



Vol.1, No. 2, February, 2012

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PICTURE SPEAKS LOUDER



Small child carrying a load bigger than him at Daud VDC of Doti district

Photo by: Ganesh Bahadur Singh

CZOPP annual general meeting held

The annual general assembly of Children as Zones of Peace and Child Protection (CZOPP) was held on Feb.15 at Lalitpur.

The general assembly finalised the CZOP programme and plan of action for this year. Activities include advocating at a policy level, promoting the Schools Are Zones Of Peace (SZOP) campaign, coordinating for implementation of SZOP National Framework and Implementation Guidelines 2068, monitoring of violation of child rights and various other activities.

It also formed an 11member steering committee with chairmanship of CWIN Nepal, vice chairmanship of INSEC and, representation of seven national and four international non-governmental organisations. Meanwhile, Child Nepal, Seto Gurans National Child Development Centre, Rural Reconstruction Nepal, Human Rights Organisation of Nepal (HURON), Underprivileged Children's Educational Programme, Save the Children, World Vision, World Education, and Plan Nepal were selected as members of the steering committee.

NAPA in Global Alcohol Policy Conference

National Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAPA) participated in Global Alcohol Policy Conference (GAPC) that was held on Feb 13-15 at the Impact Convention Centre in Nonthaburi, Thailand. The main theme was 'From the Global Alcohol Strategy to National and Local Action'.

The GAPC was jointly organized by the Thai Ministry of Public Health, the World Health Organization, the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance and, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation.



Altogether 1120 participants from 59 countries took part in the conference where the Ministry of Health, WHO, the Nepal Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAPA) and the Rural Development Tuki Association (RDTA) showed their representation on behalf of Nepal.

The general objective of the conference was to promote evidence-based alcohol policy, development and implementation through cross-sector participation free from commercial interest processes.

In the conference, Sumnima Tuladhar, Coordinator of NAPA presented a poster titled on 'The Impact of Alcohol on Children'.

The conference recommended ten target areas for policy measures and interventions:

- Leadership, awareness and commitment
- Health services' response
- Community action
- Drink-driving policies and countermeasures
- Availability of alcohol
- Marketing of alcohol beverages
- Pricing policies
- Reducing the negative consequences of drinking and alcohol intoxication
- Reducing the public health impact of illicit alcohol and informally produced alcohol
- Monitoring and surveillance

The conference ended with handover the flag of GAPC to Korean Ministry of Health to organize the GAPC on 7-9 October, 2013.

CWIN is a member of this national alliance.

CHILDREN IN MEDIA

BPKIHS employees keep 500 children as 'domestic help'

PRADIP MEYANGBO

Dharan: Over 500 school-going children have been allegedly employed as domestic help by the staff of the BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Dharan.

The children have neither been provided access to education nor facilities set by the Sunsari District Child Welfare Committee.

Of around 1,600 hospital employees, including doctors and nurses, more than 1,000 are residing in the quarters provided by the hospital, and most of them have kept children as domestic help.

Register of the hospital Nanda Kumar Thapa claimed most of these children have been employed as domestic help by their own relatives. He, however, said he was the one to propose keeping children as domestic help by securing their rights.

"It was me who forwarded the proposal. However, lack of coordination has caused a problem," he said. Sakuntala Subba, the executive director of UPKA Nepal, an NGO working for children, said it has been conducting informal classes targeting some children employed as domestic help by the hospital staff.



She said most of the children belong to marginalised communities and hail from Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari districts. Most of them are in the 10 to 16 age group.

“As the children seemed interested in studies, we started classes in the afternoon,” she said.

“Some children are talented,” said teacher Gita Magar, adding that most of them are dropouts. The children get a monthly pay of up to Rs 2,000 as domestic help.

Source: www.ekantipur.com (February 12, 2012)

Teachers deprive eight lakhs kids of right to education

KATHMANDU: Despite the government’s declaration of schools zones as zones of peace, one of the main stakeholders of schools, teachers shut down schools today in the latest instance of defiance of the declaration and violation of the children’s right to education enshrined in the constitution.



The school closure enforced at the call of Teachers’ Union of Nepal and Nepal Educational Republic Forum (NERF), an organisation comprising various teachers’ and school employees’ organisations, affected more than eight million students in around 33,000 schools across the country.

While the teachers and non-teaching school staff continue to trample on the declaration, the government is hesitant to take action against them.

Rose Nath Pande, joint spokesperson at the Ministry of Education, said the ministry cannot take action against the teachers because the ‘schools as a zone of peace’ declaration is yet to be endorsed.

He said the ministry has been trying to address the agitators’ demands through talks. Babu Ram Pokharel, newly elected president of the Private and Boarding Schools Organisation Nepal, said they have extended moral support for the professional organisations of teachers and school employees. “We have to work with them, so we cannot ignore their request to shut the schools for a day in a bid to press the government to address their demands,” he said, but hastened to add that PABSON does not support all of the agitators’ demands.

“We have requested 6,000 member schools in 70 districts to shut as a mark of support for these professionals’ bodies,” Pokharel said.

With final exams round the bend, the schools will have to run additional classes on account of the bandh.

Agitating teachers today staged a rally from Shantibatika to MoE demanding that the government meet their demands. While staging a sit-in in front of the MoE, the teachers clashed with security personnel.

Home Kumar Thapa, president of the Nepal Institutional Schools Teachers' Union (Nepal ISTU), which leads NERF, today said police arrested some 200 teachers from the MoE premises, while police said detained 55 teachers and released them later.

Hari Dev Yadav, vice president of the Nepal National Teachers' Organisation (Lalitpur) sustained injuries in his head during a clash with police. He is receiving treatment at the Bir Hospital.

Thapa said the teachers will shut the schools nationwide tomorrow against the arrest of their colleagues from a peaceful protest.

He urged the government to take the teachers' demands seriously and ward off educational strikes.

Agitating teachers had called students to attend classes on Saturday, a weekly holiday, as part of their nationwide protest.

Thapa said about 60 per cent institutional schools and 70 per cent community schools opened yesterday, while PABSON stated only a few private schools opened that day.

Suprabhat Bhandari, president of the Guardians' Association of Nepal, said they are against the Bandh.

"The teachers' protest should not affect the children," he said, urging teachers to change the modality of protest and the government to address the teachers' demands without delay.

Source: www.thehimalayantimes.com (February 27, 2011)

Signing of the Third Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

On 28th February, 20 countries signed the third Optional Protocol of CRC at the official UN signing ceremony in Geneva. By establishing a new complaints procedure, this third Optional Protocol will, for the first time, provide children access to justice at the international level. If justice cannot be secured in their home country, children and their representatives will be able to appeal to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The signing is an important first step towards ratifying the Protocol. States now need to ratify the protocol to be bound by its provisions, while 10 states are needed to ratify before it becomes fully into effect. An NGO coalition representing child and human rights organisations will continue lobbying to ensue the Protocol enters into force as soon as possible. Nepal is yet to sign the optional protocol, but national child's rights organisations will advocate the government to sign the new complaints procedure to help protect children in Nepal and around the world.

Source: *Joint Press Release- NGO Group for the CRC/International Commission of Jurists/Child Rights Coalition Asia* (February 28, 2012)