

Dear Jan, Lia, Bjorn and adoptive parents and sponsors.

With schools being closed many Indian state have relaxed labour laws and migration and resignation of adults will have huge adverse impact on children. The children confined to their homes may face domestic exploitation and the very poor and marginalised will face exploitation by way of child trafficking for child labour or child sexual abuse.



We have witnessed many children and toddlers walking along with their migrant families hundreds of miles at times without food and water. We have seen migrants dying on the way due to the account of starvation and fatigue. It is highly possible that some of their children are in the hands of child traffickers.

As the lockdown eased we have witnessed many children on Madurai traffic Lights and on the main shopping streets and around the temple selling different things like pens belt, dolls etc. At times I have seen the pain in the eyes of the children when the car travelers were not rolling down their windows. In addition there are only fewer vehicles on the road. The children were so desperate for money. So these children are the real vulnerable ones who could be exploited for few rupees.

Another big problem is that many migrant labourers have left and the small and medium enterprises are very badly in need of employees. So children of very poor families who desperately struggle for survival will become the target for exploitation for the family to get some income.

A child line data in India gave an idea of what happened within the first week of lockdown. 92,000 SOS calls were received concerning children in districts. 11 percent of calls related to physical health 8 percent on child labour, 8 percent on missing children and runaway and 5 percent of homelessness. During the month of March 898 child marriages were prevented. I myself know that many child marriages are being dealt by district child protection office.



But ofcourse of the many children who will be exploited the worst affected will be the girls and the handicapped. SJDT which focus its mission on vulnerable children especially girls and the handicapped will be open to reach out to these vulnerable children.

Thanking you

Dr. I. Sebastian M.A., M.B.A.,  
Executive Director  
St. Joseph's Development Trust

