

Lost my childhood in an automobile workshop

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Adnan, 14, while working at a motor workshop

Adnan is a 14-year-old boy. He has 9 family members including 6 siblings younger than him. Adnan's father has a vegetable shop and his daily income is insufficient to meet the requirements of such a big family. He has no option left but to make his son work in a motor workshop. Adnan is working from the age of 10. He works almost 13 hours a day, from 9 am to 10 pm. For such a hard work he gets only Rs 100 daily. Like other children working in motor workshops, Adnan has neither time nor money to study while playing games seem a more farfetched idea. He sees his future as an expert motor mechanic in his own workshop.

Child labor is defined as an activity with negative impact on the child. Hundreds of thousands of children in Pakistan, due to the poverty, are forced to work as labourers before they ever enter school and many must leave school in the middle of a course of study to become labourers. Once children are snatched from school and put to work, they are cut off from their normal development, education and relationships. Devastated by suffering at early ages, these children require psycho-social rehabilitation, education and economic opportunities within their communities.

International Labor Organization has adopted the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, calling on all governments to take "immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency" in 1999. The worst forms identified by the Convention include slavery, trafficking, prostitution, and work likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.