

Celebrating Children's Right To Be Heard

An Interface with Juvenile Justice Functionaries of the District

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On November 28th and 29th, 142 children - 57 girls and 83 boys - all members human rights clubs - had a two day interaction with Juvenile Justice Functionaries of Srikakulam and Vizianagaram districts. Participating with interest and commitment in the Celebration of Children's Right to Be Heard Program were 15 members of Juvenile Justice Boards, Child Welfare Committees, Special Juvenile Police Units and the District Child Protection Units. Children representing 63 human rights clubs from 55 schools had many heart-warming stories to narrate of their attempts to be "Citizens Today" and not of Tomorrow as they are traditionally told to be.

Since 2008 People's Action for Rural Awakening in partnership with the Institute of Human Rights Education has been in the forefront of taking human rights education to government schools of Andhra Pradesh. Today the effort extends also to the schools of Telengana State. PARA's advocacy efforts with the governments have resulted in over 1,67,000 government teachers being trained in human rights education. The education department today recognizes the need for setting up human rights clubs in schools. With the revision of text books done in the last year human rights lessons have been mainstreamed into the state school text books.

The program on 28th and 29th November 2014 provided a platform for children from human rights clubs to exercise their Right to be Heard, a right enshrined in the CRC. Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child provides: "1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

It was only fitting that in the 25th year of the CRC this right is recognized and children enable to exercise this right. With a great sense of excitement and fulfilment children shared the little successes they had through the actions they took up under the auspices of their human rights clubs. A.Laxmanrao of Ambedkar HRC, Zilla Parishad High School of GSP Puram spoke of how their representation to authorities resulted in better quality mid-day meals. K.Ramu of Aung San Suu Kyi,HRC from Dolapeta school spoke of the rally they conducted on the World Environment Day besides getting a compound wall sanctioned for the school and also of getting drop outs back to the school. Miss. Ramakrishnamma of Nehru HRC of Lakkidam shcool spoke with pride of getting 2children re-admitted to school through using the 1098 facility and also of conducting a rally on Child rights in CRC Week. Miss Prasanti K of Mother Theresa HRC spoke of their club's effort to clear the debris after the Hudhud Cyclone and making representation to the Municipal Commissioner regarding the state of sanitation around the school. Children also exhibited the media coverage they had received while doing these activities. Almost every club had some stories to narrate. They also had their complaints regarding the lack adequate number of class rooms, lack of toilets, drinking water, poor sanitation around the school, lack of compound wall that results in antisocial elements having easy access to the school premises in the night. Interestingly they also spoke of the system that grades their performance in school. They said

that they had no clue how it works! The enthusiasm the children showed in narrating their clubs' activities and the courage they manifested in highlighting their problems were equally matched by the response of the Juvenile Justice Officials. The Chairperson of the Vizianagaram Child Welfare Committee promptly called up the sanitation inspector of the area from which complaints had come and got an undertaking that the matter would be addressed expeditiously. Mr.Chittibabu anchored the program and Fr.John Tharakan and Mr.Ramesh Taritla were the main facilitators.

People's Action For Rural Awakening intends to take up the same program in 12 other districts of Andhra Pradesh and Telengana States where human rights clubs are being formed. With children willing to speak up and stand up for themselves there is hope for that they will be listened to and that their Right To be Heard can be made real.

Thomas Pallithanam

S.No	Distrtict Name	Name of the club leader	Name of the school	Achievements	Issues raised
1	Srikakulam	A.Laxmana Rao. Ambedkar HRC	ZPHS-GSP Puram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the quality in MDM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Govt. has taken uniform measurements for 8th class students and uniform has given with the same measurements in 9th class Exiting grading system gives confuse to students, burden to the teachers Only 3

					<p>toilets available to 470 students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Drinking water (one bore is available but not useful) • Partial boundary wall
2	Srikakulam	Gouri Naidu	ZPHS-KUPPILI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complained against corporal punishment to JC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
3	Srikakulam	Sai Srinivas	ZPHS-Allinagaram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re join the mahi who was dropout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
4	Srikakulam	Kalyani	P.Ganagallavani peta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School issues (Sanitation in compound wall raised by hrc in the presence of sr.principa megstr&sec DLSA while hud hud relief visit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No shelter provide hud hud cyclone
5	Srikakulam	k.Ramu, Angan Shuki HRC	Dolapeta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted rally on environment • Class rooms sanctioned • Re admitted one dropout child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
6	vizianagara m	Ramakrishnam ma Nehru HRC	lakkidam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readmitted 2 children through 1098 call • Conducted rally on Child rights in CRC Week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No boundary wall
7	vizianagara m	T.Ramojirao Ambedkar HRC	Komatapalli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct swach bharati prog. • Sectioned one kitchen room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open defecation surrounding the school
8	vizianagara	V.Manohar	GBHS-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying

	m		Gajapatinagram		in trees because govt building allotted other purpose
9	vizianagaram	S.Satish Rajaram mohan ray HRC	BPM School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collected 500/- donation for HRC • Conduct swach bharati prog. • Joined one dropout children Nagaraj 	
10	vizianagaram	K.Deepika	Rompalli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made a representation for class rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sufficient class rooms. 10th class classes conducted in staff room
11	vizianagaram	sunitha	Malicherla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctioned boundary wall • 760 donations collected for hud hud victims Conduct swach bharati prog. 	
12	vizianagaram	I.Rani	Gajularega	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejoined one dropout child suryakala.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • again she dropped and joined as domestic worker along her mother.
13	vizianagaram	Bharat	jonnada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three children were readmitted(suresh,pydiraj and santhosh 	
14	vizianagara	Prasanthi.E	St.Anns GHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lift the waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muncial

	m	Ambedkar and Theresa HRC	Vizianagaram	<p>garbage , remove the trees n branches which fell down in hud hud cyclone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> made a representation to Muncipal commissioner to sanitation issue 	<p>commissi oner not respond still today</p>
15	vizianagara m	A.Harish	ZHS-Nelivada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6th class dropout children rejoined(leelavathi) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
16	vizianagara m	Indira	GGHS-Gajapathinagar am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stopped one child marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No boundary wall so facing so many problems

ABSTRACT OF PARTCIATED MEMBERS IN INTERFACE OF HRC Leadrers and Functionaries of JJAct

S.No	Disrtict Name	No.of schools	No.o f clubs	No.o f Boys	No.o f Girls	Total HRC Members	No. functionaries of JJB	OTHERS Teachers, RPs , & Team +reportrs	TOTAL
1	Srikakulam	23	27	40	15	55	05	17	77
2	Vizianagara m	32	36	50	42	92	08	25	115