

BATCH OF 2006-2011

GROUP I - PRISON REFORM GROUP

Group Members-

- Abhishek Chopra (2006-03)
- Ananya Bhattacharya (2006-07)
- Ankit Kejriwal (2006-08)
- Ashutosh Kaushik (2006-12)
- Chitra Rentala (2006-47)
- Kalpana Yadav (2006-30)
- Nidhi Malik (2006-40)
- Priyoma Majumdar (2006-45)
- Roshan Santhalia (2006-51)
- Sadhika Jalan (2006-54)
- Shreya Atrey (2006-62)
- Swetali Mohapatra (2006-80)
- Yash Bansal (2006-78)

This group of the class of 2006-2011 worked on prison reforms. They took the Central Jail, Cherlapally, observation homes and special homes at Saidabad and Nimboliadda as their fields of research. They contacted Mr Venkatesh Reddy, District Judge (Chairman, District Legal Services Authority)

The report compares the Cherlapally Jail with the UN Guidelines for a Model Prison under the heads Barracks and Treatment of Prisoners, Availability of Medical Facilities, Opportunities for Education, Quality of Food and Water, Work Opportunity and Labour and Recreation.

Part III of the report details the children's experience in the Saibabad and Nimboliadda homes, detailing the kind of work done by the sewing section, carpentry section, education and vocational section, and the group had found the conditions to be largely satisfactory.

The second report of the same group focused on their efforts to establish a foundational support system for the inmates and the administrators of the Observation Homes which would embrace the task of rendering meaningful assistance on a regular basis. They

attempted to set up communication channels between the administrators of the Observation Homes and NGOs committed to the upliftment of child rights and child welfare. They gathered that what the homes need is constant monitoring and assistance from outside sources who can aid the process of enhancing the quality of life of the inmates which includes better education facilities, health care and enhanced infrastructural as well as emotional support.

The foremost factor that the group thought was that each year there would be a transition which might create a disconnect in the efforts undertaken. NGOs too have their own difficulties in terms of funds. The group felt that future legal aid teams would need to follow up and ensure that the NGOs deliver what they claim to.

GROUP II - RELIEF AND REHABILITATION GROUP

Group Members -

- Amrita Mukherjee (2006-06)
- Choden Bhutia (2006-15)
- Divyang Thakur (2006-21)
- Jayeeta Kar (2006-28)
- Satshya Ann Mathew (2006-59)
- Shraddha Swarup (2006-61)
- Simar Barnala (2006-64)
- Tripti Dhar (2006-70)
- Varun Tandon (2006-75)
- Ved Bansod (2006-76)

Rather than take up the conventional Kukatpalli land rehabilitation, this group formed an association with organizations like the Andhra Pradesh Red Cross and the MVF who are engaged in relief and rehabilitation activities. They aimed at providing food and safe drinking water, providing amenities to children and pregnant women, first aid facility, relief measures just after disaster, water purification, medical assistance, psychological assistance, and providing of kitchen tools and implements.

The group contacted the internship co-ordinator for MVF- Mr Arvind. They were briefed on the kind of work the organization does in relation to short-term camps, children in the 5-8 age

group, children in the 9-14 age group, motivation centres, residential bridge course camps etc. The group also personally interacted with children in the camps.

The group was assigned work on the Right to Education Act. Their areas of work were formulating a questionnaire which should focus on awareness and the extent of implementation of the Act, conduct household visits in the Ranga Reddy District and interview people on the basis of the questionnaire, help in organizing public meetings, rallies and conduct awareness raising programmes, establish networks with civil society organizations, visit other NGOs and encourage them to replicate the MVF model, and hold meetings with government departments and local authorities to build capacities in order to implement the various provisions of the RTE Act.

The Red Cross Office didn't have an exclusive cell dealing with relief and rehabilitation, so they were appointed to meet the Chairman (Justice A Lakshman Reddy), who discussed the various programmes of the Red Cross in Andhra Pradesh: disaster management, Tsunami Short Term Recovery Plan, Youth Peer Education Programme and Humanitarian Pandemic Preparedness Project.

The challenges faced by the group were the fact that Organizations are sceptical about entering into institutional tie-ups. Discussions need to be initiated with the top-level officers, and it takes several weeks to convince them of the merits of the group's proposals. The paper work also taken a lot of time. Added to this is the problem of changing officers.

The group eventually recommended that this work be handed over to the Teach India group since a large part of the work of MVF deals with education.

GROUP III - IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT SCHEMES GROUP

Group Members -

- Abhijit Kumar Pandey (2006-01)
- Ajey Sangai (2006-05)
- Dhruv Sharma (2006-20)
- Jaya Bhanu Rao (2006-27)
- Naveen Rana (2006-38)
- Shreya Parikh (2006-42)
- Raadhika Gupta (2006-46)

- Rohan Singh (2006-50)
- Sangram K Malik (2006-57)
- Tashi Wangmo (2006-66)
- Y Nikhila Reddy (2006-79)
- Harsh Kabra (2005-26)

This group chose Indira Kranthi Pathakam, Employability of the Disabled, Indramma Housing Scheme, Rajiv Aarogyasri Community Health Insurance Scheme (Aarogyasri I and II) and the White Ration Camp as the schemes to be observed.

As regards Indira Kranthi Pathakam (IKP), the group observed that the members were extremely happy with the scheme. There was transparency in working due to the efforts of Mr Ramu and Ms Vanita Reddy. Through their interaction with members of SERP and the members of SHGs, VOs, and MMS of the Shameerpet Mandal, the group discovered that the IKP has been a successful scheme. The microfinance aspect of the scheme had significantly helped in the reduction of rural poverty by giving the beneficiaries a source of income which they could use to earn a sustained livelihood. However, there were problems in implementation such as alleged siphoning off of funds, and concerns of whether the loans granted were helping women's empowerment. So the group examined the records to see the reasons why the loans were sought by women. They found that the loans were used for supporting children as well as for setting up their grocery stores etc.

As for the Indiramma Housing Scheme, the group drafted applications for persons and forwarded to the Praja Darbar. The problems with the scheme were the fact that since most of the people availing the scheme are Below Poverty Line families, their ability to generate enough money to be able to build the foundation of the house on their own becomes a concern. They don't get any money before the foundation is built, and this would force them to go to money lenders, thereby perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

As for the Aarogyasri Scheme, the group visited an Arogyasri Medical Camp held at Kothoor village. Once there, they interacted with patients, doctors and Aarogyasri officials. The group found that the complaints with the scheme were justified since it takes a consequence based approach rather than a cause-based one. They found the instruments at the camp to be very rudimentary and there was no provision for emergency treatment. A need to spread awareness about first aid, sanitation, physical exercise etc was felt.

The group also looked at the functioning of ration card allotment. The existence of a White Ration Card is vital for any person who wishes to avail the benefits of other government schemes.

The same group then looked at individual complaints regarding the implementation of the white ration card, alternative business model, Pavala Vaddi Scheme, and Indramma Housing Scheme for the next semester.

GROUP IV - TEACH INDIA GROUP

Group Members -

- Aparna Bharadwaj (2006-10)
- Dhammarshini (2006-19)
- Gaurav Garwa (2006-23)
- Govind Ram Meena (2006-24)
- Gyelpo (2006-25)
- Ishana Tripathi (2006-26)
- Kaniskha Mohan Singh Rathore (2006-32)
- Kriti Das (2006-34)
- Prayank Nayak (2006-44)
- Shivam Choudhary (2006-16)
- Tenzing Dorji (2006-69)
- Vaibhav Ganjiwale (2006-73)
- Vaibhav Tomar (2006-74)
- Vikramaditya Singh Malik (2006-77)

This group taught class VI and VII at Srinivas Memorial School and then at Aliabad village. They took classes in Mathematics, English, Science and Social Studies and Hindi. Performance of the students was evaluated at the end of every week.

As for teaching at Aliabad village, the group contacted Mr B Ramu, the CMO. They assembled 15 children and taught them free of cost. The teaching methods used combined creativity and learning. Activities such as Prop Show, Colour and Paint Exercises, Audio Visual Clips, Basic Hygiene Drills etc.

The group recommended the establishment of a Teach India Society at NALSAR, so that juniors too can volunteer and execute continuous programmes.

GROUP V - LEGAL AID CELL AND LEGAL LITERARY GROUP

Group Members -

- Abhilash Damodaran (2006-02)
- Deepika Sharma (2006-18)
- Erina Chatterjee (2006-22)
- Jyotika Kaushik (2006-29)
- Khalyaan Kharunakaran (2006-33)
- Neha Meena (2006-39)
- Paridhi Chouhan (2006-41)
- Paushali De (2006-43)
- Runjhun Noopur (2006-52)
- Samiksha Gupta (2006-55)
- Shreya Kumar (2006-63)
- Sourav Saha (2006-65)

This group took it upon themselves to make the legal aid cell functional. They gathered material from the library as well as from the Internet for collecting information that might help the common people. They primarily encountered land disputes, matrimonial disputes and family property disputes.

They set up the legal aid website where those seeking legal assistance can fill in the application form and submit it directly. They brought out the legal aid newsletter for the purposes of disseminating information to officials of the State Legal Services Authority so that their commonality of interests could bring them together.

The group chose prison reforms and relief and rehabilitation as the two core specific areas for generating awareness. They met officials such as the Secretary of the State Legal Services Authority, the Sarpanch of the village, Circle Inspector etc; which gave them an insight into the procedural difficulties that a legal matter might run into. They made a field visit to Lalgiri Malakpet to make case studies and forward them to the State Legal Services Authority.

GROUP VI - THE LAND RIGHTS LEGAL AID TEAM

Group Members -

- Aparna Bharadwaj (2006-10)
- Dhammarshini (2006-19)
- Gaurav Garwa (2006-23)
- Govind Ram Meena (2006-24)
- Gyelpo (2006-25)
- Ishana Tripathi (2006-26)
- Kanishka Mohan Singh Rathore (2006-32)
- Kriti Das (2006-34)
- Prayank Nayak (2006-44)
- Shivam Choudhary (2006-16)
- Tenzing Dorji (2006-69)
- Vaibhav Ganjiwale (2006-73)
- Vaibhav Tomar (2006-74)
- Vikramaditya Singh Malik (2006-77)

The first land rights program of the group was about land disputes in the Kesavaram Village, and the second task was checking the implementation of the Government scheme called 'Abhyastham' in the same village. They took the help of the RDI (Rural Development Institute) for the former and discovered that the awareness of the villagers regarding the latter was low.

For their land dispute task, they confined themselves primarily to issues relating to title. They made trips to the Mandal Office Shameerpet so as to get acquainted with the prevailing land rights situation in the Mandal.

The Abhayastham scheme was meant to give all women Self Help Group members life-long pension providing financial security in their old age. The team contacted Mr G Ramu, Assistant Project Manager, Shameerpet Mandal Office. The team aimed to study the impact of the scheme at the ground level, educate people about the benefits of the scheme, organize legal literacy programs, and provide training or vocational education to these women so that they can have self-employment opportunities.

The team observed that the villages don't have any government spokesperson to inform them of the benefits of the scheme, and that the women themselves weren't very eager to get involved in the scheme owing to familial pressures etc. They felt the need to increase awareness regarding the scheme amongst the villagers and offered suggestions regarding the implementation of the same.

GROUP VII - RELIEF AND REHABILITATION GROUP

Group Members -

- Ankita Sangwan (2006-09)
- Chenchu Om (2006-14)
- Namgay Om (2006-37)
- Kanika Sachdeva (2006-31)
- Richa Dutta (2006-48)
- Samridha Neupane (2006-56)
- Tavishi Garg (2006-67)
- Tshering Dorji (2006-71)
- Tsering Pem (2006-72)

The group visited the GHMC office and discovered that there has been very slow progress by the government in catering to the needs of the rehabilitated slums. They chose the Nav Nirman Nagar Basti for study. Kukatpally, where the bastis were rehabilitated, is also claimed to have been rehabilitated by the officials of the GHMC, but the team discovered that this was not the case.

The team met Smt Siva Parvathi, Addl Commissioner UCD, Dr Sameer Sarma IAS Commissioner, GD Priyadarshini Addl Commissioner UCD and some project officers. Field visits showed them how there was a lack of basic amenities at Kukatpally and how the displaced inhabitants found it difficult to get employment.

The group's task focused on making the Self Help Groups truly self-sufficient. They tried to make sure that the displaced inhabitants were given legal aid in some form so as to enable them to voice their opinions to the officials. They went to the GHMC office and enabled a grievance airing session between the aggrieved persons and the officials.

The challenges faced by the team were Government officials not taking them seriously as they were mere law students, language barriers and the officials not being available when they went to meet them.

GROUP VIII - LOK ADALAT AND UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION GROUP

Group Members -

- Amrita Mukherjee (2006-06)
- Choden Bhutia (2006-15)
- Divyang Thakur (2006-21)
- Jayeeta Kar (2006-28)
- Satshya Ann Mathew (2006-59)
- Shraddha Swarup (2006-61)
- Simar Barnala (2006-64)
- Tripti Dhar (2006-70)
- Varun Tandon (2006-75)
- Ved Bansod (2006-76)

The group attended sessions of the Lok Adalats organized by the Andhra Pradesh Legal Services Authority and attempted to set up a Lok Adalat at NALSAR. They contacted Justice Venkateshwara Reddy, a retired District Judge who was the presiding officer of the Lok Adalats in the Ranga Reddy District.

On attending the sessions, the group discovered how a Lok Adalat is different from the regular courts. The group wasn't able to set up a Lok Adalat in NALSAR because of the sudden transfer of Justice Reddy.

The group's second task was to observe the functioning of the Andhra Pradesh State Human Rights Commission. The kinds of cases that they saw while sitting through the proceedings were related to Custodial Death and Torture, and subsistence allowance. They discovered that while some cases were genuine; others were mere allegations. The group prepared case briefs for every case they sat through.

The group also attempted to set up a NALSAR University Press (NUP) but the plan could not be executed due to paucity of time and funds. The group then prepared a booklet on the Property Rights of Women in India, which was annexed to the report.