

People's Watch

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Summer Programmes Sudhantra - RCTV

Celebration of freedom and celebration of equality SANGAMAM is a summer camp for the children who almost lost their childhood just for being the children of the victims of human rights violations or child victims themselves with whom we have already come into contact or within whom we have established links in the course of the year. In our attempt to achieve holistic welfare of the people we work with, every summer it is our endeavor to organize such summer camps. These children are not children that one would come across everyday; they are children who have been forced to grow up overnight, missing out on their childhood that so many of us cherished.

SANGAMAM, was first organized in the year 2000 with just 20 children. The number of children grew every year, challenging us to initiative better activities that needed much more planning and resources. This year the program was held from 9th to 17th of May 2009 at Mahatma School, Alagarkovil, Madurai. It was a



platform for the children to celebrate their rights and relationships in this Summer Camp - Sangamam 2009. Children between the ages of 10 18 took part. The name 'Sangamam' came into being as the camp unites children from various places with different background and ideologies and brings them together under one roof. This year there were 440 children both boys and girls at the camp. There were 2 camps this year one for the senior children & the other for the junior children. Every child who came had a story to tell about a day in the past that had changed their lives forever forcing them to grow up overnight losing out on their precious childhood. However the camp did not make them run away from their troubles, instead gave them the strength to overcome it and to face it. The children spent their 10 days here in happiness and the hills around echoed their laughter. 'Celebration of Rights' was the theme of the camp that was conducted for the children below the age of 12. For the children above 12 it was a camp to celebrate their 'Right to Equality'.

Ms. Rohini, Actress and Social Worker, Mr. Mahaboob Batcha, The Managing Director, SOCCO Trust, Mr. Henri Tiphagne, Executive Director, People's

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Watch, Mr. R. Chokkalingam, President, Kannadasan Narpani Mandram, Mrs. and Mr. Venkatasamy, District Judge and the staff members of People's Watch motivated the students in the inaugural program. Mr. Venkatasamy quoting the example of one student working part time in a fast food shop and passing in the civil services examination insisted that hard work and determination alone would enable us to achieve one's goal. Ms. Rohini, Actress and Activist, stated that People's Watch had known where to start its Human Rights work and has rightly started it with children. She asked the children to use this opportunity aptly by

utilizing all the available resources thus converting their hard work into success.

The children who took part in this camp were trained in Yoga, Sports, Arts and Crafts, Computers, Karate, Dances, Songs, Story Telling, Memory improving exercises, goal setting, parai, drawing and sketching. The children breathed the fresh air of freedom and flourished in an equal atmosphere. They performed extraordinarily well in the sports day which was another new factor in the camp. Forgetting the worries of their past towards their future dreams opening out their wings to fly, the camp was surely a beginning in their journey. ■



The Second National Advisory Committee of IHRE was held at IGNOU campus, New Delhi on 29th June 2009

IHRE Bihar organised the 'Orientation cum Syllabus Training Program for HRE Teachers' on the Discrimination module at Patna from 15-19 June 2009



Summer Camp IHRE - Tamil Nadu

The Institute of Human Rights Education (IHRE) organized a total of 5 summer camps this year in the month of May 2009. The programs aim at strengthening the knowledge on Human Rights for the teachers teaching Human Rights Education and the students are the HRE students. The 2 programs held at Madurai were focused towards the formation of the Human Rights Clubs at Government Adi Dravida Welfare Schools. The program for students consisted of training on human rights songs, human rights through art form, puppet show, street theater folk dance etc. Also sessions were handled towards



enabling the participants on refusal skills, discussion skills, vision making and ambitions, team building, cooperative and leadership skills. Sessions were handled by the subject experts in the most simplified form. The program for the teachers on the other hand was to motivate the teachers to support and guide the formation of student clubs.

Similarly, two Media programs were planned one for teachers and

one for students. The Media training for students was to train the HRE students to make a documentary film on their own experiences with regard to the impact of Human Rights Education. The student participants were the past and present batch of HRE students. The Media training for teachers was towards making documentary films based on the HRE module 'Discrimination'.

The final program that was held at Coonoor was a training of trainers program for HRE teachers. These teachers are trained as trainers for the future HRE programs. The details of the five summer programs organized by the Tamilnadu IHRE unit are as follows,

S. No.	Details of the program	Dates	Venue	Zones	No of participants		
					Female	Male	Total
1.	Summer training program for HRE Students	5 th to 8 th May 2009	Mahatma school, Madurai	Villupuram, Trichy, Koval, Madurai, Chennai	30	35	65
2.	Summer training programme for Teachers	5 th to 8 th May 2009	CESI training Centre, Madurai	Villupuram, Trichy, Madurai, Chennai	3	15	18
3.	Media Work shop for Students	6 th - 8 th May 2009	Donbosco Alaihal Media, Trichy	Villupuram, Trichy, Madurai, Koval, Chennai	2	19	21
4.	Summer training programme for HRE Students	18 th - 22 nd May 2009	Donbosco Alaihal Media, Trichy	Villupuram, Trichy, Madurai, Koval	10	11	21
5.	Summer training programs for Teachers	18 th - 22 nd May 2009	St. Theodore's Sanatorium, Coonoor	Sivagangai, Madurai, Koval, Chennai, Erode, Villupuram	9	34	43



The state level consultative meeting for differentiallyAble persons was conducted in TASSOS (Tamil Nadu Social Service Society) Hall in Trichy on 08-06-2009. The NGOs, charitable institutions and organizations of differentiallyAble persons in the state participated the meeting. It was arranged to start a separate unit for monitoring the rights of differentiallyAble persons with the help of People's Watch.



2. Kerala Summer Camp for Children & Teacher

The third summer training programme for the state of Kerala was held from 24th -28th April 2009 at Rajagiri College, Kalamasseri. Summer camp mainly focused on the formation of Human Rights Clubs In schools. The proposed camp both for the HRE teachers and students of the HRE programme. Total number of participants for the programme was 96 (34 teachers and 62 students) from the HRE schools. The participants for the programme assembled on the 24th April 09 evening at Rajagiri College, Kalamasseri. The day started with an invocation. Registration of the participants was done on the same day. The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Sebastian Paul M.P on 25th April 2009. Dr.K.S. Radhakrishnan Former V.C. SSUS Kaladari was the guest of honor of the function. And the chief guest of the Valedictory function was N.K. Sundharesan (RDO, Ernakulam)

3. Odisha HRE Children Teacher Summer Program "SAHAYOG 2009"

Odisha HRE Children Teacher Summer Program "SAHAYOG 2009" was held at Govt. High School, Tapovan-Bhubaneswar from 18th to 22nd May 2009. 101 students and 46 teachers from 46 schools have participated in the program. Dr. S.N.Subarao, great Gandhian and National convener of National Youth Project to inaugurate "SAHAYOG 2009". The ceremony was presided over by Dr. Bibhuti Pattanaik and graced by S.J.K.C.Sarang, S.J. Bhabani Pattanaik, freedom fighter and State coordinator Pradipta Nayak. In the valedictory ceremony like Dr. Aurovinda Behera, IAS, Principal Secy. to Govt. of Odisha as chief guest, Dr. Bimalendu Mohanty, ex V C as guest of honor, Dr. Prafulla Ch Mohapatra, former Director of SCERT as chief speaker, Mr. Laxminarayan Nanda, Programme Officer, UNICEF as guest of honor. The students have received certificate of participation from the guests. S.J.K.C.Sarang, Managing Committee member has presided over the program and Pradipta Nayak, State Coordinator has given vote of thanks to the guests, participants and others.



The book 'Paliyalai Purinthukolvom' written by writer Kamla Pasin reviewed by Ms. Jeyashri, Program Assisant, IHRE TN on 31st July 2009 at the Head Quarters

Dr. Vasanthidevi, the Chairperson of IHRE and Mr. Henri Tiphagne participates in the Kerala HRE State Advisory Committee meeting held at Ernakulam on 13.02.2009



International Accreditation Human Rights Education

Mr. Bethusamy Genesaperumal a student of Human Rights Education and is residing at Bomminaikanpatti village in Theni District of Tamilnadu. Coming from a rural background, he is a first generation learner with a poor economical background and his parents being agricultural laborers. With the efforts of the Institute of Human Rights Education, human rights education is included in the curriculum of the Government Adi Dravidar Welfare School, Bomminaickenpatti. Ganesa Perumal learned an Introduction to Human Rights Education, the rights of children and the discrimination. He was attracted by the thoughts of human rights and he indulged himself completely in that education. With the outcome of this, his enquiries and debates with his teachers, elders and friends are notable and they are increasing the value of human rights education. With the outcome of this, his enquiries and debates with his teachers, elders and friends are



notable and they are increasing the value of human rights education. While in his school days as a small boy he had strongly opposed and acted against female infanticide in his village.

In the year 2005, being a student, Mr. Bethusamy Genesaperumal showed immense interest in HRE through his active participation in the State Level Human Rights Education Conference held in Tamilnadu. Seeing his participation the guest from the UN High Commissioners office Ms. Elena Ippoliti was highly impressed and expressed her appreciation to him. Now after 4 years, this young student is being honored by the golden opportunity through an invitation from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva to address a panel on

'Combating Racism through Human Rights Education: Examples of National Practice' on the 22nd of April 2009. Now after 4 years the invitation has come through his way as recognition for his participation in that small age. For sure, the program on Human Rights Education has created an impact in this person due to his extraordinary and keen interest in studying the HRE in his village school at Bomminayakanpatti. In the international conference held against Apartheid in Durban of South Africa, a resolution had been passed to implement the human rights education as an instrument to eradicate racist discrimination by all nations and our Executive Director, Mr. Henri Tiphagne also participated in this meeting. As an after effect of that resolution, a meeting was arranged to evaluate the introduction of human rights education in countries at Geneva. We have to note that Ganesa Perumal was invited to participate in this above meeting. It is surely an international accreditation for our human rights education programme. ■



IHRE State Coordinators meeting with Ms. Carolyn, Banyan Tree Foundation held at Mysore, on the 9th of April 2009.



Mr. Henri Tiphagne, Executive Director in the Second Regional Consultation of the Asian NGOs Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI) held at Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from the 28th 29th of April 2009.

Women who dared to Starve for a cause

Experience sharing

Sharing by Ms. Palaniammal, State Monitoring Officer of People's Watch regarding her meaningful participation in the State Level Indefinite Hunger Strike called by the Women's groups to protest against the Human Rights violations on the Tamils at Srilanka.

The various forms of human rights violations against the Tamils in Srilanka in the name of war reported in the newspapers, televisions and internet sources disturbed me. The official websites of the Srilankan army too carried their success stories. The sexual atrocities on Tamil women, the forceful abortions, sexual atrocities on young girls and merciless killings by the Sri Lankan Army caused deep anguish within us. The Sri Lankan Government considers the destruction of Tamils as its main task.

In the above context, the Joint Women Action Group decided to go for an indefinite hunger strike to show our protest against such gross human rights violations against the Tamil people. People like Muthukumar had ended their lives to show their protest against the Sri Lankan Government. We choose to show our protest against the Srilankan government by the way of hunger strike.

Twenty women including me participated in the indefinite hunger strike fasting unto death under the leadership of Prof. Saraswathi, Activist and Ms. Sheelu, Head of Women's Collective. During the fast, for the first two days it was difficult for me to starve and many times felt that it was eating time and found it was not easy

to balance. But on the third day my body got used to fasting. My only target was we should succeed in our cause by pressurizing the Srilankan government to stop the war. This made us more and more determined. We were eagerly waiting for the news to reach Ms. Sonia Gandhi and made representations through politicians, individuals, organizations and media. Our expectations were whether there would be any response from Ms. Sonia Gandhi in solidarity with the women's struggle.

The overwhelming support given to our agitation by visually handicapped persons increased our enthusiasm. But the Tamilnadu police department attacked the visually handicapped persons and arrested them for giving their support to us. Similarly the police department also arrested the ladies who participated in the agitation in support of us and treated them shamefully. The male and lady police constables used unprintable words against the women who gave support to our agitation. It raises serious doubts if the Tamilnadu Government had directed them to take this shameful action? The police department acted in a way to divert the attention against our hunger-strike.

The arrest of 5 women by the police in the pretext of serious health condition was also a terrific instance. More than 200 police constables entered through the backdoor instead of front door as if they were



searching and capturing terrorists. It was early morning hours when they had entered and most of us were lying down. We woke up by the sounds of their boots. The police forcefully removed the bed-sheets covered over our bodies. They did not permit us to complete our morning routines. Four male police constables asked the ladies who were already in the bathrooms what they were still doing in the bathrooms and forced them to come out of the bathrooms. This was a shameful event. This shows that the Central Government and the State Government did not mind our agitation. Finally the hunger strike was brought to an end by the intervention of many people movements, groups, including Justice Krishna Iyer who rendered their support and said that it was not enough if we alone fast as the issue required attention of all the people throughout Tamilnadu and so asked us to take it forth to all levels through different forms of protest. On this basis we ended this 13 day hunger-strike.

Following this, the two phases of trainings for Human Rights teachers were held at Gawhathi Bosco Reach out Training center from 21st to 25th February 2009 and 31st March to 4th April 2009 under the facilitation of Dr. Devasagayam, Director, Institute of Human Rights Education

Advisors Meeting CHRM



Tirunelveli

The Citizens for Human Rights Movement (CHRM) today is wide spread with nearly 1793 units with 120 Taluk councils and 25 District Councils. The CHRM members take up the local issues in their locality. Once these taluk and district councils were formed the the State Council meeting was planned to be held. Prior to the State Council meeting the CHRM regional level meetings were organised for the CHRM Advisors at district level.

The meeting for the CHRM Advisors of Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, Virudunagar, Sivagangai, Ramanathapuram districts was held at Madurai on 6th June 2009 and convened by Mr. Shanmugavel, CHRM Head Quarters Secretary.

The meeting for the CHRM Advisors of Tirunelveli, Tutucorin, Kanyakumari districts was also held on 6th June 2009 at Tirunelveli and convened by Dr. Arulraj, CHRM Advisor.

The meeting for the CHRM Advisors of Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Tirupur and Erode districts were held at Coimbatore on 7th June 2009 and convened by Advocate. Mr. Nicholas, Regional Law Officer, Coimbatore.

The meeting for the CHRM Advisors of Salem, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri and Namakkal Districts was held at Salem on 7th June 2009 and convened by Advocate. Mr. Asokan, Regional Law Officer, Salem.

The meeting for the CHRM Advisors of Vellore, Tiruvannamalai districts was held at Vellore on 13 June 2009 and on the same day for the Chennai, Thiruvalluvar and Kancheepuram districts at Chennai and convened by Mr. Amaladas, CHRM Advisor.

The meeting for the CHRM Advisors of Trichy, Karur, Perambalur, Tanjore, Nagai, Ariyalur districts was held at Trichy on 14 June 2009 and convened by Advocate. Mr. Martin, Coordinator, Human Rights Intervention Unit.

The meeting for the CHRM Advisors of Villupuram and Cuddalore districts was held at Villupuram on 14 June 2009 and convened by Mr. Amaladas, CHRM Advisor. ■



Coimbatore



Vellore



Salem



Trichy



Villupuram



Chennai

State Council Meeting CHRM

Following the above CHRM Advisors meeting, the Citizens for Human Rights Movement (CHRM) organised its first State Council meeting at Kodaikannal from 19th 21st June 2009. The district council members participated in the meeting and the objective of the meeting was to review the activities of CHRM at state level and to elect the State Council Members of CHRM. The Meeting was started by hoisting of the movement flag by Dr. Parthasarathy, CHRM Advisor. The inaugural address was given by Mr. Henri Tiphagne, Executive Director, People's Watch and State Advisor, CHRM. Prof. Kalyani had spoken how joint efforts would strengthen the growth of the movement and Dr. Parthasarathy had spoken on the need for an ideology for the movement.

This First State Council had elected the 7 members for the state council which included Women, Dalits, Minorities and Transgender representatives. The CHRM would definitely play a potential role towards social change through its various political interventions. In addition, it would also grow into a major force in the field of Human Rights which would surely be as an outcome of joint action and effort of the Human Rights Defenders in the CHRM.



**District Level Advocacy
& Lobbying held at
Nagapattinam on June
15th 2009**



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