Boys of Yuvajyothi with friars

sisters and brothers with skills in dealing with child sexual abuse (See in www.icid.org.in). Furthermore, advocacy on behalf of vulnerable children is continually promoted by building up networks and engaging in dialogue with Government and non-Governmental organisations.

Women in disadvantaged situations are being empowered to challenge gender violence and exploitation and to insist on gender equality and more political participation. This is done through the formation and facilitation of women's groups, socio-legal training, skills building and assistance in acquiring livelihood opportunities, along with the facilitation of dialogue in families and communities.

Dominican Sisters of the Presentation: Livelihood project for tribal women

Disadvantaged indigenous communities are being empowered to strengthen their political participation and to be accepted as integral and equal members of society. This is done through formation about their rights and self-governance, assistance in accessing social protection schemes and legal support, the facilitation of dialogue amongst them, and through networking and collaborating with Governmental and non-Governmental organisations.

Appeal to the Dominican Family for solidarity with our brothers and sisters in India who are promoting peace and an end to violence and exploitation against children, women and indigenous (tribal) communities.

To show solidarity, Dominicans worldwide are urged to take the following actions:

1. To organise at least one Prayer Vigil and Solemn Eucharist for peace in India and solidarity with victims of violence and exploitation - children, women and indigenous (tribal) communities.

2. To incorporate this focus on peace in India into our ordinary Advent preaching and to diffuse this as far as possible through the media of your entity.

3. To invite and encourage all artists within the Order (painters, photographers, poets, musicians, ...) to contribute towards the process of peace, safety and empowerment at the local and global levels by producing a work of art.

4. To make a financial contribution to the projects, ***Project Bloom*** and ***Safe Childhood***, to support and strengthen the promotion and defence of children's rights by the Dominican Family in India.

HOW TO SEND CONTRIBUTIONS?

Financial Contributions

Account Name	Indian Centre for Integrated Development
Account Number	13390100062926
Bank	The Federal Bank LTD
Address	HN 576, Yashwant Apartment, Near Central Mall, East High Court Road, Nagpur – 440010 Maharashtra State; India
IFSC Code	FDRL0001339
Swift Code	FDRLINBBIBD

Works of Art

Write to the General Curia
Promoter for Justice and Peace
un@curia.op.org

General Information

fr Herald D'Souza
harryop@gmail.com;
Tél: +91 90494 73743

Union of St. Catherine of School Missionaries with tribal community

Dominican Month for Peace

1 DECEMBER 2019 ——— 1 JANUARY 2020

SOLIDARITY WITH DOMINICANS IN INDIA

Children praying for peace

The **Annual Dominican Month for Peace** is focused in 2019 on **India**. In 2017 we showed our solidarity with Dominicans promoting the national Peace Accord especially involving peasants in Colombia; and in 2018 we supported our brothers and sisters struggling for democracy and peace through credible elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Now we turn to another region and we are directing our Dominican solidarity to India, a country which, in recent years, has experienced considerable growth and development.

However, despite such development, many marginalised and vulnerable sections of society continue to be victims of increasing violence and atrocities. Amongst these, Dominicans are particularly working alongside abused and violated children, women and indigenous (tribal) people in their yearnings for peace and recognition. By supporting them, we also want to join our efforts to those of the universal Church with regard to youth (after the Synod on Youth in 2018) and indigenous people (alongside the Synod on Amazonia in 2019).

Rally of tribal children for equality of girl child: Dominican Sisters of the Presentation

THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN INDIA

Children under the age of 18 comprise 37% of India's population. Many of them experience deprivation such as lack of access to basic education, nutrition or health care. In addition, many are subjected to various forms of abuse, neglect, violence, and maltreatment which dominate their childhood experience. According to the National Crime Bureau Report (NCRB), in 2015-2016 there were 32,973 cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act including 19,765 cases of child rape, 12,226 cases of sexual assault, 934 cases of sexual harassment and 47 cases of use of children for pornography. Additional forms of abuse include domestic abuse, child trafficking and child labour. It is estimated that, linked to poverty and other social structures of the society, there are around 10.1 million working children between 5-14 years of age. This accounts for 3.9% of the total child population, and of these children, 26.0% are used as peasants/cultivators, 32.9% as agricultural labourers, 5.2% as household industry workers, and 35.8% as other workers (Census, 2011).

Further violations of child rights, legitimised by cultural practices and customs deeply rooted in the male-dominant patriarchal society, involve child marriage, of which 326 incidences were reported in 2015-16 (NCRB, 2016), and gender discrimination, which has created significant gender disparity. This is reflected in the preference for providing educational opportunities for the male child. The perception of girl children as a burden to the family also leads to sex selective abortion which has resulted in an unequal sex ratio in the country with 933 females per 1000 males (Census, 2011).

Children's Parliament: Dominican Sisters of the Presentation

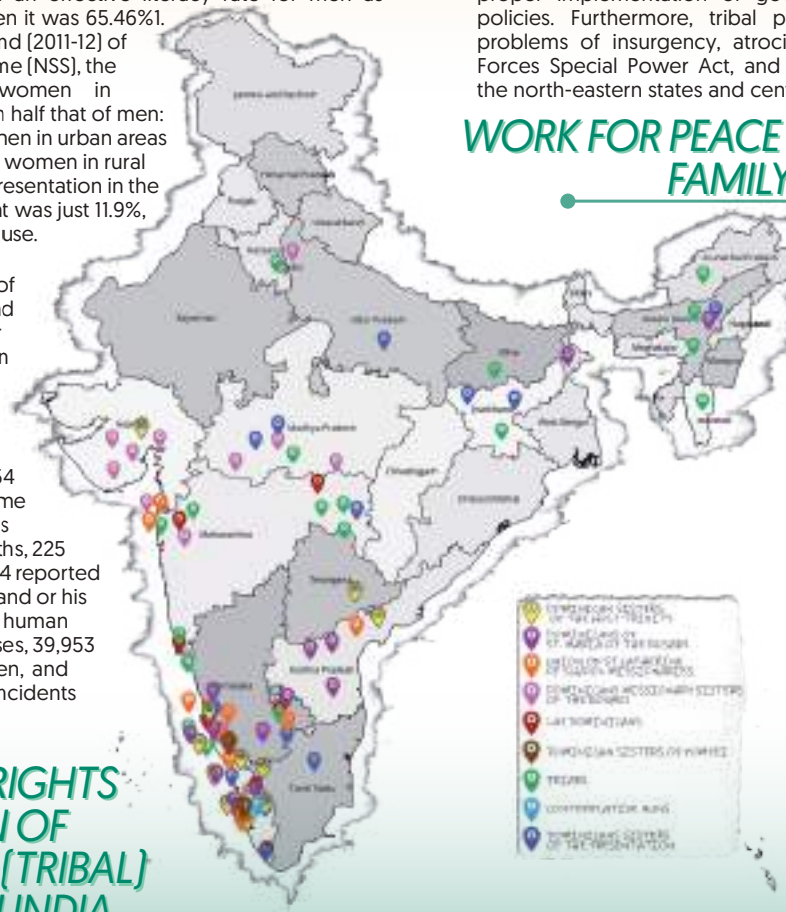
THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA

Continuing the experience of girl children, women, who comprise nearly half the population of India, suffer social and economic discrimination and lack of social liberty with a dominant life experience of oppression, restrictions, violence and exploitation. While they play a vital role in managing the family and contributing to the family economy, their contribution goes unrecognised as they are treated as subservient to males. Deprived of education, equal opportunities for productive expression and political decision-making, largely confined indoors and subjugated relentlessly, women continue to face grave violations of rights.

Girls in waste picking being counselled in group in ICID

Census 2011 revealed an effective literacy rate for men as 82.14% whereas for women it was 65.46%1. According to the 68th round (2011-12) of the National Service Scheme (NSS), the participation rate of women in employment was less than half that of men: 54.6% men and 14.7% women in urban areas and 54.3% men and 24.8% women in rural areas. In 2014, women representation in the Lower House of Parliament was just 11.9%, and 11.4% in the Upper House.

The persistence of patriarchal social norms and inter and intra gender hierarchies leads to women being exposed to a continuum of violence in the home and in society throughout their life cycle. There was a total of 338,954 reported incidences of crime against women in 2016. This included 7,628 dowry deaths, 225 cases of acid attack, 110,434 reported cases of cruelty by a husband or his relatives, 1,183 cases of human trafficking, 39,068 rape cases, 39,953 cases of assault on women, and 27,422 sexual harassment incidents (NCRB, 2016).



THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF INDIGENOUS (TRIBAL) PEOPLE IN INDIA

The tribal population of the country, as per 2011 census, is 10.43 crore (104,3 million), constituting 8.6% of the total population. 89.97% of them live in rural areas and 10.03% in urban areas. Some of the major issues faced by tribals are land alienation, displacement, enforced migration, poverty, indebtedness and exploitation leading to actions of frustration and hopelessness.

Tribal people have always been geographically isolated. Non-tribal investors have taken advantage of their distinctive culture, their weak connection to the broader community and their vulnerable condition to exploit and suppress them for decades and still today. Tribals continue to be displaced due to "development" activities, with grossly inadequate rehabilitation processes. Being peace loving and timid people, they are frequently victims of violence.

In 2015, a total of 6,275 cases of atrocities against persons belonging to Scheduled Tribes were registered in the country. In addition, tribals lack access: to quality education due to unavailability of schools near their habitat as they often live in dense forests and remote areas; to health care centres; and to proper implementation of government welfare schemes and policies. Furthermore, tribal people in north-east India face problems of insurgency, atrocities under cover of the Armed Forces Special Power Act, and never ending tensions between the north-eastern states and central government.

WORK FOR PEACE OF THE DOMINICAN FAMILY IN INDIA

The Dominican Family in India (DFI) comprises 159 Friars, 452 Sisters, 5 Nuns, 143 Lay Dominicans, and 109 Dominican Youth. Since the early 1990s, the DFI has been working unabatedly among the marginalised and disadvantaged sections of society, especially with children (7,000), women (3,500) and indigenous rural communities (11,000) in their quest for dignity, justice and peace, by accompanying them and assisting them to access their rights and protection.

Through many and diverse awareness and sensitisation programmes in families, schools and communities, the DFI is trying to create safe environments and safe neighborhoods where children can be protected from exploitation and their rights safeguarded. Many children are being rescued from exploitative situations and provided with emotional, medical and legal support to enable secure childhood development. A prime example of this is an initiative, ***Project Bloom***, of Dominican friars in collaboration with Dominican Sisters of the Presentation and Dominican Laity in the Yuvajyothi Children's Home of the Indian Centre for Integrated Development (ICID) in Nagpur, which rescues street children or those found begging or rummaging in waste. In addition, all the Dominican entities in India are developing a training project, ***Safe Childhood***, to equip