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NEW NATIONAL MEMBER OF NEPAL

Friendship-Nepal – Forum for Human Rights and Public Health – Nepal is admitted as “C” category member of International Council on Social Welfare. The main objectives of this NGO is to implement programmes on Human Rights Women Rights, Child Rights, Public Health and training for marginalized groups. It has members from all districts of Nepal.

Friendship Nepal in association with ICSW South Asia Regional Committee has conducted its first workshop on 13th November 2011 at Kadmandu on Human Rights violation in Nepal, Social Protection Initiatives and role of NGO’s in Social Development.

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15TH ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONAL MEETING AT KYOTO

A special Leaders Forum on Youth Employment at the 15th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting (ARPM) of International Labour Organization (ILO) held at Kyoto in December 2011 raised the crucial issues of prevailing mismatch between the available skills and demands of current employers and the severe lack of options for the youth, who are left out of decision and policy making.

Representative from India pointed out that in India challenges before youth were huge. Close to 60% of the young people in the world lived in Asia Pacific Region which accounted for 45% of all the unemployment in the world.

The participants of the regional meeting felt that with 24% educated youth being jobless, innovative solutions were needed. Another observation was that promoting entrepreneurship will increase employment and bring about benefits of economic growth and youth should be included in policy making.

ILO Director General Juan Somavia said in the meeting, the world and Asia needed a new vision of growth and development that could open the way to a new era of Social Justice.

SCARCITY OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCE POSE A SEVERE CHALLENGE IN THE WORLD

According to Director General of UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) degradation and scarcity of land and water resources pose a severe challenge to the world's capacity to meet human demands by 2050.

In the last 50 years, a significant increase in food production combined with demographic pressure and unsustainable agricultural practices have spoiled the land and water systems upon which food production depends. By 2050, due to increasing population and higher level of food consumption, the global level of food production will have to increase by 70%, while developing countries may need to achieve a 100% increase in food production.

Many land and water systems around the globe now face a concrete risk of gradual break down of their productive capacity, thus challenging the capacity of providing sufficient food for the world's population which is expected to reach 9 billion by 2050.

This calls for immediate remedial action as break down in food production will have a direct bearing on hunger and poverty.

FEMALE LITERACY IS A PUSHING FORCE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF A NATION

Women education is very critical for achieving growth in a knowledge based society. If women are made literate they will be self reliant and the beneficial impact of this will be manifold. Literate women are more aware about diseases and their treatment, with better capability to deal with sickness and improve health.

To discuss a holistic and development link approach to literacy a three days International conference on women Literacy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development was organized by UNESCO and Ministry of Human Resource Development in September 2011 at New Delhi. Besides India, Brazil, China, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, Mexico, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan and Nepal were participants in this conference.

In her inaugural address Mrs. Prathibha Patel, President of India, said "imparting education, to women and girls is important for bringing about social change and for the full development of the societies. Efforts must be made to create awareness about literacy. All forms of media both print and electronic media should be harnessed for this purpose."

MEMBER COUNTRY NEWS

AFGHANISTAN

AFGHANISTAN NEED DONOR SUPPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP WORK FORCE

At ARPM Meeting of ILO held in December at Kyoto members pointed out that in conflict areas like Afghanistan unemployment is more. Afghanistan Government lack information on Labour market. Based on 2007 – 2008 National Risk and Voluntary Assessment (NRVA) there is 79% unemployment in Afghanistan and 47% underemployment. 7.4 million people are out of jobs.

The meeting recommended International Community to focus on developing decent work in Afghanistan with 70% of population below 24 years of age.

ILO is collaborating with the Ministry of Labour and planning a work force survey financed by the department of International Development during the next year. If people have jobs they would less likely to work for the Taliban for US\$ 10 a day which is the present norm. The ILO wants to put jobs as the central pillar to stability in Afghanistan.

INDIA

CIVIL SOCIETY IN INDIA FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

In India, with the economic growth, corruption has grown even faster, which is not a good sign. The price winning economist Wassail Leontief has said "Capitalism and free enterprise without strict regulation will highly enrich the wealthy few under the pretense of National progress and widen the poverty chain".

Corruption is not specific to India. British industrialist Lord Paul has said "But a country of 1.2 billion people where even the basic necessities of life have not been provided for a large number of people who are living below poverty line, socialism with all its experiments had not been able to deliver social justice".

It is in this context when national leaders have not made much efforts to irradiate corruption, civil society organizations had to react and redress the situation. This is what prompted the civil society leader Mr. Anna Hazara to join for a fast in protest of increasing corruption practices in India and to fight for introduction of Lokpal Bill to book people, who are involved in corruption including politicians. Indian government now has conceded to the request of Mr. Anna Hazara and has presented a bill in this regard in the Parliament for discussion.

India has to stand for more than glorifying economic growth alone as a country free from corruption and reduction in poverty. If started from the top, the rest will follow.

SRI LANKA

SRI LANKA – PEACE PROCESS NEED TO CONTINUE TO ENSURE PEACE

Sri Lanka's internal war and terrorism lasted for 3 decades till May 2009 with the military defeat of LTTE. The bitterness and animosity that the last stage of war caused a permanent scar on the inter ethnic relations and require genuine

reconciliation between the government and ethnic communities. The war and terrorism created a long festering ethnic conflict.

Now that the war is over, members of international community including United States, European Union, India and Japan who were involved directly in the peace process need to continue with their efforts to ensure peace and justice in Sri Lanka

Source: Media Release of National Council of Sri Lanka

NEPAL

NEPAL – HUMANITARIAN PROJECT FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

In Nepal 6.6 lakhs children are visually impaired and 72% of them are without spectacles due to high medical cost and inaccessibility to health facilities. NGO like Jyothi Sangh, a National society is helping visually impaired Nepalese citizens to give them eye sight by availing grant from foreign countries. In past Indian government had given a grant of NR 10.26 million to conduct screening camps in schools of various districts under school Eye Care Programme.



Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year 2012

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