

INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION

Nyaya Pathrika

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IJM

Children attend a ceremony celebrating the graduation of bonded labour survivors from IJM's two-year rehabilitation programme.



IJM staff conduct training on bonded labour and trafficking for police officials.

TRAINING ON BONDED LABOUR EQUIPS STAKEHOLDERS FROM ALL SECTORS

Upon invitation, IJM helps conduct trainings on bonded labour, trafficking laws and relevant procedures for different stakeholders. In the last quarter, IJM helped conduct training sessions for police officials, government officials and community level leaders.

On August 13, IJM was invited to train government officials, including all the Tahsildars of Kancheepuram. The sessions focused on equipping officials with a better understanding on the roles and responsibilities of the government while identifying, rescuing and rehabilitating bonded labourers. Kancheepuram Collector, Tmt Gajalakshmi R was also present at the training.

On August 20, IJM was invited to train 32 Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors in Kancheepuram. The sessions, which were highly interactive and participatory, provided an overview of both bonded labour and human trafficking.

Lauding the initiative of his department, one police official said, “This class has been very useful to my career. I received lots of information. Keep it up!”

Apart from training officials, IJM also helped train several community members on July 27 and 28 at a Community Leaders training workshop.

“These ‘leaders’ were picked by their own community members to represent them on various issues of common interest,” says Loretta Jhona, Director of Aftercare, IJM. “The focus of the workshop was to equip community leaders to raise awareness of the issue within their own communities and also to equip them on accessing various government benefits both for themselves and their fellow community members.”



Ms. Maragatham Kumaravel inaugurates a survivor's business at the launch ceremony.

LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME LAUNCHES IN PULIKUNDRAM

On June 28th 2016, SWELECT Energy Systems Ltd., the Chengalpattu Revenue Division Office, the National Adivasi Solidarity Council and IJM jointly celebrated the launch of a livelihood programme for bonded labour survivors in Pulikundrum.

The launch was attended by a number of significant guests, including Ms. Maragatham Kumaravel, Member of Parliament, Kancheepuram District and Mr. Kothandapani, Member of Legislative Assembly, Thiruporur Division. Over 400 released bonded labourers were also present.

Funded by SWELECT and implemented by the Released Bonded Labourers' Associations – formal groups of survivors who advocate on behalf of other survivors – the project aims to develop a model community of released bonded labourers in the Pulikundrum panchayat. RBLA leaders have developed a model in which loans will be provided to participating survivors who have come up with viable business plans. 20%

of the money will be offered as a subsidy, while 80% will be made available as a loan to be repaid in 12 installments.

“We decided to fund survivors through loans as opposed to grants because we want to treat survivors with dignity,” says Merlin Freeda of IJM. “As opposed to charity, we believe that this approach will promote accountability and ownership. It will also quash caste-related prejudices and questions of whether or not bonded labour survivors can sustain their freedom. The survivors are excited to run their own business and are confident that they can repay the loan within the timeframe.”

Four businesses were inaugurated at the launch event and many other released bonded labourers have submitted proposals for diverse business plans. All loan payments have successfully been made on time thus far.

PHOTO SERIES

The district governments of Tamil Nadu, assisted by IJM, have conducted multiple rescue operations over the past few years. These operations have revealed that a disturbingly high amount of bonded labourers are being trafficked to Tamil Nadu from the state of Odisha. To empower trafficked survivors post rescue, IJM began a two year aftercare programme for rehabilitation in Odisha.



In early September, 820 survivors graduated from IJM's rehabilitation programme for bonded labour survivors. 417 of them attended a celebratory graduation ceremony that included workshops on individual and family leadership, and legal rights. Member of Legislative Assembly, Ms. Tukuni Sahu also presented at the ceremony.

OVER 800 SURVIVORS GRADUATE FROM THE IJM AFTERCARE PROGRAMME FOR REHABILITATION IN ODISHA.



Children participated in separate activities, including arts and crafts and sessions on the importance of education and their rights.



Elected as a Community Leader by his peers, Triclochin Bag now holds the responsibility of advocating on behalf of other released bonded labourers. By acting as liaison between other survivors, government representatives and IJM field workers, he will help ensure that the risks of rebondage are minimised.



Dr. G. S. Bajpai addresses the audience at the National Seminar on Human Trafficking in Chennai.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL SEMINAR ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The National Seminar on Human Trafficking was held at the University of Madras on the 23rd and 24th of August 2016. The following are some highlights from expert speakers at the seminar which brought together police officials, government officials, NGOs, students and community members to collaborate and learn together about how to effectively combat human trafficking in India.

“The problem (human trafficking) needs to be brought at the micro level (states/districts) as what is happening in Tamil Nadu might not be the same as what is happening in Bihar.... We need to see the problem as a whole, but also at the local level as policing is a State subject..... there are three things that are vital in combatting human trafficking: prevention, protection and prosecution.”

- Dr. G. S. Bajpai, Professor and Registrar, National Law University, New Delhi and President, Indian Society of Victimology.

“There are laws and legislations (pertaining to human trafficking), but implementation is something that needs to be thought about....There are very few convictions across the world in trafficking in persons. Very few countries are reporting increases. This may reflect the difficulties that the criminal justice system is having in convicting offenders of trafficking.”

- Dr. Suruchi Pant, Deputy Representative, United Nations Office on Drug and Crime, Regional Office for South Asia, New Delhi.

“In Andhra Pradesh, 2005, no ‘customer’ was ever arrested, no trafficker was arrested, 93% of victims were arrested. In 2015, 145 ‘customers’ were arrested, 115 traffickers were convicted, no victims were arrested and 200 exploitation places (were) closed down. It is a paradigm shift. It is the same law and same prosecutors. The shift comes from capacity building.”

- Dr. P. M. Nair, IPS (Retd.), Chair Professor and Anti-Human Trafficking Expert, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.



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