

NAD's Annual Activities Report 2011-12

16th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf 2011, Durban, South Africa from 18th to 23rd July, 2011:-

On July 18, 2011, the 93rd birthday of human rights activist Nelson Mandela, over 2,100 registered participants from 125 countries came together in Durban, South Africa for the XVI World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD).

This was (Mr. A. S. Narayanan (Secretary), Mr. Anuj Jain (Joint Secretary), Mrs. Geeta Sharma (Woman Secretary), Mr. Dilip Jangir (Executive Board Member), Mr. Umesh Grover (Executive Board Member), Ms. Anu Saigal (North India Deaf Woman Committee) & Mr. Yogindra Nath Bhargava (Member) from National Association of The Deaf, India's first opportunity to attend a WFD World Congress, which is hosted once in every four years. In between presentations on Deaf Education, Developing Countries, Human Rights, and Sign Language and Deaf Studies as part of the event's "Global Deaf Renaissance" theme, we held meetings with the office bearers of WFD, the USA National Association of the Deaf (NAD), and numerous other NADs around the globe. We were very grateful to have had an opportunity to learn from these well-established organizations and also, look forward to collective efforts reinforcing the work of local Deaf leaders in developing countries.

WFD is an international non-governmental organization representing approximately 70 million Deaf people around the globe, over which 80% live in developing countries. Recognized as a spokes-organization by the United Nations (UN), WFD works collaboratively with the UN to promote the human rights of Deaf people, preserve native sign languages, and ensure that Deaf people have equal access to education and information. At this year's Congress, outgoing WFD President Markku Jokinen received the Dr. Liisa Kauppinen Human Rights Award for his benevolent service to Deaf people worldwide during his past eight years in office. His role as president has now been passed to Colin Allen of Australia, whom the international Deaf community has revered for his extraordinary leadership.

Throughout the week, we were informed about current research studies on the status of Deaf people, sign language, and interpreters from Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania and the Americas. Here are a handful of interesting facts we learned:-

- WFD has documented 27 countries who have officially recognized sign language at various levels;
- In Sweden, for every Deaf person who uses sign language, there are 8-10 hearing people who use sign language (parents, partners, interpreters, CODAs, etc.);
- Countries in Francophone West & Central Africa Regions each have 1-5 sign language interpreters for the entire country, all of whom are informal & untrained;
- 31% of CODAs (hearing children of deaf adults) in South Africa feel their identity is more Deaf than hearing; and
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing students are 1.5x more likely to be victims of abuse.

While our time in South Africa was short, we were honored to have met and learned from the many wonderful people endeavoring to improve the lives of Deaf people around the world. As Nelson Mandela famously said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to

change the world." Through collaboration with organizations like WFD, and NAD aims to supplement such positive change.

We are already looking forward to the XVII WFD World Congress which will be held in Istanbul, Turkey in 2015. In addition, WFD will be hosting their Second International Conference in Sydney, Australia from October 16 - 18, 2013.

Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC) set up in Delhi on 25th July, 2011:-

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has approved the establishment of an Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre (ISLRTC), on project basis for a period of five years, as an autonomous Centre of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi. IGNOU has provided five acres of land available for the Centre in its campus at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi. The Centre will lead the way in the study, academic development, and propagation of Indian Sign Language and in its teaching and training, so that this language gains its rightful linguistic, cultural, educational and social place.

The Government has also accorded approval for creation of 35 posts for the Centre for Department like Sign Linguistics, Interpreting, Library, Documentation and Administration. The Centre has been established at an estimated cost of Rs. 44.00 crore, over five years. The Finance Minister also announced establishment of such a Centre in his Budget Speech for 2010-11.

IGNOU has been a pioneer in open and distance education in the country and provides cost effective quality education. The University also has a National Centre for Disability Studies and is conducting sign language programmes in collaboration with the University of Central Lancashire, UK, under the UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI). Thus, IGNOU is well-suited to incubate the ISLRTC. Its vast distance education network, including 61 Regional Centres and more than 3000 study Centres will be available to the ISLRTC to expand its outreach.

As per the 2001 Census, there were about 13 lakh deaf & hearing impaired persons in the country. They use Sign Language for communication amongst themselves. Recognizing that existing facilities for systematic study of, and research and training in Indian Sign Language are limited, the Eleventh Five Year Plan had envisaged establishment of an Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre for development and promotion of the Indian Sign Language, and training of teachers and interpreters.

Representatives of National level organizations of the Deaf, will be duly represented, among others on the Committees which will be responsible for planning and managing the ISLRTC.

54th International Week of the Deaf 2011 Celebrations, India:-

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) first launched International Day of the Deaf in 1958; the "day" was later extended to "week." The International Week of the Deaf (IWD) is observed annually during the last full week of September. The week culminates with International Day of the Deaf on the last Sunday of the week. The 1st World Congress of the WFD took place in September 1951, and the choice of September to celebrate the International Week and Day of the Deaf is a commemoration of this historical event.

The purpose of IWD is to draw the attention of politicians, authorities and the general public to the achievements of Deaf people and the concerns of the Deaf community. During this week, organisations of Deaf people worldwide are encouraged to carry out information campaigns about their work, and to publicise their demands and requests. This week also increases solidarity among Deaf people and their supporters, and is used as a time to stimulate greater efforts to promote the rights of Deaf people throughout the world.

Deaf Youth Empowerment Seminar, Delhi on 18th September, 2011:-

We have also been able to successfully conduct the Deaf Youth Empowerment Seminar at Auditorium, Fr. Agnel School, Gautam Nagar, Delhi on 18th September, 2011.

The seminar started with the welcome note by Mr. Mumtaz Haider, Co-Worker of NAD. Mr. A.S. Narayanan, Secretary of NAD shared two powerpoint presentations about the history of the issues faced by the Deaf Communities of India & also, about NAD's journey. Mr. Anuj Jain, Joint Secretary of NAD explained the meaning of the deaf empowerment, the meaning of WFD & the meaning of International Day of the Deaf. There were about 323 deaf young people from Delhi and NCR who participated in the Seminar. We also received good feedbacks from the participants.

One of the major goals of NAD is that these Deaf Youth Empowerment Seminar will create awareness about the issues faced by the Deaf and hard of hearing young persons in India and creating more deaf youth to become the NAD Leaders. Toward this end, NAD is working with various Deaf organizations of India such to meet common goals.

NAD is imparting the deaf youth empowerment seminar to empower the deaf young people and enable them to stand up for their rights. This helps the Deaf community to become more involved in social and legal matters that concern them as citizens.

Deaf Youth Empowerment Seminar helps the Deaf Young Persons to interact with Deaf Leaders & Govt. Officials and how and when they need to approach the authorities for needs. It helps remove their fear of authorities and helps them access and utilize their rights to life so they can live fearlessly as citizens.

Deaf Awareness March, India Gate to Jantar Mantar, Delhi on 23rd September, 2011:-

About 650 deaf people plus well-wishers from the NCR rallied in the Deaf Awareness March. The marchers wore matching event T-shirts as they moved from India Gate where they were flagged off by Mr. A. S. Narayanan, General Secretary of NAD, Mr. Anuj Jain, Joint Secretary of NAD, Ms. Geeta Sharma, Woman Secretary of NAD, & Mr. Vishal Arora, Asst. Treasurer of NAD. The procession smiled at all onlookers distributing information leaflets about deafness and Indian Sign Language.

The larger banners appealed for official recognition of Indian Sign Language, more Interpreters, Sign Language to be mandatory in Deaf Schools and that a Deaf College should be set up among other things.

The procession ended at Jantar Mantar where the assembled the Deaf People were interviewed and filmed by the TV News.

Thousands gathered to watch the Deaf performers stage meaningful mimes with a message for the public.

Deaf Women Empowerment Seminar, Delhi on 24th September, 2011:-

We organized the Deaf Women Empowerment Seminar at Auditorium, Fr. Agnel School, Gautam Nagar, Delhi on 24th September 2011 on the occasion of the 54th International Week of the Deaf 2011.

This was a seminar on raising awareness and creating a positive space in society for disability and women's issues. The deaf women are doubly disadvantaged first by disability and second with the added vulnerability of their gender. The seminar has explored these issues and a number of senior deaf women activists and participants from across Delhi, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Noida, and other parts of U.P. and Haryana had been participating. We saw a gathering of around 175 deaf women. We invited Ms. Geeta Sharma (Woman Secretary of NAD), Ms. Vandana Varshney (NAD's North India Deaf Woman Committee) & Ms. Nirupama Kaul (Co-Worker of NAD) to share the different presentations.

The seminar started with the welcome note by Ms. Sonia Bhatia, Program Officer of NAD. Ms. Vandana Varshney, NAD's North India Deaf Woman Committee shared the powerpoint presentation about the history of deaf women who have succeeded. Ms. Nirupama Kaul, Co-worker of NAD explained the deaf women issues. Ms. Geeta Sharma, Woman Secretary of NAD shared the powerpoint presentation about empowering deaf women.

Every deaf woman was impressed to learn more from the Seminar. We wish deaf women to do equally what we men do best!

Empowering Deaf People, Noida (Uttar Pradesh) on 2nd October, 2011:-

We have also successfully conducted the 'Empowering Deaf People' Workshop at Auditorium, Christ Church, Sector 29, Noida on 2nd October, 2011. This benefits the Deaf to learn and educate themselves about their rights, to empower themselves, understand the issues faced by our deaf leaders. Zorin Singha, President of NAD testified about his visit to the International Disability Alliance, Geneva, Switzerland in September 2011. They were very impressed by his testimony. Mr. Anuj Jain, Joint Secretary of NAD explained the meaning of the Human Rights and the meaning of the deaf empowerment to all deaf participants. They are excited to learn the new things. Mr. A. S. Narayanan, Secretary of NAD shared the Gandhi's Life Story PowerPoint Presentations on the occasion of the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi on 2nd October, 2011. There were about 423 deaf participants from only NCR in the Seminar.

India's First Indian Sign Language Research & Training Center (ISLRTC), IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, Delhi on 4th October, 2011:-

Shri Mukul Wasnik, Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment & Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal here today inaugurated the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) at the IGNOU Campus. Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri K.M. Acharya, Secretary (SJ&E), Smt Vibha Puri Das, Secretary (HRD), Professor V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU, Prof P.R. Ramanujam, Pro Vice Chancellor, IGNOU, Prof Madan Vasishta, Honorary Director, ISLRTC, Shri Ramesh Warlyani, Vice Chairman, National Council for Promotion of Sindhi Language (NCPSL), Mr. A.

S. Narayanan, Secretary of National Association of the Deaf and other dignitaries were present on the occasion at IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, Delhi on 4th October, 2011.

Dr. Madan Vasishta, Honorary Director of ISLRTC is very pleased to have opening the ISLRTC this year. He is most thankful for (SJ&E) who approved the opening the ISLRTC. He has a lot of experiences for Sign Languages in different countries of the World.

Mr. A. S. Narayanan, Secretary of NAD expressed his thankfulness to Mr. Shri Mukul Wasnik, Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment & Shri K.M. Acharya, Secretary (SJ&E) who approved our waiting for 5 years of the opening of the ISLRTC. He said the benefits of ISLRTC for deaf teachers, hearing interpreters, deaf parents & deaf students to learn the profession of Indian Sign Language. He said he and his people came a dream true that ISLRTC is opening at IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, Delhi today. He specially thanked to all deaf people who had been sacrificing to come the Rally and the Protest for demanding to Govt. of SJE provide the ISLRTC for 5 years.

Shri Wasnik said that ISLRTC is the realization of the long cherished dream of the deaf community in India. It is an exclusive education project for teaching, learning, training and capacity building for the vast deaf population. It will be a full time teaching and training center for Indian Sign Language combined with distance teaching/learning opportunities. This research centre is the first of its kind in India with centres attached to IGNOU. There will be zonal/regional centers in different geographic regions of the country. The center would consist of short term, medium and full-fledged programmes for both the un-trained and experienced teachers of the deaf schools.

Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment said that in India, as per 2001 census, the population with hearing impairment was over 12.62 Lakhs and as per 58th round of NSSO the hearing impaired population was 30.62 Lakhs. A significant number of deaf persons essentially depend on Sign Language for communication; hence this is an historic occasion, depicting the commitment of the Government to fulfill the needs of the deaf community in India. The inclusion of deaf people in the larger development activity of the country depends significantly on promotion of Sign Language, Shri Mukul Wasnik said. He further said that Sign Language in India is in nascent stage and evolving. Even the reach of it also by far is limited to some pockets of the country. Therefore, we need to think innovatively to reach out to the people who are in need. One such activity could be having Sign Language Clubs. In USA, there is a concept of Sign Language Clubs. These clubs are attached to colleges and universities. Shri Wasnik requested the Director, ISLRTC, to explore the possibilities of having such clubs in India. European Sign Language Centre through the web based computer tool www.spreadthesign.com created a web of itself in 10 European countries. The Minister requested the Director to explore the possibility of creating a web of ISLRTC in our States and UT's. Information and Communication Technology should be used to its maximum advantage in reaching out to the deaf people, Shri Mukul Wasnik said.

Delhi High Court directs the Centre to appoint Sign Language interpreters in Public Offices on 24th November, 2011:-

In response to a petition filed by the National Association of the Deaf (N.A.D.), the Delhi High Court has directed the Central Government to conduct a survey of various Government offices to ascertain the number of Sign Language interpreters required to help persons with hearing impairment communicate with officials in order to access various public services.

A bench of Acting Chief Justice A. K. Sikri and Justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw also asked the Government to conclude the survey within three months and to appoint a nodal officer to coordinate the exercise.

After hearing the petitioners, the bench gave the directions to “undertake a study/assessment/survey of the public buildings, hospitals, places of amusement and entertainment, facilities like airports, railway stations, bus stops and other places requiring availability of Sign Language Interpreters” to assess the requirement of interpreters at each of these places.

The survey would also assess for each particular organisation if the Sign Language Interpreters should be formally appointed or whether they should be empanelled with them to be available at short notice or with prior appointment, said the order.

Furthermore, the bench directed the Government to “recruit an adequate number of interpreters at specific points of interface of persons with disability with Government services such as disability commissioners, special employment exchanges, vocational rehabilitation centres and district disability rehabilitation centres and in all the major Departments and Ministries.”

It also passed the order to create a pool of Sign Language Interpreters to provide services at major railway stations, major airports, banks, post offices, hospitals, bus terminals, police stations, places of education, vocational rehabilitation centres, major administration offices, in the judiciary, employment exchanges and for Government interviews for jobs involving people with hearing impairment.

National Deaf Workshop on UNCRPD, Delhi on 26th – 27th November, 2011:-

We organized the first kind of the National Deaf Awareness Workshop on UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) between 26th & 27th November 2011 at Auditorium, Indian Social Institute, 10, Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi near Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir between 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Mr. Zorin Singha, President of NAD, A. S. Narayanan, Secretary, and Mr. Anuj Jain, Joint Secretary of NAD shared the different PowerPoint Presentations about the Human Rights on Video, the human rights/laws, & UNCRPD. We created an awareness on UNCRPD to help deaf people understand and know the laws and rights of the deaf. It helps to empower them to do themselves by their own decision in their lives in India. A milestone for the advocacy of the rights of persons with disabilities is now steadily gaining worldwide acceptance and support. This is known as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) refers to a document focusing on international human rights of people with disabilities. It was created by the United Nations and is being monitored by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 13, 2006. The Convention was opened for signature on March 30, 2007. It then came into force on May 3, 2008, after the Convention's ratification by the 20th party. There are a total of 71 countries that have ratified the convention. Some of the countries that have ratified the Convention include Australia, Belgium, China, India, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. The UN.org website has a section where interested groups and individuals can read the latest developments regarding the convention.

The Convention intends to ensure equal rights to people with disabilities. This is done by elaborating in detail the rights of persons with disabilities and setting out a code of implementation.

Guiding Principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:-

Eight principles form the base for the Convention and the articles included in it. Below are the guiding principles:

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility
- Equality between men and women
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities

India ratified UNCRPD on the 1st of October, 2007. India was the 7th country in the world and the first significant country to do so. The ratification of UNCRPD was a direct result of the advocacy by NCPEDP and Disabled Rights Group (DRG).

UNCRPD is an international instrument that provides persons with disabilities the same human rights that everyone else enjoys. It marks a radical shift in defining and understanding disability - it moves from a medical/social perspective to a human-rights based approach.

However, UNCRPD is just a paper if it is not implemented. Disabled people have to play an active role in the implementation and monitoring of UNCRPD.

NCPEDP has therefore launched an advocacy initiative for speedy implementation of UNCRPD in India.

650 million people, roughly 10 per cent of the world's population, live with a disability, according to the United Nations. In India alone, there are roughly 100 million people with disabilities, which is almost 1/6th of population of disabled people in the world.

13th NCDEDP-SHELL Helen Keller Awards 2011, Delhi on 2nd December, 2011:-

The story of The NCPEDEP - Shell Helen Keller Awards started way back in 1999. Over the years, these awards have come to be recognized as the most prestigious Indian benchmark for honouring people and organisations which have been working towards promoting employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The awards are given away in 3 categories:

Category A: Role Model Disabled Person: Disabled persons from within the disability sector and outside who have been active as ambassadors of the cause of employment for disabled people and are a positive role model for others.

AWARDEES:-

- 1.Ashwin Karthik, Delivery Software Engineer, Mphasis, Bengaluru
- 2.Nilesh Singhal, Deputy Manager, State Bank of India, Bhopal
- 3.Pradeep Raj, General Secretary, Association for Disabled People, Delhi

Category B: Role Model Supporter of Increased Employment Opportunities for Disabled People: Individuals from within the disability sector or outside who have contributed substantially to the cause of promoting employment opportunities for disabled people over an extended period of time.

AWARDEES:-

- 1.Meera Shenoy, Chief Executive, Centre for PwD Livelihoods (CPDL), Hyderabad
- 2.Niranjan Khatri, General Manager of WelcomEnviron Initiatives, ITC Welcomgroup, New Delhi
- 3.Thilakam Rajendran, Managing Director, ARUNIM, New Delhi

Category C: Role Model Companies/NGOs/Institutions: Organisations from the disability sector or outside who have shown their commitment towards promoting equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

AWARDEES:-

- 1.Aegis Limited, Mumbai
- 2.Deaf Enabled Foundation, Hyderabad
- 3.ITC Hotel The Maurya, New Delhi
- 4.Muskaan (Parents Association for the Welfare of Children with Mental Handicap), New Delhi
- 5.Pointec Pens Private Limited, Bengaluru

Each year a total of 10 awards are given away – 3 each in the individual category and 4 for role model companies/organisations on 2nd December, the eve of World Disability Day.

We wish to greatly congratulate Deaf Enabled Foundation who received the 13th NCDEDP-SHELL Helen Keller Awards 2011 for Role Model NGO. We wish them a successful in the future.

World Disability Day 2011, India Gate, Delhi on 3rd December, 2011:-

We, National Association of the Deaf (NAD) & National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) shared organizing the World Disability Day 2011 successfully, we had a large solidarity rally at the lawns of Boat Club next to Amar Jawan Jyoti, India Gate, Delhi on 3rd December, 2011.

Our demand this year was the need to RECOGNISE INDIAN SIGN LANGUAGE AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF INDIA. It was time to show our solidarity. It was time to show unity. It was time to ensure a right legacy. There were 10,000 deaf people from all over the country participating in the peaceful protest.

Mr. Zorin Singha, President of NAD, Mr. A.S. Narayanan, Secretary of NAD, Mr. Javed Abidi, Honorary Director of NCPEDP, Mr. T.K.M Sandeep, CEO of Deaf Enabled Foundation, Mr. Arun C. Rao, Executive Director of The Deaf Way Foundation & Ruma Roka, General Secretary of Noida Deaf Society shared the showcases on the stage behind India Gate. They flagged off 500 balloons to the High Sky Up. Mr. Vishal Arora, Asst. Treasurer of NAD explained the deaf issues to the audience. The Deaf Members of Delhi Deaf Friendship Society & Deaf Students of Noida Deaf Society shared performing 5 different mimes.

On World Disability Day, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) and National Association of the Deaf (NAD) have demanded official language status for sign language and training of people to become sign language interpreters at public places.

Addressing hearing impaired persons who carried out a silent march at India Gate here on Saturday to protest against the Union government's silence on their concerns, NAD President Zorin Singha, aided by an interpreter, said India was home to over 70 million people with disabilities.

“Of this, 18 million are people with hearing impairment. Unfortunately, the concerns of the deaf people in India have not been addressed even 64 years after Independence.”

Empathising with the problems faced by deaf persons on a daily basis, Mr. Singha said: “You cannot go to school or watch television. And God forbid if you have to go to the police station or hospital for an emergency. If you go to the railway station to catch a train and suddenly there is an announcement that your train has been postponed or the platform number has suddenly changed. But you cannot hear a word. It is a matter of concern that there are no visual announcements for hearing impaired people and no visual emergency alarms in case a fire breaks out in a building.”

Expressing concern over the movement of the hearing impaired being in a nascent state, Mr. Zorin said the NAD advocates for the rights of the hearing impaired and liaises with the government and policy makers.

“We are currently hosting State-level meetings across the country to spread awareness among hearing impaired people on their rights and to also recruit more members.”

Reminding that the High Court in a recent ruling had ordered that a survey must be undertaken in public buildings, hospitals, airports, railway stations that require sign language interpreters, NCPEDP Director Mr. Javed Abidi said:

“In this country, we have 18 million hearing impaired people but only 250 certified interpreters by a conservative estimate. If we are having dearth of sign language interpreters, then how would we deploy them at public places?” By The Hindu.

Deaf Youth Empowerment Seminar, Chandigarh on 18th December, 2011:-

We have also successfully conducted the Deaf Youth Empowerment Seminar at Auditorium, PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry, PHD House, Sector 31-A, Chandigarh on 18th December, 2011.

The seminar started with the welcome note by Mr. Yogesh Kumar, Public Relation Officer of NAD, Chandigarh (Branch Office). Mr. Jagdip Singh Sodhi, Executive Board Member of NAD shared the powerpoint presentation about the history of the problems of the Deaf Communities of India. Mr. Anuj Jain, Joint Secretary of NAD explained the meaning of the deaf empowerment, & the meaning of deaf youth. Mr. Radhey Shyam, Co-Worker of NAD shared the powerpoint presentation about the beginning of NAD.

Mr. Jetal Ramaiya, Branch Manager of The Deaf Way Foundation, Biza, Punjab & Mrs. Roopa Ramaiya, Education Cordination of The Deaf Way Foundation, Biza, Punjab shared the idea of games of the danger river with the deaf young people. There are about 175 deaf young people from Punjab participated in the Seminar. They are a lot of excitement by our seminar.

Kids of Deaf Adults (KODA) Workshop, Delhi on 30th December, 2011:-

We organized conducting the first time of Kids of Deaf Adults Workshop (KODA) in Delhi, India on 30th December, 2011 at Indian Social Institute, 10 Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi. There were about 20 hearing children & 20 deaf parents & 45 deaf members of Delhi Deaf Friendship Club, Gurgaon Deaf Friendship Club, Noida Deaf Friendship Club, Ghaziabad Deaf Friendship Club, Faridabad Deaf Friendship Club, Delhi Foundation of Deaf Women, Noida Deaf Society, Delhi Association of the Deaf, Silent Sports Promotion Society, & BAASL of IGNOU participating in the KODA Workshop.

Dr. Poorna Kushalnagar and Dr. Raja Kushalnager both are professors at RIT {Rochester Institute of Technology} (NTID {National Technical Institute for the Deaf}). They visited India with family and were happy to stop by in Delhi to present the KODA Workshop on 30th December 2011. Dr. Poorna has Ph.D. in Neuropsychology and Dr. Raja has Ph.D. in Computer Science.

We made a joint presentation on "Life in America". This show and tell kind of presentation, which helped the members of hearing children of deaf parents learnt about deaf family with hearing children growing in America. Education, jobs, communication, challenges of raising hearing kids, laws in America that helped deaf parent two (where would deaf parent two be if they were in India all the time?). The goal is for audience to know that with their support, deaf

people can do anything. Dr. Poorna led the discussions about coping with deafness or something like that and included their two sons to show how they raise two hearing kids (KODA).

Dr. Raja teaches the advance computer teaching skills to computer deaf teachers. He is perhaps the only one deaf person in the world who has a Ph.D. in Computer Science.

3rd National Workshop on the Grassroots Deaf Leadership, Delhi on 18th February, 2012:-

We organized the 3rd National Workshop on the Grassroots Deaf Leadership on 18th February, 2012 at Indian Social Institute, 10 Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi. There were about 165 deaf members from all over the country participating in the Workshop. We have invited the special lecturers Dr. Madan Vasishtha Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Department of Administration and Supervision, Gallaudet University, Washington DC, USA), Mr. Sibaji Panda Lecturer (International Institute for Sign Languages and Deaf Studies, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK) & Mrs. Ritu Panda General Secretary (Deaf Culture Society).

The workshop started with the welcome note by Mr. A. S. Narayanan, Secretary of NAD. He showed the Dignity on video to all the audience. The deaf people learnt the lessons about the Dignity.

Dr. Madan Vasistha Ph.D. has shared the experiences & opening of the ISLRTC and the powerpoint presentation about grassroots leadership.

Mr. Sibaji Panda, Lecturer has explained the Deaf Education in Bilingualism and Mrs. Ritu Panda has talked about deaf woman issues.

Punjab Deaf Conference, Chandigarh on 3rd March, 2012:-

We successfully conducted the Punjab Deaf Conference at Auditorium, Govt. Medical College & Hospital, Sector 32, Chandigarh on 3rd March, 2012. This benefits the Deaf Punjab People to learn and educate themselves about their rights, to empower themselves, understand the issues faced by our deaf leaders. Mr. A. S. Narayanan, Secretary of NAD shared the powerpoint presentations about the history of ISLRTC and the success of NAD. Zorin Singha, President of NAD testified about his visit to the International Disability Alliance, Geneva, Switzerland in September 2011 and explained the powerpoint presentation about the UNCRPD India. The Deaf Punjab People were very impressed by both of them first time. There were about 303 deaf participants from only Punjab in the Conference.

Peace Protest on 6th March, 2011 at Delhi on the deaf girl raped by Govt. Dr. in Bankura Hospital, Kolkota, West Bengal:-

About 200 deaf women/girls with 50 deaf men from only NCR gathered at Jantar Mantar, Delhi on 6th March, 2012 for the Peace Protest on the deaf girl raped by Govt. Doctor in Bankura Hospital, Kolkota West Bengal.

The plan was path breaking in its approach to the problems and needs of disabled people and the resolution of these issues. The Plan for the first time contains a section dedicated to the disabled population of the country, numbering approximately 6-7 % of the total population. We represent the deaf community of India, which is reported to be anything from 15 million to 18 million

strong. Yet we find ourselves without the most basic access; witness the lack of provision of the post of interpreter and in fact the non-existence of interpreters for the deaf. No access to Government Services, not even Police, Fire and Ambulance, Government Hospital and private hospital or an officer of law without interpreters we are disabled.

The latest outrage perpetrated on the deaf community is the shameless rape of a deaf minor girl in Kolkata by a hearing doctor and action is yet to be taken against him. We demand in the strongest terms that the culprit be brought to book and proceedings against him as accused be taken up.

NAD demands an urgent call to Government agencies, for a meeting to create access to justice policy and send them to all Govt. States. Each High court should begin by creating a pool of interpreters who will be able to be available to the police and the court as per requirement to support the access needs of the deaf. This should be done immediately.

Our community has long been oppressed without adequate communication access and this dismal state of basic human rights in our country in the 21st century is unconscionable.

Demand:-

1. Create a post of interpreter for the deaf as per High court order No.W.P. (C) No. 6250 / 2010 date of decision 24th November, 2011 (see attached).
2. Pool of interpreters for the deaf to be established in each district of India.

Imagine life as a deaf person in the country. You cannot go to school; you cannot watch TV and God forbid if you have to go to the police station or hospital for an emergency! Imagine going to catch a train and not being able to hear the announcement that your train has been delayed or postponed or the platform number where the train was supposed to have come has suddenly changed! There are no visual announcements for deaf people!

Imagine being in a building and not being able to hear the fire alarm ring!
There are no visual emergency alarms!

We have decided that we have carried a 'Solidarity March' on Tuesday, 6th March 2012 at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi from 11.00 AM to 2:00 PM. It was a 'Silent March' to protest against the Government's silence on our concerns. It was peaceful and orderly.

The Police men led Mrs. Geeta Sharma (Woman Secretary of NAD), Mrs. Rajni Khandelwal (North India Deaf Woman Committee of NAD) & Ms. Nirupama Kaul (CO-Worker of NAD) to meet the Secretary of Health Minister, India. They explained to him about the rape and there is no interpreters in Hospital. They demanded him to provide the human deaf rights. He said He will do it. After their returning, they announced to deaf women that the Secretary, Health Minister accepted our demands.

International Women's Day, Delhi on 11th March, 2012:-

We organized the first kind of the International Women's Day at Auditorium, Indian Social Institute, 10 Institutional Area, Lodi Road, Delhi on 11th March 2012.

This was a raising awareness and creating a positive space in society for disability and women's issues. The deaf women are doubly disadvantaged first by disability and second with the added

vulnerability of their gender. The seminar has explored these issues and a number of senior deaf women activists and participants from across Delhi, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Noida, and other parts of U.P. and Haryana had been participating. We saw a gathering of around 155 deaf women. We invited Smt. Bindra Karat, Chief Guest, Former Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha and Smt. Anita Agnihotri, Guest of Honor, Member Secretary, National Commission for Women participating in the Seminar.

The seminar started with the welcome note by Mrs. Reena Jain, NAD's North India Deaf Woman Committee. Mrs. Geeta Sharma, Woman Secretary of NAD shared the powerpoint presentation about the history of deaf women work & the rapes of deaf women in India.

Smt. Brinda Karat, Chief Guest, Former Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha is surprised to hear about several rapes for deaf women. She said she will do to support the rights of deaf women and protest against the rape of deaf women.

Smt. Anita Agnihotri, Guest of Honour, Member Secretary, National Commission for Women has explained her work and showed the powerpoint presentation about the goal & work of NCW.

International Women's Day, Chandigarh on 17th March, 2012:-

We organized the first kind of the International Women's Day at Auditorium, Chandigarh Club Ltd, Sector 1, Chandigarh on 17th March 2012.

This was a raising awareness and creating a positive space in society for disability and women's issues. The deaf women are doubly disadvantaged first by disability and second with the added vulnerability of their gender. The seminar has explored these issues and a number of senior deaf women activists and participants from Chandigarh, Mohali, Panchkula, Ambala, Rajpura, Patiala, Ludhiana and other parts of Punjab and Haryana had been participating. We saw a gathering of around 75 deaf women.

The seminar started with the welcome note by Mrs. Suvidha Jain, Woman Secretary of Chandigarh Deaf Friendship Club. Mrs. Rupinder Kaur, Woman Secretary of Chandigarh Deaf Friendship Society shared the powerpoint presentation about the deaf women who succeeded. Mrs. Sonia Sodhi, Deaf Woman Committee of Patiala Deaf Friendship Club, Mrs. Sangeeta Sharma, Deaf Woman Committee of Chandigarh Deaf Friendship Club & Mrs. Roopa Ramaiya, Education Coordination of The Deaf Way Foundation, Punjab shared the powerpoint presentation about the deaf women issues. Mrs. Reena Jain & Mrs. Vandana Varshney, NAD's North India Deaf Woman Committees shared explaining the several rapes of deaf women in India and needed all deaf women to voice against the rape and stand what they can do for their own women rights.

Mrs. Meeta & Mrs. Mansi, Deaf Woman Committees of Ludhiana Deaf Friendship Club have performed the mimes about women issues.

Wish them a successful in their fruitful works for the future.