



CUTS-Centre for Human Development (CUTS-CHD)

PACE

Participation and Action towards Community Empowerment

Quarterly E-Newsletter

Volume 2, No. 1

January-March, 2006

International Women's Rights Day

Seminar for Empowering Women

CUTS-CHD, in collaboration with *Rajasthan Patrika* and National Legal Services Authority, organised a seminar to mark the International Women's Day on March 8, 2006, at Chittorgarh. About 150 women social workers from villages as well as city of Chittorgarh participated in the event.

The objective of the seminar was to sensitise the people on the grassroots level to myriad problems that women face to generate awareness towards the various types of ill-treatment and exploitation meted out to them, and to find ways and means to provide them a better future.

Speaking on the occasion, P N

Khandelwal, the District and Sessions Judge, Chittorgarh pointed out the issues, such as child marriage, female, girl child illiteracy and exploitation of women. He called for complete eradication of superstition, and torture of women in the name of witchcraft and emphasised the need for a collective effort from the Community to punish the guilty.

"A house that honours a daughter, must honour the daughter-in-law as well. Female foeticide is a criminal act, which can adversely affect the gender balance in the society. Girls must be provided with a better environment for their development and education", said P N Khandelwal.

Rajeshwari Meena, Chittorgarh *Pradhan*, presided over the seminar. Addressing the women she said, "women should empower themselves

and take active part in political affairs". She stated that, education and awareness have important contribution in empowering women.

Dhanna Singh Rawat, CUTS-CHD Coordinator elaborated the history and importance of 'Women's Rights Day' and called the women to unite for their



Rajeshwari Meena, *Pradhan, Panchayat Samiti*, Chittorgarh speaking on the occasion of World Women's Day.

betterment. Ramesh Sharma, from the local bureau of *Rajasthan Patrika* pointed out the role of media in highlighting the need for women empowerment. He suggested mutual cooperation among various stakeholders to fight out the social ills.

Other participants who spoke on the occasion included: B S Tanwar, a social activist; Kiran, of Helping Hand Society; Mahesh Joshi of *Aditya Jan Sewa*; Kamlesh Trivedi of *Ummid Samiti*; Kamla Bai Nayak from village Raghunathpura; Gulab Devi from Unkhalia and Pushpa Gangwal, a social activist etc. At the end of the seminar, CUTS-CHD presented prizes and rewards to the students for poster and slogan writing, which was organised under the aegis of *Rajasthan Patrika*.

Various Acts for Women Empowerment in India

- Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
- Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1976
- Pre-natal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of Measure) Act, 1994
- 73rd and 74th Amendment for one-third reservation in panchayats and municipalities
- 84th Amendment Act, 1988 for 33 percent reservation in Parliament and State Legislatures in the pipeline

Editorial

The Idea of having an international women's day was first put forward at the turn of the 20th century amid rapid world industrialisation and economic expansion that led to protests over working conditions. Women from clothing and textile factories staged one such protest on March 8, 1857 in New York city. The garment workers were protesting against the poor working conditions and low wages. Later, these protesting women established their first labour union in the same month two years later. More protests followed on March 8 in subsequent years, most notably in 1908 when 15,000 women marched through New York city demanding shorter hours, better pay and voting rights. In 1910, the first international women's conference was held in Copenhagen by the Socialist International and an 'International Women's Day' was established. The year 1975 was designated as International Women's Year, when the United Nations (UN) gave official sanction to it. In India...

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Self Help Groups and Bank Linkages Project

CUTS-CHD has been implementing Self-Help Groups (SHGs) project in Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts aiming towards making women self-reliant. The project is being supported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

The target group under this project are women and people below poverty line (BPL) On February 28, 2006, Trivikrama Devi, Quality Assistant Officer, *Mahila Abhivirudhi Society* Hyderabad, visited village Barundani in Mandalgarh *panchayat samiti* of Bhilwara District to gather information regarding the process of group formation, group management, linkage of groups with the banks and the ways in which SHGs are proving beneficial not only in the process of receiving bank loan but also in upliftment of their economic status.

She also collectively evaluated the BPL groups prepared by district

women development agency, CUTS and *Gram Panchayat* under the *Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojna* and praised groups formed by CUTS. Thereafter, she gathered information from the authorities of various banks in which accounts of groups formed by CUTS exist.

Being impressed by the SHGs formed by CUTS-CHD, she awarded cash prizes of Rs 100 each to Padmini Women SHGs, Barundini and Chamunda Mata Women SHGs Mino ki Jhopariyon.

SHGs of Chittorgarh – During January-March, monthly meetings of 43 SHGs were organised in Kapasan, Nimbaheda, Bhadesar, Gangrar and Chittorgarh *panchayat samitis*. There are 498 women members in all the SHGs who saved Rs 4,02,814. Seven SHGs have got bank loan to the tune of Rs 1, 59,000.



SHGs of Mandalgarh – There are 75 SHGs in Bhilwara *panchayat samiti* comprising of 803 men and women that collected about Rs 2,62,420 during the period. Mandalgarh *panchayat samiti* has 15 SHGs that got loans of Rs 1,45,0000.

SHGs of Baneda – Baneda *panchayat samiti* of Bhilwara district has 100 SHGs so far. About 1180 men and women are associated with these SHGs, out of which 19 SHGs have received bank loan of Rs 2,34,000.

'CHAYAN' Youth Intervention Project

Youth programme – towards pleasant future, 'CHAYAN' (Youth intervention project) is being implemented in urban slums of Bhilwara district. with support from CARE.

Major activities during the period included: peer educators meeting, community meetings, puppet show in *Vidya Niketan* School, sports competition at Youth Resource Centre, meeting with CARE Bhilwara for the plan formation under the project, organisation of debate competition in project related schools etc.

HIV/AIDS tests of four youth were conducted by project related Peer Educators at Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centre (VCTC) laboratory



and consultation centre, Chittorgarh. Purushottam of the Inner Spaces, Outer Faces Initiative (ISOFI) project took some snaps and gathered work related information about Kawakhera, the project area for *India Today*.

'Hamara Manch'- Rural Girl Empowerment Programme

CUTS-CHD with the support of Save the Children (UK) organised a two-day training seminar of networkers under 'Hamara Manch-the rural girl empowerment programme' on February 23-24, 2006 at Chittorgarh.

Through the medium of *Bal Panchayats* the networkers were provided training on issues including: why the boys need life skills; what qualities should be there in a life partner; whom friendship should be done with and how implementation of information dissemination should be achieved effectively.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme

A two-day introductory workshop of 30 surveyors was organised at CUTS-CHD premises on February 02, 2006. The objective of the workshop was to analyse the status of Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), in which survey report was presented.

This report contains comprehensive interviews and survey forms (to be filled by the interviewees) of 2110 children, 2110 wards and 422 MDMS officials from the 211 selected schools of 14 *panchayat samitis*.

Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition and Aids (RACHNA) Programme

Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition and Aids (RACHNA) Programme of CARE India, Bhilwara is working on providing quality maternal and child health services in 302 *Anganwadi* Centres (Integrated Child Development Services) in Banera, Mandalgarh and Suwana *Panchayat Samitis* of Bhilwara District.



The programme is being organised with support from Women and Child Development Department and CARE, India. Various activities like organisation of mother and child health day, sectoral meetings, representations, educational and training tours by CARE etc. were organised under the project.

Launch Meeting of Universal Birth Registration Programme

The launch meeting of Universal Birth Registration (UBR) was held at Bhilwara with the support from Plan India, whose nodal agency is Indian Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR), Jaipur. Among the distinguished participants were: Nutan Jain and Nahar Singh from IIHMR, Jaipur; Kanhayalal Dhakad, *Zila Pramukh*, Bhilwara; CPK Jain, Statistical Officer; Geeta Gurjar, Additional Education Officer; and Maya Surana, Child Development Project Officer. Other participants included the stakeholders and sarpanches of three blocks of Bhilwara – Suwana, Mandalgarh and Baneda – where the project is being implemented.

In the launch meeting, birth registration certificates were provided to five-year old son of one Meera Dholi from Lakshmipura village and three year old daughter of Ramdev of Kheldiya village. Dhanna Singh Rawat along with CUTS Bhilwara staff was present on

the occasion. Under the UBR project, other block level launch meetings were also organised at the *panchayat samitis* of Baneda, Mandalgarh and Suwana during February and March in which the situational analysis of the area was carried out. Cultural programmes and slogan writing were organised in the seven villages to generate awareness for birth registration. Addressing the meeting, Ashutosh Gupta, said by taking care of personal and community hygiene and by using the health services a person, individual and public can take care of their health. Cleanliness has important contribution to health perseverance. He further said the government has the responsibility to take care of public health and security, but at the same time, consumers too need to be careful and aware of their health and security.

P N Khandelwal stated that countries development can only be

actualised through healthy citizens and health and security are the fundamental rights of the people. He informed about laws in action against the use of sub-standard and adulterated commodities, polluted environment and unsafe services etc. In this context, he pointed out Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

Speaking on health issues, Dr A A Gauri, retired Chief Medical Officer said processed fruits, sweets and other edible products and their colour, pollution therein affect badly on health of people.

Senior Advocate, Bhanwarlal Shishodia said that as healthy people are the asset of the country, similarly unhealthy are a burden on the family, society and country.

On the occasion, a special postage stamp released by the Indian postage department, was released by Superintendent of head post office HP Soni. About 150 participants attended the seminar.

Heavy Blasting

J K Cement has mines near Tilakheda village of Chittorgarh district. Its mining activity is nearing the village, compelling the villagers to leave their homes. CUTS-CHD requested Ghanshyam Singh Chauhan, the block officer to take stock of the situation. Upon survey it was found that about 46 houses out of 65 have received severe damages like cracks in walls and wooden frames. The villagers are compelled to live under the open sky.

During the survey, Ishwar Singh, Motilal Gayari and Premchand Dhakad informed that heavy blasting has affected their houses. They also said that the J K Cement authorities never gave prior information before blasting and life has become a living hell. Kanhayalal Gayari and Motilal Gayari of the same village pointed out that loss to the tune of Rs 120 lakh has been done to the village. The villagers had informed the district officials, but no action has been taken against the J K Cement.

Road Safety Week

CUTS-CHD, with the active support from Transport Department and Traffic Police Chittorgarh, observed the road safety week during January 02-08, 2006 in Chittorgarh by giving information to the vehicle drivers and putting reflectors in the vehicles at the Kapasan crossroad. Working on the theme 'save from fast speed and over weight' under the 'Road Safety Campaign' for the year 2006, reflectors were affixed on 73 trucks, 27 tempos, 12 bullock carts and 15 goods carriers.

T C Meena, the District Transport Officer and K L Paliwal, Traffic Police Officer, explained the transport laws, including the fitness of the vehicles to the drivers on the spot. They also checked the number plates and other necessary papers of the vehicle. About 19 vehicles were found to be without number plates and incomplete papers and hence were fined.

Seminar on World Consumer Rights Day

CUTS-CHD, in collaboration with District Redressal Forum, organised a district-level workshop on 'World Consumer Rights Day', at CHD premises, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, on March 15, 2006.

The seminar was presided over by PN Khandelwal, District and Sessions Judge; Ashutosh Gupta, District Collector, Chittorgarh was the chief guest.

In the opening speech, Dhanna Singh Rawat welcomed the participants and briefly outlined the context, history and importance of World Consumer's Rights Day.



P N Khandelwal, District & Sessions Judge speaking on World Consumer Rights Day on March 15, 2006

Permanent Lok Adalat

CUTS-CHD, in collaboration with District Legal Services Authority, Pratapgarh and Consumer Information and Advocacy Centre, Manpura, organised a legal literacy *chaupal* on January 19, 2006, at Manpura village of Chittorgarh *panchayat samiti*.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest, PN Khandelwal, the District and Sessions Judge said that permanent *Lok Adalats* are working for the low-cost, easily-accessible and speedy justice. Giving information on the permanent *Lok Adalat*, Khandelwal said that any citizen can present an application regarding public services related to water, air, road, transport services, post and telegraph, telephone, power supply, health and hygiene, hospital, insurance services etc., on which court dispense speedy judgement on the basis of consent or merit and demerits of the grievances.

CHD REPRESENTATIONS

- On January 24, 2006, Shashi Prabha participated in the introductory workshop on complete cleanliness of the district at Chittorgarh.
- During January 16-20, 2006, Satish Kumar Vyas took part in workshop on health issues organised by International Health Organisation (ILO), Patna.
- On February 4-5, 2006, Dhanna Singh Rawat and Madangiri Goswami attended the workshop on AIDS awareness being organised by the State AIDS Control Committee, at Jaipur.
- On February 14-15, 2006, Madan Lal Keer, Ganga Dhadhich and Shiv Singh Chauhan took part in a workshop on Universal Birth Registration organised by IHMR, at Jaipur.
- On February 16-17, 2006, Ganga Dhadhich participated in a meeting on the child marriage eradication under the joint women programme of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Jaipur.
- On March 18, 2006, Dhanna Singh Rawat attended a seminar on the safe motherhood network organised by Centre for Health, Education, Training and Nutrition Awareness (CHETNA), Ahmedabad.
- During March 21-25, 2006, Seema Yagnik participated in the Training of Trainers workshop organised by Reproduction and Health Department, at Chittorgarh.

VISITORS

- On January 03, 2006, C P Meena, Establishment officer, Employees Provident Fund, Bhilwara, inspected CUTS-CHD and expressed happiness over the provident fund process.
- On January 05, 2006, Nitu Shahi, Project Coordinator, Save the Children (UK) Jaipur visited CHD with reference to *Hamara Manch* project.
- On January 09, 2006, 53 students from Athawale College of Social Work and Orange City College, Maharashtra visited CHD under the leadership of Prof N S Kotle and C S Malviya.
- On February 07, 2006, Pallavi Arora from Going to School, New Delhi visited CHD office under 'Star Girls' programme in which she collected case studies of girls who completed their education under deplorable condition in order to get jobs.
- On February 18, 2006, Secretary General of CUTS, Pradeep S Mehta assessed Bhilwara branch of CHD and gathered various project related information.
- On February 22, 2006, Purushottam from *India Today* visited Kawakhera slum of Bhilwara.
- On February 28, 2006, Trivikrama Devi, Quality Assistant Officer, *Mahila Abhivrudhi* Society Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh visited Women Empowerment through SHGs Programme village Barundani in Mandalgarh *panchayat samiti* of Bhilwara District.
- On March 06, 2006, two groups of teachers from Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society (CECOEDECON), Jaipur, visited CHD to assess the working of Child Parliament.
- On March 20, 2006, R K Sharma, CUTS-CART visited CHD for meeting regarding fund raising and documentation activity.

PUBLICATIONS

CUTS-CHD has been engaged in the publication of resource and information materials since 1991. The aim is to disseminate information on issues of people's concern at the grassroots level and to support its interventions by providing knowledge-based modalities. Some select publications are:

Books and Training Manuals

- Soochna Hi Shakti Hai* (Information is Power)
- Logon Tak Nyaye* (Justice for People)
- Sasakt Nari Sudrid Samaj* (Empowered Women Robust Society)
- Jaiv Vividhta Ke Samvaahak Guni* (Traditional Healers are the agents of Bio-diversity)
- Alakh Jaga Hai Gaon-Gaon* (Awakening in the Rural India)
- Khuli Khidkian Khule Darwaze* (Open Windows and Open Doors)
- Samooch Ki Kahani Mahilaon Ki Zabaani* (The Success Stories of SHGs by the Women Members: In Process)

