



Let us come together,
know our rights and claim them



Introducing the National Association of the Deaf

"Let us come together, know our rights and claim them"

The long-awaited formation of the National Association of the Deaf in India took place on December 3rd 2005, to coincide with World Disability Day. This is the first national grass roots organization of its kind for the deaf, and it proposes to be one that is of the deaf and for the deaf. An organization that is truly representative of the deaf community in India managed and lead by deaf people in India.

While there have been other organizations working for the deaf in India in the past, there has yet to be one strong organization capable of uniting deaf people across India. N.A.D hopes to bring deaf communities together from across the different states in India in order to cultivate a united front. By this means, deaf people will be able to stand together and claim the rights that they are entitled to.

The ethos behind N.A.D is about showing deaf people in India that they are able to lead the way for their own community and claim their rightful place in society. Too long have deaf persons suffered from an unsatisfactory education system, poor opportunities in life and a lack of understanding and support from

family and the public at large. With the establishment of N.A.D, deaf people in India can now look forward and hope for a bright and better future.

N.A.D's Aims

- To promote the rights and quality of life of deaf and hard of hearing individuals in India.
- To foster a united front of deaf people across the different states of India.
- To promote equal rights at all levels and in all fields of life.
- To encourage the interaction of deaf people through meetings, at both national and regional levels, sports meetings and political rallies.
- Lobbying Government bodies and policy makers to ensure that the rights of deaf people are taken into account.
- Creating public awareness and educating others on the current issues and problems concerning deaf people.

To ensure the empowerment of deaf people so that they are economically self-sufficient, educationally sound, and have their rightful place in society.

World Disability Day 2005

NAD was launched on Dec 3rd, 2005. At a huge rally of deaf person's across the country at India Gate in Delhi.







Human Rights Education for the Deaf

To coincide with N.A.D aiming to increase the rights of deaf people in India, it has started an education programme for the deaf population of India on the subject of Rights and the Law. In a society where human rights violations are ever present, the organization feels it is important to raise awareness amongst the deaf in India about their rights, as well as the rights of others.

At the recent annual National Deaf Youth Conference, held in Mangalore between the 28th and 31st of January, sessions were held on Rights and the Law and presented to the 180 participants at the conference. Considering the mixed abilities of the group present, these sessions were very basic and a simple introduction to the idea of human rights and the concepts and principles that human rights are based on. The groups in attendance were very receptive to the sessions, despite having different themes and new ideas introduced to them for the first time. Their eagerness to learn portrayed their willingness to acquire this new knowledge and also their desire to be able to stand up as a united group and claim their rights.

The sessions were recorded and will be compiled onto a CD, along with a series of sessions on Human Rights Education. These will be sent to deaf schools and friendship clubs across India, reaching as many deaf children as possible. The current problem in all schools across India is that Human Rights Education is not included at all in the school curriculum. These CDs will hopefully go some way in redressing this problem, providing the much-needed education to one of the more marginalized groups in India today.

Access Demonstration

National Association of the Deaf Access Demonstration.



Deaf IAS toppers — now fallen on deaf ears!!!



Members of National Association of the Deaf held a second Dharna, this time targeting the Chief Commissioner for Disabilities' Office, in an effort to secure justice for three hearing impaired individuals who have failed to be given an allotment in the Civil Services, despite clearing the All-India civil service examination and interview. On 8th November 100-odd deaf people stormed his office at Sarojini House with banners and placards refusing to leave until their demands were met.

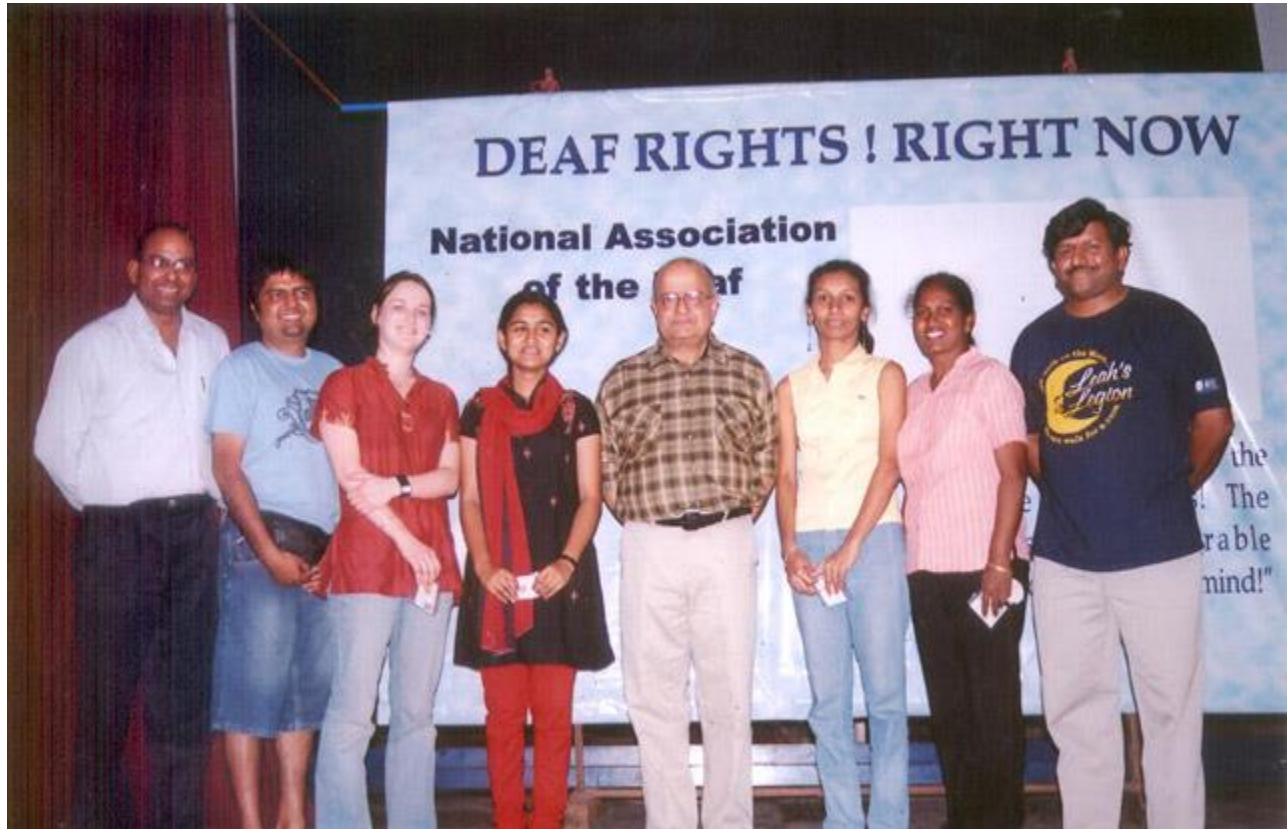
Despite the fact that both the Chief Commissioner for Disabilities, as well as the Deputy Chief Commissioner, were not present but holding a mobile court in Chandigarh, the deaf members would not be reconciled and demanded that they both come back to Delhi to help correct this injustice. They even went so far as to lock the office staff out of their own office, stating that if they are not able to do justice for the disabled they may as well close the office.

What also did not help diffuse the situation was the fact that there was no Sign Language Interpreter available in the Chief Commissioner for Disabilities' Office. Without the aid of an Interpreter, how are the hearing impaired sector supposed to raise their grievances and be given the help that the office is there to provide? The Chief Commissioner for Disabilities, who had spent the previous week being bombarded with text messages from deaf people all over the country, is now attempting to resolve the matter with the Department of Personnel and Training.

This matter has since been brought to the attention of the Minister of the Department of Personnel and Training and has even reached the desks of both the Prime Minister and the President of India. N.A.D is still awaiting a satisfactory conclusion to the entire affair.

NATIONAL DEAF YOUTH CONFERENCE 2006

Deaf leader professor Dr. Madan Vasishtha with interpreters and organizing team of NDYC 2006.



MSJE Demonstration

A cross-disability demonstration against MSJD policies and practice.





N.A.D Consultation on Deaf Education

First national consultation on education of the deaf by NGOs and educators was attended by representatives from NAD, IDCS, NCERT, Gallaudet University.



The National Association of the Deaf held its first and pioneering Consultation on Deaf Education at the Indian International Centre on Thursday 9th February. This was a unique conference and perhaps the first of its kind in

India. Government officials, NGOs and experts in the field sat alongside deaf community members in order to discuss education of the deaf from a new and fresh perspective: the Deaf Perspective. Not only did this workshop offer an opportunity to debate and discuss new ideas, it also opened minds and paved the way for future developments in the field of Deaf Education.

The two presentations of the day were led by Dr. Surinder Randhawa from Rourkee, who presented on the current status of Deaf Education in India and the issues of concern and Dr. Madan Vasishta from Gallaudet University, who shared his vision about 'choices' that should be made available to all deaf children at various ages.

Each session was followed by an open floor discussion and at the end of the day all participants at the conference culminated their thoughts and ideas in order to compile a position paper on Deaf Education, chartering a plan for further action. Several valuable points and recommendations were raised.

- The need for a mass awareness campaign promoting sign language and the rights of deaf people in general.
- That communication and the role of information were of vital importance and that early intervention was essential, targeting parents of deaf children as well as sensitizing Doctors to deafness and the issues involved
- The need for networking and the sharing of skills, ideas and experience.
- The need to evolve a credible assessment system to evaluate, assess and certify trainers and trainers of trainers.
- The necessity to introduce sign language into the education of deaf children in special schools as well as being included in the school curriculum for all
- The role of interpreters emphasized as being fundamental for a deaf person to be able to fully participate in society
- The need to have more sign language courses available.

Moreover, it was stressed that this should all be done with participation of deaf people as the first precondition: "Deaf persons themselves need to be included and involved in this process in an important way while making decisions at all levels".

World Disability Day 2006

The first major demonstration by deaf persons in the country led by NAD on Dec 3rd, 2006 with a charter of demands for the prime minister.

