Regional Level Conference for Textile Industry affected Young women workers
Demands

17 June 2014

Regional Level Conference for Textile Industry affected Young women workers had been conducted by Tirupur Peoples Forum for Environment and Labour Rights (TPF) on 17th June 2014 at Hotel Regency. Regional Level Conference was organized at Erode in Erode district covering 3 neighbouring districts. Child Rights NGOs, Women Federation, Trade Union Leaders, Socially concerned Academicians, Victims of Camp Labour Scheme (Sumangali) Girls/ Young Women and their Mothers, Social Activists, and regional level member organizations of TPF had participated in the conference. READ, Sathyamangalam has done local coordination.

TPF’s 7th Regional Level Conference for Textile Industry affected Young women workers since 2013 had been held chaired by Mr. S. M. Prithiviraj, Convener of Tirupur Peoples Forum. Documentary-short films depicting the tragic stories of camp labour girls and women workers. Mr. N. Maheshwaran, Coordinator, READ had welcomed the participants.

Mr. Karuppusamy, Director of READ, Sathyamangalam has explained the objective of the Regional Level Conference with a brief introduction. He has highlighted the various aspects of Camp Labour issues and the intervention of Erode District Administration. He has explained about the recent surveys made by his organization in 11 blocks of Erode District and the hardship faced in assessing the number of camp labour scheme girls among the tribal hamlets and villages of Sathyamangalam Hills. He has described the achievements made in elimination of child labour, assistance provided to former camp labour scheme workers and prevention drive made in the villages concentrated with Dalit habitation. He has emphasized the importance of the demands of Tirupur Peoples Forum.

Mrs. Kalaimagal, Inspector of Labour, Erode, Mr. Shanmugam, Director of National Child Labour Protection, Erode District, Mr. M. Mothiraj, Overall Coordinator, CARE-T, Coimbatore, Mrs. Sujatha, Professor, Providence college, Coonoor, Dr. P. Rangasami, Professor, Amirtha Vidhya Peedam College, Ethimadai, Coimbatore District, Mr. Arjun, Prof. Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Dr. K. G.
Umashankar, Development Consultant, Mrs. Anbuselvi, CDD, Gobichettypalayam, Ms. Shenbagam, Winner Trust, Mrs. Madhavi, TAMs, Mr. Ramesh, MSF, Anthiyur, Mr. Chandrasekar, Bargur Hills and other speakers had addressed the Region level conference.

The speakers had endorsed the key demands of Tirupur Peoples Forum and urged that the Government should ban Camp Labour Sumangali Schemes as it is a form of bonded labour, forced labour and the Textile and Garment industries employs children below 18 years and even below 15 years old children. The negative impact of Sumangali Scheme, problems faced in Hostels by girls, poor quality of food, non-availability of water, verbal abuse, forced labour, non-payment of promised lump sum, Provident Fund, balance due wages at the time of girls leaving the factory, and the untold miseries of the camp labour girls.

The speakers also insist to fix minimum wages for 8 hours work and the Government should come forward to protect the rights of labours. A medical officer should be appointed to check the fitness of a girl and their age before recruiting in Textile mills and Garment industries.

Ms. Shobha, Project manager of READ had shared her assessments and trends on camp labour issue in Erode District with a power point presentation. In her survey, she had found that 81% of the victims are Dalits and among them most of them are from Arundathiyiar community in Erode District.

Mr. G. Selvakumar, Member, Tamilnadu Commission for Protection of Child Rights, in his Chief Guest address has explained that he is well aware of labour rights violations faced by the young women workers under Camp Labour Schemes, as he hails from Erode District. He has expressed that the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights has legal obligations to intervene and protect the rights of the children in all spheres based on the direction and guidance of National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. The State Government and Central Government are effectively working towards the protection of Child Rights. He has appreciated the efforts of Tirupur Peoples Forum and Civil Society organizations in eradication of Child labour and he has endorsed principally the demands of TPF.

Victims of sumangali scheme and their mothers’ had shared their sad experience in their working place including excessive working hours, non-payment of promised sum, low wages, verbal abuse, health problems, inadequate infrastructure facilities in Hostels and etc. 7 girls and young women boldly gave their testimonies in front of the audience. Representatives of various NGOs have shared the difficulties that they have faced in the recent fact finding missions like rescue of child labour including deaths of girls/young women at workplace and other labour issues in textile and Garment industries.

Mr. S.M.Prithiviraj, Convener of TPF, in his presidential address, demanded that the Tamilnadu Government’s Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Marriage Assistance scheme should be extended to
the young women who have not completed 10th standard due to poverty faced forced labour and other violations in Garment and Textile industries and also to all young women and the families having more girls. He has thanked the Government for increasing the minimum annual income of poor families eligible for this Marriage Assistance scheme to Rs 72,000/- per annum.

TPF has found in its recent fact finding missions and assessment that in many cases link between dowry and recruitment for the camp labour of girls and young women especially, among the poorest of the poor and the marginalized vulnerable communities still exists on a large numerical level across our State of Tamilnadu. State should issue a notification that the subject of child labour is dealt with under the provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, with Standard Operating Procedure for all departments concerned for handling the issue of child labour and it holds the Juvenile Justice Act, which defines a child’s age as 18, as the basis for taking action against child labour.

Each and every rural Panchayats should have a register with details of women workers of the village who are working in Tirupur, Coimbatore, Erode, and Dindugal Districts. Consolidated Register should be made available in the 27 District Collectors Offices across the State where the recruitments are made. This is essential for the rehabilitation of victims and their families in case of emergency.

The minimum wages of Rs 255/- should be paid for 8 hours of work for the unskilled women workers. Minimum Wages Revision committee should increase this wages correspondingly based on the inflation and market price index and it should be monitored and effectively implemented. The Apprentice Act should be used only for a maximum of 6 months of apprenticeship in all manufacturing units of Clothing Sector as a whole. We have ensure that all the children of the poor and the marginalized communities should be enrolled, continued their education till 12th Standard and we have work hard to educate all the children since the education is the only tool for us to overcome poverty and the exclusion in the development of our Nation.

Demands of Tirupur Peoples Forum have been passed with the whole hearted endorsement of all the participants, key speakers and media persons.

Notice and Stickers of Child Protection Policies are released during the Regional Level Conference and Vote of thanks by Mr. N. Maheshwaran, coordinator of READ. Nearly 200 persons including Victims of Sumangali Scheme girls and their mothers, Child rights NGOs, Trade Union Leaders, Professors from various colleges, social activists took part in the conference and media persons also presented at the regional level conference.
Photo Gallery
புத்தாண்டின் கையாள்வை தீர்வு, செயல்தொடர்கள் மையில் நிகழ்ந்த காலோட்டிற்குக் காரணிக்கும்

செவ்வி தினசரி அறிவு பொருளில் பதிவு செய்யப்பட்டது. பதினெட்டாம் புத்தாண்டின் செவ்விக் பொருட்களில் பதிவு செய்யப்பட்டது. பதினெட்டாம் புத்தாண்டின் செவ்விக் பொருட்களில் பதிவு செய்யப்பட்டது. பதினெட்டாம் புத்தாண்டின் செவ்விக் பொருட்களில் பதிவு செய்யப்பட்டது. பதினெட்டாம் புத்தாண்டின் செவ்விக் பொருட்களில் பதிவு செய்யப்பட்டது.

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