

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2024

Two-Days Training on Resource Mobilization: On November 7th and 8th, SIGN organized a two-day training program on Resource Mobilization at the Social Development Centre's Conference Hall in Ranchi. A total of 37 participants from seven



diocesan social service societies and five religious organizations benefited from this session. The training was facilitated by Fr. Anil William

Crasta, the Assistant Executive Director of Caritas India, who served as the resource person. The training covered a range of essential topics, including: **Social Analysis:** Understanding societal dynamics and their impact on fundraising. **Compliance for Fundraising:** Ensuring adherence to legal and organizational standards. **Governance Systems:** Emphasizing the importance of robust governance frameworks, proper conduct of board meetings, drafting minutes, and organizing annual general meetings.

Organizational

Bye-laws: Key elements required in organizational statutes. Fr. Anil also discussed the significance of having a comprehensive **Human Resource Policy**, including processes for staff recruitment, appointment, and exit.



He highlighted the importance of maintaining well-documented staff files and the positive impact of experienced staff on the organization's reputation.

Participants were introduced to various organizational policies and committees, such as: POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) Policy, Grievance Redressal Committee, Finance Committee, Marketing and Media Management Department. The session also



emphasized the role of professional fundraisers in enhancing resource mobilization. Fr. Anil introduced practical tools such as **Donor Mapping**, which involves identifying major donors, event sponsors, part sponsors, and

specific-purpose donors. He encouraged participants to start donor mapping with family, friends, and acquaintances, and to create **fundraising trees**. To strengthen community involvement, he suggested collaboration with school social action groups,

organizing fundraising events such as **Daan Utsav**, and leveraging **crowdfunding platforms** like Milaap, GiveIndia, Impact Guru, Ketto, GoFundMe, Wishberry, and Mighty Cares. Fr. Anil stressed the importance of cultivating relationships with donors by maintaining comprehensive records (e.g., PAN, addresses, birthdays, phone numbers, and email IDs). He suggested ways to engage donors, such as offering Masses, reciting Rosaries, and sending personalized greetings during Christmas, Easter, and birthdays. The training provided practical insights and strategies, empowering participants to strengthen their resource mobilization efforts effectively.

Inter-Religious Deepawali Milan Samaroh: On November 9th, SIGN, in collaboration with the Sadbhavna Group (an inter-religious forum), organized the *Inter-Religious Deepawali Milan Samaroh* at Bihar Club. The event brought together around 70



participants from the Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Sarna, and Christian communities. The

program began with a symbolic *Diya March*, where each participant carried a lit diya and marched from the Bihar Club gate to the auditorium, symbolizing unity and the triumph of light over darkness. This

was followed by a collective recital of the Indian Constitution's Preamble, emphasizing shared values of equality, fraternity, and religious freedom. The children from Holy Cross School, Bardwan Compound, enthralled the audience with a vibrant welcome dance. Following this, representatives from each community delivered talks on the significance of Deepawali. A common theme in their messages was the parallel between the festival and the core principles of the Indian Constitution. Speakers highlighted that just as Deepawali dispels darkness with light, the Constitution strives to eliminate discrimination, inequality, and injustice in society. The festival serves as a reminder to uphold the values of justice, freedom, and equality, inspiring everyone to light the lamp of respect, opportunity, and dignity for all in society.



The Ursuline School children added to the celebratory spirit with a patriotic dance performance. The *Deepawali Milan Samaroh* concluded with participants exchanging greetings of "Happy Deepawali" and enjoying the distribution of sweets.

The event beautifully showcased the spirit of inter-religious harmony and the shared cultural values that unite us.

Visit of a Special Guest: On November 22, 2024, Fr. Nicholas Barla, a lawyer, social



worker, and advocate for tribal development, brought Ms. Anna Fernandez to SIGN. Anna, an Indian-origin Canadian citizen, is a social worker dedicated to tribal development worldwide. Despite her Canadian upbringing, her roots trace back to

India through her grandparents. She travels extensively, visiting tribal communities across the globe to understand and support their development. Fr. Barla introduced

Anna to SIGN to explore potential collaborations in promoting agricultural practices and herbal medicine among tribal communities. They aimed to learn from traditional knowledge and, where necessary, enhance these practices for better sustainability and impact. Mr. Walter Zaphed Kerketta, the Regional



Agriculture Coordinator at SIGN, accompanied Fr. Barla and Anna to Kherwakocha village in Rajadera Panchayat, Angada Block. There, they visited Mr. Anil Kujur, a progressive farmer associated with SIGN. Mr. Kujur shared insights into his organic farming methods, including the preparation and use of *Matka Khad*, *Bijamrit*, and *Jivamrit*. He demonstrated the indigenous techniques for collecting cow urine and explained how *Matka Khad* is distributed efficiently through a drip irrigation system to ensure each plot is nourished. Anna and Fr. Barla were impressed by the sustainable and eco-friendly farming practices of the local tribal community, highlighting the potential for learning and collaboration. This visit marked the beginning of meaningful dialogue on preserving and enhancing traditional tribal agricultural methods and herbal medicine practices.

Visit of a team from RAOEN: The River Above Asia Oceania Ecclesial Network (RAOEN)



is a network that fosters dialogue and collaborative engagement among the Church, indigenous and local communities, youth, and other faith-based organizations across Asia and Oceania. From November 18th to 20th, Fr. Pedro Walpol and Mr. James Pochury from RAOEN visited

Jharkhand as part of their mission to promote the customs, culture, and heritage of tribal communities. During their visit, they spent time at the SIGN office, where each

staff member introduced themselves and explained the significance of their surname. They also shared notable practices unique to their respective tribes. The SIGN team highlighted their ongoing efforts in preserving, protecting, and promoting tribal heritage



and philosophy. The next day, the RAOEN team visited a village in the Khutpani block, where they interacted with members of the HO tribe. This interaction provided them with firsthand insight into the customs and daily lives of the local tribal community. The team

also visited the Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS), where they addressed students on the topic of climate change and the vital role tribal communities play in forest preservation and combating climate deterioration. The Director of XISS emphasized the need for further research to deepen understanding of tribal communities and their contributions. RAOEN representatives also met three prominent tribal social workers: Bisu Benjamin Aind, Anup Chander Minj, and L.D. Fonse Kujur. These social workers expressed concerns about the diminishing use of tribal languages, customs, and culture among the youth, who often prefer English or Hindi and are drawn to Western lifestyles. They stressed the urgency of working to preserve tribal identity and traditions for future generations. Overall, the RAOEN team's visit to Jharkhand was insightful and meaningful, fostering a deeper appreciation of tribal heritage and encouraging collaborative efforts to preserve these rich cultural traditions.

Speech Competition: With the support of Misereor, on 30th November, a college level speech competition was organized in Gossner College Simdega and St. Teresa's School, Torpa. It was organized to promote awareness and understanding of tribal rights through key legislative and constitutional provisions—the **Chotanagpur Tenancy (CNT) Act, 5th Schedule of the Constitution**, and **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA)**.

The primary goal of this competition was to educate students about the legal frameworks protecting the rights and autonomy of tribal communities in India specially in Jharkhand. By engaging young minds in critical discussions, the event aimed to foster a deeper appreciation for the challenges faced by tribal communities and the importance of preserving their rights. 19 participants (6 participants from St.



Anne's Inter College and 13 Participants from Gossner Inter College) participated at Gosneer College, Simdega. Ashish Soreng, from St. Anne's Inter College secured first

position, Priyanka Minj, from Gossner College, secured second position and Sanjay Nayak, from St. Anne's College, got the third position, whereas there were 9 participants from St. Anna's Intermediate College, Torpa and St. Joseph Intermediate College at St. Teresa's School, Torpa. Sushma Kongari, secured first position, Kinan Lata, secured Second position and Manish Kumari, got the third position. All the winners were from St. Anna's Intermediate College, Torpa. The students prepared and delivered impactful speeches, shedding light on the historical background, significance, and contemporary relevance of these laws. The competition also provided a platform for students to develop public speaking and critical thinking skills while fostering empathy and a sense of responsibility toward marginalized



communities. As a result, A) Students gained valuable insights into the importance of safeguarding tribal rights and B) The event instilled a sense of social responsibility and motivated students to contribute toward social justice. This speech competition successfully deepened the students' understanding of the issues faced by tribal communities and the legal protections available to them. By empowering young minds with knowledge, the event took a step toward building a society that values inclusivity and equity for all. Events like these not only educate but also inspire action, ensuring a brighter future for tribal communities.