



# *Annual Report*

2016-2017



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## About the Organization

We are a social justice organization working for the rights of the tribal “Adivasi” people of Andhra Pradesh, India and for the protection of the natural resources and ecology of the Eastern Ghats (hills). Samata started working in a small tribal hamlet in 1987 with a group of tribal and rural youth, to mobilize tribal communities against exploitation by outsiders and by government. Samata was formally registered as a non government organization in 1990.

Our vision is to help build an India in which tribal and scheduled castes, adivasi groups, the poor and other disadvantaged minorities can fully participate in a healthy Indian democracy, enjoy the benefits of economic development and retain their rights, their culture, and their history. Our mission is to advocate for the voiceless, to hold government accountable to its promises, to enable minorities to fully achieve and exert their rights, to promote sustainable development while defending against environmental abuses and to aid the human development of the disadvantaged. We believe the best way to achieve our mission is through adherence to nonviolence, community empowerment and adherence to the democratic process.

## Support to mm&P

### Workshop on Issues in Vth Schedule areas

State level consultations: State level consultations were organized in 5 states vis-à-vis Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. The consultations were organized after the need was felt to better understand the nitty-gritty's of the Samata judgment, how the respective state governments have perceived and responded to the judgment and how can the community take the initiative to make the state respond or comply to the provisions of 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule and subsequently Samata Judgment. A total of 460 participants from 6 states actively participated in the workshop which was organized along with mm&P flagship program to share the costs of gathering.

S.No	State	Venue / Town	Date of Consultation	No. of Participants
1	Odisha	Rourkela	4-10-2016	96
2	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	23-11-2016	57
3	Madhya Pradesh	Dabhaura	26-11-2016	84
4	Gujarat	Tapi	11-12 -2016	74
5	Maharashtra	Palgarh	13 -12-2016	79
6	West Bengal	Kolkata	26-02- 2017	70



## Children and Mining Workshop

Children and Mining Workshop was conducted in the Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan. The purpose of the workshop was to bring to the notice the various issues faced by children working in the mines and affected by mining.

Sr.no	State	Venue	Date
1.	Madhya Pradesh	Panna	28-11-2016
2.	Jharkhand	Ghatsila	24/25-12-2016
3.	Rajasthan	Makrana	16-02-2017

Children are the most affected in the mining areas. Those who work as mine laborers are the victims of child labor. Their health, education and wellbeing is adversely affected. For the



children living close to the mining areas the situation is equally worse. Lack of clean drinking water, pollution, lack of basic education forces the children into menial jobs either in the mines or elsewhere. The workshops were addressing some of the legal aspects of how child labor can be curbed in mining areas and how child rights can be protected. The workshop saw participation from grassroots activists and mining affected people.

## National Seminar on Governance in Vth Schedule Areas



A two day seminar titled-'The National Seminar on Vth Schedule Areas' organised by Samata brought together eminent academicians, grassroots activists, pro-bono lawyers and students from law and development background to dialogue and debate on the various issues that have afflicted the Scheduled area since Independence. The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Upendra Baxi. Prof. Baxi spoke about the idea of Development and how it is envisioned in the scheduled areas. The National Seminar was attended by Mr. Harsh Sethi, Dr. Shalini Randheria, Mr. Achuyt Yagnik, Ms. Namita Wahi, grassroots activists- Ms. Indu Netam, Mr. Deme Oram, Mr. Mukesh Bhirua, Mr. Raju Pandhara, Mr. Albert Minj, Mr. Kaluram, and several other activists. The Seminar also saw participation from students and academicians from in and across Delhi.



## **Recognising Grassroots Struggle for Rights to Resources, Livelihood and Health**

Samata in collaboration with mm&P has taken the noble initiative to felicitate grassroot social activists. The social activists have been relentlessly fighting for social justice mostly in schedule five areas and other tribal belts. In the era of globalization and privatization, the indigenous communities are losing out on their access to land, and other natural resources. On the other hand there are tenacious struggles from the various grassroot leaders against the injustices done to the indigenous people and the natural resources by the capitalist forces. The grassroot activists Indu Netam (Chhattisgarh), Rajesh Tripathi (Chhattisgarh), Basanth Pradhan (Odisha), Swaraj Das (West Bengal), Ravindra Velip (Goa), Munni Hansda (Jharkhand), Albert Minj (Jharkhand), Rajendra Kapurapu (Andhra Pradesh), Gamella Devakaumar (Andhra Pradesh), Panasala Chhibabu (Andhra Pradesh), Bansilal Bhinjana (Rajasthan) and Siya Dulari (Madhya Pradesh) were felicitated. The felicitation was done by Dr. Claude Alvaris and Dr. Nandini Sundar.

## **Workshop on paralegal and capability development**

A two day dialogue of lawyers, community leaders, gram panchayat presidents, ward members and women activists from East Godavari and Visakhapatnam Districts was organised by Samata on 30-31st of January 2017. The panellists of the gathering were Mr. R Ravi, Executive Director of Samata and Mr. B T Venkatesh and Ms. Sampurna of Reach Law, Bangalore. The major issues that came up in the dialogue include extensive mining in tribal regions, open sale of D-patta lands in tribal sub-plan areas, no proper land entitlements under FRA, no roads in tribal areas and atrocities by the forest department.



Workshop on Paralegal and Capability building was also organised in Rourkela in Odisha. This training program was aimed at select group of individuals comprising of tribal lawyers, human rights defenders, tribal leaders and youth. Mr. B T Venkatesh and Ms. Sampurna of Reach Law Bangalore were the facilitators for the workshop.





## Vlth General Assembly

The 6th General Assembly of the mines, minerals & People (mm&P), organized from 13th May to 15th May 2017 at Kotagiri in Tamil Nadu, witnessed the participation of about 236 volunteers, coming from dozens of struggle groups representing 17 states across the country. People from various paths of life- activists, journalists, lawyers, environmentalists, , students, farmers and women participated in the meet. The Assembly was attended by eminent persons- Mr. **K.V Krishnamurthy** the former Deputy Director of Geological Survey of India, **Mr. Rajendra Singh** popularly known as 'water man' of India, **Mr. CR Bijoy** , an expert on PESA in India, **Prof. AK Sinha**, **Rahul Basu** from Goa Foundation and **Leo Saldanha** from Environment Support Group. The General Assembly provided a platform for people to share their experiences and express concern on issues of community rights over natural resources.



## Lobbying with Parliamentarians



The Lobbying with the Parliamentarians Program is an attempt by Samata and mm&P to reflect the state specific issues and challenges faced by the local community people living in the mining areas, especially to take cognizance of the severity of the problems faced by children and initiate suitable measures to minimize the same by bringing it to the notice and knowledge of honourable state and central ministers and address the same.

In this regard A team of delegation from 17 states across the country has met with the parliamentarians from various political parties to submit its memorandum in New Delhi from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> July' 2017 .The delegation led by Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada, ED of Samata& Chairperson of mines, mineral and People, Mr.Ashok Shrimali , Secretary General from mines, mineral and People. The delegation met with senior political leaders and Member of Parliaments across the parties such as Mr. Sharad Yadav from Janta Dal (U) from Bihar, Tribal affairs Minister, Juel Oram , Piyush Goyal ,Minister of State, Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy and Mines, Mansukhbhai Vasava, (BJP) Senior Member of Parliament from Gujarat, Mr. D. Raja(CPI), Senior Member of Parliament from Tamil Nadu, Mr. Kantilal Bhuria (INC), Member of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Tiruchi Shiva, (DMK) Member of Parliament from Tamil Nadu, Mr. Jairam Ramesh(INC), Member of Parliament from Andhra Pradesh, Jitendra Choudhury(CPI), Member of Parliament, Tripura East, Mr. Kamal Nath (Congress), Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, Faggan Singh Kulaste, (BJP), Minister of State- Health and Family Welfare, Rajeev Gowda (INC), Karnataka, K. Kavita (TRS) Member of Parliament from Telangana, Mr. Godam Nagesh (TRS) Member of Parliament from Telangana, Mr. Shripad Yasso Naik (BJP), Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) from Goa and requested the ministers and parliamentarians to take up the issues, raise them in the parliament and demand for appropriate actions.

### **Katiki Tollgate Inauguration**

As per the guidelines given by then Sub-Collector Paderu, the construction of tollgate began which would be the entry for the Katiki waterfalls. Samata has facilitated throughout the struggle to construct the tollgate. The tollgate was inaugurated by Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada, ED, Samata on 16th July, 2016

## World Indigenous Day Celebrations

The United Nations 'International Day of World's Indigenous People' is observed on August 9th each year with an aim to promote and protect the rights of Indigenous people. This year the International Day of World's Indigenous People was celebrated in Borra Panchayat. Samata also organised a walk from Borra Girijan Ashram Patashala to Borra Caves to celebrate the indigeneity of the people and the surroundings. At Borra Caves school children took oath to protect their forests and their natural resources. Samata provided t-shirts to school children carrying the slogan- "health of the hills is wealth of the plains".

## Children on the Move

Convergence workshop on issues related to migration and children was conducted with all the line departments on 11th November, 2016. The workshop was conducted as part of the Children on Move project of Samata.

## Youth Counselling

As part of Samata's youth outreach program, we have conducted 5 counselling sessions at Tribal schools and hostels. The idea was to understand the issues that are weaning them away from pursuing education for better livelihood opportunities and also to orient students on the socio-cultural aspects of transitioning from rural area to cosmopolitan cities and towns. Approximately around 900 students between the age group of 14 to 20 years participated from 5 different schools, colleges and Tribal hostels.

Sr.no	Place	School/College	Date
1.	Aruku Valley		24-11-2016
2.	Paderu	Vijeta Junior College	25-11-2016
3.	Borra		26-11-2016
4.		Kasturba Balika	15-12-2016
5.	Hukumpeta	Government Junior College	16-12-2016



## Red Hand Day Awareness Campaign

Red Hand Day or International Day against use of child Soldiers is observed on 12th February every year to call for action against children as soldiers and support to children who are affected by it. This year Samata has taken an initiative to recognise this day and spread awareness amongst the children. The awareness campaign was held in Visakhapatnam.



## **Guest Lectures and meetings**

1. Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada gave a guest lecture at National Law School Visakhapatnam on 23rd October, 2017. He spoke about the various legislations in the Vth Scheduled areas.
2. Tribal Sub-Plan meeting- Divisional level Tribal Sub-Plan meeting was organised in Paderu. Samata was invited for the meeting. It was attended by Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada, Ms. Sayantani and Mr. Satish from Samata.
3. May Day Event- On the occasion of May Day on 1st May, 2017, a public meeting was held at Pedda Mallapuram in Andhra Pradesh. Mr. Ravi Rebbapragada was invited as speaker for the event.