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Delhi, INDIA: India is celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi this year. Following his footsteps, a Global Peace March is being organized by *Ekta Parishad*, urging the implementation of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The '*Jai Jagat campaign*' or 'Global Peace March' seeks to give voice to the most disadvantaged people from India and the entire world. It raises and discusses the core challenges faced like climate change, inequality and violence, through an inclusive and non-violent dialogue with the United Nations, on the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The March is supported by many peace loving citizens, civil society organizations, activists and movements worldwide including Emmaus International.

The march began on *2nd October 2019* in Delhi with introductory speeches explaining about the campaign which continued for 3 days. On behalf of Emmaus Asia, *Ms. Moon Sharma* participated in the launching event of the Global Peace March, which started from Rajghat (a memorial dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi) in New Delhi. It was a day of festivities with more than 500 activists taking part. *Ms. Moon Sharma*, on behalf of Emmaus movement, expressed her solidarity and walked together with hundreds of marchers with slogan for peace, justice and non violence.

Then the march continued its journey, which will walk through 10 countries (*Pakistan, Iran, Armenia, Georgia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, Italy and Switzerland*) covering a distance of 9280 kilometres, and will reach Geneva on the 26th of September 2020. During

this journey, the March will include many programs like 'on the road trainings' promoting non violence and events on key justice themes. Many other marchers from different countries of Europe and Africa will also arrive at Geneva on the same day, and will finally culminate into a week-long activities in Geneva from 27th September to 2nd October 2020, including dialogue with global institutions.

'Tara Projects Association' has been associated with Ekta Parishad since last several years. The founder, Mr.Rajagopal is a supporter

of Emmaus values and Fair trade. During his last visit to Tara, he sought cooperation and support from TARA as well as Emmaus Asian groups. During this meeting, Ms.Moon informed him about the Emmaus struggles and its link with the objective of the Jai Jagat Campaign / March. Looking at the cause of the campaign for peace and justice and its coherence with the Emmaus values and fair trade, it was decided that Emmaus movement will support and be a part of the campaign.



Emmaus International decided to support the campaign in a few ways – by making a financial support, and by becoming an official partner of Jai Jagat. Also to mobilize and raise awareness in particular among Emmaus organisations that could join the march from time to time on their territory, invite them to participate in the events that will take place along the way, encourage Emmaus organisations whose converging marches are taking place close to home to participate in them.

On behalf of Emmaus, we extend our heartfelt wishes to JAI JAGAT team for successful completion of the global march on the move for justice and peace. We welcome and call on others to join in this global march, and speak up for the spiritual, social and economic wealth we derive from cultural diversity. Let us take this small step towards a big change that will strengthen bonds, deepen our understanding of the value of cultural diversity, and help us to live together in a better world.





Rajshahi, BANGLADESH: On 15th October 2019, Thanapara Swallows observed the 'International Rural women's day' at Sardah in which members of youth group, staff members, community representatives were present. All participants took an oath that more attention need to be given in commitments to gender equality, to combat domestic violence, and call for actions to support in increasing the capacities of rural women and girls.



Bogra, BANGLADESH: Polle Unnoyon Prokolopo (PUP) is working on a project to develop young people's understanding of women's rights and to combat domestic violence against women through advocacy. PUP has formed a group of 25 different stakeholders including school students for advocacy on different women's rights. On 15th November 2019, PUP

provided training to these group members on right based issues like Demerits and disadvantage of Child Marriage, Harmful effects of domestic & family violence, bad effects of Sexual Harassment and the burden/effect of Dowry system.



Tindivanam - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: A National conference on protection of Women against Violence was organized in Pune, Maharashtra by 'MAITRI Network' - an organization working for women's issues in India.

Social groups working in the field of women empowerment at the 7 districts of Tamilnadu and Pondicherry participated in this national conference from 27 to 28 November 2019. Women's condition in India especially in the work field, women's participation and importance given to women in formulating government policies, women health and hygiene, and freedom of migrant women were the main topics addressed during the conference. On behalf of Village Community Development Society (VCDS), 5 members participated which included two victims who were helped by VCDS to share their testimony in the conference.



On 14th December 2019, as part of 16 days awareness campaign on domestic violence against women, VCDS organized a seminar on sexual harassment against women at work place. The seminar highlighted about importance of women protection and girl children's education and their rights.



Cuddalore - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: *Florance Home Foundation (FHF)* organised a one day awareness campaign on ‘Women empowerment and safety’ in a Government school at *Killai*. More than 90 women including school children took part in the event on *6th November 2019*. Local Superintendent of Police from Women’s wing was invited as chief guest. She spoke about the different ways to ensure women safety.

Trichy - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: *KUDUMBAM* organized a 10-days training programme on Organic farming from *14 to 21 October 2019*, in which 8 women students from ‘*Thanthai Rover Agricultural college*’ in *Permabalur* participated. The students stayed at *Kudumbam Kolunji ecological farm*, learnt about the importance of reviving traditional seeds, water conservation and water management. They interacted with the farmers in *Kovil veerakudi* village, who explained how they gradually phased out conventional based chemical agriculture on their fields. They also collaborated on making and sowing of seed balls on tank bunds. At the end of the camp, students were actively considering taking up roof top gardening as well as dedicating a small part of their family fields to organic farming.



Bogra, BANGLADESH: On *23 November 2019*, *Polle Unnoyon Prokolopo (PUP)* organized a one day orientation and training programme on chemical fertilizer & pesticide free crop and vegetable cultivation, to produce safe food and improve soil health. The event took place at PUP office, in which farmer groups’ representatives and PUP staffs participated. *Mr. Abdur Rahim* – Agricultural officer from ‘Research & Expansion department’ in *Bogra* facilitated the training program. An agreement has been signed with the ‘Agricultural department’ to conduct 4 more training programmes on ‘Integrated pest management’ and ‘Compost making’ during the year 2020.



Emmaus International Board

Date: 25 - 29 November 2019

Venue: Tara Projects Association - Delhi, India



Delhi, INDIA: Every year, the Board of Emmaus International meets to implement the guidelines, proposals and decisions set out by the World assembly, which meets every four years. The board then makes decisions which steer the movement's work. This year, the Board met from 25 to 29 November at 'Tara Projects Association' in Delhi, India. Elected members from the four regions participated in the meeting. The meeting began with a welcome and introductory session, followed by the adoption of the Agenda. Then the discussions continued on various work domains – International Solidarity & Campaigning, Belonging to the Movement, Coordination & Mobilisation, and preparations for 2020 World Assembly.

The board approved establishing an impact assessment report on initiatives supported by the Annual Solidarity Programme, the prospects for Abbé Pierre Foundation programme, and Emmaus International's proposed commitments to several campaigns as presented in the working document. Two working groups has been set up – One for developing a code of conduct for elected members, and the other group on the issue of self-sufficiency and independence as criteria for membership of the movement. They will put forward their proposals for next Board meeting.

Also Statutory matters were discussed – Amendment to the statutes, procedures for replacing Board members, role and mandate of national delegates, role and relevance of the Emmaus International Committee of Wise Persons. The regions were asked to discuss on these matters, and the board will make a decision at its next meeting in May 2020. The board granted full membership of Emmaus International to 7 groups from Africa and UK, and the start of trial membership to 11 groups. Thereafter the forecast operating budget for 2020 was approved as presented in the document.

The Board also approved the forecast budget for the 2020 World Assembly with different options for group representatives and elected members to participate. Venues where the 2020 World Assembly will take place in Uruguay and the first programme and proposed



content presented during the session was also approved. The board asks all regions, and in particular Europe, to do their best to motivate groups from their regions and their nations, to ensure full participation in this event which is crucial to the life of the movement.

On 27th November, a detailed presentation was made regarding the situation in India and the consequences for Emmaus groups by *Dr. Ajay Kumar (an associate Professor from JNU)* and members from Indian groups. Thereafter members were divided into two groups. One team visited the village *Bawana*, an urban slum in outskirts of Delhi. The area has major issues concerning hygiene, sanitation, sewage and lack of basic amenities like water and electricity. A meeting was organised in the two-storey building constructed with FAP support. This center serves as a multi purpose facility providing access to quality health, ethical finance, community meetings, training sessions and housing for the homeless in emergency situations. There were around 35 women who were young health workers and also the beneficiaries of Micro credit program. They shared about the benefits of the Micro credit program, and how it has contributed in reducing exploitation from private money lenders.

Another team proceeded to the village *Badarpur*, located 9 kms away from Tara office. The Community Health care centre of TARA in this area is located in the heart of the slum. This densely populated area has residents who are migrated from nearby States. People who reside here do not have access to quality health care, sanitation facilities and education, and they are vulnerable to many seasonal diseases. During the visit, the team was explained the systematic growth in number of members in MHO, and the link



between the community clinic, the diagnostic centre, the pharmacy and the referral hospital details. Also a meeting took place with the beneficiaries who shared their testimonies, the developments of Mutual health systems, and the benefits of the program. Thereafter the team visited the tailoring unit, education sponsorship children and the girls performing self defense techniques. Participants also had the opportunity to visit some tourist locations. The Board expressed its sincere appreciations to TARA for the accommodation, food and hospitality provided by the team, and for organizing the meeting and visits effectively.

2020 Celebrations



TAMILNADU, S.INDIA: On 31st December, two Emmaus groups in South India organised the Christmas & New Year welcome celebrations.

Year ending evaluation of *Village Community Development Society (VCDS)* activities was conducted on 31st December with the board and EC members of VCDS. The action plan for the year 2020 was presented and the board member shared their ideas along with the new plans. Then the New Year welcome Celebration began which was organized with the local village members, teachers, students, staffs, farmers and board Members of VCDS.



Florance Home Foundation (FHF) celebrated the year end events with the staff members and children in *Killai Home* by firing crackers. Sweets were distributed to all the children, and they enjoyed a delicious meal.

HealthCAMP



Trichy - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA:

KUDUMBAM organized a medical camp in the month of December 2019 with local doctors. The camp has been organized in 4 villages covering a population of 480 members. The objective of this Medical camp had been to assist in early diagnose of health issues, recommend line of treatment, change in food habits and in lifestyles. Due to excessive use of chemical pesticides and depletion of ground water, there is an increase in poison residues in the food, resulting in

increase in diabetics, cancer, cardiac problems and kidney problem. The nearest Primary Health Centre is 15-20 kms from the village. Hence most of the health problems are diagnosed in the advanced stage. As an outcome of this medical camp, 90 patients had been identified with diabetics, and necessary assistance has been provided to them. Kudumbam organizes such camps once in 3 months, and due to periodic monitoring and health awareness, there has been a remarkable improvement in patients, who come to medical camp regularly.

Tindivanam - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA:

Village Community Development Society (VCDS) organized an awareness rally on 'Dengue fever' on 5th November 2019 in the Government schools in 5 villages among the school students. This rally was organized along with the local primary Health Centres and Health Inspectors of the region. The rally highlighted the issues of open place water stagnation, improper use of fresh water and drainage system, food habits and change in the farming techniques, which contribute towards our health damage.



CONTAINERS TRANSPORTS MEETING

FRANCE:

Containers meeting took place in France from 11 to 13 December 2019, hosted by Emmaus community in Angouleme, with the goal

of **helping the movement to redefine the framework of the container and transport programmes.** Representatives from groups in Africa, L.America & Europe who are sending and receiving containers participated in the meeting. On behalf of Asia, *Selva Arokaiaraj* participated in the meeting.



In Africa, only groups based in Benin, Togo & Burkina Faso are able to receive the containers. Likewise in L. America, groups from Peru & Uruguay only receive the containers, as there are several guarantees to be met (Agreements from HQ, legislation, transit, etc.). The background of how this container programme evolved, the difficulties faced in the last few years in receiving

containers in certain locations due to political situation and due to significant extra costs, the possibilities of revitalizing the programme and its sustainability, how to ensure the impact of the programme in terms of social change and economic independence were the main topics discussed.

BioVillage CONFERENCE

Trichy - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: KUDUMBAM in association with 'Department of Women's Studies, Bharathidasan University' organised its 11th Annual State-Level Conference on Bio-Villages at *Kolunji Ecological Farm, Pudukkottai*. Over 600 persons from several districts of the state participated, ranging from farmers, officials of agriculture and related government departments, NGO representatives, academicians, professors and students of schools, colleges and university departments, environmentalists, fieldworkers.

The Vice Chancellor of *Bharathidasan University* - *Dr.P.Manisankar* in his inaugural address recalled *Mahatma Gandhi's* statement that India lives in its villages and the growing need to follow Gandhian principles of development. He appreciated the efforts of *Kudumbam* in successfully promoting the concept of bio-village farming in dry regions over the years as sustainable livelihood development option among small and marginal farmers.



University's Dean of Arts & Director of Women's Studies - *Dr.N.Manimekalai* in her special address elaborated that Kudumbam facilitates 3500 women in 570 groups. Their skill development in preparation of bio-inputs has contributed in reducing chemical pesticides in the neighbouring agricultural fields of *Kolunji farm*. It is the time for the State to upscale these initiatives. Joint Director of Agriculture - *Mr.Subbaiah* mentioned during his speech that Kudumbam is involved in organising Bio-village Conference for more than 10 years.

Farmers who have excelled in agriculture in unique ways shared their success stories, techniques and experience with those who participated in the conference. During the end of the event, 22 resolutions passed at the conference were read out. Kudumbam gifted everyone a seed bag of cereals/millets, and the event ended with vote of thanks.

Emmaus Asia Regional Board

Date: 12 - 14 October 2019

Venue: AEP - Beirut, Lebanon



BEIRUT: Emmaus Asia Regional Board met at *Association d'entraide Professionnelle in Beirut, Lebanon* from 12 to 14 October 2019, in which delegates from *India, Lebanon & France* participated. Several discussions were held during the meeting in preparation for the *Board meeting* of Emmaus International (EI) scheduled to take place in *India* in *November 2019*.

After the welcome session by the chair, the agenda for the meeting was adopted. The main decisions of the Asia Regional Assembly held at *Bangladesh* in *April 2019* and followup / actions taken have been reviewed by the members, after which the minutes has been approved. Thereafter payments made by Asian groups towards Emmaus International membership fee & Solidarity sale contributions for the year 2019 were presented.

Progress of mutual health programme at *Tara Projects Association* was shared, after which members were explained in detail about Emmaus Ethical fund, and the three loan applications which is in process. Thereafter member groups shared in detail through video presentations regarding the projects implemented in the year 2018 under 'Annual Solidarity programme'. Also the groups reported on **2018** projects supported by '*Foundation Abbé Pierre*' & '*Emmaus Montbeliard*' based in France. Member groups were appreciated for

the efforts taken to make a short video on each of their ongoing projects.

For the year **2019**, two groups in India (VCDS & KUDUMBAM) received the support under 'Annual Solidarity programme'. Activities implemented by both the groups were shared, and then a video presentation was made. Calendar for **2020** Annual Solidarity programme for presenting the projects online to different committees was shared. Groups were asked to follow the calendar strictly, and if any clarifications required, they were asked to contact ISE and RS. After the criteria and the new formats for reporting of projects were informed to the members, the concept note for 2020 projects were shared.

Thereafter members were informed regarding the preparations underway for **2020 World Assembly** – Venue, Logo, Themes & Participant details. Four themes chosen for World Assembly which were closely connected with the daily life of Emmaus groups – *Exist, Resist, Transmit & Commit* was explained in detail. Details regarding the number of participants from each group, and their participation fee was informed to the members.

Moving forward, members were explained regarding the process of election to take place during the next Regional Assembly in India from *14 to 17 April 2020*. Then the highlights of America international work camp that took place

in Pereira, Colombia from 14 to 23 September 2019 was informed to the members. From Asia, two members participated in the work camp – Pallavi (TARA) & Antoine (AEP). Members were informed about the Jai Jagat Campaign 2020 – a global peace march from Delhi to Geneva – with the aim of taking Gandhi’s message of justice, nonviolence and peace to the Global community. The involvement of Emmaus Indian groups and Emmaus International in this Peace march have been shared with members present.

Claude Audi, from AEP explained the context of the beginnings of AEP in 1984, its involvement in micro credit programme in the last 35 years, and the role of AEP in poverty reduction, and reintegration of entrepreneurs into national economic circuit. *Roger Melki*, a senior development specialist explained about the situation of Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon since the tensions arose in 1940s, the immigration policies, the external aid, political instability, and the impact on Lebanon economy because of the influx of refugees.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 7 pm on 13th October, and visits were arranged to AEP activities the next day to meet and interact with Micro credit beneficiaries.



TAMILNADU, S.INDIA: Social Action movement (SAM) is a network of Social Activists in Tamil Nadu. In 38 districts in Tamilnadu, they have a membership of 468 members. They propose to develop a 3 year plan to regreen 342 panchayats in 27 districts of Tamilnadu, involving 114 NGOs in the first phase all over the state. The core team of SAM has approached to Companies for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) grants to implement this programme.

From 21st to 23rd September 2019, KUDUMBAM organised a three day workshop for 30 NGOs and a proposal was evolved to regreen 342 panchayats in Tamil Nadu involving 8 universities. The proposal includes preparation of seed balls and nursery distribution to the local farmers in each district, with 2 NGO’s in a district with a lead NGO. VCDS has been chosen as a lead NGO for Villupuram and Kallakuruchi districts. VCDS took part in a planning meeting with SAM and CSR in Chennai.



ECO TOURISM VISITORS TO ASIAN GROUPS

Delhi, INDIA: A team of community leaders from Emmaus France under the leadership of *Mr. Jean Frédéric* and *Mr. Thierry* visited TARA from 31st October to 6th of November 2019. Majority of the community leaders were young and newly appointed in their respective communities in France. The visit organized was part of a broader training program to help the community leaders to be more aware and become confident in their new assignment, to gain more knowledge about the socio-economic actions of TARA and to understand the local context and the realities where TARA works.



During their stay at TARA, the team visited water conservation, skill development, natural farming and Health initiatives of Tara. Also the team met micro credit beneficiaries, interacted with them and keenly learnt about their small income generation activities. They also visited the community centers built with the support from Foundation Abbé Pierre. It was an enriching experience for the French team to meet, discuss and share the learnings and experiences, understand the importance of holistic approach of community work to support the marginalized in the society, keeping in mind the values of the movement.



Tindivanam - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: *Village Community Development Society (VCDS)* received 4 volunteers from 'Pistes solidarities' French national organization in November 2019 - *Josephine Rocher, Helene lacaze, Marie chramberro, Antoine Jacquin.* They will be staying in India for 5 months period to explore and study the rural life of Indian women and children, especially in the field of agriculture, education, safety and sanitation.

Cuddalore - Tamilnadu, S.INDIA: *Florance Home Foundation (FHF)* received 4 guests from Sweden in November 2019 - *Elin Plahn*, a school principal with her husband *Fredrik Plahn* and their kids *Ivar & Ingrid*. They are back to FHF 20 years later, and were very much interested to explore the changes taken place in the organisation.



Book Release

FRANCE: *At a time when popular revolts are multiplying, discover Abbé Pierre's thoughts in "Drawing Strength from the Infinitely Small", a collection of his thoughts available in bookshops now! Preface by Edgar Morin.*

Through "Drawing Strength from the Infinitely Small", Abbé Pierre speaks to everyone, from the humblest to the most privileged, using common sense and humour to both move and convince, awakening the urge to seek understanding and making the world's complexities accessible.

The texts gathered in this work come from Abbé Pierre's personal archives, his numerous conferences and articles, and from thousands of hours of sound recordings, transcribed here for the very first time.

The book is on sale now in bookshops, Emmaus communities & online at:

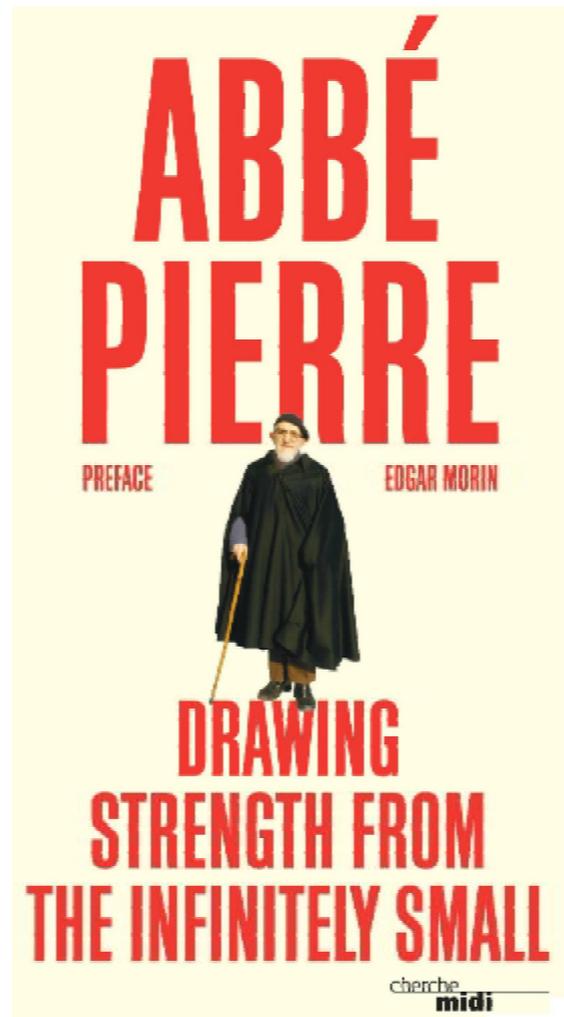
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Editorial Committee:

Ms.Moon Sharma, India
Mr.Camille Chedid, Lebanon
Mr.Selva Arokiaraj, India
Ms.Josephine Pavithra Devi, India

For Communications:

EMMAUS ASIA SOCIETY
Door No: 43, Fifth cross street,
Health Employees colony,
Nainarmandapam
Pondicherry - 605 004, INDIA
Tel: +91 94426 17266
E-mail: emmausiasia@gmail.com



emmaus
INTERNATIONAL
asia
ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

Compiled by :

Mr.M.Kamalakaran
Regional Secretariat