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Institute *for* Social Democracy

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Flat No. 110, Numberdar House
62-A, Laxmi Market, Munirka
New Delhi-110067, INDIA
Phone & Telefax : 091-11-26177904
Email : notowar.isd@gmail.com
Website : www.isd.net.in

In-co-operation with

Bread for the World - Protestant Development Service

P. O. Box 40144
D-10061 Berlin
Federal Republic of Germany
www.info.brot-fuer-die-welt.de

MISEREOR

Catholic Central Office
for Development and EB
PO Box 10 15 45,
52015 Aachen, Germany

Written and Edited

Babita Negi and Ravneet

Illustrations and Cover Design

Ravneet and Surender Singh

MESSAGE *from* The DESK



AS we try to recover from the Covid crisis, uncertainties loom large as new variants emerge and bring along the fear of how it will affect us all. Despite these hurdles ISD has continued steadily on its path of working for a peaceful, harmonious and inclusive society. Last one year was a mixed bag of reaching out to those in crisis from Covid and of re-planning our interventions given the changed contexts we now face. Adapting to the changed context is imperative to be able to work and stay relevant to the needs of society one is addressing through its work. While ISD committed itself to provide help in the form of food and other essential supplies, our vision of working on shared heritage did not get blurred in the changed circumstances.

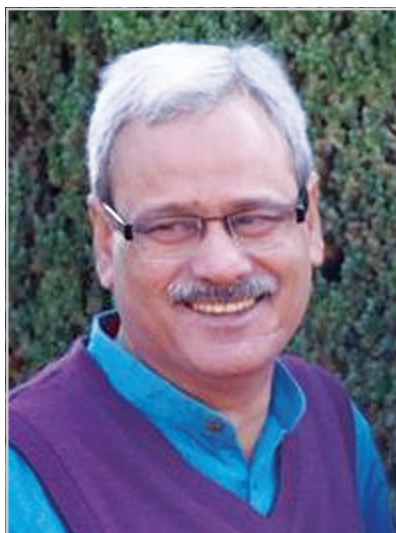
Through our interventions like revival of lost and dying forms of Composite Heritage, theme based capacity building workshops, meaningful engagement with women, youth and children, research on the shared heritage of different regions, community interaction and engagement for understanding the harsh realities of hatred and violence we all face, we have been able to build a consistent and strong process for dialogue, exchange, learning, exploring and inclusive safe space for people to come together. The more we reach out to the community at large the more we feel the need to dive in deeper. The essence of working on peace and harmony is staying rooted to the ground realities with more people as well as making consistent efforts towards structural changes that can help is long lasting positive change.

In our experience so far, it is a delicate balance between intervention for Key people and More people, for Inter-personal changes and Structural changes. It can be overwhelming to engage at the community level, to match the needs and scale of engagement and the limitations an organisation has. Similarly, striving to bring positive structural changes can get frustrating and exhausting given the complexities of making things work in a rigid, bureaucratic system. Organisations often find themselves struggling with striking the right balance and more importantly to even recognize the need for such a balance. ISD has been able to see its work and strategies in the light of Reflecting for Peace Practices approach. Our experiences have generated critical lesson for us and tend to guide our future strategies.

Shruti

INSTITUTE *for*

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY



Institute for Social Democracy came into existence in the backdrop of unprecedented violent conflict that South Asia has witnessed over several decades. Now they have become a routine affair. Thousands of women, men and children fell victim to this madness. ISD was established by late Dr. Khurshid Anwar and its work on Composite Heritage was his brainchild. ISD has chosen Composite Heritage as a tool for conflict transformation and violence prevention as no other organisation has yet taken it up. Composite Heritage is chosen as a tool, because of the fact that irrespective of the caste, religion and gender every individual relates to it. It belongs to masses, not an individual. The initial objective of ISD was to provide a common platform for groups and individuals committed to secularism and democracy, to explore and affirm Composite Heritage as a basis for peace and democracy. With this objective in mind, we initiated our intervention through the perspective building and capacity building on the context of conflict and bringing Composite Heritage as a tool to restore Peace, Harmony and Democracy. Through our interventions, we learnt that there is almost total lack of peace movements in the context of sectarian violent and non-violent conflict such as communal, caste, ethnic, linguistic and regional conflicts. In sub-continent, there is a movement for peace when it comes to war and nuclear race issues. There is also a strong and significant feminist movement but when it comes to conflicts mentioned above, our efforts become only reactive. We assume that there is peace because there is no visible conflict. We remain until and unless we are confronted with violent conflicts. Once the violent conflict is invisible, we again assume that there is peace. The biggest lesson that we learnt through these years is that the absence of violent conflict does not mean peace. We also learnt that there are always sources of tension present in the society and they become visible as and when the forces behind the sources become proactive. On the contrary, we also realize that in a given society there are always "Local Capacities for Peace" present. Though we always require them to remain on the surface and help to keep peace and harmony intact we hardly become proactive. During our journey we have evolved not just as an organisation but also the concept of Composite Heritage has evolved and new dimensions are added to it.

VISION and MISSION



VISION

To build a social structure based on peace, harmony and democratic values while accepting social and cultural diversity and establishing dialogue with mutual respect.

MISSION

- To identify, understand and collect, different forms of Composite Heritage at community level, through research and dialogues.
- Mainstreaming of the concept of Composite Heritage through different mediums for the sake of democratic values.
- To encourage the youth, like-minded groups and different peace networks for contributing on peace and harmony by enhancing their knowledge and social analysis.

BELIEF

ISD believes in establishing a dialogue with different social groups and connects with them with full respect towards their social and cultural aspirations and without doubting their intentions. ISD dreams of building secular and democratic society based on human development and dignity of human rights.

ISD - ITS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE and AREA of WORK



ISD is a trust and has its own organisational structure. Its central unit, which outlays and decides the outline of its programmes is based at Delhi, which also happens to be its main office. Programmes and interventions of ISD are spread across at many levels. With the support of its Delhi and field staff ISD has adopted the structure of adhocracy, in which different cells are created and the anchors of each cell works accordingly.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE and AREA of WORK : ADHOCRACY



AREA of WORK



ISD directly and indirectly is engaged in enriching and enhancing the concept of Composite Heritage, democracy and peace building in India with support of its network partner, likeminded people, comrades and partners through publication and workshop medium.

Directly

ISD works at Kullu and Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, Allahabad and Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh, Mukteshwar and Nainital in Uttarakhand, Kaithal in Haryana, Jamshedpur in Jharkhand, Bandipora, Pulwama, Srinagar, Tral and Samba in Jammu & Kashmir.

Indirectly

Through Publications

Through publications- ISD has reached out to Andaman, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu - Kashmir, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

Indirectly

Through Workshops

ISD has shared its concept of Composite Heritage with diverse groups in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu - Kashmir, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, North-East, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Note:

All activities of Composite Heritage at Jammu and Kashmir are supported and funded by the Misereor.

THEMES WITHIN the FRAMEWORK of COMPOSITE HERITAGE and LOCAL CAPACITIES for PEACE



Our work is not just restricted to engage with Composite Heritage only on a conceptual level. It, however, is a theoretical framework which informs our work at the grassroots level too. The work also entails capacitating our target groups so that they can become self-reliant. The following are some of the areas that we cover under the aegis of Composite Heritage-

REVIVAL of COMPOSITE HERITAGES

Reviving lost Composite Heritages is equally important as recognizing them. ISD, with the help of communities, recognizes as well as revives forms of Composite Heritage through various activities. Traditional food, games and folk art/songs etc. are in the process of being revived in our field areas.

AWARENESS BUILDING PROGRAMS

Awareness programs, even though non-tangible or quantifiable make an important constituent of any community-based work. In this regard, ISD, through the help of popular material and theatre workshops, has been trying to build a strong understanding of issues pertaining to society, social justice, rights etc. amongst its stakeholders. Composite Heritage has been underlined as an important tool in building a peaceful society.

EDUCATION

Education, through alternative means/ways can be extremely helpful in building awareness in communities. It can be a useful tool to reduce negative aspects of society while enhancing skills. Education, in the context of culture and tradition, also works as a binding force between people.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

It's important to engage with the issue of gender discrimination and gender-based violence, especially with the youth. We have been trying to engage with the help of workshops, trainings with communities in general and the youth in particular. The necessity of engaging the latter lies in the fact that they play an important role in disseminating ideas. The topics which we cover



through our trainings and workshops are as followed; gender discrimination, eve-teasing, domestic violence, gender-based violence, witch-hunting, rights and duties etc. We also ensured that women took part actively. We also helped form self-help groups so as to provide a space for women and youth to be self-reliant. The effort was also to illuminate negative forms of Composite Heritage.

CAPACITY BUILDING of YOUTH, LEADERS and WOMEN

Capacity building programs and workshops have been conducted in different field areas for development of youths and women. These programs are aimed to capacitate the target groups so that they can take leadership roles in their respective areas.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

The communities, that we are working with, have been trying to implement traditional methods of farming which are not only sustainable but also contribute towards reviving forms of Composite Heritages. The traditional agricultural practices are organically aligned with nature, thus contributing to a process of environment protection.



EXPLORING NOVEL IDEAS

by ADAPTING NEW STRATEGIES



We strive towards using various methods to illustrate the importance of Composite Heritage as a tool to build a peaceful society, which are as followed-

1) **RESEARCH as A TOOL to UNCOVER COMPOSITE HERITAGES**

ISD has been working on local Composite Heritages through research work since last year. The aim of the research cell entails using research as a methodology to develop a nuanced understanding of shared heritages while also bridging the gap between us and ISD's trainees and comrades.

The process entails inviting proposals from our trainers which underline Composite Heritage of their respective fields. The proposals undergo a scrutiny by the members of the research cell to gauge their potential and a topic is selected after a unanimous decision. Himachal, Assam, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh etc. are some of the areas where ISD has undertaken research with its trainer partners. The following are the topics which were covered in the last one year.

2) **GROUPS of SOLIDARITY-YOUTH and WOMEN's GROUPS** **as AGENTS of PEACE**

Women and youngsters can play a fundamental role in disseminating any knowledge. Keeping this in mind, ISD formed youth and women's groups so as to strengthen the concept of Composite Heritage at the grassroot level. The youth play a significant role in bringing two generations on the same platform so incorporating their role within our work was considered important. ISD formed several youth groups in its field area so as to engage them and providing them the tools to build a society based on values of peace and harmony. Women historically have been harbingers of peace and sensitivity so formation of women's groups was deemed necessary, which in turn would give them the space to grow individually as well as on the community level.

ISD has been conducting workshops and trainings for its women's and youth groups. The workshops/trainings can be categorized as following—workshop on Composite Heritage, Gender-sensitization workshops, DO NO HARM- LCP, training for Conflict Transformation Tools etc. This also includes meetings on issues related to social and political significance. These meetings also help in developing critical thought process amongst the participants which can subsequently help them in carving out a distinct identity for themselves on progressive ideals. Both the groups have been playing a very important role in resolving conflicts at the community level while simultaneously restructuring their respective regions in a more progressive way.

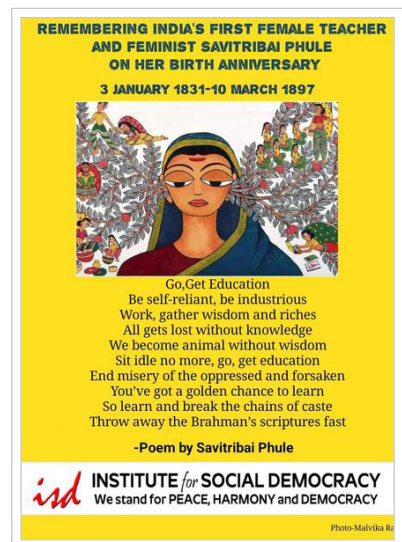
Through our work at the grassroot, we realized that the best way to engage the youth is by involving them in activities such as theatre, street plays, exposure visits etc., which not only makes the activities more interesting, it also ensures participants' regular presence. Even though the Covid-19 induced restrictions dampened our planned activities to a great extent, however our staff worked diligently to ensure our work continues.

In Allahabad, efforts have been made to engage youth groups through the medium of theatre. Various theatre workshops have been organized as it gives the participants the space to explore themselves and their talents. Besides theatre workshops, youth groups' exposure visits to ISD's other fields have been made an integral part of our work's methodology as it helps widen the participants' horizon.

In Jaunpur, Himachal and Jharkhand, several workshops have been organized to inculcate critical thought process. The workshops have been around themes on Composite Heritage, gender, gender roles/gendered division of labor, Local capacity for peace (LCP, henceforth).

3) UTILIZING INTERNET as A MEDIUM to CIRCULATE OUR IDEAS

The strength of social media as a tool to spread ideas cannot be denied any longer. It plays a significant role in reaching audiences which otherwise wouldn't have been possible. We, too, incorporate this method in our work to share the ideals that we stand by and believe in. We regularly make pamphlets/posters and hold online meetings on relevant issues. We have been active on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to regularly catalogue our activities.



A BRIEF REPORT of PROJECTS and ACTIVITIES



A) ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED at The GRASSROOT LEVEL

- In all our fields, we conducted gender-sensitization workshops in which we discussed gender specific roles, gendered upbringing and knowledge production, women's rights and recognizing the amount of labor done by them on an everyday basis. The aim of these activities is to mobilize the youth to understand the relevance of gender equality.
- We conducted theatre workshops and street plays across our fields. These informal spaces help the participants to ensure their presence fully while simultaneously giving us the space to critically engage with them on socio-political issues.
- In Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, we conducted meetings/workshops with farmers on organic farming and traditional agricultural practices as forms of Composite Heritage. A women farmers' convention was also organized at Inter-college in Bheedapani.
- In all our fields, we celebrate International Women's Day, Holi, Independence Day, Ambedkar Jayanti etc. Apart from these, we, along with communities, celebrate region specific festivals such as Kajri Utsav in Jaunpur, Vishwa Adivasi Diwas in Jharkhand, Chetru Vith in Himachal Pradesh etc.
- To mainstream the concept of Composite Heritage, we organize meetings/seminars/workshops in all our fields, i.e., Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir, Jammu, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand. The activities involve various stakeholders such as village heads, communities, journalists, youth and women groups or revival of bonds within communities so as to invoke a collective harmonious past. The primary aim of the activities remain is to build an understanding of the importance of communal harmony and how communities, on a collective level, can promote democratic values.
- We have been organizing various cultural programmes across our fields, especially after the Covid-19 induced lockdown so as to give the communities the opportunity to explore themselves. In Sonari, near Jamshedpur, we organized a Yuva Mahotsav to mainstream the concepts of Composite Heritage through cultural activities. In Mirjaheed, we conducted a cultural workshop through which themes of communal harmony were explored. Another cultural programme was conducted in Dhollian to create a shared space for communities facing inter-caste conflicts. One more objective of it was to explore the importance of traditional songs/dances in our everyday lives.

B) CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS

- In Jaunpur, Himachal Pradesh, Allahabad, Jharkhand, Machhli Sheher, Jammu (Kathua) and Kashmir (Bathnoor, Tral) we conducted workshops under Do No Harm (DNH) and Local Capacity for Peace (LCP) with our youth and women's groups. The trainings were also held with NGO partners and CBO leaders in Jaunpur.
- In Jaunpur, Machhli Sheher and Himachal Pradesh, we conducted cluster level meetings on Gender/LCP/DNH/Gender/Conflict Transformation with youth and women's groups.
- In Rangpuri Pahadi Basti, Delhi, we conducted one day art and cultural program.
- In Jharkhand, street plays were organized in three villages under LCP programme.
- A webinar was organized on ISD's foundation day, titled 'Shared Culture and Struggles-Farming a way of life and related laws. In Jharkhand, a one-day seminar was held on LCP.
- Kajri festival was organized in Machhli Sheher.
- A three-day social analysis workshop was conducted in Lucknow.
- In Bathnoor, we did a gender sensitization workshop with our women and youth groups. The aim was to underline gendered experiences and how they affect our lives differently.
- An activity was done with our women group trying to revive traditional skills, like farming, medicines, food etc.
- With children in Bathnoor, we conducted a meeting gauging their understanding of Kashmiri proverbs.
- In Bathnoor, Tral, we conducted activity on leadership development with children. The aim of the activity was to develop leadership qualities in children so that they can have control of their lives.



C) EXPOSURE VISITS

Exposure visits can play a fundamental role in widening one's horizon in terms of how one views oneself with relation to the society at large.

- The youth group from Allahabad participated in a trip to Jharkhand on an educational tour. Since ISD has been working to mainstream Composite Heritage as a concept at the grassroots, a meeting with the youth groups from two different regions would help them in understanding each other's culture. Another visit was to Sumitra nandan pant children's park.
- In Jaunpur, a youth group from Kadanpur village went to Jamuhar Park. As the Covid-19 induced restrictions curtailed everyone's mobility, it was deemed important to give the youth the space to let go of their worries, even for a day. A sports event was organized in Jamuhar Park.
- A group of thirteen farmers from our field area in Uttarakhand went to Aman Sanstha in Chamoli on an educational excursion. The idea was to exchange ideas on traditional farming practices.
- A youth group from Tral and Madwan participated in an exposure visit to Jammu. The aim of the visit was to give the participants the opportunity to visit different place and cultures.
- Another group of women participated in a visit to Mansar. The idea behind the visit was to give the space to recuperate their energies from patriarchal drudgery, even for a day.
- Children and youth of Bathnoor participated in a trip to Pai Mahal, Nishat garden, and Mughal gardens. The aim of the visit was to know more about cultural heritages of Kashmir.
- About 80 members of the youth group went to Chandil. The communities here were dislocated because of the construction of a dam. The motive of the visit was to make the youth group understand the misery of displacement and how it not only affects the communities but also lead to a loss of art and culture.

D) CELEBRATING FESTIVALS and EVENTS

Festivals add a significant value to any society. They teach us the importance of living together in harmony. Similarly remembering people who have played important role in molding society on ideas of justice and equity is equally important. Keeping this in mind, ISD and our field staff make sure that they keep underlining the importance of festivals through our work. The following are some of the festivals and events which were organized by ISD in the last year. It is not an exhaustive list but an overview of our activities in our various fields.

- In Allahabad, International Women's Day, Holi festival, Independence Day were celebrated. The events were marked with playing games, singing songs and performing plays so as to understand the importance of these events in our lives.
- In Jaunpur, Holi Milan programme, Kajri Utsav and meetings on the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi were organized.

- In Jharkhand, events on International Women's Day and Vishwa Adivasi Diwas were organized.
- In Himachal Pradesh, Chetru Vith was organized. Chetru Vith is an annual program of ISD in Himachal Pradesh.
- Vindu Chandan Jayanti was celebrated in Mirjaheed, Bodam.
- Ambedkar Jayanti, May Day and Teej festivals were organized in Haryana and Dholian. The necessity of celebrating these festivals is to invoke a sense of belonging and understanding the contribution of these personalities and dates.
- In Bathnoor, we conducted an activity with children and youth from Shia and Sunni communities so as to further the idea of peace and harmony.
- In Karmullah, we tried reviving the art of 'Dastangoi' with children and youth.
- In Madwan, we did a process of reviving folk songs with women and girls.
- In Bathnoor, we started a revival process of Kashmiri traditional dance 'Rouf.'
- In our fields, we, along with the community members, organize cultural programs which incorporate folk songs, dances. For example, folk songs/traditions like *suhaag*, *rouf*, *kodia*, *pakkha* etc. are some of the folk songs of Kashmir and Jammu regions. *Kajri* comes from Uttar Pradesh and *Ragini* from Haryana.

E) COVID-19 RELIEF DISTRIBUTION

- In Madwan, Tral, Dholian Bari-Brahmana, Barian, Samba and Kathua, we distributed relief packages. We followed a process to gauge the number of families that needed assistance. A telephonic conversation was made with ward councilors and community resource persons to identify beneficiaries which was followed by identifying the most vulnerable families. We faced several difficulties as heavy restrictions had been placed by the government which made taking permissions and restricted our movement.



OUR PROGRESS



The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown forced everyone to alter their strategies. Most of our funds were directed to provide Covid-19 relief packages so as to help communities that had been further marginalized because of the lockdown. However, opening of the lockdown meant that we could step out and begin our work again. Despite of hardships (unavailability of communities as they were trying to recuperate from the losses incurred during the lockdown by working more hours, or the pandemic related restrictions put limitations on when and with whom we could organize our activities), we managed to made progress which is catalogued in the following:

We connected with new partners while also gaining credibility amongst new groups, stakeholders, fellow activists and volunteers during the relief work during the pandemic. It helped us expand our field area in Allahabad, Jharkhand, New Delhi, Jaunpur and Uttarakhand.

Our youth groups are increasingly playing a significant role in strengthening our work. They have not only been exploring themselves, but also are working towards bringing positive change in their respective villages/homes etc. They have been taking initiatives on their own, such as teaching children in their respective villages or helping senior citizens in accessing government schemes and facilities. In Haryana, our youth groups have been campaigning for clean and green villages. Women and farmer groups, who have been attending ISD's activities, have taken initiatives to protect and conserve forest in Uttarakhand for which they were honored by the forest department,

The campaign for Covid-19 appropriate behavior in Allahabad, for example, made an impact during the local elections. The political parties which were campaigning for elections without taking any Covid-19 related precautions, began taking necessary precautions.

Another important example is from Haryana. Women, especially from marginalized identities, have barely any presence in the public realm. Sitting alongside of men is considered a transgression. However, in one of our events, one of our members, a Dalit woman, sat in the front row with the savarnas (communities considered higher/superior in the caste hierarchy). This act, which would have invited violent repercussions otherwise, underlines the assertion that communities from the marginalized communities are showing. On the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti, ISD managed to bring savarnas and dalit communities on the same platform. These examples are a reiteration of the fact that a genuine effort can bring change.

Women have developed small financial committees which help them save money. Because of celebration of events, women have become aware of famous icons which has inspired them to take certain progressive steps. For example, in Jaunpur, after our conversation on Kasturba Gandhi's life, decided to enroll their daughters in Kasturba Gandhi Vidyalaya (a local school).

The communities have now started taking initiatives to preserve forms of Composite Heritage. In Allahabad and Jharkhand, our youth groups took the initiative to learn craft materials. This has not only helped in reviving forms of Composite Heritage, but has also become a source of income for them. In Himachal, the youth groups have begun learning traditional musical instruments from the local artists.



- A) Apart from the above, the following youth groups in field areas have been developed and have participated in various planning meetings and workshops.**

S.No.	FIELD AREA	NUMBER of YOUTH GROUPS FORMED		TOTAL NUMBER of MEMBERS
		NUMBER of YOUTH GROUPS DEVELOPED in THE LAST 1 YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER of YOUTH GROUPS	RECORDED in THIS REPORTING PERIOD
1.	ALLAHABAD (U.P.)	02	06	90
2.	JAUNPUR (U.P.)	04	08	98
3.	HIMACHAL	00	02	30
4.	JHARKHAND	01	06	60
5.	UTTARAKHAND	02	06	63
6.	HARYANA	02	03	35
	TOTAL		31	376

- B) We have been, with the help of our team and communities, been trying to preserve and revive lost forms of cultural heritages. The following is brief overview of the number of forms that we have tried to revive-**

FIELD AREA	Number of Forms of Composite Heritage Revived During The Year Before	Number of Forms of Composite Heritage in The Process of Revival	Total Number of Forms of Composite Heritage That Have Been Documented
ALLAHABAD (U.P.)	06	04	10
JAUNPUR (U.P.)	04	04	08
HIMACHAL	07	04	11
JHARKHAND	02	13	15
UTTARAKHAND	09	08	17
HARYANA	03	03	06
TOTAL	31	36	67

PUBLICATION of POPULAR MATERIAL



Writing as a medium is quite radical as it opens the space to reiterate one's values and bridges the gap between the writer and the reader. Because of the pandemic, we moved all our publication online. Our readership has increased from an earlier number of 3366 to 3945. The following are the newsletters and booklets which we published in the last year.

SAMRATH : (April-June 2021)

This issue of SAMRATH focuses on the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic which shattered the health infrastructure and led to lakhs of deaths. The articles catalogued in the issue also delineate efforts made by individuals as well as communities in not only mitigating the loss during the pandemic but also providing help to each other, for example in finding oxygen cylinders, creating make-shift ambulances or providing ration.

SAMRATH : (July-September 2021)

This issue of SAMRATH is dedicated to the 'World Indigenous Day.' The themes underline the necessity of forming one's own narrative by adivasis. And how the idea of freedom and democracy- can be envisaged through and take an inspiration from- an adivasi culture. The articles illuminate the relation between environment and adivasi culture.

The poetry involved in the issue criticizes the deceitfulness of the humankind and how the native languages are dying. They criticize the catastrophic implications of mainstream development model on the environment and how a symbiotic relationship between humans and the environment has been wrecked in the name of development.

SAMRATH : (October to December 2021)

This issue invokes how fascist regimes reinvent itself and take different shapes. The current socio-political context is an epitome of how fascist ideology manifests itself through state policies, propaganda, media houses etc. However, it is only the collective strength of the people which defies all odds to put up a fight against a fascist regime. This issue dedicates itself to cataloguing articles speaking of various mass movements across South Asia.

SAMRATH : (January to March 2022)

This issue illuminated how Covid-induced economic crisis and subsequent inflation further marginalized already vulnerable sections. The economic crisis depleted employment opportunities. The informal sector has faced severe repercussions and has led to a loss of livelihood to a great extent. The articles in the issue are also indicating towards shrinking democratic spaces and an invocation of a mandated way of being, something which aligns with the majoritarian ideology.

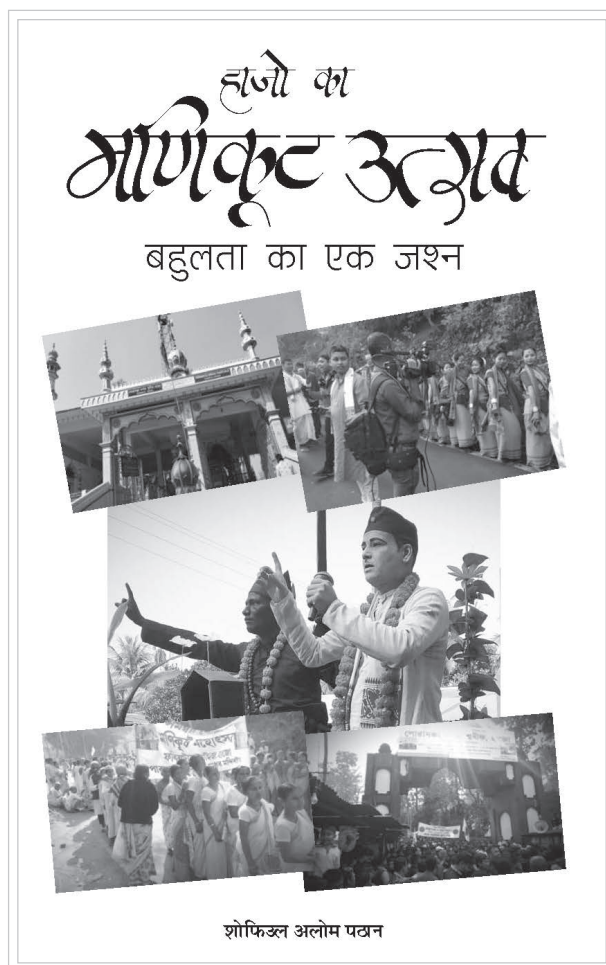
SACH : (April-June 2021)

The editorial of the issue illuminates dual realities of Covid-19 induced distress. On the one hand, it had a disastrous implication for everyone in general and vulnerable communities in particular. It, however, also brought communities/countries together which looked after each other during this period.

The articles underscore how considerable number of people slipped down the poverty line. One article traces the trajectory of adolescent girls post Covid-19 induced lockdowns. The author argues how the adolescent girls, who vehemently fought against patriarchal norms and gender roles to study, had to drop out of schools and become involved in informal labor market to add to their families' meagre incomes.

Another article reveals that more often than not girls, belonging to households even with an access to internet, are not allowed to use any devices. It has put their education in a precarious situation and its devastating effects will take years to be undone.

Certain communities came to bear the burden as carriers of the virus, more than the others, which underlined the 'estrangement' we exhibited even when we claimed to be 'in this together.' The structural barriers the pandemic created for certain communities need to be thought of and consciously tried to be dismantled, if we want a just post-covid world.



SACH : (July to September 2021)

This issue of SACH is dedicated to the 'World Indigenous Day.' The editorial, while cataloguing a number of research articles, mention how the adivasi communities have been facing the brunt of mainstream development model. In the name of 'mainstreaming' and progress, their cultural traditions have been destroyed.

The articles illuminate the pain an indigenous community goes through with the loss of their identity. 35% of protected land across the world come within indigenous territories. Indigenous community's contribution in preservation of nature has now been recognized and they can provide substantial solution to the climate crisis that we all are in.

SACH : (October to December 2021)

This issue of SACH revolves around Social Movements and the importance of shared struggle and solidarity. The articles in this issue catalogue mass movements across South Asia and how communities have fought back resisting repression and inequality. The articles underline how it is the unity of the people which make democracies vibrant. It is the shared struggles which give people the courage to fight. From Chipko movement to Gwadar ko Haqq Do, it is the strength of the people which keep the voices, against oppressive regimes, alive.

SACH : (January to March 2022)

SACH's current issue is an effort to underline the efforts made by indigenous communities to preserve forest lands. Climate change has brought severe repercussions for the planet. The necessity of finding a solution soon is also because the crisis will most certainly lead to conflicts as we have been seeing constant power cuts, scarcity of coal, water etc. However, a narrative which has been gaining traction is that we need to take steps collectively, that an individual effort can only get us so far. The communities need to be involved to move ahead and find a solution. What is important to note, here, is that indigenous communities historically, through their culture and religious practices, have been preserving the environment. Most natural patches near indigenous communities continue to remain safe as their culture and belief system ascribes supreme importance to the environment. The importance they give to their culture and religion which then is extended to the environment can become a pivotal tool to find a solution to the crisis that we find ourselves in.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 93

This booklet looks at Juari, a form of Composite Heritage from Himachal Pradesh. The research explains the emergence of the tradition and how it is based on collective labor. Juari is primarily a community-based practice of helping in each other's work. It is an integral part of the Himachali lifestyle as the community comes together to build houses, in traditional agricultural practices, arranging marriage festivities etc. The research bares visible the interconnectedness of folksongs, folklores, food culture with the practice of Juari. The songs sung during the practice not only consolidate the culture but also keep those who are working refreshed. The research however also underlines the caste, gender and class-based discrimination of the practice. Nonetheless, this doesn't undermine the importance the practice plays in the role of traditional Himachali lifestyle.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 94

Shofiul Alom Pathan's research work titled 'Hajo ka Manikoot Utsav,' is 94th issue in booklets published by ISD. Their work elaborates on an issue which we haven't yet touched upon. The work is on a festival called Manikoot at Hajo in Assam. The work delineates the collective cultural history of Assam, the importance of Hajo in written and oral traditions, religious institutions at Hajo and their relevance. It also underlines the importance of the above-mentioned festival and how it informs the Assamese history of a composite heritage.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 95

This booklet is an amalgamation of Urdu poetry which can be taken as representatives of anti-colonial struggle. This text underlines an important role that Urdu has played in the fight for independence. It includes poems of 28 poets and serves the necessary role of available texts for the youth.

BOOKLET : SERIES – 96

This booklet is dedicated to, India's first teacher, anti-caste activist, a harbinger of women's empowerment, Savitribai Phule's 125 death anniversary. This booklet is a translated version of a text which was first published in 1966 in Marathi. It traces her trajectory from the time of her birth through her life underlining her characteristics, views and commitments. Five of her poems have also been incorporated in the text.

OUR TEAM

Board

Dr. Mohammad Azhar
Mr. Qamar Agha
Dr. Jayant Kumar
Ms. Bhasvati Chakravarty

Delhi

SHRUTI CHATURVEDI : Chief Coordinator and Programme Coordinator
CHANCHAL SINGH : Programme Incharge
SURENDER SINGH : Publication Incharge
NEERAJ SHARMA : Accounts Incharge / Administrative Head
BABITA NEGI : Associate Programme Coordinator
RAVNEET : Programme Associate
TALIB AKHTAR : Programme Associate
SHRADHA RAWAT : Publication Assistant and Documentation Incharge
RANJAN PATRA : Account Assistant
SHRI KRISHAN : Senior Office Assistant

Uttar Pradesh

UTPALA SHUKLA : Field Coordinator
SARITA BHARATIYA : Programme Associate
NISAR AHMAD KHAN : Field Coordinator
PRABHA DEVI : Programme Associate
BEENA DEVI : Cadre
RAGHVENDRA : Cadre

Himachal Pradesh

TEJ SINGH THAKUR : Field Coordinator

Jharkhand

GOUTAM GOPE : Field Coordinator
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Haryana

VIKRAM SINGH : Cadre

Uttarakhand

BIMLA KARKI : Cadre

Jammu & Kashmir

SADAF : Field Coordinator
JAWAHARA BANO : Community Resource Person
PAWAN KUMAR : Community Resource Person



INSTITUTE *for* SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

Flat No. 110, Numberdar House, 62-A, Laxmi Market, Munirka, New Delhi-110067

Phone : 091-11-26177904 / Telefax : 091-11-26177904

E-Mail : notowar.isd@gmail.com / Website : www.isd.net.in