

# People's Watch

a monthly newsletter

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## UDHR

### 60th anniversary

#### Cycling for human rights

On the 10th of December 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was born. To celebrate its 60th birthday, People's Watch organized several programs. For example a cycle rally and a street corner meeting was organized on 14.12.08 by CHRM units of Sellur, Madurai. The aim was to create awareness on Human Rights in observance of Dec. 10th - the International Human Rights Day. 55 participants cycled in this cycle rally. But in several other places throughout the states similar programs were conducted.

#### Andhra Pradesh:

On 9th Dec 2008, the UDHR 60th anniversary was observed at Ravulapalem, with a public event.

On 10th Dec 2008, the UDHR hand books were released and the UDHR day was observed in Don Bosco Ravulapalem.

On 11th- Dec 2008, the UDHR day was observed in Ubalanka High School: Ublanka High school had conducted drawing and essay writing competitions on Human Rights on 9th and they had a special school assembly on 11th of December.

#### Tripura:

The anniversary of UDHR was observed at Samaprashad J.B.School at Anandanagar.

#### Tamil Nadu

- HR day celebration in Mavuthampathi ADW School. Mr. Ananth to participate.
- Perundurai middle & Govt Hr. sec school, and Thirunagar colony school, planning to celebrate human rights day. C.S.I Matric School.
- Uthukuli block Kunnathur School.

- Thuthikulam PU Middle school ,
- Sivagangai Girls Hr.sec, Sivagangai,
- Raja middle school,
- Alies Miller Girls High school,
- Many HRE teachers also called me, and they also celebrated HR day in their schools. In Sivagangai RRRK middle school AEO participated in the function, he also informed me.
- Corporation Schools-CMS-Errikkarai, CMS-Prakasam Road, CMS-Kannammamet.CMS-Ammankoil Street.
- Mr. Shiyam-Govt ADW Hr.Sec school , Kaarai, Vellore District.

#### Orissa:

The anniversary was observed by IHRE Orissa on 10.12.08 in Bhubaneswar in a massive way. Students from Nayapalli Ashram School (HRE), Capital High School, Gurunanak Public School, Prabhujee E.M.School, Alok E.M.School, V.E.M.School, B.B.School for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb School, Amity University, VISWAS Social Science Schools, Teachers, Bharat Scout and Guide students and teachers, Lawyers and Journalists participated. Nearly 800 students and teachers and others participated in a long Human Chain and Open Seminar.

#### Karnataka:

A Competition programme on HRE Songs and Dance was conducted on December 6th 2008 at United mission School

Human Rights Day was celebrated at St. Joseph's college. On that day winners of six programmes were invited and the prizes were distributed.

#### Kerala:

HR day was observed in Kerala state in different forms. Justice K.K. Narendren inaugurated the function. Group Song competition and Choreography was organized. Around 120 participants attended the programme.

In addition, the 60th anniversary of UDHR was observed in many schools various states.

Inside...



### 2 Advocacy & Lobbying



### 3 At Forum Asia



### 3 Public Hearing



### 4 Counseling Training



### 4 PW Family Day

## Lobbying and Advocacy

From 4th to 6th of December the third advocacy and lobbying program of People's Watch was conducted in Salem district. The aim of the program is to promote human rights issues on several levels. Therefore there were discussions with local NGOs as well as a press meeting and bureaucracy-advocacy. It was made public that there have been 148 human rights violations registered in Salem district within the last eleven months. There have been 45 cases of caste discrimination, 44 cases of violence against women and 40 cases of police torture. The new method of lobbying and advocacy, which was also used in Virdunagar district and Tirunelveli district, brought some significant success: Due to the networking, which was part of the visit, the Federation of Salem District Monitoring was established. This assembly of NGOs and activists will meet every three months to create a common report including all their information on human rights issues in Salem district.



**Mr. Henri Tiphagne at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of Bread for the World in Berlin, Germany 29th and 30th of November, 2008**



## Steps towards Justice

### Achievements of HRI

In the month of December the Intervention Unit of People's Watch has had several successes. These are some of them:

- In the case of the Dalit Atrocities in Ariyalur District a relief amount of Rs. 6250 has been paid to each of the three victims
- In the police torture case of Murugan the National Commission for SC, New Delhi had directed the District Collector and the Superintendent of Police in Thoothukudi District to take steps immediately.
- In the case of the custodial death of Arun Bharath in Virudhunagar District a compensation of Rs. 1, 00,000 was paid to the family of the victim.
- In the case of illegal sand mining in Karur District the High Court in its order on 8th of December 2008 appointed an expert committee to submit a report.



**General Assembly of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) held on 06.12.08 at Geneva in which Mr. Henri Tiphagne, the Executive Director participated**

**Mr. Henri Tiphagne, the Executive Director, at a meeting of the Dalit Platform in Frankfurt, Germany on 28.11.08**



## Public Hearing on HR Violations

In connection with the advocacy and lobbying program public hearings on human rights violations were conducted in several districts of Tamil Nadu. Emphasis was given



on the democratic nature of the program. Therefore the hearings were held outdoors and the public was encouraged to participate actively by asking questions and giving opinions. Photo: PH Virudunagar dist. 14.11.2008

## Forum Asia

Mr. Vidyasagar from the CNA Unit participates in the 12th Asian Training & Study Session for Human Rights Defenders (17th Nov to 1st Dec, 2008) at Bangkok, Thailand. Since 1991 Forum Asia regularly conducts training sessions to improve the efficiency of human rights defenders in Asia. The topics of this session ranged from an overview on the history of human rights and the present human rights situation in Asia to concrete steps as to how to defend the defenders. In this respect emphasis was given on the question of how to use human rights mechanisms

like laws, declarations, conventions and regulations. These mechanisms are already given in many forms but often are not used efficiently. Regarding human rights lobbying and promotion the participants learned that whoever controls the media controls the culture. Therefore several strategies were developed on how to use different media for the purpose of defending human rights and to make people aware of the fact that "we are the people we are the state", as it was said on the workshop.

## Workshop on Finance Management and Procurements

The workshop was held by Ms. Grethe Norgaard, Procurement Officer DCA, at Vedic Village, Kolkatta from 1st to 3rd of December 2008. The first day was used for a brief



refresher on Finance Management while the second and third day were used to prepare a Procurement Manual. Mr. Edison who participated in the program said that, "it was one of the best workshops" he had ever attended.

## Our Publication In the month

People's Watch and other Publishers (SOCO Trust, SIDA, Karuthu Pattarai etc..) participated in the Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India (BAPASI) 3rd Book Fair in Madurai. The fair was conducted from 27th of November to 7th of December 2008. Several articles and the following new books were published in December Monographs on People.

1. Untouchable. (Fact finding report)
2. Movement Leaders - Ruth Manorama
3. Violence in the class room. (Fact finding report )
4. NREGA PWIS Booklet



## National Training Program Working with torture victims



Three workshops have been led by Joanne Jacoby, a psychiatric social worker and AJWS volunteer, and Dr. Vincent, a clinical psychologist from a local university, and a consultant to People's Watch, was conducted at Pillar House. At the first workshop from 26th to 28th of November twenty-six people from the Monitoring, RCTV and Helpline units were taught interviewing skills when working with trauma victims. They also learned that when working with victims they first need to know themselves. This includes being aware of their blind spots, their blocks in interpersonal relationships, their weaknesses as well as their strengths. The second workshop dealt with the issue of trauma. Emphasis was given to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). On the third workshop under the title care of the caregiver the participants learned about the importance of self-care. Joanne said that she felt honored to work with people who were so motivated to learn. ■

## Local Resource Mobilization

Danchurch Aid has organized a Fundraising workshop for its partner organizations to build the capacity on raising local resources so that its partners think of raising local resources as a strategic priority in- term of long term development, instead of being totally dependent on donor driven funds.

It was a four day workshop which started from 8th December to 11th December 08. This work shop was facilitated by The Resource Alliance. There were about 25 participants from different parts of India. The main focus was on practical and innovative strategies, methods, tools that could be used to raise resources.

Ms. Veena Shankar and Mr. Pradeep Solomon Raj attended the workshop. It was a new experience for them to be amongst the people from different parts of India; interacting with them and doing exercises. In the workshop the participants came to know about the western donor's disinterest towards investing in India and the real resource capital of India. They thought about the various methods and tools to identify an organization's needs.

The workshop paved the way for People's Watch to think about bringing a local resource mobilizing unit. After attending the workshop Mr. Pradeep was able to come out with an action plan. ■

## Family Day 2008 People's Watch

The annual family day function was organised on the 23rd of December 2009 at the SOCO hall in Madurai. The staff members along with their family members participated ■



Printer and Publisher : Mr. Henri Tiphagne, People's Watch

Newsletter prepared by : Ms. Radha

Layout : Mr. Samuel

6, Vallabai Road, Chokkikulam, Madurai - 625 002

Tel: 0452-2531874, 2539520 Fax: 0452 2531874

E-mail: [info@pwtn.org](mailto:info@pwtn.org); Website: [www.pwtn.org](http://www.pwtn.org)