

CAMPAIGN FOR NEW CONSTITUTION

Doing the right thing at the right time can have great impacts. The context is about the constitution making process in Nepal. The focus of people at the moment is centered on the provisions the new constitutions will make. They are obviously cautious not to let their issues left to be included in the new constitution.

A Legislative Theatre performance is the opinion building campaign run by a disabled people organization. The campaign intends collecting opinion from the side of Persons with Disabilities through utilizing Theater for Development tool with the key activity of Legislative Theater Performances. Around 15 performances have been completed in the grass root level of different parts of Nepal to the date.

The campaign has two apparent sides to be discussed herewith. Persons with Disabilities are making their involvement in the historical constitution making process. The campaign is utterly targeted at the community level so that ever unheard people are getting opportunity of being heard. The vigorous involvement of the community people shows how much keen they are to be included in the mainstreaming of development.

On the other side, the campaign has pioneered the concept of 'Disability Theater'. Each individual artist involved in the 'Theater for Development' possesses some sort of disability. The part of acting demonstrates the outstanding creativity of Persons with Disability in theater. This gives the strengths in the potentiality of Disability Theater in future in Nepal.

Direct interaction held among PWDs at community level proved a boon in preparing the opinion to include in the new constitution from side of disabled people. The pain and plight expressed by PWDs clearly showed how marginalized they are inside their own home country.

Inclusion of key issues of PWDs in new constitution and proper development of legal framework following the constitution can be the logical remedies of these plights.

LEGISLATIVE THEATER PERFORMANCES IN VARIOUS SPOTS

April 2009

Kathmandu, Nepal

A series of Legislative Theater Performances were organized recently in various parts of the country. The Performances were arranged by Nepal Disabled Human Rights Center (DHRC-Nepal) with aim of collecting opinion from the side of People with Disabilities to include in the new constitution.



According to the President of DHRC, Legislative Theater Performance is a type of forum play where the trained artists act upon different problems and difficulties disabled people are facing in the community. The artists raise many problems, the facilitator asks to the audience for the proper solution at the peak of the show. The suggestions obtained from the audiences are documented and submitted to the committee in CA responsible for the disability rights issues.

The first performance was held in Kathmandu where a Shadow Constituent Assembly was organized by National Federation of Disabled Nepal. Representatives from across the nation were invited in the program and they

viewed the theater performance.



Following the performance in Kathmandu, some of the shows were arranged in the western part of Nepal. The show performed in Tribhuvan Higher Secondary School in Banke district was the first performance out of Valley. Then the drama team moved to Dadeldhura, Far Western side of Nepal. Two shows including in Amargadi and Jogbuda were arranged in Dadeldhura district. Other two performances were arranged in Mainapokhari of Kabre VDC and Charikot bazaar of Bhimeshwor Municipality in Dolakha district.

Many people including with Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) have viewed the performances. Most of them who were present at the performances

expressed their opinion to include in the new constitution.



The organizer of the performances Nepal Disabled Human Rights Center (DHRC-Nepal) has submitted the opinion collected during Legislative Theater Performance to the Committee in CA responsible to disability rights targeting the first draft of the new constitution.

A ROLE MODEL FOR PWDS

Dadhiraj Dhakal inhabitant of Nawalparasi district (western part) of Nepal never thought he would lead the successful life after having a frightful accident before some years. He has got amputated his leg after the motorcycle accident.

Before he met the mishap, he used to drive vehicles in India. India is a close neighboring country of Nepal. Many people move to India every year in search of good job opportunity. Around 13 years he worked as a driver there in India. During this period, he faced this misfortune and returned to his home country Nepal.

Including with four daughters, the wife and the mother, he had seven members in his family. The total responsibility of looking after them was upon

him. Unlike other disabled people in context of Nepal, even after suffering from this disaster in his life, he was lucky to achieve positive responses from his society.

After this misfortune in his life, he made up his mind to engage in small type of entrepreneurship. When I was in Kathmandu during my staying in hospital, I used to sell the watch there in local market at leisure time. It helped me to increase the level of confident in doing small business.



With monetary support of some people, he started my own business in Narayanghat, Chitwan. In the beginning I thought to develop a tricycle to ease his business. He consulted with one of his friend who had his own garage. He was happy to go with the idea proposed by Dhakal. With the support of that tricycle, he continued his entrepreneurship. He is looking after his family of seven members with that business.

He used to drive the vehicle since past thirteen years. But when he bought his bike, he got the accident within three months. His friend lost his life who was with him at the time of mishap. He saved his life but lost the leg. After he suffered that disaster in his life, he has never imagined he would be able to live independently and look after his family.

Now he is proud of himself since he is leading an independent life being a disabled person. He suggests all disabled people not to loose the confident

and do something with a strong will power. According to him, if one does any work with patient and hard labor; he becomes successful without any kind of doubt.

Short - Cut

HEALTH CAMP

A Health Camp was organized in Abukhaireni, Tursure Bhivad and Damauli of Tanahu district. The camp was organized with the technical support of Kathmandu Model Hospital. The Camp provided the free service of checking to 25 people with cleft problem and those who got fire burnt.

PARENT ASSOCIATION'S EVENT

An event of Parent Association of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities has been organized recently in a school in Thankot, Kathmandu. The event was arranged by the Special Olympic Committee. The director of the Special Committee Ganesh Prasad Parajuli has delivered his speech how they should go with their children with intellectual disabilities.

SECOND REGIONAL CRICKET TOURNAMENT OF BLIND

Second Regional Cricket Tournament of Blind was recently held in Butwal. Total four teams from across the nation joined the competition. The team from Central Development Region won the competition. The tournament was inaugurated by Ram Krishna Jaisi, the executive chief of Butwal Municipality.

INTERVIEW ON THE LEGISLATIVE THEATER PERFORMANCES

Interviewer: Shudarson Subedi



President Nepal Disabled Human Rights Center (DHRC-Nepal)

Interviewee: SK Thapa

Venue: DHRC-Nepal office, Battisputali, Kathmandu

SK: I would like to welcome in the interview for the "disABILITY VOICE" monthly web newsletter.

Mr. Subedi: Thank you very much for providing me this opportunity.

SK: Could you please describe in brief on the concept of Theater for Development "TfD"?

Mr. Subedi: Theater for Development is a tool frequently used in development field. We decided to use it in opinion building for new constitution. Selected artists are trained and they perform the Legislative Theater Performances in various places in the country.

SK: Could you please tell how DHRC planed to utilize Theater for Development (TfD) tool to conduct the campaign of Persons with Disabilities for building opinion to include in the new constitution?

Mr. Subedi: Since there is diversity in the field of disability, we thought the language used in theater would fit to all people with disabilities. We know that the language of arts i.e. drama is universal. So we thought it will have a great impact. So we utilized it to run our campaign.

SK: How are the theater performances going on? For how long time does it go on?

Mr. Subedi: Performances are going well. But we are badly disturbed by the unscheduled and frequently called strikes.

SK: How is the participation of PWDs in the performances?

Mr. Subedi: It's really good. Many PWDs are coming to see our performances from remote areas. We were encouraged by the enthusiastic participation of PWDs in Dolakha district. Many PWDs came there in Charikot to see our performances.

SK: What is the feedback of common people regarding the theater performances?

Mr. Subedi: All the people who viewed our performances appreciated through their heart. They suggested us to increase the outreach of such activities.

SK: How is the acting part of PWDs artists?

Mr. Subedi: Truly speaking it's appreciating. They have done great. Their hard labor is making our theater performances superb in the community.

SK: What is your further plan for the sustainability of this particular activity?

Mr. Subedi: This is the first time we utilized this particular tool. We found it impressive and it has a great impact in the community. We are thinking utilize this tool in our advocacy campaign too in near future.

SK: Would you like to deliver something on the issue of opinion collected during the performances and the new constitution through this Newsletter?

Mr. Subedi: I would like to thank you again for providing me this opportunity to express my views through this web newsletter on the matter of Legislative Theater Performances. I would like to thank all disabled people who were directly involved in opinion building from the side of PWDs. I would like to express my gratitude to team of Legislative Theatre Performance for their input. I hope new constitution will fully incorporate the disability issues.