**SKILLS FOR FREEDOM**

**Newsletter from India**

 **No: 8 December: 2015**

This electronic newsletter from **PEACE TRUST, INDIA** is addressed to NGO's, Social Activists, Media, Opinion makers, Leaders and Bureaucrats for improving their understanding on skilling the youth for gainful employment and addressing social issues like modern slavery, child labour, migrant labour, un-employability of youth. We also send this to people who we believe are involved in improving the migrant worker's conditions. You are welcome to unsubscribe yourself, if you so choose.

**-EDITOR**

Peace Trust is a Non Government Organization working on Child Labour and Bonded Labour issues since 1984. It has also focused on Migrant workers rights issue since 1999.

* Peace Trust’s Skills for Freedom is the only solution to end Modern Slavery in Tamil Nadu. It is a joint effort for enhancing the employment opportunities of rural youth in Dindigul, Karur, Tiruppur Districts.
* Reduce the risk for young workers - Beginning of this month Peace Trust has launched a new Initiative to "Support School Education, Health Protection, Livelihood Development and Skill Training for Gainful Employment among Vulnerable Young Population in Dindigul District" Geneva Global/ Freedom Fund are supporting this initiative
* SPSC Vocational Education & Employment Facilitation Centre provides access to vocational education and employment facilitation for rural poor youth in Nagapattinam, Thiruvarur District Tamil Nadu and Karaikal District, Puducherry.
* Peace Trust also provides training for Quality Teacher Education and gainful employment to young women from resource poor families in Dindigul and Karur District.

The views expressed are not of the donors but a compilation of field realities for the purpose of sharing and action.

**The Skills for Freedom e-newsletter is published by:**



**Peace Trust**

**Near Police Housing Colony**

**Trichy Road, Dindigul-624005,**

**Tamil Nadu, India**

**Ph:0451-2410021; Fax:0451-2410372**

**Email:**info@peacetrust.in**,**chairman@peacetrust.in

**Website:**[www.peacetrust.in](http://www.peacetrust.in/)

**Edited By: Dr. J. Paul Baskar Ph.D.**

**Assisted By: Ms. Anitha Palanivel, Mrs. Chitra**

**We partner with**

  

**FLOODS**

**CHENNAI REACHES OUT: FROM CROWDSOURCING FOOD, SHELTER TO PHONE RECHARGE OFFER**

The Tamil Nadu Thowheed Jamath mobilised over 700 volunteers from Thanjavur, Thiruvarur, Vellore and Pudukottai districts for rescue and relief operations.

Many in Chennai were used to seeing visuals of the city’s low-lying areas, slums, apartments and industries built on lakes and wetlands being submerged occasionally. But when everyone, barring a few hundred, was affected, the reactions were varied -some reached out, while others remained confined by cultural barriers.

When the torrential rainfall had flooded almost the entire city by Tuesday evening, Vijaya Raghavan, a 23-year-old engineer tweeted: “If you are running out of balance, please text me with your number with network name. I will recharge for you.”

On Thursday, Raghavan, who was on his way back to his home in Tiruvannamalai, said he couldn’t help anyone anymore as he had run out of resources. He did respond to requests, paying Rs 10-20 as recharge fees for the various cellphone numbers, till the city blacked out and his phone battery died on Wednesday afternoon.

Kannan and Balaji, two youths from Theni, 500 kms south of Chennai, set out for Chennai on Thursday afternoon with a jeep full of relief material. “We hired a jeep to bring all the material we collected. We have no idea where to go or who to give these too. Let’s see,” they said. The relief material includes 600 packets of bread, 100 water packets and medicines.

Many in Chennai were used to seeing visuals of the city’s low-lying areas, slums, apartments and industries built on lakes and wetlands being submerged occasionally. But when everyone, barring a few hundred, were affected, the reactions were varied -some reached out, while others remained confined by cultural barriers.

When the torrential rainfall had flooded almost the entire city by Tuesday evening, Vijaya Raghavan, a 23-year-old engineer tweeted: “If you are running out of balance, please text me with your number with network name. I will recharge for you.”

On Thursday, Raghavan, who was on his way back to his home in Tiruvannamalai, said he couldn’t help anyone anymore as he had run out of resources. He did respond to requests, paying Rs 10-20 as recharge fees for the various cellphone numbers, till the city blacked out and his phone battery died on Wednesday afternoon.

Kannan and Balaji, two youths from Theni, 500 kms south of Chennai, set out for Chennai on Thursday afternoon with a jeep full of relief material. “We hired a jeep to bring all the material we collected. We have no idea where to go or who to give these too. Let’s see,” they said. The relief material includes 600 packets of bread, 100 water packets and medicines.

Watch video

Hundreds took to social media to aid rescue efforts, providing valuable information. While Twitter handles like ChennaiRains provided crowd-sourced alerts and help, another group prepared a spreadsheet of data which included a list of official and private control rooms and help centres. People also offered shelter to flood victims on social media -from a room to an apartment, marriage halls and movie theatres.

The Tamil Nadu Thowheed Jamath mobilised over 700 volunteers from Thanjavur, Thiruvarur, Vellore and Pudukottai districts for rescue and relief operations. “We announced the mission Tuesday night through Facebook. Yesterday, we had about 250 volunteers, and today another 450 were added from various districts,” said Abdul Rahman, state secretary of the organisation. The RSS and several other organisations were also involved in rescue operations. Meanwhile, a senior police officer who monitored rescue operations in the city’s middle-class neighbourhoods, said many families refused to leave their houses as they didn’t want to stay with others in the temporary shelters or use common toilets. “I encountered half-a-dozen families who refused the request to board the boat,” said the officer.

**CHENNAI FLOODS: FOOD, WATER PRICES UP, ATMS DOWN**

For instance, a packet of milk, which normally costs Rs 20-22, was being sold for Rs 100 while drinking water bottles were being sold for Rs 100 against the original price of Rs 30-40.

Chennai: A man moves to safe place from flooded Kotturpuram during heavy rains in Chennai on Wednesday.

As some shops finally opened in parts of the city on Thursday, after remaining closed for the last three days, people rushed out to buy essential items. But many had to return home disappointed as the prices of food and drinking water had skyrocketed in several parts of Chennai.

For instance, a packet of milk, which normally costs Rs 20-22, was being sold for Rs 100 while drinking water bottles were being sold for Rs 100 against the original price of Rs 30-40. With ATMs not functioning, many ran out of money.

“I could buy only two milk packets and a few eggs,” said Saroja Shankar, a resident, who walked more than two kilometres to find an ATM but had to return home without any cash.

While some residents who were able to reach the roads managed to get some provisions, hundreds remained stranded in isolated areas. Dozens of individuals and organisations who prepared food for flood victims at various locations faced difficulties in reaching these areas.

Volunteers at a Jain temple in T Nagar had 5,000 food packets ready, but were looking for people to distribute them. “Those who could reach us took the food packets themselves, but we could have helped many more if there was coordination with the government agencies,” said a volunteer. For those who wanted to prepare food on a large scale for flood victims, the availability of products was also a problem. With the city being cut off from two of its main lifelines, the Chennai-Bengaluru highway and GST road, vehicles carrying provisions were stranded. Vehicles finally started moving on these roads on Thursday. Wholesale vendors at Koyambedu market, which was also submerged by the heavy rainfall, said they had restored supplies. P Gnanashekharan, a retired school-teacher who lives near worst-hit Tamabaram, said the administration should have ensured distribution of necessary provisions before the rainfall began. “Government responsibility is not limited to announcing holidays,” he said.

**CHENNAI FLOODS: OVER 200 HEALTH CAMPS TO CHECK OUTBREAK**

Fearing an outbreak of diseases, the state health department is running about 200 medical camps in various parts of the city as well as in Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram -two other flood-hit districts in northern Tamil Nadu.

The water is contaminated with sewage water at many places raising a major health threat.

State Health Secretary J Radhakrishnan told The Indian Express that over 1,700 doctors were on duty.

“Patients at the Tambaram government hospital were rescued and shifted to advanced facilities. The Global hospital in the city had to shut down after water entered the wards. The health minister, who is also a doctor, led the evacuation efforts. All other hospitals are operational in full strength, “ he said.

The dean of the Madras Medical College, Dr Vimala, said all medical colleges were running with full strength of doctors, nurses and resources. “Besides, several doctors have joined from other districts to run over 200 fever camps and disaster management camps. Senior doctors from medical colleges have been deputed to the camps in flood-hit areas,” she said.

**EXPLAINED: WHY IS CHENNAI UNDER WATER?**

Unusually heavy rain has exposed the city’s broken urban planning, revealed its stolen natural waterways, and exposed its tolerance of illegal construction.

The catastrophic flooding in Chennai is the result of the heaviest rain in several decades, which forced authorities to release a massive 30,000 cusecs from the Chembarambakkam reservoir into the Adyar river over two days, causing it to flood its banks and submerge neighbourhoods on both sides. It did not help that the Adyar’s stream is not very deep or wide, and its banks have been heavily encroached upon over the years. Similar flooding triggers were in action at Poondi and Puzhal reservoirs, and the Cooum river that winds its way through the city.

The catastrophic flooding in Chennai is the result of the heaviest rain in several decades, which forced authorities to release a massive 30,000 cusecs from the Chembarambakkam reservoir into the Adyar river over two days, causing it to flood its banks and submerge neighbourhoods on both sides. It did not help that the Adyar’s stream is not very deep or wide, and its banks have been heavily encroached upon over the years.

Similar flooding triggers were in action at Poondi and Puzhal reservoirs, and the Cooum river that winds its way through the city.

While Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa said, during the earlier phase of heavy rain last month, that damage during the monsoon was “inevitable”, the fact remains that the mindless development of Chennai over the last two decades -the filling up of lowlands and choking of stormwater drains and other exits for water -has played a major part in the escalation of the crisis.

On the evidence of what is currently unfolding in Chennai, city authorities would appear to have the abandoned the concept of storm water drains -the fundamental instrument of flood-fighting -altogether over the years. Experts at Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) pointed out that the key parameter of rain intensity measure -which ought to be at least 1 inch per hour -has been ignored while planning multi crore drainage projects.

While storm water drains are supposed to be planned on the basis of detailed topographical data, their linkage with water bodies, construction along their course, and the design of roads have rarely been seen as part of a whole. As a result, drains constructed over the past decade have repeatedly proved inefficacious -and showed up problems of poor urban planning nearly every monsoon. Planning officials said contractors are rarely briefed on the topography or the flood character of sites. A top civic official said even the water log data of the last 10 years are often not considered as officials “hurry to complete works” before the allocated funds lapse. A former CMDA planner said mandatory standards based on data on sea level and water flows are not followed, resulting in situations like Koyambedu, the neighborhood that saw expensive storm water drain projects, but has still gone under. Across Chennai, illegal construction has been making neighborhoods unrecognizable -what may have been a tank, lake, canal or river 20 years ago, is today the site of multistory residential and industrial structures. There are over 1.5 lakh illegal structures in the city, according to a report submitted by CMDA to the Madras High Court. Despite several HC orders ordering their demolition, the buildings stand -often after appeals to the Supreme Court, and due to the inefficiency of the CMDA’s legal wing. Hundreds of stay orders against demolition orders have been obtained by both business houses and individuals. As the illegal structures sprouted in the city and suburbs, over 300 water bodies disappeared. The irreversible destruction of the city’s natural water paths can be seen in the flooding in Mudichur, Velachery, and several other areas that have come up on wetlands or river basins. After a major flood in 2005, Chennai had commissioned a project to prepare laser terrain maps, scanning the entire city from a helicopter, instead of depending on topographic maps. But this project remains unimplemented -just like the early warning system that was prepared by the Department of Remote Sensing at Anna University to understand the run-off pattern of rainwater. El Niño to blame, other factors too An exceptionally strong El Niño, along with a rare “coincidence of various factors”, has resulted in the heavy rain in Tamil Nadu this northeast monsoon season, officials at India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. The El Niño phenomenon -an unusual warming of surface waters in the equatorial Pacific Ocean -is “intensely strong” at present, Additional Director-General of Meteorology (Research) at IMD, B Mukhopadhyay, said. “In a strong El Niño year like the present one, the summer (southwest) monsoon is adversely affected, while the northeast monsoon or the winter monsoon is favourably affected.” However, Mukhopadhyay added, “the present very heavy rain is exceptional and not normal.” The 2015-16 El Niño could turn out to be the strongest ever recorded -in fact, by one measure, it has already reached that milestone. In mid-November, the sea surface temperature in the central tropical Pacific was 3 degrees Celsius warmer than normal, the largest positive deviation in recorded history. To officially beat the 1997-98 El Niño as history’s worst, sea surface temperatures must stay at these levels for three months. Other than the El Niño, a strong upper air divergence and high moisture content at lower levels, have contributed to the rain, Mukhopadhyay said. “These two factors, along with formation of low pressure systems have resulted in the heavy rainfall,” he said.

**PEACE TRUST FLOOD SUPPORT:**

****

Peace Trust has been involved in Mobilizing Local Support to collect Bread, Biscuits, Medicines, Readymade Clothes, Bed Sheet, Water Bottles, Milk Powders, Rice, Dhal and Wheat(No Cash).

The Pasumai FM Community broadcast from Dindigul run by Peace Trust was able to Coordinate Rotary Clubs, Local Traders, Students and Individual Volunteers from today 4th December. The 9 collection centers at various Dindigul locations and Vedasandur city are activated.

The audio appeal of Pasumaifm has provoked a good response from individual <https://soundcloud.com/tags/rain%20help%20promo%20>

At Cuddalore REAL has been the contact point.

**CHENNAI:**

Peace Trust was waiting for road services towards Chennai to be opened from Sunday the team will go to Chennai and work for local communities.

**SUPREME COURT TO REMOVE GENDER DISPARITY IN JUDICIARY**

The Supreme Court admitted to decades of institutional disparity in appointing women as judges to the High Courts and the Supreme Court despite women practising as lawyers since 1922.

Justice J.S. Khehar, who heads a Constitution Bench looking into ways to improve the Collegium system of judicial appointments, said recently in no uncertain terms that “the ratio of female judges to male judges must be in the same ratio.”

This historic introspection on the negligible participation of women on the Bench was triggered by a written representation filed by the Supreme Court Women Lawyers Association, through senior advocate Mahalakshmi Pavani, advocates Sneha Kalita and Prerna Kumari, before the Bench.

Ms. Pavani submitted the apparent fact that lack of proper representation for women in the judiciary may raise questions of how gender bias is inherent in the very high temples of justice.

The representation said how since independence, there have been only six women judges appointed in the Supreme Court out of total 229 judges appointed from 1950 till date.

 “The first female Judge appointed in Supreme Court was Justice M. Fathima Beevi from Kerala in 1987. She was later followed by Justice Sujata V. Manohar from Maharashtra in 1994 and in the year 2000, Justice Ruma Pal was appointed from West Bengal and in the year 2010, Justice Gyan Sudha Misra from Bihar. In 2014, Justice Ranjana Desai from Mumbai was appointed and currently Justice R. Banumathi from Tamil Nadu is the only woman Judge in Supreme Court,” the association said. It said there are only 62 women Judges out of 611 (including Additional Judges) in the High Courts across the country.

**TEA PLANTATION**

**THUNDER IN HILLS NOW A FAINT ECHO**

November 30, 2015, 11:30 PM IST

They made Kerala govt buckle, kept unions at bay, but politics threatens unity of women’s collective in Munnar.

“Vanakkam vanga“, welcomes Madhathy, 72, to her two bed room 200-sqft home in the picturesque hill town of Munnar. A second generation Tamil tea estate worker, Madhathy’s father had migrated from Madurai to Munnar during the British rule to work in the tea plantation that is now owned by Kannan Devan Hills Plantation Company Private Limited (KDHP). Since then Munnar has become her home.

Madhaty’s is among the thousands of Tamil tea estate worker families in Munnar that until recently lived a quiet life. The women were shy , smiling faces on Munnar’s tourist brochures. They had their political preferences but rarely took part in active politics or agitations. Suddenly they sprang up. They forced the Kerala government to negotiate with KDHP to give a 8.33% bonus and 11.67% ex-gratia to workers after a nine day agitation in which they kept the union leaders and political parties out. But the same women have now started associating with political parties to get prominent posts in the panchayat. Take the case of Madhathy’s daughter Mariyammal Karuppaswamy, 39, who won the panchayat elections from Cholamala ward in Munnar gram panchayat under the banner of “Pembilai Orumai” (women’s unity). Though her family has been LDF supporters, after the elections she decided to support UDF. “My supporters advised me to align with UDF. I can’t betray their trust. But I will never join UDF,“ said Mariyammal, who still works in the tea plantation from 8am to 5pm.

Another leader, Gomathy Augustine, who successfully contested from Devikulam block panchayat, was accused of being in talks with Tamil Nadu’s AIADMK, a charge she vehemently denies.“AIADMK leaders did try to contact me, but I refused to meet them. People are trying to break our unity by trying to create a Tamil-Malayalam rift, “she said.

Gomathy, 37, who joined Devikulam estate at the age of 17, says she had no political interest when she joined the agitation. “Like others, I wanted justice. The company had decided to give only 10% bonus and for the hard work we do, we were paid a pittance of `232 per day . But then I became one of the faces of the agitation and was advised to stand for the polls. I didn’t an ticipate what is happening now, “said Gomathy, a Class 10 pass out from a Tamil medium school.

One of the co-founders of Pembilai Orumai, Lissy Sunny has gone against her and made allegations that she has aligned with outside forces. Upset with the turn of events, a week ago, Gomathy “accidentally“overdosed. Her husband told police she had attempted suicide because of the allegations. “Things have changed since the agitation. We succeeded because we were together. But now the effort to split us is gaining momentum and to some extent the opponents of our movement have succeeded, “she said.

These were the leaders who removed the poster of Thirumavalavan, president of Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi in Tamil Nadu, placed near the KDHP office, when the management had made an allegation that external elements had engineered the entire agitation. KDHP managing director K Mathew Abraham had said all the 19 people arrested for trying to assault him and the firm’s head of industrial relations were outsiders.

“AIADMK is trying to create a base in Munnar and they have been trying to woo the Pembilai Orumai leaders. After keeping political parties at bay, now the leaders have started linking with them causing unrest among the rest in the group, “said Ramathas, editor of a local Tamil magazine `Munnar News’.

However, Velatai Palaniswamy, 53, another Pembilai Orumai leader, who won the panchayat elections, refutes the allegations. “We are together and will be together. We are aligning with UDF or other political parties because we want to ensure that people benefit and our demands are met,“ she said. She added, “We had fielded candidates in 16 wards.Only two won at the gram panchayat level and one at the block panchayat level. If we had won everywhere, maybe we wouldn’t have linked with others“.

Meanwhile, as the leaders struggle to keep the group united, for others, life goes on as normal. “We are back to work and are happy with the management. We were upset when they cut down on our bonus but now there are no hard feelings, “ said Valarmathy , who is back at Nullatanni Estate at 8am with an aim to collect more than 200kg tea leaves each day . “Pembilai Orumai for many women is now a thing of the past. The unity that was seen a few months ago in Munnar is no more, “said Amutha, a local, who has moved away from the family profession of working in the tea plantations.

The movement may have run out of steam since it was built around a bonus demand and did not have a long-term strategy, political or social. But, for a few weeks, this band of Tamil women who went by the `no-men, no-unions’ mantra did inspire female workers across Kerala.

**ENVIRONMENT**

**CLIMATE CHANGE? MODI, SHARIF GO INTO BRIEF HUDDLE IN PARIS**

NEW DELHI: A brisk handshake and an intense 160-second huddle following an unscripted encounter between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif at the Leaders' Lounge of the climate change conference in Paris set off intense speculation of a possible thaw in India-Pakistan ties.

Modi and Sharif sat on a sofa after shaking hands for a brief conversation that the Pakistani prime minister later described as cordial. "I had good discussions with the Indian Prime Minister in a good way, in a good environment and even they have expressed that we should take our issues forward. And we also have the same opinion and hope," Sharif said according to a Times Now report, giving grist to the conjecture that the meeting could potentially clear the air between the two sides.

The Indian side, however, underplayed the significance of the brief discussion, with the meeting seen as a courtesy as the two leaders were present in the same room ahead of the climate conference getting underway. The Prime Minister apparently did not see the meeting as necessitating particular comment. But even if unplanned, the meeting certainly marks a contact at the highest level after failed attempts to restart a dialogue.

While Modi is understood to have met other leaders including those from Bolivia, Afghanistan and Brazil in the lounge, it is being surmised that the talk with Sharif might lead to something more tangible, like resumption of official dialogue or perhaps a green signal to the India-Pakistan cricket series in Sri Lanka. This is the first meeting between Modi and Sharif since Ufa in Russia in July.

Modi and Sharif were both present at the UN summit on peacekeeping in September in New York where a wave was all that was exchanged after an attempt to schedule a meeting of national security advisors did not work out over Pakistan's insistence on a foreign secretary-level exchange.

Ties have run aground after an unexpected breakthrough at Ufa saw Modi and Sharif agree on a NSA-level meeting to discuss terrorism. Two jihadi attacks in India followed by Pakistan's demand that Kashmir be inserted into the agenda scuttled talks. On its part, India objected to the Pakistan NSA's plans to meet the Hurriyat.

"PM @narendramodi meets PM Nawaz Sharif at COP 21 in Paris," foreign ministry spokesman Vikas Swarup tweeted along with a picture of the two leaders shaking hands. Officials said the meeting was not planned, but some felt preparatory work might have made the handshake happen.

**DINDIGUL DISTRICT RECEIVED EXCESS RAINFALL, SAYS COLLECTOR**

Dindigul district received excess rainfall this year, resulting in about 60 per cent of rainfed tanks getting filled up. Against the average rainfall of 771 mm till November, the district received 877.77 mm, the Collector, T. N. Hariharan, told farmers at the monthly grievance redressal meeting here on Friday.

However, against the average monsoon rainfall of 417.9 mm in October-December, the district registered 322.5 mm. The rainfall realised in October was 88.07 mm, against the average of 189.1 mm. But the rainfall in November was 233.71 mm, against the average of 163.8 mm. An excess rainfall of 41 mm was recorded so far against the annual rainfall of 836 mm. More rains were expected in the next one month, Mr. Hariharan said.

Among the 91, 488 wells in the district, 40 per cent had water that can be supplied for three hours and 30 per cent had enough water to maintain supply for two to three hours. About 60 per cent of the 2,065 rainfed tanks had water to their full capacity. Mr. Hariharan said that paddy planting had been taken up in a big way in Palani, Athoor, Nilakottai, Batlagundu and Dindigul areas, utilizing the monsoon rains. Paddy had been planted in about 60 per cent of the targeted area using machines. He advised the farmers to take up rain fed cultivation as there was adequate stock of fertilizers and other inputs.

According to an official press release, those who participated in the meeting included A. M. Nagendran, District Revenue Officer, and N. Sampathkumar, Joint Director of Agriculture.

**PLASTIC WASTE MUST FOR LAYING NH**

Centre issues circular stipulating its use all over the country

Technology developed by the Department of Chemistry, Thiagarajar College of Engineering here, to lay roads using waste plastic as a binding agent is to be used all over the country to strengthen National Highways.

In a circular dated November 9, the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has said: “Bituminous mix with waste plastic shall be the default mode for periodic renewal with hot mixes within 50 km periphery of urban area having population of more than five lakh.”

Roads laid using waste plastic in several parts of the country have withstood rain and shine and proved to be sturdier than conventional roads. For example, a section of the Vilacheri Road in Madurai, laid on January 24, 2007, has not shown wear and tear.

Pointing to the ‘Guidelines for the use of waste plastic in hot bituminous mixes (dry process) in wearing coats’ (IRC: SP: 98-2013) by the Indian Roads Congress, the Ministry has made use of waste plastic as a default mode and “any relaxation on ground of non-availability of waste plastic, cost etc. shall involve approval of the Ministry.”

In a related development, the National Rural Roads Development Agency has, in a recent circular, given targets to individual States for construction of rural roads using waste plastic.

According to I. K. Pateriya, Director (Technical), “the total length is more than 3,500 km for this year and targets will be further enhanced in 2016-17.”

R. Vasudevan, Dean, TCE, who led the team that came up with the technology in 2001 and got it patented in 2002, hailed the announcement as a positive step in protecting the environment.

According to him, plastic menace will be a thing of the past once it is used to lay roads.

The process involves shredding of waste plastic to small pieces (1.6 to 2.5 mm) and mixing with aggregate at a temperature of 170 degree C.

Each stone gets insulated in 30 seconds and the plastic-coated aggregate is added to bitumen for laying roads.

“The strength of the road gets doubled when plastic is used,” says Dr. Vasudevan. Strong binding prevents seepage and ensures that the road is not affected by water stagnation, he adds.

**FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE IS EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY: PM MODI**

Prime Minister Modi asked people to adopt energy conservation and energy efficiency measures like the maximum use of solar-powered items.

Preparing to attend the world meet on climate change in Paris tomorrow, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said it is the responsibility of all to ensure that the Earth’s temperature does not rise as global warming is already creating disasters like recent heavy rainfall in Chennai.

He asked the people to adopt energy conservation and energy efficiency measures like the maximum use of solar-powered items.

In his monthly radio programme ‘Mann Ki Baat’, Modi recalled his proposal for setting up a SAARC disaster response mechanism and said the recently-held ‘table talk exercise and best practices seminar’ in Delhi was a good beginning in this regard.

“We keep receiving news about the natural disasters from every corner of the world. Such are the tragedies which have never been heard earlier or imagined. We are now experiencing the impact of fast-changing climate. In our own country, massive rains recently hit Tamil Nadu and caused losses to it as well as other states. Several people lost their lives. I offer my condolences to them,” he said.

“The whole world is worried about climate change. There are discussions everywhere over it and concerns are being expressed. There is acceptance for it (climate change) as an index before any work is done. The temperature of the Earth should not increase now. It is the responsibility and concern of all,” he said in his 20-minute programme.

His emphasis on the responsibility of all assumes significance as the developed world is placing greater onus on developing nations like India in the fight against climate change.

India has been maintaining that the developed countries have been the major polluters over centuries and should assume greater role in fighting global warming by funding and transfering low-cost technology to developing nations.

**ECO-FRIENDLY IDOLS WITH PAPIER-MÂCHÉ CRAFT**

TRICHY: Vasudevi, 30, from Srirangam, whose life was confined to a mobile shop having to just attend queries of customers, has now emerged as a certified papier-mâché idol maker. She is now ready to give employment to many women desperately in need of jobs.

Vasudevi was among the 50 women who were given training in papier-mâché crafts at the skill development program launched by the state government. The women were trained for 6 months in making idols out of papier-mâché, an initiative by the Tamil Nadu Handicraft Development Corporation along with Poompuhar Outlets.

"Traditional dolls and idols of Hindu deities have been in great demand in recent times in the domestic and overseas market. Such programs would help them exploit the demand in the growing market," said papier-mâché idol trainer M Ramalingam.

They have been trained in making idols close to one feet tall out using waste papier-mâché. "The demand for such idols skyrocket during Navarathri Golu and such idols have gained popularity, especially among NRIs," says Ramalingam. Besides, non-religious figures including those of personalities like Swami Vivekananda, Tamil poet Bharathiyar and other noted celebrities are in demand, he said.

Papier-mâché involves use of paper strips glued together with the help of an adhesive. Usually waste or recycled paper is used in the preparation.

"This program has trained us on making the mould using plaster of paris and tapioca starch. This would facilitate us to give varieties in our creations. Moreover, since the dolls are created out of waste plaster of paris and waste paper, it is eco-friendly and also less in weight compared to clay idols," said Vasudevi.

"We are planning to form groups among ourselves and start producing idols after getting orders," said P Jayashree, 30, who got trained under the program.

"The products of those who were given training in the program would also be marketed from Poompuhar outlets in Trichy, which would also encourage budding women entrepreneurs," said Manager of Poompuhar in Trichy R Ganga Devi. T P Poonachi, minister for khadi and village industries, gave away certificates to women who successfully completed the training at Rengabhavanam Mahal at Srirangam. R Manoharan, chief government whip, too was present at the event.

**SKILL TRAINING**

**DATA ON STATUS OF EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN INDIA**

National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) on 22 September 2015 released the data of 68th Round on Status of Education and Vocational Training in India.

This report is based on the employment and unemployment survey conducted in the 68th round of NSS during July 2011 to June 2012. The survey was spread over 12737 FSUs (7469 villages and 5268 urban blocks) covering 101724 households (59700 in rural area and 42024 in urban areas) and enumerating 456999 persons (280763 in rural areas and 176236 in urban areas).

**Literacy rates in General**

* 18.2 percent of households in rural areas and 5.9 percent in urban areas do not have a single literate member in the age-group 15 years and above who could read and write a simple message with understanding.
* Literacy rate among persons of age 7 years and above was 74.7 percent in 2011-12 of which 70 percent were in rural areas and 86 percent in urban areas.
* The male and female literacy rate in rural areas was 79.1 percent and 60.6 percent respectively. In urban areas, the literacy rates were 91.1 percent for males and 80.3 percent for females.
* Among persons of age 15 years and above, only 2.4 percent had technical degrees or diplomas or certificates. The proportion was 1.1 percent in rural areas and 5.5 percent in urban areas.

**Current attendance in educational institution among persons of age 5-29 years**

* About 57.7 percent of people in the age group 5-29 years were estimated as ‘currently attending’ educational institutions.
* In rural areas, 57.4 percent of the persons of age 5-29 years currently attended educational institutions compared to 58.5 percent in urban areas.
* Among persons of age 5-29 years, about 64.5 percent were currently attending ‘Government an local body educational institutions’, 22.5 percent were currently attending private unaided institutions and 12.3 percent were currently attending private aided institutions.
* ‘To supplement household income’ was the main reason for more than 70 percent of males for currently not attending any educational institution.
* To attend domestic chores’ was the single reason for more than half of females not attending any educational institution.
* About 27 percent in rural areas and 26.4 percent in urban areas reported that they never attended any educational institution as ‘education not considered necessary’.
* About 3.6 percent in rural areas and 3.4 percent in urban areas reported that they never attended any educational institution as the schools were too far.
* In rural areas 24.7 percent of males and 28.4 percent of females and in urban areas, 22.9 percent of males and 29 percent of females reported the reason ‘education not considered necessary’ for never attending educational institution.
* Among males, nearly 25 percent in rural areas and 33.2 percent in urban areas reported the reason ‘to supplement household income’.
* Among females, nearly 29.3 percent in rural areas and 28.1 percent in urban areas reported the reason ‘to attend domestic chores’ for never attending educational institution.

**Vocational Training among persons of age 15-59 years**

* Among persons of age 15-59 years, about 2.2 percent reported to have received formal vocational training and 8.6 percent reported to have received non-formal vocational training.
* In rural areas, nearly 1.6 percent of males compared to 0.9 percent of females and in urban areas, nearly 5 percent of males compared to 3.3 percent of females reported to have received formal vocational training.
* In rural areas, nearly 11.1 percent of males compared to 5.5 percent of females and in urban areas, nearly 13.7 percent of males compared to 4.3 percent of females reported to have received non-formal vocational training.
* Among rural males who received/were receiving formal vocational training, the share was the highest (22.3 percent) for field of training ‘driving and motor mechanic work’ while among urban males it was the highest for ‘computer trades’ (26.3 percent)/
* Among rural females, who received/were receiving formal vocational training the share was the highest for ‘textile related work’ (33.2 percent) while among the urban females it was the highest for computer trades’ (30.4 percent).

**Comment**

The data on vocational education is worrisome as the rate of vocational training had barely increased between 2004-05 when the data was last collected and 2011-12.

This was despite former UPA government led by Manmohan Singh announced an ambitious National Skill Policy in 2009 and created a National Skill Development Coordination Board earlier.

The data poses a serious challenge for the Skill India Mission of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government which aims to train about 40 crore people by 2022.

**TRAFFICKKING**

**TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN TO SOUTH INDIA FROM NORTHERN STATES**

Trafficking in children and women is a global phenomenon affecting a large number of women and children. Some estimate that as many as 1.2 million children are being trafficked every year. There is a sharp demand for the trafficked children as child laborer as well as women and girls for sexual exploitation across the nations.

Karnataka is turning out to be a hotspot of human trafficking, reporting the third highest number of cases in the country during 2009-12. Union Home Ministry Data says 1,379 human trafficking cases were reported from Karnataka in the four-year period. Tamil Nadu leads the table with 2,244 cases and Andhra Pradesh snapping at its neighbor's heels at 2,157. The tentative Child Labor Survey Report 2011-2012 reveals that child labor is rampant in the State with over 51,108 children working in the State in both hazardous and non-hazardous sectors. Successive governments have vowed to eliminate child labor by setting several deadlines, all in vain due to one reason or the other; the enormity of the problem has remained almost same. Interestingly, the report, which has the estimates of children working between the age group 9 and 14 years, states that the largest number of child laborers in the State are in the State capital -Bangalore (Urban) -with as many as 11,277 children working in the city. Unfortunately, most of such working children hail from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Human traffickers find a fitting breeding ground in the fast-growing southern metros, luring victims with huge salaries and better lifestyles. A sizeable chunk of trafficking victims, migrant laborers in particular, are often forced into sex work. Recent raids led to the rescue of hundreds of bonded laborers in Bangalore. NGO and government officials say this is only the tip of the iceberg. Over the years, states of southern India have become the most sought-after destinations for human traffickers in the country. Situations show these states contribute to more than half the number of human trafficking cases reported from across the country. On an average, each of the four south Indian states reports over 300 human cases every year. Only West Bengal and Bihar, among others, have 100 such cases every year. Some states report less than 10 cases annually. The number of cases of women and children being trafficked in Karnataka has been on the increase in the last five years with over 3,000 such offences being reported.

In the last five years, there were as many as 3,234 cases of women and child trafficking.

The government has taken adequate steps to control the menace, adding that anti-human trafficking units have been set up in Bangalore city, Mysore, Hubli-Dharwad, Belgaum and Dakshin Kannada districts. The government is considering setting up such units in four other districts of Gulbarga, Raichur, Kolar and Davanagere. Despite due to lack of policy commitment and political Will the situation has remained more or less the same. The number of women and child trafficking cases in Karnataka has been on the increase in the last five years with a total of 3,234 such offences being reported during the period.

Tamil Nadu has been among the five states that registered the highest number of cases of human trafficking since three years. In 2013, going by data from the National Crime Records Bureau, the cases registered climbed to 549, the second highest number in the country.

Police and anti-human-trafficking activists said Tamil Nadu has emerged as a destination for humans being trafficked across borders especially children from Bihar and UP. The Tamil Nadu police and non-Governmental Organizations rescued 386 minors and 414 women in 2013, all victims of human trafficking many of them were from Bihar.

The recent trends in urbanization and industrialization in some of the cities of Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Bihar and Delhi have changed the States as the transit and Destination for unsafe migration and trafficking. The accumulation of ‘Double Trend’ in the pattern of migration has largely attached practices of unsafe migration full of exploitation, human trafficking and multiple abuses. Now, individuals are migrating from one state to the other and this has given the States the title of following ‘imbibing unsafe migration’ leading to human trafficking, slavery and bonded labor.

Recent data reflects that most of the enslaved victims in Bangalore and Delhi belong to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh; this indicates the high volume of practicing slavery and exploitation in multiple forms as well as proves that organized operations by the syndicates of crime nexus related to human trafficking are active. As far as Bihar is concerned, it is one of the most backward States of the nation and the developmental indicators are getting weaker. Low literacy, large family size, uneven distribution of land, lack of income generation opportunity etc have equally aggravated the social and economic status of the disadvantaged community of the state.

In this context, child vulnerability has become a major issue and the concept of child as ‘Bread Earners’ has become prevalent in the underprivileged community across the state. This has strengthened the Child Labor supply chain in several cities of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu giving vent to the bestial practices of slavery, bonded labour and child trafficking in Bangalore of children hailing from Bihar. Uttar Pradesh, more or less has the same vulnerable situation for the children of the under covered community in the state. Interestingly, a large number of children working in these states are brought from Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand.

The children are employed in disorganized hazardous manufacturing units in Bangalore. These products need soft hands to give the finesse and cheap labor for better commercial gains. It is most mention worthy that such children are paid Rs.800 to Rs. 1,500 only for working more than 14 hours per day. In the recent years more than one thousand children have been rescued from several factories in Bangalore and they belong to Bihar and UP. An estimate also reveals that more than 40,000 children are missing from Bihar and it is feared that most of them have become victims of human trafficking for the purpose of child labour, bonded labour, sex abuse, domestic work etc. It needs to be mentioned that all the above mentioned rescued children were from Bihar.

In this approach, it seems that there is urgency to intervene with multiple forms of confrontations at all the sensitive destination points harboring victim of slavery and human trafficking as the findings of previous data of repatriation of victims to Bihar and Karnataka is one of the most sensitive tasks where the need for multiple forms of approach intervention are urgent and a prerequisite to reduce the prevalence as well as promoting effective rehabilitative mechanism for such victims in order to combat the relapsed trafficking for their real and sustainable freedom.

 Following this approach, it stands in need to mention that several initiatives have been undertaken to mollify the despicable practices in the states; the results have remained much below the expectations due to subdued approach of multiple functionaries of the states; there to organize a workshop by PRAYAS on the above mentioned issues in Bangalore for the sake of the victims of trafficking, slavery and bonded labor.

Peace Trust will be taking part in the workshop organized Bangalore on 9th December to help the victims coming to TamilNadu.

**TRAFFICKING CONTINUES DESPITE AWARENESS**

**Ranchi:** Even after 15 years of its creation, Jharkhand is yet to find ways to check the problem of human trafficking. Cases of women and girls, many of them minors, committing suicide, being brutally beaten up or dying under suspicious circumstances in Delhi and neighbouring states after being trafficked, continue unabated over the years. Though awareness on human trafficking has increased a notch above what it was earlier in the government corridors and police stations, the state still has a long way to go.

Recent cases like that of Phulin Kisku, a Sahebganj girl who was found critically injured in a house in the Vasant kunj locality of Delhi in October 2013 and Phoolmani Nagesia who committed suicide at her employer's house in Ghaziabad in September 2013, stand out in terms of torture and atrocities meted out to the girls who are lured by agents to work outside the state as domestic helps.

CID IG Sampat Meena said, "The awareness level among police has increased and officers are now taking these cases seriously, which why the number of FIRs registered has gone up over the years. We are continuously organizing training sessions for officers in the police department to make them aware about various laws related to children." From just two FIRs registered in 2001 the number has come up to 147 in 2014. However, the CID records say the number of FIRs lodged in such cases in the last 15 years is 528, which according to experts working in this field is very less compared to the number of girls being trafficked from the state.

Sanjay Mishra state coordinator of Action against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children (ATSEC) said, "According to our survey around 30,000 girls are trafficked from the state every year. Awareness has certainly increased, but FIRs cannot be the only source to determine the number of girls being trafficked from state." He added, "Parents think twice before lodging FIRs because they are unsure about the treatment they will get at police stations or that in most cases the trafficker is a close relative of the victim."

Activists also claim that while the police have become active and sensitive over the years, the social welfare department is still not taking the problem seriously. Social activist Baidnath Kumar said, "In the last 15 years, not a single shelter home has been constructed and made functional by the department. If the children are not rehabilitated, chances of re-trafficking increase." However, secretary of women and child development and social welfare department Vinay Choubey refuted the charges. "The department has sanctioned new shelter homes under Integrated the Child Protection Scheme, which will start functioning by the end of this year. Eleven new NGO-run-shelter homes will be started in Ranchi, Bokaro, West Singhbum, Sahibganj, Hazaribag, Dumka, Giridih, Garhwa, Jamtara, East Singhbhum and Koderma," he said.

**80% OF KIDS TRAFFICKED BY RELATIVES: STUDY**

Nov 24, 2015, 12.43 AM IST

New Delhi: Of the 254 cases registered under the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act in the past year in Delhi, a little under half involved youngsters lured to the workplace by friends below the age of 14. This revelation is one of the more shocking of the many in a study conducted by NGO Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), the findings of which were released in Delhi on Monday.

The National Capital Region was found to be pretty notorious with 2,222 of the 5,253 child labourers rescued across the country in the past year employed here. And while 254 cases were registered against businesses using children in hazardous operations, 42% of the cases sadly showed that it were minors themselves who had lured their under-aged friends.

Of the child labourers rescued in the NCR, 80% had been trafficked by either their relatives or by people known to them, and shockingly, almost 90% of them had been yoked by industries producing hazardous goods. BBA officials say that under a proposed amendment to the Child Labour Act, the government plans to reduce the number of jobs classified as hazardous from 83 to three, and so the number of children rescued under this category could show a decline.

The data between 2010 and 2014 showed that only 185 children could be freed on average every month against the target of 500 set for the state labour department by the Delhi high court. Of those emancipated, 1,289 were less than 14 years old and employed in small-scale industries being run from residences in west and northeast Delhi.

Incredibly, around 21% of the children below the age of 14 were bonded labourers. Their movement had been restricted and they were paid a pittance as wages. The figures showed that 50% of the children were employed in industries producing zari, plastic goods, footwear and bags.

The study also showed that 21% of the children were employed by their parents or their relatives and had been brought to the city on the pretext of access to better education. The rest had either been kidnapped or brought here by placement agents. A vast majority of the rescued children, 82% of them, were employed as "household helps".

Officials say that a proposed law to permit the employment of children for home-based work is likely to perpetuate the trafficking of children. And since most manufacturing units operating out of residential areas claim to be family enterprises, Kailash Satyarthi, Nobel laureate and founder of BBA, pointed out the findings "would have implications for any change in the law allowing children to work for their families, especially if they are below the age of 14."

BBA found that children were mostly trafficked from rural areas in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Nepal by people belonging to the same community. "Despite the fact that this atrocity has existed for many years no, little intervention has been possible to take action against the said agents due to the lax laws," said the study.

**ABSCONDING HUMAN TRAFFICKER ARRESTED**

BILASPUR: A man wanted in connection with selling two minor girls from Kota block of the district to a brothel in Allahabad was recently arrested. Three other women have already been arrested in this regard. The accused are relatives of the victims.

Police said three women and Subhash Savat, a resident of Mirgunj, Allahabad, had sold two minor girls of Kota block to a brothel in the same area and they were forced into prostitution. The accused had lured victims by promising them work and good pay.

Meanwhile, families of the missing girls lodged a report with Kota police station of the district. Police raided the brothel a couple of months ago and rescued them. They also arrested Rajnibai, a relative of the victim. Savat was brought to Bilaspur and produced before a court on Saturday from where he was sent to jail.

**CHILD TRAFFICKING ON RISE IN ASSAM: REPORT**

GUWAHATI: Poor parents sending their children away with traffickers, who promise them lucrative jobs, has almost become a trend in the state. CID reports say at least 4,754 children have gone missing in the past three years in Assam.

The trend revealed in the report is worrying as the number of girls missing in the recorded time frame is almost double than that of boys. Those missing in the past three years include 2,753 girls and 2,001 boys.

Massive internal displacement caused by floods and ethnic violence has taken a toll on the children in the state. In many cases, children were trafficked from the relief camps for flood and violence victims.

"Last year alone, at least 129 girls were reported to have been forced into prostitution by traffickers who took them to metro cities in other states with the promise of lucrative jobs," a CID official said.

A total of 718 children were reported to be missing in the state in the last 365 days, with 23 in the last 30 days.

Maximum cases of missing children have been reported from Baksa, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Kamrup and Kokrajhar districts. The CID reports also revealed that over 422 victims of human trafficking, mostly minors, had been rescued since 2011.

The state police have arrested 281 middlemen since 2011, but the conviction rate in human trafficking cases in Assam remains awfully low at only two percent.

"The laxity of the authorities to respond faster in such cases is the reason behind so many missing children not being traced before they are transported to other parts of the country. The numbers are only official figures, the actual ones would be more," said Runumi Gogoi, chairperson of the Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (ASCPCR).

Recently, Nobel Peace prize winner Kailash Satyarthi has urged the state government to adopt a stringent policy to check human trafficking. Satyarthi even suggested creation of a 'Rehabilitation and Welfare Fund' with the help of the state for immediate relief to the trafficked children.

**COP SAVES WOMAN IN TRAFFICKERS' GRIP**

NEW DELHI: Had it not been for an alert policeman, a young woman from Telangana would have fallen into the clutches of operators in what is reportedly the capital's human trafficking den. The 22-year-old, who spoke neither English nor Hindi, was spotted in Shakur Basti, being heckled by a group of touts, by Constable Nagendra Mishra, who roped in translators to find her address and proceeded to reunite her with her family.

Mishra was on patrol duty at Shakur Basti railway station three days ago when he spotted the young woman sitting in a corner of platform number 1 with her child, weeping. A few men loomed over her and aggressively tried to convince her to accompany them. The woman, however, seemed unimpressed by their exhortations.

When he asked her the reason for her distress, the woman replied in Telugu which Mishra, himself, did not speak. Sensing trouble, Mishra shooed the touts away and brought her to the police station. There, too, none could understand what she said. Thinking quickly and well, Mishra called in a translator while he informed his seniors. Prafulla, a woman assistant sub-inspector, was assigned to look after the guest.

Meanwhile, another cop, ASI Lalit Mohan, scanned her mobile phone and called up her husband. ACP (railways) O P Singh then contacted her hometown's local police station in Bara Samkarnpeth, Telangana, and confirmed her address. Her photographs were also sought.

The husband, one Sukhwinder Singh, reached Sarai Rohilla police station the same night. Police questioned him to confirm his identity and, once satisfied, relinquished the custody of the woman and child. Singh disclosed that they had had a love marriage and he worked in a factory in Mansha, Punjab. The woman's mother had fallen ill and she wanted to see her but Singh could not avail leave from work. So he got her a ticket to Delhi and a second ticket from Old Delhi railway station to Hyderabad and told her to make the journey without him.

However, the woman got down at Shakur Basti by mistake, when she heard other passengers on the train remark that they had arrived in Delhi. Because of her language problem, she could not figure out her next step. That was when touts surrounded her and Mishra spotted her just in time. DCP (Railways) Milind Dumbre, it has been learnt, is writing to senior special commissioner (law and order) Deepak Mishra to reward the policeman for his humanitarian gesture and commitment to duty.

**5 MINOR GIRLS RESCUED FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKERS**

KANPUR: The Government Railway Police (GRP) and the Railway Protection Force (RPF) on Tuesday evening busted a gang of alleged human traffickers and rescued five minor girls belonging to Kokrajhar district in Assam from their possession. Two persons who were taking them to Delhi on the pretext of getting them job were also arrested.

The girls were rescued from the women compartment of the North-East Express at Kanpur Central Railway Station after a woman sub-inspector of RPF, Rinku Singh, sensed something fishy and raised an alarm. The GRP has registered a case against the two men who have been identified as Harka Urang (59 years) and Ashok Lakra, both residents of Kokrajhar in Assam.

Talking to TOI, Inspector GRP, Tripurari Pandey, informed that the rescued girls are aged between 16-17 years and were lured on the pretext of getting jobs in Delhi. "Sub-inspector Rinku Singh, who was on escort duty in the North East Express heading towards Delhi, raised an alarm that five minor girls were being accompanied with two men in the ladies compartment of the train. Later, a joint operation of GRP and RPF as launched and the girls were rescued while the men were arrested," informed the GRP inspector.

He said that a case against the two accused has been registered under sections 363, 372 and 374 of the Indian Penal Code and 24/26 sections of the Child Act.

The GRP inspector also mentioned that Harka and Ashok have confessed to their involvement in trading minor girls even in the past.

"A team of GRP has been dispatched to Delhi to rescue those girls who had been earlier traded by these men. The accused have accepted their involvement in trafficking the girls and informed during interrogation that they used to get Rs 10,000-20,000 for doing the job," said the GRP official. He concluded by saying that further action is underway and investigations will continue.

**DRAFT TRAFFICKING REHAB POLICY SOON**

New Delhi: With the national capital witnessing a spike in trafficking cases, a committee constituted by the Delhi government has decided to set up a task force, which will frame a proper rehabilitation policy for the victims. The panel that met on Monday said plans were afoot to sign MoUs with states like West Bengal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh to stop the menace.

The government also decided to expedite framing of a law to regulate placement agencies, some of which are believed to be running trafficking rackets.

While chief secretary K K Sharma chaired the meeting, DCW chief Swati Maliwal attended it as a special invitee. "There is no policy for the victims of trafficking as of now. Under the new policy, victims will get skill development training and placements," said Maliwal.

DCW has also suggested involvement of business organisations like Ficci, Assocham, PHD Chamber of Commerce so that they can also help in the rehabilitation of the victims.

"To stop second generation prostitution, plans for residential schools for kids of sex workers and shifting them to the schools were discussed. A decision was taken to sign MoUs with other states for easy restoration of (trafficked) girls," a government statement said. Maliwal said another matter that came up for discussion was a video-conferencing facility for the trafficking victims so that they could record their statements from their home states.

She informed the chief secretary that Delhi Police solely depends on NGOs and police of other states for rescue operations, which shows that they don't have their own resources.

"The chief secretary asked Delhi Police to make a strong information network so that girls can be rescued easily from places like GB Road. He also asked police officers and director of prosecution to give details of the number of FIRs lodged and chargesheets filed in past five years in cases of trafficking, along with a list of number of conviction in such cases," the statement added.

**TWO CHILD MARRIAGES STOPPED IN NAMAKKAL**

Two child marriages that were scheduled to take place on November 22 were stopped by the timely intervention of officials here on Saturday.

In the first incident, a 17-year-old girl was to be married to a 22-year-old youth of Kolli Hills. Childline 1098 received a tip-off and a team comprising Special Sub-Inspector of Anti Human Trafficking Wing Tamilselvi, officials from Childline, revenue, social welfare and district child protection visited the girl’s house and found marriage preparations on.

In another incident, a 17-year-old girl was to be married to her relative, a 22-year-old painter of the same area, on November 22. The parents of both the girls were explained about the law that mandates completion of 18 years for conducting marriage. Written statement was obtained from the parents and they were asked to produce their daughters before the Child Welfare Committee on November 24.

**MARRIAGE OF 15-YEAR-OLD GIRL STOPPED**

TRICHY: Timely tip-off from an unknown caller prevented the proposed marriage of a 15-year-old girl in Lalgudi on the outskirts of Trichy on Friday. The girl was lodged at a government reception home in the city.

The '1098' Childline helpline number in Chennai received a call from a girl on Friday morning, who told them about the plan to marry off a 15-year-old girl from Lalgudi to a 27-year-old man Kumar from Manamedu near Musiri in Trichy district. The marriage was reportedly scheduled to be held at a marriage hall in Manamedu on November 22.

The officials from Childline, Trichy and district social welfare department went to her residence and questioned the parents, who denied any arrangements for the marriage.

**MIGRANT LABOUR**

**EXPERTS WANT WELFARE SCHEMES FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN AT WORK SITES**

The government needs to facilitate services like the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, education, protection and healthcare for seasonal migrant children at worksites, said experts here on Friday.

Speaking at a State-level consultation organized by Aide et Action International -- South Asia in collaboration with the Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCPCR), migrant children -- who are the most vulnerable section at worksites -- should be included in all government welfare schemes.

Umi Daniel, Migration Thematic Head, Aide et Action – South Asia emphasized on the need for a better convergence between the government departments and civil society organization in providing basic services and entitlements to young migrants at worksites.

Odisha Housing and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board will extend all its support to the migrant families in accessing basic social security schemes at the destination points and planning to open crèches at the worksites, said Subas Singh, Chairman of the board.

It needs to be mentioned that the Odisha Commission for Protection of Child Rights has issued periodic guidelines to make education and child care accessible for migrant children in destination. Among others State Information Commissioner Sashiprava Bindhani also spoke.

**AUSTRALIA QUASHES MIGRANT CENTRE UNREST**

**Sydney**: Australian authorities forcibly ended a two-day riot on Tuesday at a migrant detention centre that left parts of it severely damaged, after police reinforcements poured in to overpower inmates reportedly armed with machetes and petrol bombs.

The additional police were sent to the remote Christmas Island facility after inmates started fires and apparently armed themselves in a protest triggered late Sunday by the unexplained death of a detainee.

"The department can confirm all areas of the Christmas Island Immigration Detention Facility are under the full and effective control of service providers and department staff," the Immigration Department said in a statement.

Five detainees were being treated for non-life threatening injuries or medical conditions but it was not known whether these were sustained during the disturbance or Tuesday's operation, it said.

The department said the operation to regain control of the centre, which is home to 203 asylum-seekers and non-citizens including hardened criminals, was largely achieved through negotiation. All detainees have been accounted for, it said.

"Some force was used with a core group of detainees who had built barricades and actively resisted attempts to secure compounds, including threatened use of weapons and improvised weapons," it added.

"A full survey of damage to the centre is yet to be completed, but some common areas appear to be severely damaged."

The disturbance at the Indian Ocean island centre began after an escaped asylum-seeker, named in Australian media as Iranian-Kurdish Fazel Chegeni, was found dead.

Reports said he was found at the base of a cliff and Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said he was informed there were no suspicious circumstances, but the incident resulted in some detainees starting fires after guards fled.

Inmates have complained about their treatment at the facility on the Australian territory northwest of the mainland.

One inmate, New Zealander Tuk Whakatutu, said earlier Tuesday the detainees had retreated into one of the detention centre's compounds after they were surrounded by police in riot gear.

Whakatutu said most inmates were hoping for a peaceful resolution but a hard-core group of 20 to 30 young men, mainly New Zealanders and Pacific islanders, were "tooled up" and determined to fight.

"I want nothing to do with it but all the young fellas are gee-d up and all they want to do is go to war with them," he told Radio New Zealand via telephone, with sirens blaring in the background.

"They've got petrol bombs, they've got machetes, they've got chainsaws, iron bars, they've got all sorts."

Whakatutu said police, whose numbers were bolstered by two plane loads of reinforcements from the mainland, had warned detainees they would be shot if officers encountered armed resistance.

"I don't want to get shot for something I'm not involved in," he said.

The unrest at Christmas Island came as the United Nations' top human rights body took Australia to task over hard-line policies on asylum-seekers, whom it has pushed back by the boatload and incarcerated in offshore camps.

Under Canberra's tough immigration policy, asylum-seekers arriving by boat are processed on isolated Pacific islands -- Nauru and Papua New Guinea's Manus Island -- rather than the Australian mainland.

As well as asylum-seekers, Christmas Island's facility is also used to hold non-citizens awaiting deportation, including criminals, after Canberra began cancelling visas of those with convictions.

The immigration department said staff at the centre would sweep all compounds to search for contraband such as weapons before detainees were moved back into normal accommodation.

**MORE MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS LEAVING US THAN ENTERING, FINDS REPORT REFUGEES ENTERING US VIA MEXICO UPS FEARS OF JIHADI INFILTRATION**

From 2009-2014, A Million Went Back To Mexico While 870K Came To US

The Times of India 21 Nov 2015

Reasons for the reverse trend ranges from tighter border control and immigration enforcement to slowing economic conditions in the US after the 2008 recession, to improved prospects in Mexico itself ded 227,000 Mexicans on its southern borders, the lowest level since 1970s. But apprehensions of non-Mexican migrants, mostly from Central America, totaled 253,000, the first year that border agents caught more non-Mexicans than Mexicans. Still, the new data suggests an overall slowing down of immigration from regions that have made Spanish a second language in the US best illustrated in phone menus where one is asked to Dial 2 for Spanish.

Over the past decade, more immigrants have come to the US from Asia -mainly China, India, Korea, Philippines, and Vietnam -than from any other region in the world, now making Asians the fastest growing immigrant population in the US. According to another Pew report, by 2065, Hispanics are expected to make up 31% of immigrants. Asians, on the other hand, will outnumber Hispanics and make up 38% of immigrants. Already, of immigrants who’ve been in US for no more than five years, more have come from Asia (2.5 million) than from Central and South America (1.7 million).

According to Pew’s 2065 projection report, in 1890, nearly 15% of the US population was foreign-born, mainly on the strength of European mig- In

Quick succession this week, three small groups of people, from Syria, Pakistan and Afghanistan, have reportedly tried to enter the US through the border with Mexico, fanning fears that violent jihadis could make their way into the country. Federal officials say there are no indications that any of the migrants had radical history or intentions and did not try to sneak across the border but surrendered voluntarily. ration. By 1965, that number fell to 5%. Today, about 14% of the country’s population was born elsewhere, helped by the 1965 immigration act that ended European monopoly on immigration. That number will go up to 18% by 2065.

**NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON CHILD LABOUR ACT IN DELHI**

****

 ***Dr. J. Paul Baskar with Nobel Laureate Mr. Kailash Sathyarthi***

Bachpan Bachao Andolan with Global March Against Child Labour, supported by Mr. Kailash Sathyarthi Children’s Foundation organised National Consultation on Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2012. The Consultation was organized on November 23rd, 2015 at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi. Dr. J. Paul Baskar, Chairman, Peace Trust has participated in this meeting. The NGO’s and State Child Rights Commissions representatives form 13 Indian States discussed about the implications of the proposed provisions in Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2012. State Child Rights Commission and various NGOs have appealed to the Govt to amend the mill.

Prayas Society, Global March against Child labour and BBA has coordinated the meeting.

Dr. J. Paul Baskar has been the National Coordinator of the Global March against Child Labour. He was actively involved in Bharat Yathra against Child labor in 1998, Global March in India in 1999 and Siksha Yatra illustrating the child education in 2000, which provoked the scheme Sarva Siksha Abhiyan.

Dr. J. Paul Baksar and Mr. Kailash Sathyarthi had detailed meeting from 11.00 AM to 2.00 PM on 24th November regarding the new law of the child labour and the intervention needed from Global March with Mr. Sowrashya and Mrs. Sumedha Kailash and the other office bearers.

**NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE ACT**



**Mr. Amod Kanth of PRAYAS**

The Lok Sahba has passed the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children)Act, 2014.(‘JJ Act’) despite numberous reservations expressed by the Standing Committee. The Bill would be soon debated in Rajya Sabha. Some of the proposed amendments are highly debatable and paradoxical to the General Principles as provided under Section 3 of The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Bill,2014. The guiding principles, such as, presumption of innocence, family responsibilities, non-stigmatizing semantics, right to privacy and confidentiality and diversion would be violated if the Bill is not appropriately modified.

**National Consultation on Proposed Amendments to JJ Act**

Prayas Institute of Juvenile Justice with the support of Kailash Satyarthi Children’s Foundation is organizing a National Consultation for building a nationwide consensus of all stakeholders in the fight against the above mnetioned proposed amendments.

The principal objectives of is Consultation are:

1. Identifying and analyzing the loopholes in the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection Amendment Bill 2014 and their potential to be misused.
2. Determining the way forward and role of all child protection stakeholders in ensuring that every child in India has its rights intact.

Through a series of plenary sessions, the broad spectrum of stakeholders will bring in the collective knowledge and experience for strengthening the tenets of the existing JJ Act and oppose the proposed amendment.

Representatives from State Commission for protection of child rights, Trade Unions, Child Rights Organization; Teachers Organizations; NGOs; Employers Organizations; Ministry of Labour and Employment, State Labour Departments; Ministry of Human Resource Development, Un Agencies, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Rural Development etc. participated in the National Consultation 13 state Child Rights Commissions expressed their concern about the Amendments. The consultation was held on 23rd November 2015 from 9AM to 12.45PM at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. Dr.J.Paul Baskar, Peace Trust was actively involved in the deliberation.

**MEETING WITH MOEF AND CC OFFICIALS**

Dr. J. Paul Baskar, Chairman, Peace Trust has met Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change Officials on November 24th, 2015 in New Delhi regarding National, Environment Awareness Campaign to be taken up in South TamilNadu District.

**SKILL DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

There was a meeting on November 24th, 2015 at Hotel Taj Palace, New Delhi from while Dr. J. Paul Baskar was able to collect much relevant information related to Skill Development concerns.

**INDIA SKILLS REPORT 2016 TO FOCUS ON SKILL INDIA**

With the focus on Skill India, especially in the wake of World Youth Skills Day being celebrated this year, global talent assessment company, Wheebox in association with industry body, Confederation of Indian Industry, India’s leading HR outsourcing and recruitment company, People Strong and world’s largest professional network, LinkedIn will be bringing India Skills Report for the third year in succession. The study aims to give insights on the skill gaps that exist in the employable population across India. The report captures the skill levels of the supply side and needs of the demand side in the talent supply chain. With separate studies conducted to understand each side, this report tries to bring in a more realistic and holistic view of skill and talent landscape in the country.

India Skills Report 2016 will reach out to 5000 educational campuses and assess five lakh students across 29 states and seven union territories from prominent universities and professional institutes in the country on employability parameters. The report would also bring in useful insights and outlook for 2016 from key corporate players from 15 key industries on their hiring trends. This would make the report a repository for reference and strategic planning for key stakeholders from both demand and supply side, thereby helping towards better talent matchmaking and acquisition processes. The in-depth study report would scan and analyze trends on hiring and skills at districts and states across the country.

Indian students can access the employability test at no cost and each student will avail personalized online portal to access the learning content, certificates and job opportunities from LinkedIn. The test can be accessed through the web link available at wheebox.com/west.

Comments Nirmal Singh, founder and CEO of Wheebox said, “We are glad that our vision to impact lives by enriching talent is synergized with government’s vision on skill and create impact for the livelihood.”

As per the analysis of The India Skills Report, only 34 percent were employable in the year 2013-14 which increased to 37.2 percent in 2014-15 - an increase of just 1.3 percent. This scarcity of skilled talent makes it difficult for the talent supply chain to operate effectively. One can imagine the enormity of the challenge to be faced in year 2026, when approximately 64.8percent of India’s population would be in the working age of 15-60 years. Addressing this problem requires participation from all stakeholders of the supply chain - the academia, industry, and the government – with meaningful steps towards a better understanding on growing needs and expectations in order to better manage the gaps in the job market.

On this occasion Dr. Amarendra Pani, director of research with Association of Indian Universities said, “The third edition of India Skills Report would benefit the institutions and Indian universities with clear road map to provide employable skills to the students.”

Nishant Rao, country head of LinkedIn mentioned, “The India Skills Report is an extremely important benchmark to help us measure and evaluate progress because if we can’t measure it, we can’t fix it".

This time, the report includes key industry sectors including Automobile, Core Engineering, Hospitality, Travel, Retail and ITES, among others.

Headquartered in Gurgaon, Wheebox is a leading global online talent assessment firm with partner offices in four countries.

**KKS PARTNERS MEETING**

KKS Project Partners Meeting was organized by KKID between 13th and 14th November 2015. Mr. R. Tepel, Executive Director, KKS, Germany has presented the Millennium Development Goals and sustainability of development. Some of the major issue he has addressed such as end poverty in all its forms everywhere; End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation Reduce inequality within and among countries; Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development ; Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss; Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels and Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Finally he has highlighted "New BMZ-funding guidelines from 2016 onwards" and the issues going to be addressed. The project monitoring aspect was grouped into four, and each group prepares common issues and challenges to face in the project implementation. The second day i.e., 14th November a field trip was arranged to visit the Organic farming system and sustainable development in the sector. The project partners meet has been helped in many ways to strength our project monitoring and implementation system in effective way.

**HEALTH AWARENESS PROGRAM**

A Health Awareness Program was organized in SPSC-VEEF on November 26, 2015 between 2 PM to 5 PM. Dr. Chokkalingam & Dr. Amudhini were the Chief Guest and all staffs and students have participated.

This program was organized to the students of SPSC VEEF INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL to take the students in to the world of "Health awareness". It is a comprehensive understanding of health. Every normal person need to know this to take care of their “SELF”. The Health awareness program encourages students to make healthy lifestyle choices, advocates for a campus community that supports students’ well-being, and provides intervention and referrals to meet students’ health needs. Through peer education programs and awareness campaigns, students can learn how to develop lifestyles that promote lifelong wellness. Personal health awareness begins with small steps. Like these health awareness programs, we can personally start shifting gears to better health.

"Health Awareness Speech" presented by Dr. Chokka Lingam. In his speech he quoted "We have to build up our body with a glow, with a mass effect, that means it is not to eat much food at a time to get glow, we need to consume the food with a correct calorie value. Students should know about the food calories. Consuming more food than the required energy of our body will cause diseases like heart attack" More over he has given many medicinal tips to the students and staffs by interacting with them during the session.

He also told "high power sound may reduce memory power i.e., hearing music through ear phones. Tensions also weaken our memory power. Often using mobile may damage our brain cells".

He has given solutions to improve red blood corpuscles level and suggesting some medicines name to cure diseases such as allergy, blood pressure and sugar. He stresses more on precautionary methods from the communicable and seasonal diseases and gave lots of tips to protect ourselves and also the children. He advised us "to not be a slave for tongue"

The program created a good awareness about precautionary methods for communicable diseases to all the students who participated in this program. They took home the motivating lecture of the doctors and promising to follow their advices.

**DESSERT FESTIVAL**

Dessert Festival was conducted in SPSC – VEEF Industrial School on November 6, 2015. Mr. F. Paul Abraham Vitus, Managing Director, Seagate Group of Hotels, Velankanni and Mr. Shanky, General Manager, Chandra Royal Inn, Velankanni has participated as the Chief Guests for the Dessert Festival. This program was organized to initiate the students in to the world of Catering Technology.

The chief guests were formally received by C.E.O., M.E.O. and Principal. A warm welcome was given to the chief guests by SPSC students. Mr. Paul Abraham Vitus inaugurated the dessert function by performing the traditional lighting of the lamp and started the distribution of first sweet box. SPSC Principal Mr. Pushparaj then presented the welcome address in which he expressed his gratitude to the chief guests for grace this function and also for the staffs and students for given their big cooperation and hard work for conducting the programme successfully.

The Chief Guest Mr. Paul Abraham Vitus was then invited to express views on this occasion. In his speech, he first expressed his pleasure on the wonderful welcome. He appraised the gathering of scholastic stature, vast experience and professional experience of Mr. Pushparaj. He also said “Even though the students are all coming from surrounding villages their mindset and way of dressing and good behaviors are all entirely different. I didn’t expect this in this campus because SPSC is situated in the mid of villages. These are all done, because, the students have got a very good leader”. Then the chief guest Mr. Shanky was then invited to express views on this occasion. He addressed the gathering and highlighted the importance and need of such programs. He said that “Normally the food festivals, Dessert festivals are all done in the hotels only by well oriented professionals, celebrity cooks with big team, but it’s happened here, It’s a very good initiative that SPSC VEEF done it. ” He also appreciates efforts taken by the SPSC students to conduct this program and gave his good wishes to the students from his heart. Internship certificates were issued by the Chief Guests to the students. Then vote of thanks delivered by Ms.S.Santhoziya, Tailoring Instructor, SPSC-VEEF Industrial School. Finally the program has end with National Anthem.

**DEBATE PROGRAM IN SPSC**

The Debate program was conducted in SPSC VEEF. The function started at 2:30pm. Mr. P. Pushparaj, Principal, SPSC delivered welcome speech. The Debate was facilitated Mr. Sembiyuran. Debate heading was “Relationship is better or Friendship is better for the hope of human life”.

Professor Raja Nidhi, Kadhar Mohaideen College of Arts and Science, Adhirampattinam, Pudhukottai District and Ms. Sridevi, DTP. Student, SPSC, have given their supporting argument for Relationship is better for the hope of human life.

Professor. Thamarai Selvan., Government college of Arts and Science, Peravoorani, Tanjore District and Ms. Amala, Nursing Student, SPSC, have given their supporting argument for Friendship is better for the hope of human life. Vote of thanks delivered by Marimuthu, two wheeler and 4 wheeler Instructor, SPSC. Program was organized by Staffs & students of SPSC-VEEF Industrial School, Velankanni.

**FINANCE MANAGEMENT TRAINING**

Geneva Global and Freedom Fund have conducted finance training for the 13 NGOs for the Project Managers and the Project Accounts Officers. The training was conducted for two days in Madurai North Gate Hotel on 26th and 27th November, 2015. Mr. Rajesh trained up and Geneva Global Project Managers Mr. Balamurugan and Mr. Jaleel have coordinated the meeting. They have taught seven steps for the finance such as Setting for Policy Budget Planning, Accounting system, Legal Communication, Audit, Set of Internal Control, and Reporting. Then Group discussion was conducted and they were also trained about how to prepare formats, cash handling, Advance policy etc.

**APPROVAL FOR NCVT COURSES**

Peace Industrial School has got approval for the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) courses in the month of August and the Quality Control of India (QCI) team has finally approved the following courses and it has been approved in the NCVT-MIS website.

The following courses have been approved.

* + - Desktop Publishing Operator
		- Sewing Technology (Cutting and Tailoring)
		- Electrician Technician

Above 30 students have been enrolled for the above courses and the classes are going on.



**ENDOWMENT LECTURE ON MIGRANT LABOUR**

The first Dr. Irene Fernandez endowment lecture is organized at Peace College of Education on 15th December. Prof.Dr.G.Palani Thurai of Gandhigram Rural University will deliver key note address. Mr.P.BalaSubramanian Former Protector of Emigrant workers of South India and Former Additional Secretary of Union Minister for Labour will deliver Endowment Lecture. Dr.J.Paul Baskar will preside over the function. Dr.Mercy SenthilKumar, a Tamil School will deliver a vote of thanks.

**DINDIGUL BOOK FESTIVAL**

Dindigul Illakiya Kalam is conducting 4th Dindigul Book Festival in Dudley School. Peace Trust has been allotted a stall for Pasumai Community Radio. The Radio is conducting live chat with the participants who come to book fair and they share their experience. Peace Trust – Young Workers Project used in the Book Fair and they are explaining about the project intervention and the adolescent girls suffering in the textile mills and created awareness among Writers and Book Lovers. The Book Fair is conducting from November 27th to October 6th, 2015.

**WORKSHOP ON**

**WATER CONSERVATION, WATER SECURITY AND WATER QUALITY**

A workshop on Water Conservation, Water Security and Water Quality was conducted last month in Dindigul Collectrate. Peace Trust was invited to submit a technical paper and to represent about it. Dr. J. Paul Baskar, Chairman, Peace Trust and Mr. B. Walter Kennedy, Environment Activist from Peace Trust have participated in the workshop.

The following is the technical paper submitted.

**Technical Paper:**

**Restoration of water bodies for ground water conservation in the climate change scenario**

Dr. J. Paul Baskar,

B. Walter Kennedy

Peace Trust

**Background**

The study area Vedasandur block in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu is a semi-arid ecosystem, entirely depending on the monsoon for the livelihood of the people. Majority of the population of Vedasandur block is living in rural areas with agriculture as their primary livelihood support system. The vast majority of farmers here are small and marginal. The quality of the land is deteriorating due to soil erosion, increasing water scarcity, adverse impacts of climate change and accumulation of toxic elements in soil and water. Climate change effects poses biggest threat to sustainable livelihood and food security of the farming communities across the block.

There has been a significant rise in the frequency weather events in recent years affecting farm level productivity and impacting staple food grains availability. Within a season, severe droughts and floods are being experienced in the region posing serious problems to the farmers. Fall in yield leads to shortage of food grains, price rise and inflation affecting the poor most.

**Statement of the problem**

Vedasandur has a tropical climate. The period from April to June is generally hot and dry. The weather is pleasant during the period from November to January. Usually, mornings are more humid than afternoons. The relative humidity varies between 65 and 85% in the mornings while in the afternoon, it varies between 40 and 70%. The maximum temperature is 34◦C, minimum temperature is 22.7◦C, and relative humidity is 65.

People residing in the drought prone villages of this block have been suffering from water shortage and related crop management problems. Lack of irrigation facilities and support services in water management have made farming operation in many parts of Vedasandur an exercise in futility. Many farmers cultivate a seasonal single crop depending entirely on north-east monsoon rains. Most of the villages were considered drought prone areas as the rainfall was only an average of 791.17mm per year. Even this little quantity was not properly collected, conserved and utilized.

In Vedasandur, hard rock formations occupy most of the geographical area. Ground water is extracted from these rocks by means of dug/tube/bore wells. With rapid growth in population in the block, demand for water for various uses has increased manifold, which has increased the stress on ground water resources. Situations of overexploitation of ground water exist in the study area and the extraction far exceeds annual recharge. The over-extraction of ground water leads to declining ground water levels thereby rendering existing wells out of use and necessitating deepening of existing wells which leads to increased pumping costs. Consequently, the general water table level goes down alarmingly, causing the existing open wells and even the deep bore wells to dry up even before the onset of monsoon. Govt. of Tamil Nadu (*vide Govt. Order MS 53, 2007*) has banned groundwater development for irrigation in the over exploited Vedasandur block in Dindigul district.

The rampant usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides pollute even the little water that is available. Farmers are forced to leave their lands fallow, after harvesting a single crop during the rainy season.

In many places, water harvesting structures constructed from the ridge portion to valley portion of the area were silted due to poor maintenance. Some farmers purchased water from other areas and stored it in their wells for irrigating their crops and providing water for their cattle.

In Kuttam village, a farmer dug 18 bore holes in his two acres of land but could not find even a drop of water from them. Many of the farmers who drilled bore wells in their farmlands failed to get water from the ground. Stretches of hard rock below the top soil, with poor water holding capacity and poor maintenance of water harvesting structures, added to the factors that contributed to the drought situation.

Another farmer R.Subbayya in Virudalaipatty village dug bore well to a depth of around 300 feet. Water was struck at a depth of 210 feet below ground level. It was fitted with HDPE pipes and connected to one compressor pump. The bore well is yielding only a few hundred litres of water and the pipes got reduced in internal diameter by at least 75.0 per cent due to encrustation / deposition of salts. Such is the level of hardness and impact of compressed air on very hard water.

**Annual rainfall trend**

The above graphical representation of the rainfall data in Vedasandur since 1981 till 2013 shows that there has been a steady increase in the annual rainfall. However, the data for the past eight years shows that there is a decreasing trend in the rainfall and this decline in rainfall is a matter of serious concern. It is found that in the past 33 years, the rainfall is erratic and ground water recharge is not adequate. The monsoon rainfall deficient years in the region has been growing since 2001 and the CTRI has already recorded seven monsoon rainfall deficient years since then.

Source: CTRI, Vedasandur

Climate variability in annual rainfall occurs because of the aggregation of daily rainfall changes. It takes place because rainfall becomes more intense, or because it rains more often, or a combination of both. Change in the number of rainy days can cause major disruptions in hydrological and ecological systems, with important economic and social effects.

Annual rainfall deviation from the long period average (LPA) of 791.97 mm is calculated for the period from 1981-2013. Based on the India Meteorological Department (IMD) classification, if the rainfall received in a particular year is within ± 19.0 per cent of the LPA, that year is called as a normal rainfall year, <-19.0 per cent to -59.0 per cent of the LPA is deficit rainfall year, <-59.0 per cent of LPA is grouped under scanty rainfall year. On the other hand, if the rainfall is >+19.0 per cent to +59.0 per cent of LPA, it is excess rainfall year and >+59.0 per cent LPA is termed as wet year.

Out of the 33 years of rainfall considered for the analysis, 21 years had normal rainfall, 7 years had deficit rainfall and 5 years had excess rainfall. There is no definite periodicity of normal / excess / deficit rainfall years. However, there are raising and falling epochs observed. Consecutive drought years are also quite common which would impact not only agriculture but also the water availability in the region (both agriculture and non-agriculture including domestic purposes). Almost once in every 5 years, there was a severe consecutive drought for a period of 2 – 3 years. Worst drought hit in the area were during 1982, 1984-86, 1990, 2006 and then again during 2012 – 2013.

**Temperature Trend**

There is an increasing trend in the maximum temperature and there is no significant change in the minimum temperature. Increase in mean temperature would reduce the crop intensity and thereby decrease the time available for the plants to photosynthesis and accumulate the food material into the sink (grain). Increase in day time temperature will have greater influence on rate of photosynthesis / respiration related gas exchanges. Moreover, it would also increase the crop water requirement by increasing the rate of evapo-transpiration and contribute to depletion of water resources.

Source: CTRI, Vedasandur

Source: CTRI, Vedasandur

**Decadal variations**

The results of the projected climate change over the study region for A1B scenario using PRECIS regional climate models showed a gradual increasing trend for maximum and minimum temperatures. The increase of maximum and minimum temperatures was 3.6°C and 4.06°C respectively towards the end of the century. As far as rainfall is concerned, the predictions indicate a slight decline (-5.0 %) in near future (2020). During 2030, the rainfall predictions indicate no change from the current condition. Thereafter, rainfall is expected to increase gradually and towards the end of the century, 15.0 per cent increase in rainfall is expected.

**Restoration of Water Bodies**

Restoration of water bodies is an important measure to properly conserve runoff water and improve the ground water situation. The appropriate site selection of these structures at needy places, particularly near the privately owned farm wells has proved its worthiness in terms of enhanced water availability. Intervention by Peace Trust in the selected villages not only checked the excess runoff and soil loss, but also enhanced the groundwater recharge. The moot point to be discussed is that of equi-distribution of benefits from upper reach (ridge) to downstream area (valley portion) of the watershed. The visible runoff in upper reaches of gullies/channels during monsoon has been controlled effectively in reducing its energy through the artificial structures like a series of loose-rock check dams/ and renovation/construction of permanent check dams. The enhanced percolation in upper and middle slopes emerged as additional ground water availability in downstream area within the selected four watershed project implemented villages. This was verified by the fact that Devinaickan patty downstream watershed area has a little over 200 open and bore wells compared to 35-50 wells each in Karumalaiodai and Kannimarpalayam upper reach area. During interactions with 15 farmers, it was clearly accepted by all that two hours additional pumping could be realized in downstream area of the watershed.

The network of farm ponds established by Peace Trust served to give two to three supplemental irrigations for dry crops like maize, jowar, pulses, etc. with which other agro-inputs like hybrid seeds/fertilizers could be properly applied. This resulted in not only increased crop productivity by one to two tons per ha. in many cases, but also helped the farmers to avoid the crop failure during dry spells.

Levelling and provision of field bunds created in a field at Sukkampatty village has been considered to be a great success for converting three acres of wasteland into irrigated area with additional annual net income of the Rs. 40,000 through cropping enterprise and this model is to be demonstrated in similar locations. The efforts made by the farmer deserve appreciation. Such demonstrations make the farmers technically sound and able to improve the water table in the field and to cope up with the drought events due to climate change.

**Overall increased water table**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S.No.** | **Description** | **Upper reach** | **Middle reach** | **Downstream area** |
| 1. | Before the project (meter) | 13.0 | 10.0 | 11.0 |
| 2. | After the project (meter) | 14.5 | 13.3 | 12.8 |
| 3. | Increase in water table (meter) | 1.5 | 3.3 | 1.8 |
| 4. | Increase in number of wells (No.) | 12 | 15 | 70 |

**Duration of water availability (open wells) as influenced by the water harvesting structures (24 sample wells)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S.No.** | **Water availability** | **Before adaptation**  | **After adaptation**  |
| 1. | < 3 months | 15 | 9 |
| 2. | 3-6 months per year | 7 | 11 |
| 3. | > 6 months | 2 | 4 |

**Conclusion**

The study made it clear that low rainfall, frequent monsoon failure, lowering of water table, increase in temperature and shift in rainfall season are the factors which contributed to the changes in hydrological condition in the study area. The ground water depletion had impacted on crop yields resulting in shortage of food. During drought years, availability of drinking water was reduced and there was shortage of fodder to animals which forced the sale of animals. It had secondary impacts like overexploitation of ground water which resulted in low water table.

Restoration of water bodies such as check dams, farm ponds, and percolation tanks through participatory approach would impact in increased water availability for sustainable utilization and management. It would result in to reduce the risk by diversifying crops in the rain fed area, raising agricultural productivity, augmenting farm income and rural employment generation.