



Kvinnohuset

Sudhanthra

Rapport Februari 2017

Hej kära Sudhanthravänner!

Mycket har hänt med FFIA sedan vi senast rapporterade till er. Förmedlingsverksamheten finns inte längre och den nuvarande verksamhetens fokusområden ligger på Stipendium, Bidrag och stöd till adopterade samt Bistånd. Styrelsen har beslutat avsätta en del fondmedel till biståndsprojekt i våra barns länder och ett par sådana projekt har startat.

Ett av projekten är ett utvecklingsprojekt i samarbete med People's Watch i Indien och som ni säkert vet ingår Sudhanthra sedan tidigare i denna verksamhet. När det nya projektet nu startat har styrelsen beslutat att Sudhanthras donationer ska ingå i projektet (se bifogad informationsfolder). Vi kommer inom kort att lägga upp information om det nya projektet på FFIA:s hemsida och vi kommer i fortsättningen att endast lägga rapporterna från projektet på hemsidan.

När i juli 2016 skickade pengar till Sudhanthra gick stödet till stor del till några Dalit-familjer som råkat riktigt illa ut. Ni kan läsa mer om det i den bifogade artikeln och se bilder längst ner i rapporten som bifogas.

Ett stort tack till dig för ditt trogna stöd till Sudhanthra! Vi hoppas förstås att du även i fortsättningen vill bidra till att förbättra livsvillkoren för kvinnor och framför allt barn i Indien, men då till det stora projektet. Om du vill avbryta betalningarna till projektet gör du det enklast genom att avsluta pågående autogiro.

Varma hälsningar

FAMILJEFÖRENINGEN FÖR INTERNATIONELLT ADOPTERADE, FFIA

Maud Zackrisson

Britt-Marie Nygren

■ Madurai-based NGO demands NHRC probe into excesses 'Kuravars tortured in illegal police custody'

GOKUL VANNAN | DC
MADURAI, JULY 6

Fourteen members of the Kuravar community, including women and children, were alleged to have been tortured under illegal custody for nearly 63 days by Thakkalai police in Kanyakumari district.

The men were charged with crimes they did not commit only because the police could not find the true perpetrators, said Henri Tiphange, Executive Director of People Watch, Madurai. The women were reported to have been sexually abused by the police in front of their kin to force the men to accept the crime, he told reporters here on Wednesday.

The 14 members of the community from Mottamalai village in Madurai district went to Mandaikadu village in Kanyakumari district to earn a living on April 19. "After getting permission of the panchayat president we lived near a coconut grove. We earned money through sharpening knives in the surrounding areas," said Maruthayi, a victim of police torture.

Life was peaceful for them till April 29. "A group of police personnel who visited us in plain uniform on the fateful day in a vehicle, forcefully took all of us to Thakkalai police station," she said. The police team headed by sub-inspector Vijayan is alleged to have sexually abused the women under the pretext of conducting inquiry in a separate room in the station.

"They removed my saree and forced me to stand only with Pavada and upper jacket. Then a police man sexually harassed me by inserting his hand into my jacket claiming to be looking for jewels," said Maruthayi



Henri Tiphange, executive director of People Watch, Madurai addresses the media detailing the alleged police torture of 14 members of Kuravar community

breaking into tears. The ordeal did not stop with that. The police tied her husband Selvaraj upside down from a ceiling hook and beat him. And they repeated the same with her father Rajan.

"After long hours of torture when my two-year children started crying in hunger, the police men scolded me in vulgar language and asked me to breast feed my child," she said. When Maruthayi refused to do it stating she had undergone an operation recently, the police personnel are reported to have removed her saree and touched

her private parts. "Unable to withstand the humiliation my husband confessed to the crime," said Maruthayi.

The police did not even spare the children. "The police officer forcefully tonsured my hair in front of my parents stating they will die soon," said 12-year-old Shekar. The police took my mother Padha Maria and my aunt Marudhayee into a separate room. "Then I heard them screaming loudly. When my mother came out the room, I was shocked to find her saree missing," he claimed.

"The police forced my

mother to hit her father Gopal with stick and plastic pipe. When I pleaded with them to stop it, they hit me with a stick and pushed me down," he added.

All the members of the community faced similar torture. The issue came to light only after Alaikudi Makkal Padhugappu Sangam (Itinerant People Rights Organisation) sought the intervention of People Watch.

"Even when a habeas corpus petition was filed in this regard and was pending in the High Court, the police continued to keep them in illegal custody in a small room inside the police station," said Henri Tiphange adding that the police had booked five men of the community under false charges and remanded them in jail.

"Four other members of the community who were taken away by police during temple festival from Nallur village in Madurai district on June 21, were also found in the same police station on July 3 when our team went there to enquire, he claimed.

'People Watch' demands NHRC investigation

DC CORRESPONDENT
MADURAI, JULY 6

Henri Tiphange, Executive Director of People Watch is asking the National Human Rights Commission to take suo moto cognisance of the alleged police torture of 14 members of the Kuravar community in illegal custody for nearly 63 days by Thakkalai police in Kanyakumari district.

He also said that the HNRC should conduct the inquiry with the senior police officials in the district because no junior level officials would

involve themselves in such inhuman practices without getting consent from their superiors.

As Selvaraj from the community who sustained severe injuries (one of his legs was fractured) during the custodial torture, the government should take steps to provide medical treatment by a senior orthopaedic surgeon. The government should give a compensation of ₹5 lakh. And for other victims like Velu, Gopal, Rajan and Rajan alias Molayan, should be given a compensation of ₹2 lakhs, he

said.

The senior police officials should sensitise the force to change their perspective of the Kuravar community. There is a general perception among the police that they indulge freely in robbery and thefts, he said.

After the Alaikudi Makkal Padhugappu Sangam (Itinerant People Rights Organisation) started interacting with the Madurai police, they have stopped filing false cases against the community members, said Henri Tiphange.

**SUDHANTHRA
PEOPLE'S WATCH
CENTRE FOR PROMOTION OF SOCIAL CONCERNS
MADURAI**

A report of the activities from 1st January to 30th June 2016

The Inception:

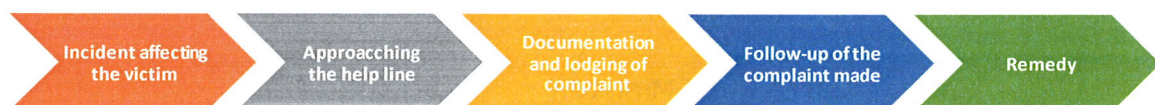
Sudhanthra – an initiative for women in distress was started in August 1995 with the aim to provide counseling, legal support and short term shelter for women in distress. This initiative later joined hands with People's Watch in its work for human rights. In the year 2000, as a result of the realization at People's Watch that the victims need multi-dimensional support in sustaining their physical and as well as mental strength both as an individual and as a family in their pursuit of attaining justice, Sudhanthra amalgamated as the Rehabilitation Centre for victims of Torture and domestic violence and other forms of violations. Holding hands and accompanying the victims until they restore their normalcy has been the single point agenda of People's Watch in establishing rehabilitation homes: one at Madurai and the other at Mettur; both in Tamil Nadu. Services ranging from shelter, food, legal support, vocational training, counseling, medical and mental health assistance are some of the services offered by Sudhanthra – RCTV.

Objectives

- To provide medical, psychosocial assistance / treatment to victims.
- To provide security and temporary shelter to victims of torture who are at risk of further abuses.
- To promote socio-economic rehabilitation for victims and their family members.
- To provide educational assistance for victims' children.
- To encourage networking with various like-minded organizations/movements.

1. HELP LINE:

It operates in the form of tele-complaints, complaints received by post or the victims come and interact with the team. The process of help line;



The received are classified under the following categories based on the nature:

Classification of Cases

Civil case	Employment issue
Criminal case	Marriage relief scheme/Death relief scheme
Eve teasing /Child issue	Cybercrime
General Police torture	Teacher pension Scheme
Anonymous complaint	Court staff
Family dispute	Consumer case
Divorce	HRD case
Caste Discrimination	College issue
Kidnapping case	School issue
Other case	Bonded Labour
Sexual harassment	Domestic violence
Minor girl missing	Judiciary delay
Corruption	Prisoner rights
Mercy killing /suicides	Educational assistance
Inter caste marriage	Insurance cheating
Complaints from the scavenging community.	Srilangan refugees
Hospital issue	Social boycott
Hostel issue	what Sapp
Suspicious death	Certificate missing

Based on the classifications the complaints are sent to the respective authorities listed as below:

- Advocate
- Online Petition - Superintendent of Police
- Commissioner of Police /Online
- District Collectors
- RTI Application
- Special Cell of Chief Minister
- Child Welfare Committee

State and National Human Rights Commissions
 Police Station
 Monitoring Unit for follow-up

The details of the cases dealt during the period January 2016 - July 2016 are

Cases Pending at the Beginning of the Reporting Month	New Cases during the reporting Month	Total Number of Cases for the reporting Month	Cases closed during the reporting Month	Cases under process during the Month	Cases Forwarded during the reporting Month	Cases pending at the end of the reporting Month
January 2016 104 cases	30	30	07	21	02	125
February 2016 125 cases	30	30	12	17	01	142
March 2016 142 cases	43	185	18	19	06	43
April 2016 43 cases	32	85	16	37	10	53
May 2016 53 cases	18	71	3	09	06	18
June 2016 18 cases	37	55	11	19	07	57

Other Works:

- Outreach programme with the college of social work - dissemination of information about Help-line and the process
- Today's engagement in the newspapers and monitoring

2. INTERNSHIPS:

Sudhanthra provides the learning opportunity in the form of internships to the college students wherein students pursuing their higher education in colleges and universities with varied academic profile get an opportunity to learn about human rights and its dimensions both in the form of theory and also practical experience with exposure the real life situations. The time frame of internship varies from one institution to other.

Highlight of today's involvement:

On the 3rd of July five women and eight children who were kept in 63 days illegal custody in a room in Thuckalay came to Sudhanthra for justice. They belong to the de-notified tribe. The trauma as a result of torture leaves us all disturbed and angry. I am enclosing a few photographs and the legal process has started.

