

# SKILLS FOR FREEDOM

Newsletter from India

No: 21

January: 2017

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.

- o 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.
- o 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".
- o SPSC Vocational Education & Employment Facilitation Centre provides access to vocational education and employment facilitation for rural poor youth in Nagapattinam, Thiruvavur District Tamil Nadu and Karaikal District, Puducherry.
- o 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**  
Lifting up the least, the lost and the last.

Peace Trust  
Near Police Housing Colony  
Trichy Road, Dindigul-624005,  
Tamil Nadu, India  
Ph:0451-2410021; Fax:0451-2410372  
Email: [info@peacetrust.in](mailto:info@peacetrust.in) , [chairman@peacetrust.in](mailto:chairman@peacetrust.in)  
Website: [www.peacetrust.in](http://www.peacetrust.in)  
Edited By: Dr. J. Paul Baskar Ph.D.  
Assisted By: Er. P. Ruba Balan, Ms. Anitha, Mrs. Chitra

**We partner with**



# MIGRANTS

## NOTES BAN TRIGGERS LABOUR MIGRATION IN BUNDELKHAND

It's been 24 hours since Munni had a plate full of rice to eat. For tonight's meal, she and her two brothers and parents have half a roti each. Her father Babloo worries how he will arrange food tomorrow.

Things began to go bad when the local stone crushing unit was shut down a few months ago due to legal tangles and Babloo and other labourers had to take up other jobs. Most of them enlisted as daily wage labourers under a contractor who paid them between Rs 500 and Rs 700. And then came demonetisation on Nov. 8. The contractor suddenly stopped work as he had no money to pay the labourers.

More than 1.50 lakh labourers across Bundelkhand, particularly in and around Bharatkoop, are sitting idle. Many have left for other places in search of work, leaving behind their families.

"I used to earn about Rs 800 per day in the stone crushing unit. One day, it was abruptly closed. I was worried how I would feed my family. But luckily, all of us here were called by a contractor who took us in as daily wagers. But after demonetisation, the contractors told us they have no money to pay us," Babloo says.

His wife, Rupa, takes up the story: "For the last 15 days, I have been borrowing rice from my neighbours but now even they have run out of food. But demonetisation has shattered us completely. No one is bothered about our fate."

A few metres from Babloo's hut is the house of Dayaram where his family, his wife and two children stay. Dayaram left home in search of livelihood 10 days ago. The family is borrowing food from neighbours. "He left home looking for work. I don't know when he will return. It is getting difficult to carry on with life. The children are going without food most days," says his wife, Munni.

According to Suresh Kesarwani, the contractor, the going was smooth till demonetisation. "Initially after Nov. 8 we managed to pay our labourers. But as the days passed, it became difficult to get cash. I had no other option but to stop work. All other contractors have done the same as despite making endless rounds of banks there was no money. I think the situation will continue like this for a few more months," he says.

In Bharatkoop alone, there were over one lakh of labourers who earned their livelihood by working in the stone crushing units located there. "They continue to stay there in the hope that the factories will start functioning soon. But then came demonetization," says another contractor, Neelkanth.

A local BJP leader, Munna, told me that he and his fellow party workers are trying to do their bit for the labourers. "We are talking to other contractors in Bundelkhand and asking them to employ these labourers. But not many are willing to go far," he said. Asked demonetisation, he trots out what senior BJP leaders have been saying to the nation: "The situation will improve soon. Demonetisation is for the good of the people."

In Banda district, some 50,000 labourers have been badly hit by demonetisation. "Some have left for Lucknow, others for Allahabad, Varanasi, Meerut, Ghaziabad and Noida. Under the prevailing circumstances, I'm unsure whether they can get jobs easily as no one has money to

pay," says Shiv Prasad Sony, another contractor. He says that the government ought to have thought about the poor.

### **STDS HIGH AMONG PEOPLE ON TRUCK ROUTES**

CHENNAI: HIV/AIDS activists and experts have for a while been harping that funds-crunch along with a slack in state campaigns are hindering intervention programmes. Two popular truck stops around 50km from Chennai may just be those pointers.

A survey undertaken by Chennai-based National Institute of Epidemiology found that residents staying within three kilometres radius of the two truck stops -- Santhavellore and Sendhamangalam - showed more symptoms of reproductive tract and sexually transmitted infections compared to those staying farther.

Truck drivers have traditionally been grouped under the high-risk category in HIV/AIDS intervention programmes. A report compiled by National AIDS Control Organisation estimates the prevalence of HIV among truckers may be more than 10 times higher than in the general population -- 7.4% against 0.7%.

The research team studied around 5,200 people in seven villages around these stops. They found that 14.6% of those staying within a three-km radius showed symptoms of RTIs and STIs, and the figure kept decreasing with distance -- 13.6% for 3-6km and 10.8% for 6-10km. Thilakavathi Subramanian, former ICMR chair of epidemiology who led the survey, said the two stands on the Chennai-Bangalore national highway were chosen because of their heavy truck traffic. "Although there have been extensive studies on the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases among truckers, we wanted to do a health check status on their sexual partners," she said.

While some were female sex workers, others were either fixed partners en route or married women who wanted to make some money. Around (66.4%) people surveyed were married. Although the team set out to undertake clinical test, they didn't find too many takers. "So we ended up going door-to-door, counselling them, winning their confidence and making them fill questionnaires on their health status," said Thilakavathi.

Many who had clear symptoms of STIs, like painful urination, lower abdominal pain and bleeding between periods, were referred to the nearest government hospital. "Very few wanted to go because they were afraid of their families finding out," said Thilakavathi. All of them were in the 15 to 49 years age group.

Quoting a NACO report, the study said that truckers are vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases due to a higher prevalence of risky sexual behaviour, including poor condom usage. Around, 2.6% of the approximately five million truckers in India are living with HIV, said the report.

"It isn't just the drivers who are high-risk. They put communities close to truck stops at risk too," said Thilakavathi. An official in Tamil Nadu State Aids Control Society (TANSACS) said although the state and centre had intervention programmes for truck drivers -- especially those who drive long-distances as they stay away from families for extended periods of time - - communities staying around truck stops didn't always come under the government radar.

"And it isn't just women. They have male sexual partners too, but it's hard to reach them," he said, adding that they were using truckers' associations to widen their target network.

HIV/AIDS experts say although awareness among the truckers' group had climbed over the years, accessibility to the healthcare system and screening high-risk communities remain a problem. "Limited sexual health services are available on the highways," said Vijay Raman of Voluntary Health Services, who has extensively studied HIV/AIDS high-risk groups.

"Even if a trucker wishes to have him treated for an STI or wants to collect condoms, he must wait until reaching his final destination or home," he said.

## **AN AMERICAN TOWN PREPARES TO WELCOME REFUGEES**

A dull grey house on a hillside had to become a home. Another Syrian family of refugees would be arriving soon, and this empty, echoing old place needed to be readied in welcome.

The word had trickled down from the State Department's refugee resettlement programme. A mother, a father, his brother and four children, the youngest just 10. Muslims, travelling from Turkey. Flying into New York in the next few days.

Their imminent arrival explains all the commotion inside this slate-colored house in the small city of Lancaster, in south-central Pennsylvania. The State may have gone to Donald Trump, who likened the Syrian resettlement programme to a "a great Trojan horse" for terrorists. But he isn't President yet. That is why volunteers and staff members from the Church World Service, a nationwide non-profit that helps the government take in refugees fleeing violence and persecution, are cleaning cabinets, carting furniture and doing their best to make things homey. Just not too homey.

The used furniture being trundled in reflects the emphasis on economy. Some comes from the donations hoarded in a cluttered garage, where a "Welcome Home" sign in Arabic is on display. Other items were acquired cheap — chairs for \$5, tables for \$20 — at Root's Old Mill Flea Market.

New paint and flooring give the house the smell of a fresh start, thanks to the landlord, John Liang, who came to Lancaster as a child, one of the "boat people" who fled Vietnam on dangerously overcrowded vessels after the war. He spent a year in a notoriously hellish refugee camp before coming to Lancaster, where he and his family delivered newspapers, shovelled snow, did sewing and assembly-line work. Anything. Now 45, Mr. Liang works overtime at a nearby Kellogg's cereal plant and manages several properties he owns, including this house, which he wants to be — just so. "There are other people living a lot harder, tougher, than what I went through," he says.

Sheila Mastropietro, the group's long-time supervisor in Lancaster, took heart in the moment. It reflected a communal understanding of both the global refugee crisis and the rigorous screening process that refugees undergo before coming to the United States. Still, given a President-elect who seems averse to the country's modest commitment to refugee relocation, Ms. Mastropietro says, "We don't know what to expect."

Last fiscal year, the Lancaster office of the Church World Service helped to resettle 407 of the 85,000 refugees admitted to this country; this fiscal year, its target is 550 of a hoped-for 110,000. "We are acting as if the numbers are going to be the same — until we hear something different," she says.

Decades of resettlement work have transformed the Lancaster area into a medley of cultures so rich that Amer Alfayadh (34), a senior case manager, struggles to name them all: "Syrians,

Iraqis, Somalis, Congolese, Ukrainians, Belarusians, people from Kazakhstan. Then, of course, Lebanese, Palestinians. Bhutanese, Nepali, Burmese, Sri Lankans.

## **CHILD LABOUR**

### **HC QUASHES ORDER IN CHILD LABOUR CASE**

MADURAI: The failure of government officials to assist the court properly has led to the Madras High Court Bench here quashing the proceedings of Virudhunagar district administration in a child labour case.

The proceedings had been issued by a Personal Assistant to Virudhunagar Collector on June 29, 2007 directing S. Dhanalakshmi, a convict in a child labour case to deposit Rs.2 lakh, at the rate of Rs.20,000 for every child labourer engaged by her in a match industry in Sivakasi, in Child Labour Rehabilitation-cum-Welfare Fund as ordered by the Supreme Court in the famous M.C. Mehta's case in 1996.

Allowing a writ petition filed by the convict in 2009, Justice M.V. Muralidaran quashed the proceedings since the officials failed to produce officials records that led to the demand of Rs.2 lakh from the petitioner and explain the basis for having made such a demand. The judge pointed out that the Inspector of Factories in Sivakasi had even failed to mention the correct case number of the apex court judgement in his counter affidavit.

“Unfortunately, the proposal dated August 9, 2006 and the memorandum of instructions dated July 24, 2007 were not placed before this court in spite of time granted by this court. So, in the absence of those records, this court is unable to accept the contentions raised by the 4th respondent (Inspector),” the judge said.

While defending the case, the officials failed to bring it to the notice of the High Court that the Supreme Court had on December 10, 1996 directed all State governments in the country to create Child Labour Rehabilitation-cum-Welfare Fund district wise or area wise by collecting a compensation of Rs. 20,000 per child labourer from the offending employers.

The SC orders were passed on a public interest litigation petition filed by advocate M.C. Mehta in 1986 on the premises that as on December 31, 1985, there were 221 registered match factories in Sivakasi employing 27,338 workmen of whom 2,941 were children.

While disposing of that case, the Supreme Court said: “In our country, Sivakasi was one taken as the worst offender in the matter of violating prohibition on employing child labour.”

### **ADDICTION RISING AMONG CHILD LABOURERS IN RAJASTHAN'S STONE QUARRIES**

The dirty red blotches are easily visible over Arun's (name changed) teeth. The eight-year-old was asked whether he consumes gutka, a tobacco product prohibited for below 18-year-olds.

Gradually, the shyness gives away an indulgent smile as he confesses to taking gutka regularly.

“I buy gutka from the same shops from where my parents get it,” he says and adds, when asked, “Yes...My parents know that I consume gutka. At times I have taken it in front of them as well. No one disapproves as my parents consume it too.”

His friend Lakshman (name changed) who studies in class 2, has another truth to reveal. “In the morning, my motions don’t happen unless I have consumed gutka,” says Lakshman, a resident of Dabi village in Bundi district of Rajasthan.

He also mentions his favourite gutka brand even as another 7-year-old friend argues in favour of another brand.

For children living in villages adjacent to stone quarries in Bundi, addiction to tobacco products is as normal as breaking cobblestones which are exported to countries such as Belgium, London and Netherlands.

Many of them are child labourers who drop out of school at a very young age and engage in making cobblestones near stone quarries.

“We had surveyed a total of 1,438 children in the age group of 6-12 years living in the villages Budhpura and Bheelo ka Jhopra and found that 263 children are addicted to chewing gutka,” said Bajrang Singh of the Manjari Sansthan, an NGO which works with the objective to end child labour in Bundi.

The survey revealed that the number of addicted children increases drastically as they enter their teenage.

“Out of the 945 children in the age group of 13-18 years, we found that 546 were addicted to tobacco products. We also came across one or two cases where children have become alcohol addicts,” said Singh.

Budhpura, Dabi, Dhaneshwar and Parana villages are stone quarrying hubs where the labourers have migrated from different parts of the country looking for work in the mines. Children are engaged in the activity at a very young age.

“To counter the fatigue, they consume gutka and even alcohol. Gradually this consumption becomes permanent and as they grow up, become alcoholics,” says 19-year-old Deepak Yadav, a volunteer with the Shiv Sikhsha Samiti Ranoli, another NGO.

Yadav, whose family has been working as labourers in Bundi stone quarries for the last two generations, tries to spread awareness about the harms of addiction among the local kids.

“We try to teach the children about the adverse effects of chewing gutka and alcohol addiction through various interactive activities and games. It is something that takes time and is a long process,” said Ramswaroop Gurjar of the Shiv Shiksha Samiti Ranoli.

According to representatives of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) in Bundi, government is not doing enough to address the issue of addiction among children.

“Till now, we haven’t been able to do large scale work on this because of a number of hindrances such as lack of infrastructure and funds. At times, we have partnered with private organisations working in these areas to eliminate child labour. We will raise this issue of addiction to the government in the future,” Rekha Sharma, chairperson, Child Welfare Committee (CWC), told HT.

Doctors believe that chewing tobacco products such as gutka from a young age can increase the chances of cancer early in life.

“We have come across cases where 14-year-olds have been diagnosed with mouth cancer owing to chewing gutka. Moreover, this addiction also gradually shrinks their mouth, a phenomenon termed as oral submucous fibrosis,” said Dr Pawan Singhal, associate professor, department of ENT, head and neck injuries, SMS Hospital, Jaipur.

“The fact that a child is psychologically under the belief that he can’t pass his motions without consuming gutka is a sign of high-level addiction,” he observed.

## **MAKE JUSTICE SYSTEM SYMPATHETIC TO SEXUAL ABUSE VICTIMS, SAYS SC**

The time has come for criminal justice system to mould a survivor-centric approach in dealing with cases of sexual violence, especially for victims of child abuse for whom the trauma will scar them for life, the Supreme Court observed.

A Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and A.M. Sapre said the criminal justice system needed significant reforms to institutionalise a more sympathetic approach in which the sexual abuse survivor was the focus.

“It would be adding insult to injury to tell a woman that her rape claims will not be believed unless it is corroborated in material particulars,” the court observed in a recent judgment.

The court was restoring the conviction of a man found guilty of raping his nine-year old niece in 2009. He was sent to jail for 12 years.

The court found, in this case, positive proof and a credible sequence of events linking the man to the crime.

The verdict, based on the appeal filed by the Himachal Pradesh government, dismissed the defence’s argument that there was a delay in filing the FIR in the rape case, which they claimed was fabricated.

“It is not easy to lodge a complaint of this nature exposing the prosecutrix [victim] to the risk of social stigma which unfortunately still prevails in our society,” the court responded. Moreover, it added that “a decision to lodge FIR becomes more difficult and harder when the accused happens to be a family member.”

Justices Sikri and Sapre also observed that in many cases rape by family members was not reported to the police by the victim or her immediate family, fearing social stigma.

## **OPERATION MUSKAAN: GURGAON COPS ‘INFLATE’ CHILD RESCUE NUMBERS**

For the past two years, Gurgaon police have been earning plaudits for rescuing a record number of “missing” children and rehabilitating them, saving them from a harrowing life of exploitation and abuse.

But a Hindustan Times investigation found gaps in the police records and procedure, indicating the campaign may have been stage-managed to inflate numbers. Police in this burgeoning city of multi-national company offices, factories, high-rise houses, villages and slums say they rescued 1,500 kids since 2015 under Operation Muskaan, a nationwide programme to rescue and rehabilitate missing children.

The district child welfare committee (CWC) fears the numbers are exaggerated to meet targets.

When HT visited the addresses of 27 “rescued” children, all of them turned out to be fake entries. Some of the families in those addresses said they were living there for two decades. Others said they had never heard or rented their properties to anyone with names that appeared in the police records.

Sample this. Police records show a 13-year-old boy was rescued near Wazirpur Chowk in Gurgaon. The entry says his home is under Dwarka’s Palam police station.

An old couple said they have been living there for 20 years and didn’t know any boy by the name that HT found in the police records, or his father. None of the neighbours recognised the child or the family.

Another entry reveals a Muslim boy was rescued by Kherki Daula police station on July 8, 2015, handed to the CWC, and restored to his parents the same day.

When HT visited the house, the family residing there for the past 10 years denied knowing any child by that name, let alone being rescued by police.

“We are a Hindu family but the name given here is of a Muslim boy and we have never rented this house to anybody with the given name,” the home owner said.

Also, HT found that police didn’t record first information reports in any cases of child labour, as required by law. Neither police nor the CWC conducted any inquiry about the rescued children.

Gurgaon police dismissed the allegations, saying all guidelines were followed during the operation.

“Those rescued were working as child labourers. We have not picked any child. Why will we do such unethical work?” said assistant commissioner of police Anil Kumar, the nodal officer for Muskaan. But the state crime branch had also questioned Gurgaon police’s account.

KP Singh, then director general of police (crime branch), wrote last year to the Gurgaon police commissioner, objecting to the false information furnished by the district police.

He asked the police commissioner to take immediate action and prepare a report of the units involved in the wrongdoing, especially uploading fake information on the police website’s “Track the Missing Child” platform about missing children.

“The wrong practice has corrupted the whole data and has created doubt about the excellent honest work done by some of the units. I am afraid the government of India will not attach credence to any such corrupted information uploaded on the portal,” says the letter from Singh, who is now the director general of police, Haryana. Singh defended the police operation when HT sought his response.

“There was a misinterpretation by Gurgaon police units working on the operation regarding missing children found in the railway station and other places. It was later explained to them and was rectified on the portal. There is a gap between the CWC and police data as they don’t compile data for the operation whereas the police do.”

Former police commissioner NS Virk, who is now IG Rohtak, was not available for comments.

The Union home ministry launched Operation Muskaan in July 2015 across the country after a similar month-long campaign, called Operation Smile, in January to rescue and rehabilitate missing children.

Haryana police claimed to have rescued 4,824 children under Operation Muskaan in July last year, of which Gurgaon police topped the list with 1,057 rescues. That means 5.35% of the 19,742 children rescued in the entire country under Muskaan were from Gurgaon.

People questioned Gurgaon police's methods and intent of the operation. Activists, who don't wish to be named, said the ineffective tracking of children, lack of follow-up, poor database and gaps in records have hurt the overall fight against child trafficking and exploitation.

They said a child goes missing in India every eight minutes and rescuing children is of primary importance, especially in a situation where several agencies fighting for child rights lack coordination.

Some of the children and parents alleged kids were picked up randomly from parks, bus stands, even shops near their houses and shown as missing.

A 13-year-old boy said he was picked up in front of his slum near Kanhai village, taken to the Sector 40 police station, detained for a few hours and then released after his father paid a bribe of Rs 2,000.

The district CWC said police made no reports of the rescued children, a requirement under the juvenile justice act. It corroborated allegations about a huge variation in the number of rescued children in police records and those produced before the committee.

Details of the rescue weren't maintained in the general diary of police stations. "A number of cases brought to us as child rescue were returned as these did not meet the norms stipulated by the government," CWC chairperson Shakuntala Devi said.

The CWC alleged none of the 177 child labourers that police said to have rescued last year were produced before state authorities. Police also did not provide details of the rescue.

Devi said children were picked up randomly as police wanted to record the highest number of rescues in India. "I would not call it Operation Muskaan, there were only tears among the children and parents."

The rescued children were not evaluated for vulnerability, even if they were from other states, and were handed to parents in a hurry, another activist associated with Muskaan alleged.

Another anomaly listed by the CWC was that police didn't take any steps to book alleged employers under the anti-child labour act.

Also, case-specific information wasn't allegedly shared with the deputy labour commissioner of Gurgaon to recover compensation stipulated by law for the rehabilitation of these children. Efforts to contact Gurgaon labour commissioner Pankaj Agarwal for his comments proved futile. "Sensitising and training personnel involved in the rescue and rehabilitation process is also extremely crucial in providing a safe environment to these children," said Soha Moitra, regional director (northern region), Child Rights and You.

Reports show many police personnel didn't receive adequate specialised training to deal with children rescued from the streets, factories, bus and train stations and parks.

According to the National Human Rights Commission, up to 40,000 children are abducted in the country every year, of which at least 11,000 remain untraced.

The Muskaan initiative was to stop a chronic menace in the country. Thousands of missing children are often drugged, beaten and forced to beg every day on the streets, in what has become a multi-million rupee industry controlled by human-trafficking gangs.

## **TRAFFICKING**

### **CYCLISTS TO PEDAL FROM DELHI TO MUMBAI FOR AWARENESS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

From an American Diplomat to investment bankers, college students and young entrepreneurs; 24 cyclists will pedal more than 250 kms every day through five states to create awareness about human trafficking and child labour.

With over 1.35 lakh children gone missing in 2015, this group will travel between India Gate and Gateway of India and visit houses on the way to tell people about the menace of child labour.

India has the highest number of slaves in the world. It has been ranked number four among 167 countries where modern slavery is prevalent, revealed the Global Slavery Index released by the Walk Free foundation, a global human rights organisation. It says trafficking for bonded labour, domestic service, forced begging and commercial sex exploitation is widely prevalent in India. The Global Slavery Index is an annual ranking for slavery conditions worldwide.

“The cyclists will travel 1,500 kilometres over five nights and six days. From cold desert to undulating rocky mountains and unending highways, the group will also go door-to-door in the villages falling on way for the cause. The cycle expedition for the cause of spreading awareness will be interspersed with pit stops at Jaipur, Bhilwara, Kherwara, Vadodara and Telasari,” said Rishikant of Shakti Vahini, an NGO working for child rights.

The riders will be accompanied by volunteers from Shakti Vahini and volunteers will conduct mass awareness programmes, street plays and skits for generating awareness on ways to combat human trafficking.

India is a source, transit and destination point, and an estimated 1.4% of the population is living in modern slavery. “Women and children, being inherently vulnerable due to their physical, mental and social status fall prey to traffickers who either lure them by deception, coercion, fraud, kidnapping, abduction or by abuse of power or authority. In 2013, section 370 and 370A introduced the offence of trafficking and its punishment in the Indian Penal Code. It adopted the definition of the Palermo Protocol of the UN, which prevents trafficking in persons. Despite the intricate, overarching provisions of the Child Labour (Prohibition) Act, 1986, India is home to millions of child labourers employed in hazardous and non-hazardous occupations, a majority of whom are victims of trafficking,” he added.

Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh are worst hit as supplier states. Tribal belts in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Assam and West Bengal have experienced meteoric rise in illegal employment of young children, mostly girls as domestic helps in metropolitan cities of Delhi (NCR), Mumbai, Bangalore and Pune through spurious placement agencies.

## **COULD INDIA'S CASH CRACKDOWN BE LINKED TO DROP IN CHILD TRAFFICKING?**

Business has been slow at the Thakkar Bappa Colony shoe manufacturing hub in eastern Mumbai since the Indian government withdrew high-value bank notes last month in an attempt to curb tax evasion and counterfeit currency.

Orders to the numerous shoemakers lining the slum's narrow streets have almost dried up due to a dearth of bank notes in circulation, say the businesses which mainly rely on cash transactions.

Yet while factory owners complain of a slump in profits and a dip in productivity, child rights activists say "demonetisation" drive has a silver-lining: it has stemmed the steady stream of children trafficked here to stitch shoes.

"Children came from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan to work here," said Sugandha Patade from the charity Pratham which rescues and rehabilitates child workers in the area.

"In the last month, no new child workers have come and those who were working here have been sent back to their villages as there are no orders for them to work on."

Police agree the cash crunch could be hitting traffickers who buy and sell children for labour, but say more detailed analysis is required before they can make a direct link. India has almost 6 million child workers, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), but activists say this is a gross underestimate.

More than half are employed in agriculture and more than a quarter in manufacturing - embroidering clothes, weaving carpets or making match sticks. Children also work in restaurants, shops and hotels and as domestic workers.

The children - mostly from poor rural areas - are taken to cities by gangs who sell them into bonded labour, force them into sex work or hire them out to unscrupulous employers. In many cases, they are unpaid.

### **ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE**

The shock currency move, announced on November 8 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, aims to bring billions of dollars worth of unaccounted wealth which people are hoarding, or "black money", into the mainstream economy and curb corruption.

High denomination 500- and 1,000-rupee bank notes have ceased to be legal tender for transactions and can only be exchanged at banks for smaller notes or the newly introduced 2,000-rupee note.

Banks are meant to alert the Reserve Bank of India and tax authorities of any unusually large sums being exchanged which may be the product of illicit activities. There is no study on the impact of banning high denomination notes on child labour, but some children's groups say they have anecdotal evidence of its repercussions in areas such as Mumbai, Delhi and other urban centres.

Child rights activist and Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, who has welcomed the demonetisation policy, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that human trafficking and child labour were among the largest sources of black money.

His own charity - Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), or Save the Childhood Movement - has reported fewer children in areas where there are small-scale factories and 'placement-agencies' which often traffick girls and women for domestic work.

"These days, they don't frequently see transportation of children by traffickers in these areas and they are not able to operate so easily because they cannot use the black money which funded their illicit businesses before," said Satyarthi.

BBA has for example found no cases of girls being trafficked at three popular railway stations in the northeast state of Assam over the last two months, compared to a monthly average of six before the demonetisation policy.

In Uttar Pradesh, the charity Safe Society says five children were rescued in the last month from the town of Gorakhpur, against a monthly average of 15 to 20.

But Satyarthi warned that child labour would persist unless human trafficking is addressed in the impoverished areas where the children are taken from.

"This means punishing offenders, providing protection on the ground such as introducing social welfare programmes for the poor, raising awareness on trafficking and child labour, and providing good quality education," he said.

## **EDUCATION**

### **A CHANGE TOO SUDDEN - 50% ENGG STUDENTS OF ANNA VARSITY FAIL IN FIRST YEAR EXAMS**

As Aspirants from State Boards Struggle, Colleges Find Ways To Impart Lessons Better  
Debates about the quality of state board school education in Tamil Nadu have often been long-drawn and inconclusive. With centum and aggregates in the high nineties in the science stream, the advocates have had numbers on their side though the detractors questioned the plight of other high-scoring students thereafter. While most shine in the Class 12 exams, how they fare at college is seldom answered.

That, though, lies here. According to data, sought through an RTI application, from the controller of examination of Anna University, nearly 50% first year students of the varsity's affiliated colleges (non-autonomous) fail in their semester exams. Professors and educationists monitoring university trends said nearly 90% of these students are from the state board.

"Students of state board mug up and write Class 12 exams. There is little room to test their grip over concepts," said educationist J P Gandhi. "At college, they must understand concepts as most questions are application-oriented. Students can't adapt to the change," Gandhi said.

Most students flunk engineering mathematics, physics, material science and engineering graphics papers, a professor of an engineering college in Coimbatore said. "Engineering mathematics, physics and material science are analytical subjects. Students have a hard time clearing these papers," he said.

Educationists have studied top-rung self-financing colleges and found that CBSE students have better prospects than TN board students. "I observed 10 students who were top scorers

in state board exams and 10 with lower scores from CBSE. Eight of the CBSE students had better job prospects and overall score at the end of the course," Gandhi said.

While the state board versus CBSE debate will continue, professors at Anna University are seeking solutions. "Some self-financing colleges are working on these. For instance, a college invests a month in the first semester to brush up Class 11 lessons as they are crucial for engineering. Most schools skip these," he said.

Some colleges follow smart classroom format. "A 50-minute lecture is divided into three sections 20 minutes for teaching, 15 minutes for discussion and the last 15 minutes for a quiz," the professor said.

That said, students from Tamil medium schools need additional support. "The medium of instruction is English and it is difficult for students from Tamil-medium schools to cope. Colleges have to give academic support and psychological counselling so that they don't feel dejected," said the principal of a self-financing college in Coimbatore.

To ensure that their faculty are up to the mark, some colleges are assessing teachers before asking them to teach. "We decide the subject teacher two months before the semester begins. The teacher is asked to take two or three classes and a panel of senior professors assesses them," the principal said.

## **INDIANS SEE MBA AS TICKET TO JOBS ABROAD: SURVEY**

NEW DELHI: About 29% of Indians aspiring for a management degree are actually aspiring for global assignments, another 26% of the aspirants are seeking respect out of graduate management education (GME). Nearly one fifth of the aspirants are looking for skill upgrades, and in comparison to 13% of global aspirants, just 1% of Indians are looking at a B-school degree as a career revitaliser. And a significant 8% of Indian aspirants see an MBA degree as their ticket to an improved socio-economic strata.

A first ever candidate segmentation survey by Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) decodes why someone pursues or aspires to be an MBA. Shared exclusively with TOI, the study was conducted across 15 countries including the US, UK, Russia, China and India among others. Unlike previous GMAC studies, where majority of the respondents are from GMAT (the admission test for top global B-schools) and Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) schemes, this time out of the total only 43% of the respondents have taken or are planning to take either of the tests.

The motivation factor for Indian aspirants for a GME are very similar to that of the US aspirants, while reasons for pursuing an MBA degree for a Chinese aspirant is significantly different with nearly half of the Chinese respondents looking at the degree as a career revitaliser. For Indian aspirants, as the study revealed, bulk of the candidates are "global strivers" and "respect seekers". Skill upgradation and innovation are also in the priority zones, serving as motivation for 19% and 12% of aspirants respectively.

"For a long period of time B-schools around the world looked at students in terms of demographics - gender, age, nationalities, but didn't get to the core motivation behind why people want to study graduate management education. After all being a man or a woman doesn't drive them. What drives them is a particular type of aspiration. So we thought the time was right as the market has overall matured as to really look at the global candidate

market place from segmentation point of view," said Sangeet Chowfla, president and CEO, GMAC.

The respondents were interviewed in local languages "in order to remove the bias that comes out of language," said Chowfla.

## **EDUCATING A NATION:**

### **DROPOUT RATE FOR GIRLS IS RELATIVELY HIGHER OWING TO CHOICES**

There is a well-known saying that if you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation. In the order of national priorities, educating India's girl child figures right at the bottom and she is more often engaged as extra help at home or as domestic help in others' homes.

The Digital Gender Atlas for Advancing Girls' Education produced by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development has ranked States and Union Territories from 1 to 35 based on several indicators ranging from enrolment to dropout.

According to the Atlas, Bihar's dropout rate for girls is below the national average of 4.66 per cent. States with even higher dropouts are Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and a few more from the North East. Mizoram reported a staggering 23.93 per cent dropout rate among girls.

There are good reasons these States rank low in terms of literacy indicators. Sanjay Kumar of Deskhal, an NGO in Bihar, says that there is a two-pronged discrimination that girls face early on: one, from their parents and the other, from the teachers teaching in schools. The first shows up when parents send their boys to private schools and girls to government schools. The second level of discrimination takes place when teachers reinforce the belief that boys learn faster than girls, thus discouraging the girls.

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2015 puts the proportion of dropouts in the age group of 6-14 at 3.9 per cent. Of this, 22 per cent boys and 24 per cent girls dropped out before completing Class I. However, the difference in dropout rates between girls and boys increases among 11-14 year olds, as girls are eased out of schools to work at home or get married. Two-thirds of those not in school were from the lowest castes, tribal groups and Muslim communities.

The government is spending on campaigns to protect the girl child and also pledging to educate her – Beti Bachchao and Beti Padhao – with ringing endorsements from Bollywood celebrities. However, less than 160 km from New Delhi, in a small village in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh, parents don't want their girls to go to a school that is less than two kilometres from their home.

"There are louts on the way. Who will protect my girls when they get harassed on the streets," asks a mother. That is one question that the state has to answer.

## **LEARNING: FROM MOTHERS TO DAUGHTERS**

### **PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR GIRLS DEPENDS SIGNIFICANTLY ON MATERNAL EDUCATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOLING**

Kunti Devi is a mother of eight. Her brood includes three girls. Her daily drill begins at 4 a.m. and seldom varies: Get up, wash utensils, clean the house, cook food and prepare her

daughters for school. Her eldest daughter is in Class IX, the second in Class VIII and her youngest, Lagni Kumari (12), is in Class III at the local primary school.

Their father, Siya Sharan Manjhi, is a musahar by caste, lowest of the low in the caste hierarchy of Bihar. Musahars or rat catchers of village Govindpur musahari, have been classified as mahadalits or the most depressed, in the State.

Literacy is rare in this caste group. The 2011 census pegs their literacy rate at 11.1 per cent although for women, it is 3.8 per cent. Caste and gender come in the way of educating the Musahars with women bearing the brunt of neglect.

“It is a struggle to send all the daughters to school as they lend a hand in the household chores. But if I could get one of them to become something, my struggle would have been worth the while,” says Kunti Devi, as she slaps cowdung on her mud walls. The cowdung cake hardened under the sun fuels the hearth and her family.

“Sukhi roti khayenge, lekin betiyon ko school padhne bhejenge (We will have dry chapattis but will send our girls to school),” she murmurs. Lagni Kumari and her two elder sisters are first-generation school goers in their family.

Although she is unlettered, Ms. Devi says that today she feels proud when she sees her daughters read letters in books and read signboards, adding that education is a must to get ahead in life. She also spends Rs. 200 every month on private tuition for her daughters.

“I work extra hard by selling buffalo milk; the money comes in handy. And sometimes, for the sake of my daughter, I make do with one meal,” she says. Lagni Kumari wants to become a police constable while her elder sisters want to be a teacher like the school principal Sudha Kumari.

At the government run primary school in Phulwarisharief block there are 53 girls on the rolls out of total strength of 98. The school often doubles up as a stable for the grazing goats and cows; offering shelter to sundry other animals during the monsoons.

The children sit on the bare floors with their books spread out. Classes I to V are held in one room as the school has only two rooms. The school has two teachers, and a principal.

However, there is a surprise: For the last nine years, the dropouts have been almost negligible and girls attend more regularly than boys. The boys are often engaged in the illicit mahua trade while the girls sent to school.

School Principal Ms. Kumari says, “Parents have to be convinced regularly to send their children to school...every Saturday I call parents of my students to the school and interact with them while convincing them about why sending their children to school is important.”

Yet, the teacher will tell you that even if two students out of 98 make it to college, that is no mean achievement. The odds of a girl being one of those two appear daunting.

The reasons for this become apparent from a survey four years ago, which was based on a sample of 8,903 children from the extremely backward communities studying in Classes I to V in government primary and primary with upper primary schools in two districts of Bihar.

This study found that 42 per cent of the sampled children were first-time school goers and 75 per cent of the sample were children from families where the mother had never been to school.

The Nitish Kumar government had given bicycles to girl students as incentive to get them to school but the real challenge lies in convincing the mothers to send their girl child to school.

Combining adult literacy and compulsory schooling for students from the extremely backward communities will be real test for the state government.

### **MORE MARRIED WOMEN AT WORK THAN SINGLE: CENSUS**

NEW DELHI: How does marriage affect a woman's job prospects, and later, how does she negotiate issues like the number of children and their gender? Recently released Census 2011 data offers some interesting insights.

Among those in the child-bearing age of 15-49 years, married women are more likely to be working than unmarried women. Those with regular jobs are also likely to have fewer children. But there is a downside to this: with fewer children, the preference for a son becomes an overriding factor, causing a fall in the sex ratio. The lot of non-working women, who make up the majority, is no better. Confined to "domestic duties", they not only have more children than working women, the sex ratio among their children is much worse, indicating a stronger stranglehold of patriarchal values.

In the child-bearing age group, just 27% of unmarried women are working compared with 41% among married women. Experts say that most unmarried women are young and families don't allow them to go out to work. Some are students in higher levels of school or college.

The total fertility rate or average number of children born to a woman over her full child-bearing years has dipped to 2.9 for working women from 3.3 a decade ago.

On the other hand, the fertility rate is higher at 3.1 among non-workers, only marginally down from 3.2 in 2001. In both cases, the sex ratio of children born in the last year is falling, but more so among working women — from 912 in 2001 to 901 in 2011. Among non-workers, the sex ratio fell from 901 to 894 in this period.

Marginal workers — women who have irregular or casual jobs for less than six months in a year — show the tense equation between a desire to limit children and son preference. The fertility rate is still high among them at 3.4 though down from 3.7 a decade ago. But the sex ratio has slightly improved from 911 in 2001 to 914 in 2011. Economic reasons may prevent such women and their families from accessing sex-selective abortions, often forcing more pregnancies in pursuit of sons. Also, underprivileged sections like tribals and Muslims form a larger chunk of marginal workers and sex-selective abortion is not as acceptable in these communities.

The wide chasm between urban and rural India is a striking feature of this data. Half of the married women in rural areas work while in urban areas just 22% go out for jobs. In urban areas, fertility rates have dropped drastically with women main workers having just two children on an average compared to 3.1 for their rural counterparts.

Side by side, sex ratio too has suffered a chilling decline from 936 to 906 for them, the biggest decline among all economic groups.

### **WAR ON BLACK MONEY:**

### **DEMONETISATION IS A COURAGEOUS REFORM THAT WILL BRING SUBSTANTIVE BENEFITS**

On November 8 Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a surprise reform to the nation: the government declared that the high-denomination 500 and 1000 rupee notes, which constituted

more than 85% of currency outstanding in value, would be invalid as legal tender and could only be deposited into bank accounts until the end of the year.

This is a courageous and substantive economic reform that, despite the significant transition costs, has the potential to generate large future benefits.

India is largely a cash-driven economy, though a rapidly growing percentage of the population is becoming tech savvy. A shadow economy reliant on cash transactions and evading taxes, especially on high value transactions such as real estate purchases, gold, and intrinsically illegal activity, has taken deep and highly persistent root. Counterfeiting of Indian rupee notes and their subsequent use in funding of terrorist activities has also been an important concern.

While the pernicious effects of a large black economy and tax avoidance have been well recognised, no tangible policy action has been taken until now. Modi's radical move to invalidate the high denomination notes, in which the black economy primarily transacts, is a daring step.

Economically and politically powerful constituencies with considerable stake in the shadow economy have been upended. Undertaking this reform has required the political courage to impose predictable transition costs on the economy to lay the foundation for sustained future benefits – the converse of what one normally expects from one's politicians.

Some economists have advanced a criticism that this initiative is an abrogation of contract and trust in the currency. This is incorrect, as the policy allows for the exchange of old notes for new notes. Although the process is inconvenient, and subjects many households to hardships, it forces the cash from the black economy to be deposited into the banking system, potentially increasing transparency and expanding the tax base and revenues to the government from taxes and surcharges.

Inevitably, the Indian economy will move towards digitisation of economic transactions, with cash currency playing a relatively minor role. The argument that the policy is anti-poor is suspect as a significant fraction of the taxes and surcharges that will be collected from the reform initiative is to be allocated to social programmes.

Finally, it has been argued that the action is despotic. On the contrary, this action has been taken by duly elected officials within the framework of a democracy. To be effective, the policy required an element of surprise. Given this surprise factor and the magnitude of the reform, the rollout of the policy has generated predictable hardships.

The shortage of new currency notes and limits on withdrawals has led to considerable anxiety about wage and pension payments, and cash financing of even routine household expenditures. The frequent changes in rules during the past month, over how money deposited into accounts will be taxed, how much money may be withdrawn and which exemptions would apply, for instance, have led to unnecessary confusion.

Nevertheless, there has been an impressive level of support at the grass roots level for this reform, as evidenced by the absence of any rioting, looting or acts of mass protest. But the policy makers must manage this transition process efficiently and with empathy, to ensure sustained support from the common man.

As per the Income Tax Amendment Act of November 28, 2016, the government will tax unaccounted income deposits at 50% and will only prosecute those who, upon investigation,

are found to have engaged in illegal or criminal activity. This move is hoped to motivate the transfer of wealth from the black economy to the banks.

Several recent developments suggest that the demonetisation drive may well yield significant benefits.

First, around 80% of the currency in higher denominations has now been deposited back into bank accounts. Since individual deposits will now be matched with their tax returns and unaccounted deposits will be taxed, this will yield a windfall for the government permitting large increases in social expenditures.

Second, we already see an impressive switch into digital transactions. Thus, this one-time demonetisation itself could have long-term beneficial impact by nudging reluctant consumers into e-payments, whose transparency will ensure greater tax compliance and a higher permanent tax base.

Third, the government's action taken will put a major dent in counterfeiting. With the new notes being much less prone to counterfeiting, social benefits will be earned immediately.

In any other time, one would have to be unreasonably idealistic to expect, from politicians, a major economic reform, which offers substantive benefits in the future, but comes with significant political costs in the transition period immediately following the reform.

India, however, seems to have voted in a prime minister who is prepared to take on political risk in his efforts to fulfill his commitment to root out corruption – and has promised even more. We await his next steps.

Jagdish Bhagwati is University Professor at Columbia University. Pravin Krishna is Professor of International Economics at Johns Hopkins University. Suresh Sundaresan is Professor of Finance at Columbia Business School

### **SALINITY IS THE VILLAIN IN NAGAPATTINAM**

THE difference between Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam is the green of the fields. While most parts of Thanjavur and some parts of Tiruvarur have managed to retain the colour of the fields, the fields go from yellow to brown as one passes through Thituthuraipoondito Nagapattinam.

Nagapattinam, already last in line for the Mettur water, is perhaps the worst affected with the delay of monsoons adding to their woes, apart from the usual waterlogging that Nagapattinam is known for. “Now that we have just sowed our crops, if there is an 80 mm shower, our crops will be ruined,” said M Seran, a farmer who belongs to Nagapattinam.

Their crops must ideally be 60 days old and should have grown to a height of 2 ft to withstand the effects of waterlogging.

According to Seran, 57 per cent of Nagapattinam was affected by salinity. If at all groundwater is available in these areas, the pros are sometimes outweighed by the cons, farmers said. For instance, additional measures to counter salinity is required, resulting in increased production costs.

Change in pH levels do not immediately affect the soil, but it leads to the deterioration of soil quality over a period of time. Ideally, the pH levels for irrigation water is between 6.5 and 8.4. When the pH increases beyond this range, sulphur or other acidic substances are often applied to counter the effects. However, for small and marginal farmers, it is easier said than done. “After every time that we irrigate, we will have to apply copper sulphate because of the

salinity here. One bag costs ‘170 and we need two bags per acre,’ says a small farmer in Kottur, Nagapattinam.

Even after this is done, their yield is significantly lower than that in other delta regions such as Thanjavur, claim farmers in the district. “We only get around 20 bags per acre these days,” said Seran. The salinity phenomenon has crept into parts of Tiruvarur too, said farmers. When a farmer goes down, so do the farmhands. According to a memorandum presented by the Tamilnadu Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association and other associations to the technical committee headed by G S Jha that had visited the delta recently, landless labourers have lost mandays, especially in Nagapattinam.

With farmers foregoing the Kuruvai crop and the subsequent reduction in acreage of over 3.5 lakh annually and with unavailability of water during the most productive part of the crop season, landless labourers lose 70 out of 150 mandays in a crop year.

Irrigation water problems aside, residents of Raghunathapuram, 60 km from Nagapattinam, said that drinking water supply in itself was erratic in the region in stark contrast to Thanjavur where drinking water crisis is almost unheard of.

“If water comes today, we don’t really know when the water will be supplied next — it may be two or three days sometimes,” said Ala me lu, a housewife in Raghunathapuram.

## **TEEN NOIR**

A disturbing trend threatens to hobble India’s young generation as health professionals and rights activists rise to meet the challenge by Ayesha Singh

With 1.3 million adolescents dying across the world due to preventable or treatable causes in 2015, health professionals and rights activists rise to combat the trend that threatens to hobble India’s young generation

His death came without warning. Hanging from the ceiling fan of his second floor apartment in Bengaluru, 19-year-old Sahej Marwah left behind distraught parents and loved ones fraught with pain. He was now an added number to the list of 1.3 million adolescents in the world who died last year from preventable or treatable causes. In India, that number is 86,224 for 10-14-year olds and 155,154 for those aged 15-19 years, according to Global Burden of Disease 2015 estimates. Suicide is the leading cause. Marwah’s parents believe their son was being bullied by his roommates, with whom he often argued over religious matters. This time, the boys succeeded in silencing Marwah forever.

“Many more voices will be silenced if we don’t make children’s interest our priority. We’ve been hearing the rhetoric that ‘children are greatest victims in our society’ since India’s Independence, but little has changed in our social environment that compels teens to be better than the best. This trend is dangerous,” says child rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Kailash Satyarthi.

In India, 21 per cent of the population—that is, over 243 million—constitute adolescents. In 2013 alone, 3,594 of them aged between 10-14 committed suicide. The same year, another 23,748 in the age group 15-19 took their lives, according to the Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing.

Sandhyarani Behera from Odisha can’t forgive herself even after four years of the death of her older daughter Sarojini. Unable to resist her mother’s frequent rebukes for not clearing the annual Plus II examination, the 17-year-old girl committed suicide by consuming poison.

“I want to say sorry, but to whom?” says Behera. Neither she nor her husband had thought that behind their daughter’s falling grades and declining health conditions lay depression. They were more interested in improving her performance. “I would have counselled her instead of levelling accusations for her poor performance,” she repents.

But the falling grades and declining health conditions are symptoms of a larger issue—depression. In Odisha, academics-related suicide is the leading cause of deaths. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) stated that the suicide rate in Odisha was 9.9 of one lakh people in 2014.

While self-harm is the front-runner in adolescent mortality matters, road accidents came a close second. More than 75,000 youths became victims of road accidents in 2014. According to traffic police, over 1,875 road-related cases were filed against minors in Bengaluru in 2015. Of the 5,004 road accidents in Karnataka in 2014, as many as 4,482 were caused due to reckless driving. Police believe that in many cases, parents were acted irresponsibly by giving vehicles to underage drivers. “Reckless driving should be a criminal charge as it claims lives of those involved in the act and other innocent people,” says a senior Karnataka Police officer. Incidents of motorcycle stunts are on the rise too. On September 1 this year, an 18-year-old youth was arrested for the death of a teenager girl during a motorcycle stunt in Bengaluru.

Similarly, Varkeychen Alex, a BTech graduate from Pala in Kerala’s Kottayam District, lost two colleges in an accident when their motorcycle collided with a truck. “They were returning after a test-riding a new superbike owned by one of them,” says Alex.

Sebin Sebastian, an advocate from Kochi, lost two friends when the motorcycle they were riding crashed into a lorry. One was a college union president of Government Law College, Ernakulam, and the other was an LLB student. They died on the spot.

An Indian Council of Medical Research report states that 12 per cent of children between four and 16 years of age suffer from psychiatric disorders. Fear of stigma is part of the illness. Jodhpur-based 19-year-old Ankita Mahla, a Class XI student, injected herself with poison three years ago. In one of her last conversations with her friend Shoili Das, she had confessed that she had been feeling persistently low. “We went to a therapist together because Mahla feared being judged by family members and friends about seeing a doctor for a mental issue,” says Das. The session seemed to go well, and she had booked another one for the next day. Before daybreak, she had taken her life. “Maybe it was depression, maybe it was something else, but her irrational fears about being labelled ‘mad’ kept her away from her family and took her straight into the death trap,” says Das.

In view of the unmet mental healthcare needs of children and adolescents of India, Clinical Psychologist at ePsyClinic.com, Aakriti Malik, and Dr Roopesh B N at NIMHANS, Bengaluru, carried out a research (currently unpublished) to understand awareness about child psychiatric conditions in parents and children and their expectations from mental health professionals. In a purposive sample of 40 parents, children and adolescents aged 10-16 years, it was found that more than half of the parents were unaware of their child’s psychiatric conditions. “The major barriers for parents were related to time, distance, lack of information about treatment options and financial constraints. Interestingly, the study found that majority children reported not being aware of their difficulties,” says Malik.

The number of adolescents attempting and committing suicide is increasing. This should be seen in the light of unemployment, relationship difficulties and significantly high family-based abuse and violence. “Even more important is the fact that there is a 90 per cent treatment gap. It means 90 per cent adolescents who need help do not have access to it,” says Dr Achal Bhagat, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals and Saarthak Mental Health Services, Delhi.

Lack of awareness and disclosure of mental health problems lead to exclusion from peers and from the educational system. Bhagat believes that educational systems do not facilitate access to mental

The Number of Adolescents Attempting and committing suicide is increasing due to unemployment, relationship difficulties and high family-based abuse and violence. Lack of awareness and disclosure of mental health problems leads to exclusion from peers and from the educational system. “There’s a 90 per cent treatment gap for mental illnesses. Ninety per cent adolescents who need help do not get it. Parents may also ignore the mental health issues. The problem is compounded by the increase use of substance abuse.”

Dr Achal Bhagat, Senior Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals and Saarthak Mental Health Services

health service. In fact, they have become a barrier. “Parents may also ignore mental health issues. The problem is compounded by the increase use of substance use,” he says.

Nikhil Santhosh, a 16-year-old student, jumped to his death from the ninth floor of Mantri Tranquil Apartments in Bengaluru. Police said he took the extreme step after his mother scolded him for securing poor marks in internal examinations. He left a one-line note stating, “I don’t deserve to be your child.” Minutes before his death, his mother had said the same thing to him, “You don’t deserve to be our child.”

Even as the rate of suicide (number of suicides per one lakh population) in Odisha compared to southern states, Puducherry and Sikkim is low, the rates are alarming, especially around board exam results. A majority of adolescents in the state grow up in villages, which have a high Dalit population that comprises around 22 per cent Scheduled Tribes and 17 per cent Scheduled Castes, whose literacy rate is very low. Professor Rita Ray of National Law University, Cuttack, says, “Adolescents are vulnerable to many issues. The atmosphere for quality education is not liberal, which makes parents and children susceptible to study-related pressures.”

Cases of youngsters drowning at tourist places in Kerala is also spiralling. On the other hand, the state rarely sees any adolescent die of a particular disease. “This issue is nobody’s priority, but it demands special attention as it is preventable. Adolescents should be made vigilant about the danger of water,” says Dr N K Sanil Kumar, a urologist and a health activist from Kochi.

While certain reasons for adolescent deaths across the world may be universal—such as road accidents and suicides—some are particular to India. Poverty is one such reason. Vanita (name changed) took her son from JIIPER in Puducherry to Dindigul Government Hospital, and finally to Madurai Government Hospital. “I began spending all my days in the hospital, not because of my son’s health condition but because we were homeless. Our landlord kicked us out fearing my son had caught a contagious disease,” says Vanita. In the middle of it all,

she lost her job. “It was finally diagnosed that he had tuberculosis, but because of little access to money, we spent sleepless nights in hospitals,” she recalls.

“In their right to survival, children and adolescents from urban slums and villages still face scarcity of safe drinking water and sanitation. Demolitions of urban slums to beautify cities and migration from villages to cities for employment displaces marginalised adolescents and their families and denies their right to survival in new locations,” says Sangeeta Macwan, Manager-Community Programmes, Sahaj Shishu Milap, an organisation working with adolescents and children. Abuse at home and workplace denies their right to protection.

Right to participation in social matters is not fulfilled, especially when decisions in their education and consent for early marriages are not taken from adolescents. “When adolescents are neither treated as children nor as adults, it hampers their development to a great extent,” says Macwan. In the presence of gender discrimination, the right to development among girls and boys from marginalised classes of society gets hampered. “Over the years, adolescent girls have died because of delayed health treatment and have committed suicide because of severe violence and burns as a result of domestic violence,” says Himalini from Thoughtshop Foundation, a social organisation working with problems plaguing adolescents and other issues. Their rights to survival, protection, development and participation are violated. Neglected and with reduced opportunities for development, these girls experience low self-worth. They are considered a burden and become prone to child marriage and trafficking. “What follows is that they’re soon burdened with household chores, early pregnancy, child rearing and become victims of domestic violence. Some even end up displaying criminal behaviour. Thus, the cycle of violence continues,” says Himalini.

Since a good part of her work involves working with marginalised communities who live in remote rural locations without medical treatment, Himalini says that delay in treating snake bites and consumption of local poison also cause deaths. In urban areas, adolescents who live along railway tracks are at a higher risk of losing their lives due to accidents.

There is an urgent need to structure fragmented adolescent health programmes and define a comprehensive programme addressing all the needs of adolescents under one framework. Working with teenagers requires focus, since they are neither children nor adults. “Creating safe spaces for adolescent girls and young women, building self-worth, providing them with life skills, sex education and enabling them to explore life goals beyond marriage are necessary,” says Himalini.

Complications linked to early pregnancy and child marriage also need to be addressed urgently as these cause numerous deaths between the age group of 15 to 19. “Working with parents, in-laws and healthcare providers on their role in maternal health is important. But what will help most is preventing early pregnancy, especially contraception (pre-marriage counselling),” says Macwan.

The pressure on adolescents needs to be relaxed. Until a major shift in mindsets and attitudes is seen, status quo will be re-enforced. “Teens of this world and the youth are living in extremely suppressive conditions and don’t have avenues to express their idealism,” says Satyarthi. “Forty per cent of the entire population is below the age of 18. To initiate a social environment where they are pushed to become tools of growth is necessary.”

To raise a collective voice against discrimination, violence, slavery, trafficking and other issues that plague the young, Satyarthi recently brought together some of the brightest minds

to discuss, deliberate and offer resolutions on the subject. His Laureates and Leaders Children Summit on December 10-11 at Rashtrapati Bhawan was a step in assessing the situation at a micro level. “Let’s take a small step today by listening to the young of this country. Then another step in understanding them closely. And finally, mobilising them to rise above all limitations and become the most empowered members of community,” he says.

In a century where our lives are moving faster than they ever did, we need to pause and think about the children who have little access to help, mental or physical. Lives can be saved with a little compassion, concern and empathy. Children, as it is said, are the future of a nation.

“Adolescents are vulnerable to many things. The atmosphere for quality education is not liberal which has made both parents and children susceptible to study-related pressures.” Prof Rita Ray, National Law University, Cuttack

“Youngsters drowning at tourist places in Kerala are on the rise. This issue is nobody’s priority but it demands special attention as it is preventable. Adolescents should be made vigilant about the danger of water.” Dr N K Sanil Kumar, Urologist, Kochi

“Demolitions of urban slums to beautify cities and migration from villages for employment displace marginalised adolescents and their families and deny their right to survival.” Sangeeta Macwan, Manager, Community Programmes, SahajShishu Milap

“Over the years, adolescent girls have died because of delayed health treatment and have committed suicide because of severe violence and burns as a result of domestic violence. Some even end up displaying criminal behaviour. Thus, the cycle of violence continues.” Himalini, Thoughtshop Foundation

“Parental expectations from mental health professionals emphasised on proper treatment of a child and the doctors to seek their consultation before initiating any treatment. Children also sought treatment and information about their illness. Many children were not aware of their difficulties.” Dr Roopesh B N, NIMHANS, Bengaluru

Among marginalised communities who live in remote rural locations without medical treatment, delay in treating snake bites and consumption of local poison also causes deaths. In urban areas, adolescents who live along railway tracks are at a higher risk of losing their lives.

Falling grades and declining health conditions are symptoms of a larger issue—depression. In Odisha, academics-related suicide is the leading cause of deaths. The National Crime Records Bureau indicated that the suicide rate in the state was 9.9 out of one lakh people in 2014.

## **A BRIEF NOTES FROM THE WORKSHOP**

### **Panel Discussion**

The Workshop on Engaging with Business on Human Rights and Social Equity was organized by Praxis on 13th December at Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

Mr. Manoj Chakravarti, COO, Centre for Corporate Governance, IIMB briefed on engagement with the business and human rights discourse.

Ms. Shireen Kurian, Praxis Mr. Stanley Joseph, Partners in Change worked out Mapping stakeholders and Issues.

Mr. Viraf Mehta, Partners in Change and Member, NVGs Drafting Committee explained The UNGPs and BHR in India: Surveying the territory and detailed Lessons from last year's consultations.

Dr.J.Paul Baskar, Chairman Peace Trust among five Panelist on Corporate Social Responsibility Business and Human Rights. He spoke on Engaging Business in Addressing Modern Slavery by sharing experience of Peace Trust and other GG/FF partners in engaging Indian Companies linked in supply chain of Textile Business. He expressed his opinion that Indian companies will gain by convinced on cooperating with local NGO's.

The Workshop provided an opportunity to understand the how the UK companies have responded to Modern Slavery Act. The workshop also provoked me to read and catch up with following documents:

- Guiding principles on Business and Human Rights (UN Human Rights document)
- Hand book on Corporate Social Reasonability in India (CII document )
- Background Paper for India's National Formwork on Business and Human Rights (ETI document)
- CSR in India 2016 (Praxis document)

The Workshop was useful to GG/FF partners like Vanmuhil, READ and TEST to

- Link our field work to atleast one pillar of the UNGPs: Engaging Business in the Supply Chain.
- Use human rights-based language when advocating to business
- Bring business into discourse on the State protection of human rights
- Bring business into discourse on Access to Remedy

We were able to suggest how human rights could be framed in the NVGs which are currently reviewed by Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

## **PEACE PRIVATE ITI**

### **AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON SIDE EFFECTS OF USING DRUGS CONDUCTED**

Dr. Amirtha Kadesar, Director, Jeganath Hospital was invited by our honorable chairman to address on the scheme which is timely needed subject to generate awareness among students to save their life killing tobacco products. He listed the main reasons for prevailing cancer.

All students realized this programme as educative and channel for their future healthy life.

He said that about 40% of all cancer patients are cursed due to the usage of tobacco products and to keep tobacco away from life. He insisted to do regular exercise and to be conscious in food habits. He advised students should learn to live in an atmosphere free from pollution, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, cigarettes, and pan masala.

He added that proper treatment for cancer may increase the chances of saving precious human life from mental agony.

## **BOOK FESTIVAL**

Book festival was conducted in Dindigul from December 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 which was organized by “Illakiya Kalam”. Pasumai Community radio has often broadcasted phone in live programme living the book festival. Thousands of people and students have participated in the Book Festival live show and shared their feedback and experience about the book festival. They had been actively using Pasumai FM Booth for express their views.



## Interaction with school students in Book festival.



Moreover, a show was broadcasted for 10 days continuously on the Consumer rights in “*Pasumai Urimai Ulaga Thagavalgal*” show on the eve of National consumer day which is observed on December 24<sup>th</sup>. Awareness programme was conducted on Demonetization and online transactions.

**The Multi Stakeholder Initiative** - Tamil Nadu - a year old initiative has been promoting dialogue with the textile and garment industry on reported rights violation and will be setting up minimum standards to prevent exploitation.

The MSI-TN seeks to draw upon a collaborative and broad multi- stakeholder effort in order to promote a safe and fair working environment in textile mills and garment factories across Tamil Nadu. The stakeholders include brand representatives, suppliers, government, trade unions and NGOs.

There is a consensus to develop a shared vision, to strengthen the relationship among stakeholders, and to determine the phases within which the MSI-TN can be further developed.

Peace Trust was also part of this meeting the preliminary discussion is scheduled to take place a day long session on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at Hotel M.K.M Rich, Tirupur.

The afternoon session in which NGO leaders like Dr.J.Paul Baskar, Chairman Peace Trust Mr.Siva, Mr.James, Mr.Doss on Building Alliance and Entering into Dialogue with Textile Industry in TamilNadu.

The forenoon session was by Government Officials on Legal Completion like Provident Fund, ESI safety Benefits with inputs from experienced NGO's working for the welfare of the workers and liason with Social Security Institutive of Government of India and TamilNadu State.

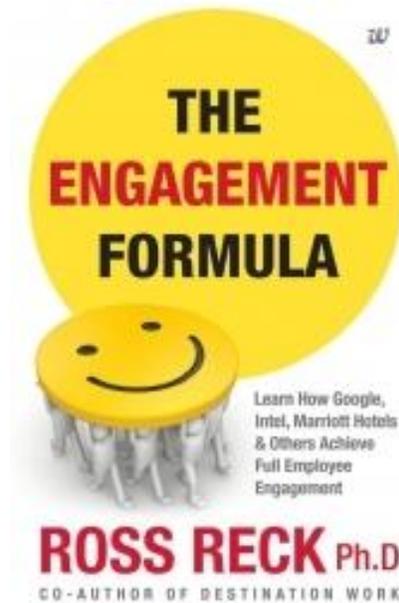
### **Space for NGOs:**

NGO Consultation on Role of NGOs in TamilNadu- Some of the senior NGO leaders met at Trichy on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 and discuss about the impact made by TamilNadu NGO's in various sectors like Child Labour Elimination Migrant Labour Empowerment, Environment Protection, Micro Credit, Watershed Management and Organic Farming. The concern was raised about shrinking role of Civil Society Organizations. The way and means for expanded and vibrant NGO sector is discussed. Financial Literary is one area indentified by these NGO's are to facilitate and help the Economic Reform initiated by Government of India.

It was a preliminary meeting but concrete programme will be evolved and dialogue discussion with Banking and Finance Sector will be improved in 2017.

Dr.J.Paul Baskar, Dr.Narayananan Dr.Prof.John Kumar, Dr.Vedachalam and Mr.Jawahar Arumugam were among 12 people presented in the consultation.

**Recommended for this month's Reading:**



## **The Engagement Formula**

by Ross Reck

This book presents a new leadership model that guarantees full employee engagement. If you implement this new leadership model in your organization, 100% of your employees will become engaged with their work all working at their full potential.

Full employee engagement is routine when you utilize the leadership model presented in this book. This new leadership model is called The Engagement Formula. If you execute its three simple steps, full employee engagement is guaranteed.

## **Young Workers Project:**

### **Community Support Group Training programme**

Project has organized 10 trainings to members of the community support group in the project villages. Overall 532 members of the community support group participated in the training programme on group functioning and the major roles of the community support group. All the members of the community support group participated well in the training. Local body leaders, officials from the line departments, school teachers participated effectively. Child drop out from school was discussed in length and it was decided to focus on it in the coming month. It was also discussed during the training to activate the village education committee to effectively involve in stop drop out and encourage children to study well and stressed the participants on making door visit to families whose children are toiling as labourers and motivate them to send their children again to school. Similarly aspects for strengthening the village poverty reduction committee also discussed.

The members learnt more about child rights and present conditions of three rights.

in addition to poverty conditions attitude of parents traditional beliefs culture were also found as the obstacles in realization of the child rights. The members expressed their commitment to eliminate child labour and also to protect other rights that are interring linked to the development of the children. They felt the need to promote nutrition health, leisure and recreation of the children in addition to their education. They have listed the activities at the village level to release child development.

### **Adolescent group formation**

Project has formed 10 Adolescents Group in the 10 New target villages classified in to 6 clusters, each field coordinator is responsible for organizing the project activities in 6 & 7 villages of the cluster. During this reporting period field coordinators made regular visit to the target villages and held preliminary meetings to form Adolescents group.

### **Adolescent group formation**

Project has formed 40 [40/600members] Adolescents Boys Group in all the 40 target villages classified in to 6 clusters, each field coordinator is responsible for organizing the project activities in 7 villages of the cluster. During this reporting period field coordinators made regular visit to the target villages and held preliminary meetings to form Adolescents Boys group

### **Adolescent group meetings**

Regular monthly meeting for the adolescent group organized 40 villages during this reporting period. Prior intimation was given to the members on the date of meeting. Adolescent girls were enthusiastically participated in the group meeting facilitated by the field coordinators. During the meeting the purpose and responsibilities of Adolescent Group such as making them self-confident in addressing their own issues, capacitating them to participate and mobilise support for the successful implementation of the program, Discussions were held on their problems, analyzing them and find solution, they articulated their views on their

situation like, they are affected by gender disparities as a girl in their family and exploitation as a worker in the mills.

Attitude of the parents and society is also reason to their problem in addition to their poverty conditions

They also reported the improved condition in their health and shared their health Problems, risks in their jobs, and problems in the right work.

Hence they told the activities that address these problems are necessary to make progress.

Effective Coordination of the efforts of CSG,SHG,Worker Support Groups would help them to relieve themselves from the clutches and slavery conditions.

### **Career Guidance Programme**

During this reporting period, career guidance training was organized for 117 young workers in the project villages to choose a right career for future. Employability skills were also dealt in the training. Training also focused on the self-realization, knowing the strength, weakness, values, sights, characteristics, needs and interests of an individual, decision making. Effective communication skills were also dealt during this training programme.



### **Children are given awareness on the impact of Sumangali Scheme opportunity and scope and schemes for continuing the Life skill education**

Project has conducted awareness sessions on the impact of Sumangali scheme 40 villages for imparting awareness on Sumangali scheme. Overall 1635 girls and boys were made aware of the dangerous practices of the Sumangali scheme. Staff members have spoke on the slavery conditions of the adolescent girls under the scheme and highlighted the major issues of the young workers exploited in the scheme such as long work hours, very low wages, occupational hazards, health effects etc. Project team motivated the children to continue the education and plan a right career for bright future. This programme received overwhelming response from the children as well as the school authorities.

Joining the scheme as a worker, the girl loses her education, health, physical and mental development.

The scheme does not safeguard the interests of the girls and the rights due to them with overwork and low wages.

Adults in the community are deprived of their jobs since they employers prefer children who do the work faster for low wages

Education, leisure, Nutrition, Healthcare are the important factors that shape their childhood and youth to grow as healthy adults and earn their livelihood .Sumangali Scheme takes away all these good aspects from the poor children to maximize the profits of individual

### **Formation of women self help groups**

In order to improve the economic conditions of the girls released from the mills, in 30 villages were organized in 30 village level SHG. Each group consists of 12 to 15 members in total 389 members are participating. Priority was given to those who are seriously affected by the mill worker, physically or mentally. They are under the habit of regular saving in their groups, pooling of this saving amount would help them to involve in economic activities in future they could also avoid bank loans and subsidies linked to them could be used for education and indexical expenses of their children. They would be relieved from the clutches of money lenders who get higher rates of interest. Benefits from Social security measures

### **VEC, PTA and VPRC involvement in prevention of dropout & Social Protection Schemes**

Project staff members have got the opportunity to participate in the VPRC meeting held in the 12 panchayats and spoke on the activities of the project. Project has succeeded in linking 107 persons from 40 villages to various social protection schemes according to their felt need. As a result of this project has gained the trust and confidence of the people and built a strong support system for its programme.

During this period efforts were made by the community support groups to activate the village education committee to work hard for the school enrollment as well as to stop the drop out in the target villages.

### **32<sup>nd</sup> GET TOGETHER MEETING OF PEACE TRUST**

Peace Trust has celebrated its 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Staff Get Together on 23rd December, 2016 at Peace College of Education, Vittalnayakkanpatty, Dindigul. The Get together meeting was presided by Chairman Dr. J.Paul Baskar. All the staff members from Peace Trust family were amassed in Peace College of Education.

Our eminent Chairman, Dr. J.Paul Baskar, greeted all Peace Trust family members. He welcomed all with thriving notes. He also shared the content of,

- Impact of Economic Reforms
- Use of Modern Technology and
- Current Affairs
- Role of NGO's

### **YOUNG WORKERS PROJECT**

Further Mr. Srinivasan from Young Workers Project has consigned about the substance and the state of his project.

**THE MOTTO of YWP is**

To support School Education, Health Protection, Livelihood Development and Skill Training for Gainful Employment among Vulnerable Young Working Population in Dindigul District. They seized 40 communities in Dindigul.

Through this project they successfully launched the programme in all the 10 project villages. There was good participation from the community in the launching programmes. In each village on an average 70 – 80 people participated in the programme.

**The Project outcome are listed as follows**

- 2345 girls were made aware of the dangerous practices of the Sumangali scheme and importance of school education. This programme received overwhelming response from the children as well as the school authorities.
- Project has succeeded in linking 157 persons from 40 villages to various social protection schemes according to their felt need.
- Young workers training programme and sensitization programme to the mill management resulted in to supply of personal safety equipment like face masks, earplugs and protective clothing to the workers.

**VEEF PROJECT**

Dr. Jeya Kumar from SPSC-VEEF project, Velankanni, Nagapattinam presented the Success story for the year 2015-2016 and also he revealed their Target plan for 2017.

**The Objective of VEEF is**

To provide access to affordable, high-quality and demand –oriented Vocational Training cum coaching for 1080 poor rural youths which will enable them to ensure sustainable livelihoods for supporting their poor families.

He said the project has provided skill trainings for 229 in 6 trades until 2016 and will aim to train atleast 257 persons in 2017. Totally SPSC-VEEF will cove at least 600 youth.

**Sustainability Plan:**

- Collaborative Programs with NGOs who are working for Education and Capacity Building.
- Tie up with corporate for CSR
- Process initiated to get Programs from IFAD, DDU – GKY, Mahalir Thittam etc.
- Tie up with Employers (for the fee payment of students)
- Steps taken to have Vertical and Horizontal growth of VEEF (Strengthening the existing courses, increasing the No. of Courses which is having good response and getting affiliation from Universities)

## **SPSC Open School and Village Child Development Centre**

The Project Co-ordinator Mr.Pannerselvam shared the indispensable view of this project and the training programmes offered in their centre. Through this project will offer capacity building trainings on multi skills promotions and rights based trainings like child rights, human rights for the children in the VCDC.

## **National Environment Awareness Campaign**

Dr. J.Paul Baskar Chairman of Peace Trust has delivered about the programme done by the project NEAC.

Peace Trust has been functioning as Regional Resource Agency (RRA) for South Tamil Nadu since 2006.

NEAC contains the following **18** districts for their project  
Coimbatore, Dindigul, Kanya Kumari, Karur, Madurai, Nagapattinam, Nilgiris, Pudukkottai, Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Thanjavur, Theni, Thirunelveli, Thiruvarur, Tirupur, Trichy, Tuticorin, Virudhunagar

All the staff members from Peace Trust were announced to enjoy their mealtime at 1.15 pm. After having their meal all were gathered into the hall sharply at 2.15 pm. Again the presentation was started in a fanatical way.

## **PEACE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION:**

Mr. V. Asaithambi Asst Prof of English from Peace College of Education has conceded the achievements done by them.

### **The Vision of PCE is**

To establish a just society free from exploitation of natural and human resources by ensuring better, quality teaching environment at all levels.

### **The Mission of PCE is :**

To achieve well planned, systematically coordinated development of teacher education in line with the changing perspectives of the academic environment and enable the teacher educators to face the challenges thrown by the preset educational system.

He mainly listed out “The infrastructure facility, library facility, computer facility, sports facility and canteen. Their achievement in NAAC with ‘B’ GRADE, getting continuation of NCTE AND TNTEU was appreciable one.

### **The Future Plan**

- They have planned to start M.Ed 2 year programme for the academic year 2017
- They also planned to start 4 year integrated programme such as B.A.,B.Ed., and B.Sc.,B.Ed.

## **PEACE PRIVATE ITI:**

Mr. D. Paul Baskaran the Manager from Peace ITI conversed regarding their achievements. They achieved well as compare with last year. Students' participation in handling the programme and conducting the seminar also appreciated one.

Our Chairman advised the people from Peace ITI should hand over the ideas done by the project VEEF for their betterment and development.

### **The Goal and Objectives are**

- To equip with job oriented vocational trades
- To organize capacity building programmes
- To encourage students to participate in the extracurricular activities
- To facilitate the students avail for the 100% placements of jobs.

### **The Programmes done By Peace ITI**

- General knowledge improvement
- Communication skill development
- Positive leadership skill development
- Personality development
- Awareness programme
- Industrial visit
- Staff development

## **EMPLOYABILITY SKILL TRAINING PROGRAMME:**

Ms. S. Santhiya Kamalam from Peace ITI has given details about the Quest Alliance programme and the importance of LinkedIn. Employability skill is a skill development programme. Quest alliance is a NGO that designs the content of Employability skill.

Totally 100 students have participated in this course. 67 students have got a job. The remaining students are continuing education as a second year in Electrician Trade.

The motto of the programme is

- ❖ To make sure students as neither an active participator nor a passive listener.

### Some of special feature of the programme

- Students participation
- Arouse interest to learn new things
- Motivation
- Energetic and performance

The main contents used are,

- ▶ Understanding self
- ▶ Resume building
- ▶ Mock Interview
- ▶ Decision Making
- ▶ Problem Solving and
- ▶ Introducing LinkedIn

### **Importance of LinkedIn:**

- ▶ LinkedIn is one of the social networking sites.
- ▶ Job search and enrolment tools are among LinkedIn's valuable features.
- ▶ More and more companies are encouraging candidates to apply for job through LinkedIn.

Mr. V. Mahendran from SPSC VEEF quoted the importance of life skill training programme.

The objective is to boost all students who likely come from rural area, educating them all life skills such as General attitudes and Communicative English.

- Almost seventy percent of the contents were covered. They feel and realize good on their internship training.
- Employment facility is monitored by a staff concerned. We collect all the details and store in our database.
- In the previous year, almost 80% students have been placed and the remaining are self employed.

### **PEACE GARMENTS AND HANDICRAFT CENTRE**

Mrs. Josephine Mercy from Peace Garments and Handicraft Centre has explained the goal of their project.

- The Main objective of the unit is to create livelihood opportunities for the landless women and poor young women who are socially and economically oppressed in the society.
- They have an link with Indiska India Export Service (P) Ltd,Sweden for buying their productions.

### **The achievements:**

- They are providing continuous work for the rural women, which improve the workers standard of life.
- The workers are considered as the asset and if they are satisfied, they may be more productive thereby contributing to the sustainable function of the Handicraft unit.

### **Gifts**

The moments and gift's were presented Mrs. P. Josephine Mercy, Principal- Peace ITI to all Peace Trust family members.

After the cake cutting ceremony the programme was ended in pleasurable way.