



## **ASIA/INDIA - 70 000 Indian children exploited in 5000 coal mines**

Shillong (Agenzia Fides) – From a bamboo ladder children descend into humid wells up to 20 meters deep, they crouch to get into a hole 60 cm wide and crawl in the mud for 90 metres before starting their long day of work in extracting coal. We are talking about children of the state of Meghalaya in north-east India who work as miners, that every day are faced with death and live in fear of that the place where they are forced to work in inhuman conditions might collapse and bury them alive. These young children wear short-sleeved shirts, pyjama pants, rubber boots. On their heads they have a torch to get light and a cloth to cover their ears. There are about 70,000 Indian children who are exploited in 5000 mines in the country for their slim body that allows them to go through narrow and claustrophobic passages, and leave 12 hours later, with a cart full of coal. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 14/03/2013)