

People's Watch

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Training on Mediation Skill

People's Watch along with local Bar Associations conducted 1 day mediation training workshops in 5 districts (Vellore, Villupuram, Salem, Coimbatore & Madurai) in the month of January. We had more than 20 participants in each location, with the exception of Villapuram, where a total of 12 advocates attended.

Many participants stated that they had gained an understanding of mediation as a process, and felt equipped by the training to attempt it alone. For nearly all the participants, mediation was new and required definition and detailed explanation. All participants had only heard of meditation, but never practiced it.

The workshops emphasized the following points:

- A mediator must be neutral, requiring that he/she know her own biases
- A mediator must have well-developed listening skills
- A mediator must gain and keep the confidence of the parties
- A mediator does not dictate the



resolution of the dispute, but rather, assists the parties in reaching their own solution; this includes making suggestions for resolution, but never includes giving orders.

Exercises were given in order to help the participants better understand the concept and the practice. A model mediation problem was covered in every workshop. The problem involves a dispute between neighbors and, depending on the amount of time permitted, the participants would either broke into groups of three and mediated the dispute, or the group as a whole discussed the best way to approach the dispute.

In every workshop, participants expressed genuine interest and satisfaction with this model as effective in demonstrating how to mediate and what the process of problem solving entails.



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CHRM

Taluk/District Council Meeting

The Citizens for Human Rights Movement had a district council meeting, which occurs every 2 months to discuss the district specific problems and the possible resolutions suggested at the state level. This format is similar to the Taluk council meetings, where CHRM representatives join together to discuss problems within the community. In January, 10 such district meetings and 25 Taluk meetings were held. The details are as follows:

| S.No | DCM | | TCM | |
|------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| | Date | District | Date | Taluk |
| 1. | Nil | Nil | 31 Jan | Thirunelveli |
| 2. | 09.01.10 24.01.10 | Shangarapuram Thiruvannamalai | 16 & 17 Jan | Vellore Thriupathur |
| 3. | 10.01.10 | Viruthunagar | 31 Jan | Arupukootai |
| 4. | Nil | Nil | 07,16,19 & 27 Jan | T.Subalapuram , Periyakulam Nilakottai, Madurai |
| 5. | 06.01.10 | Thiuvapur | 27 & 31 Jan | Tharangambadi Keevalur |
| 6. | 12.01.10 | Karikal | 17 & 25 Jan | Gudiyatham Shangarapuram |
| 7. | 24.01.10 | Thrippur | 9,11 & 23 Jan | Tharapuram Avinasi, Erode |
| 8. | 09.01.10 | Trichy | 11,16,17,18 & 27 Jan | Sirrangam, Musiri Manachanallur Lalakudi, Thottiyam |
| 9. | Nil | Nil | 6,12 & 13 Jan | Omalur, Kangavalli Attur |
| 10. | 05.01.10 | Ariyalur | 11 & 12 Jan | Sendurai Thirunallarur |
| 11. | 17.01.10 | Kanur-2 | Nil | Nil |
| | Total | 10 | Total | 25 |

Complaint Box at Bus Stand



The Citizen for Human Rights Movement installed a unique complaint box at the Madurai - Mattuthavani integrated bus complex on January 14th 2010, in order to enable people to lodge complaints against violence targeted at women in their homes and at the workplace, as well as violence against school children and against the weaker sections of the society. At the inaugural Mr. Henri Tiphagne stated that People's Watch would take suitable action on the complaints received.

Demonstrations organised by CHRM



CHRM members of Theni organized an agitation to show their protest for filing false case against CHRM members on March 10, 2010



CHRM members of Sivagangai organized an agitation to condemn the attack on Dalit women panchayat leader Ms. Manonmani on March 29, 2010

Training on Fact Finding for CHRM Defenders

The District level Fact Finding training programs were organized for CHRM Defenders to create awareness among various categories of people in CHRM on Human Rights and to involve them in the Fact Finding process. It is note working that for the first time these training programs were organized in the villages itself. Details of the training programs held in the month of February & March and the fact-findings done during the training period are as follows,

| District | Date | Total Participants | Total case | District | Date | Total Participant | Total case |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------|------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|------------|
| Viruthunagar | 27 & 28 Feb | 25 | 7 | Nellai | 20 & 21 March | 27 | 7 |
| Theni | 13 & 14 Feb | 20 | 4 | Kaniakumari | 27 & 28 March | 24 | 7 |
| Dharmapuri | 6 & 7 Feb | 23 | 5 | Vellore | 20 March | 44 | 10 |
| Nagai | 27 & 28 Feb | 25 | 10 | T.Malai | 27 March | 38 | 10 |
| Villupuram | 13 & 14 Feb | 18 | 13 | Tuticorin | 13 & 14 March | 40 | 7 |
| Erode | 6 & 7 Feb | 17 | 5 | Ramanad | 27 & 28 March | 26 | 15 |
| Thiruppur | 13 & 14 Feb | 20 | 6 | Ariyalore | 06 & 07 March | 29 | 5 |
| Trichy | 13 & 14 Feb | 24 | 6 | Krishnagiri | 06 & 07 March | 33 | 5 |
| Namakkal | 13 & 14 Feb | 20 | 4 | Coimbatore | 06 & 07 March | 29 | 7 |
| Salem | 27 & 28 Feb | 22 | 5 | Thiruvallur | 06 & 07 March | 28 | 4 |
| Tanjore | 6 & 7 Feb | 25 | 5 | Madurai | 06 & 07 March | 31 | 5 |
| Kanjipuram | 6 & 7 Feb | 20 | 5 | Dindugal | 13 & 14 March | 28 | 5 |
| | | | | Perambalur | 13 & 14 March | 19 | 6 |
| Total | | 259 | 75 | Total | | 396 | 96 |



People's Watch Publications at Chennai Book Fair

The publication unit representing People's Watch participated in the 33rd All India Book Exhibition in Chennai from December 30-January, 20 2010. It was organized by the BAPASI. The unit is proud to have been the only stall with books on human rights among the 600 stalls at the exhibition. Though we had fewer collections, we attracted a large number of visitors, which enabled us to sell more books than in previous years.



Human Rights Education National

Curriculum Committee Meeting for Braille Module-II (Child Rights)

The Curriculum Committee meeting for the Braille module-II for Child Rights was conducted on January 14, 2010 at Vocational Rehabilitation Center in Bhubaneswar, with the active participation of the following persons: Mr. R.K. Sharma, Rehabilitation Officer; Mr. Prafulla Kumar Rout, Assistant Teacher of B. B School for the Blind; Mr. Ajay Kumar Samal, General Secretary of NAB; Mr. Mahendranath Mahanty, retired headmaster of Bhima. Bhoi. School for the Blind; and the State Coordinator Mr. Pradipta Nayak.

The objective of the meeting was to prepare Module - II on human rights education, tailored to suit visually challenged students.

Teacher's review meeting

There were 2 teacher review meetings conducted during the month of January. The first meeting was conducted on January 28, 2010 at Shikashakara Sadana, Bangalore for high school teachers, of which there were 35 in attendance. The schools represented have completed the first module and started the second module on child rights. The second meeting was conducted on January 30, 2010 at the BRC office in Sira for primary school teachers whose schools they have completed the 3rd module on discrimination. There were 42 teachers who participated in this meeting.



IHRE National Core Committee Meeting

IHRE National Core Committee Meeting was held at Loreto Day School-Sealdah in Kolkata on February 4, 2010. Dr. V. Vasanthidevi, the chairperson for IHRE, Dr. I. Devasahayam the Director of IHRE, Mr. Henri Tiphagne the Executive Director of PW, Mr. Saji Thomas the Director of Programs of PW, Ms. Margaret Sampath the National Coordinator for IHRE and Mr. Maria Soosai the Program Secretary of IHRE were present. Sr. Cyril the Principal of the Loreto Day School was a special invitee to the meeting.

The core committee is the place where the work is reviewed and major decisions are taken regarding the HRE program for each state. In addition, 2 partners, namely Dr. Saibal Gupta from ADRI, our partner in Bihar and Fr. Thomas Pallithanam from PARA, our partner in Andhra Pradesh, were the new members added to the committee. This enables our partners also to participate in the decision making process and ultimately contribute to the success of the programs under reviews. This is found to be a very useful monitoring system for HRE programs in every state.



Teachers review meeting in West Bengal

On February 6, 2010 a teacher's review meeting was held at Loreto Day School Sealdah. This platform was also used for advocacy and lobbying with the government for introducing human rights into the school curriculum. The honorable home minister Mr. Kumar Mukherjee donated his valuable time to come and inaugurate the program. He lit the lamp along with Sister Cyril, the school principal, Dr. Vasanthi Devi the Chairperson of Human Rights Education and Dr. Devasahayam the Director of the Institute of Human Rights Education. Dr. Vasanthi Devi, in her address, requested that the education department of West Bengal introduce human rights education into the school curriculum. There was an experience sharing session led by two teachers concerning the impact of this education on the students. Honorable Mr. Kumar Mukherjee assured that he would definitely communicate our request to the education department.

Mr. Salim, the Chairman of Minority Development and Finance Corporation was also present for the release of the 3rd book titled

“Discrimination.” He addressed the teachers about the importance of human rights education and the manner in which it should be implemented.

State Advisory Committee Meeting-Kerala



The 6th annual Kerala State Advisory Committee meeting was held at hotel Park Rajadhani Trivandrum on February 28, 2010. The objectives were to review the status of HRE programs in Kerala, to discuss the problem of the debt incurred due to the production and distribution of modules, as well as to discuss the option of adding volunteers into the schools, based on the number of students and the school location. The presumption is that it would be very difficult to manage school visits by the coordinators alone. Therefore, the

meeting addressed the various ways in which to strengthen the HRE program in Kerala and discussed other relevant HRE matters. Dr. Vasanthi Devi, chairman of IHRE, Mr. Ashok Mathews Philip, the Executive Director of SICHREM and Mr. Saji Thomas, the program Director Participated in the meeting.

Women's Day Celebration - Andhra Pradesh

The International Women's Day celebrations and HRE review of the Paderu region were held simultaneously at the CAH Boys Stadium in Paderu on March 11, 2010. Mr. B. Ananda Mohan the IFS Project Officer of the ITDA - Paderu was the guest of honor. The objective of this program was to bring all HRE students, teachers, representatives and women leaders together for an interactive review session. Ultimately

the aim was to educate them on importance of Women's Day and the details of the Women's Bill. Mr. Naryana Swamy, the deputy director of the Tribal Welfare Department of Paderu also took part in the forum.

Rev. Fr. Thomas Pallithanam, the Director of PARA, upon the release of the HRE newsletter, reasserted that children are the primary source of social and political change and that only through education of this ilk, can a culture of human rights be achieved. The program was followed by children review meeting, where topics discussed included the review of HRE syllabi, the role of children's clubs, the importance of honing leadership skills and team-building, career guidance, as well as reinforcing the rights and capabilities of young girls. ■



International Visits of the Executive Director

Mr. Henri Tiphagne, the Executive Director, participated in the 3rd regional consultation of the Asian NGOs Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI), which was organized by the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM ASIA) in Tokyo, Japan from March 3-5, 2010.

Mr. Henri Tiphagne also took part in the 1st National Workshop of the Asian NGO Network on NHRI's (ANNI) in Taipei, Taiwan on March 26-27, 2010.



Human Rights Education Tamil Nadu

One day review meeting-2010

Institute of Human Rights Education, Tamilnadu organized one day review meetings for HRE teachers in 5 districts of Tamilnadu covering Adi Dravidar Welfare Schools. 64 programs were organized and 1593 teachers from 1515 schools participated.

This was a platform for the teachers to share their experience, impacts and challenges in teaching Human Rights Education. The details of the programs are as follows,

| S.No | District | Total No of programs | No of blocks/Zone covered | No of schools covered | No of Teachers |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Erode | 21 | 20 | 495 | 543 |
| 2. | Chennai Cooperation | 02 | 10 | 119 | 129 |
| 3. | ADW | 17 | 30 | 199 | 217 |
| 4. | Sivagangai | 10 | 12 | 353 | 355 |
| 5. | Dindigul | 14 | 16 | 349 | 349 |
| Total | | 64 | 88 | 1515 | 1593 |



Significant Events

The Institute of Human Rights Education celebrated Women's Day in 19 HRE schools by screening a documentary film about child rights. The celebrations culminated with a special speech on the rights of women and children, with an



emphasis on equal opportunity. A discussion forum and skits and folk dances that highlighted women's issue, specifically dignity and self-worth followed.

Mr. Chokku, the District Coordinator of Sivagangai, was invited to a conference on women's issues organized by self-help groups of women in the Thiruppuravanam block of the Sivagangai District. Around 1,000 people participated in this conference. Mr. Chokku, elaborated on women's issues and emphasized the historical injustices to women in our society. The spectators vowed to recognize women's rights in their own life. Some of the participants even shared their own experiences, shedding light on the miserable conditions in which women are forced to live.

In Vellore, an HRE Students' Club organized a program in which saplings were distributed to all the student members in order to heighten environmental awareness.



Coordinators Meeting of the IHRE Tamil Nadu:

During this forum, the work of the coordinators is reviewed and plans for upcoming projects are made. The coordinators shared the challenges and impacts of IHRE programs with the Chairperson. They had a planning meeting for the forthcoming summer camp. In addition, Mr. Maria Soosai, the Program Secretary, conducted a short, yet rigorous training program for coordinators, which centered the writing skills necessary in drafting reports.

Human Rights Club:

Mr. Shiyam, the zonal coordinator of the ADW School in Chennai, attended the 1st anniversary celebrations for the HRE students club, World Women's Day and World Water Day in Pилanthipattu, in Vellore district. The HR club submitted their study report for the annual day, which emerged from the HR club research initiative with focuses on the Palaru River, as well as their school's infrastructure.





Visit of Ms. Sabina Atzei, the Senior Finance Officer, and Mr. Kandasami, Chartered Accountant, from Cordaid

Visit of Ms. Laurance Andre from UNVFVT to RCTV, Mettur & to People's Watch head quarters



Training for HR Defenders



A participatory learning workshop with trainers on the rights and responsibilities of human rights, the 1st of 2 Trainings of Trainers envisaged in the Royal Netherlands Embassy funded 'Capacity Building of Human Rights Defenders' program took place in Bangalore from the 22nd to the 24th of February 2010 for participants from the North East, West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The facilitators of the program were Dr. R. J. Rajkumar and Mr. Henri Tiphagne, Executive Director, People's Watch. There were 33 participants in the program. General

situation of Human Rights Defenders in the country, provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, major developments of understanding of the mandate by the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders were some of the areas discussed. By the end of the workshop, the participants had drawn up plans of regional training programs in their respective states - a total of 13 programs - 2 each in North East, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and 1 in Orissa. One of these programs took place on the 27th and 28th of March, 2010. Trainers were also introduced to mechanisms of the National Human Rights Institutions/State Human Rights Institutions in the workshop and assurances to serve as monitors of these institutions and their performances from their respective States was got from them. There also was consensus to develop a National Platform of Human Rights Defenders.

Visit of Ms. Emerlynne Gil of FORUM ASIA

Ms. Emerlynne Gil, Program Manager, Human Rights Defenders Program, The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM ASIA) visited People's Watch during 26 to 30 January 2010 and provided inputs on the publications in the program 'Monitoring of National Human Rights Institutions'. She also contributed to the two meetings on general observations and experiences of organizations and individuals with national and state human rights commissions held in Chennai and Madurai on the 26th and 30th of January, 2010, respectively. ■



Mr. Saji Thomas, the Program Director participated in the 1st sub-regional workshop on South Asian Human Rights Mechanisms, in Kathmandu, Nepal on March 24 & 25, 2010.



Model Women's Assebly



Empowering women through the political process

The first women's parliament was conducted by NAWO, in association with its partner organization from November 2-5, 2009 in New Delhi. Nearly 500 women from the MP constituencies participated in this forum, where a model budget was drafted. In addition, debates were held concerning the portrayal of women in media, growing incidences of violence on women, Dalits and religious minorities, as well as on the plight of tea garden workers. Ms. Palaniammal, the state human rights monitoring officer from the MNA unit representing People's Watch participated in this process.

Based on the outcomes of these debates, the IWID planned a mock women's state assembly. This assembly provided an alternate space where a vision to challenge the

dominant style of politics was articulated. The objectives of the assembly included enhancing the political power of women, asserting pressure on the existing political order and to increase the presence of women in the decision making process.

Mr. C.J. Rajan, the senior program coordinator of HoD in the MNA Unit, represented People's Watch during a 1 day consultation meeting organized by IWID, in collaboration with various women's networks in Chennai on January 5, 2010. The consultation acted as a planning meeting for the model women's state assembly. After this consultation, People's Watch was offered 3 ministerial posts, including the Ministry of Food, Ministry of Human Rights and Ministry of Social Welfare. Ms. Amirthavalli of the CHRM was nominated as the Minister of Food and Ms. Palaniammal, the State Human Rights Monitoring Officer in the MNA unit, was nominated as the Minister of Social Welfare. Some female staff members and women from the CHRM were nominated to



the Legislative Assembly, where the constituencies were divided.

Based on these selections, members of Legislative Assembly were nominated for the training program. The training program was planned in order to make the participants understand the function of the state legislative assembly and the role of women in it. The purpose of this program was to train members to participate effectively in the forthcoming model assembly. It was a 2 day training program, organized by People's Watch, in conjunction with the CHRM and along with IWID. It was held at the Life Center in Dindigul from January 31 February 1, 2010.

After this preliminary training the women representatives from CHRM and Ms. Palaniammal, Ms. Uma Rani & Ms. Sharmila participated in the Model Women's Assembly at Chennai from 22 -24 March, 2010. ■

Staff members paid homage at the grave of the late Fr. Alexis Diamond Raj, founder of People's Watch, on January 04, 2010 for the anniversary of his death on January 01, 2010.



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