

KSMTF-Activity Report-2005

Introduction

We present this report paying homage to the late Mr.K.V.Raphel, who was the president of Ernakulam District union and the state vice president of KSMTF.

1. Major Activities

(a) Tsunami based activities:

> Took initiative in convening an urgent meeting of many social organizations and individuals to effectively respond to the Tsunami situation and avail justice to the victims.

> Organized collective activities together clothes, food and medicine and distributed them to the affected people.

> Federation has cooperated with the efforts of democratic organizations under the banner "voices from the margins" to organize a Peoples Tribunal. Tsunami affected persons from Kerala, Tamilnadu and Pondichery narrated their experiences at this Tribunal. Justice H.Suresh, Dr.V.Mohini Giri, Justice D.Sreedevi, Dr.Gopalguru were present as jury at the proceedings. The findings of the Peoples Tribunal has been published.

> The visit of shri Harekrishna Debnath, chairperson NFF and shri N.D.Koly general secretary NFF at the Tsunami affected areas of Kerala is being acknowledged proudly by the federation.

> Formed a people's forum of the Tsunami victims, under its banner agitations, lobbying and networking were done to pressurize the Government to assure proper housing, sanitary conveniences, and livelihood assets as crafts & gears.

> In collaboration with SIFFS we organized state-level awareness-raising programs.

> As per the directions of NFF we prepared a list of directly & indirectly Tsunami victimized persons in Kerala and a financial support was availed to the enlisted ones.

(b) Other activities:

> Struggles organized in Kerala & in Delhi against fish-import and foreign fishing vessels. These struggles were organized by KSMTF itself and also in collaboration with other trade unions.

> When trawl-boat owners ventured to bring out a statement to go against trawl-ban; KSMTF took a firm stand to counter this move and the trawl-boat owners associations were compelled to withdraw from their venture.

> Struggle were organized to pressurize the central and state Government to increase the kerosene quota to fish workers and against the move of the Central Government to cancel the kerosene quota at a subsidized rate.

> Struggles were organized to release the Kerala fish workers enjailed in Pakistan. Met Indian prime minister on this issue managed to release them from the jail. Later financial assistance in the form of grants and loans were organized for them from the Government.

> A struggle was organized in a state capital –Thiruvananthapuram as per the direction of NFF in the context of Global Week of Action. Fish import and foreign fishing vessels issues too were raised in this struggle.

> KSMTF actively participated in the struggles organized by NFF in Delhi addressing many demands and issues of fish workers.

> World Fisheries Day (November – 21st), a massive rally was organized. It marched into the AG's office in Thiruvananthapuram.

> KSMTF participated in the Chennai conference on ILO convention, fisheries policy and coastal protection organized by NFF. KSMTF conducted a seminar in Thiruvananthapuram on the same as a continuation of Chennai conference.

> Women's Day Celebration: Theeradesa Mahila Vedi the women's wing of KSMTF marched towards the Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram.

> Hiroshima day was meaningfully recalled in collaboration with many other organizations. Shri Cherian Philip, R.V.G. Manon and T. Peter addressed the meeting. "America-America" directed by K.P. Sasi was also displayed at the press club hall.

> Federation also has participated in the blockade demonstration before the Cochin Port Trust demanding the withdrawal of fish imports, cancellation of fishing license of foreign vessels. Active participation of the federation members were noticed at the AG'S office picketing on the same issue at Thiruvananthapuram.

> Federation has organized a strike at Thiruvananthapuram against the move to displace the fisherwomen vendors from the wayside markets end to assign the wayside markets and other markets to Walmart co. The strike conducted by fisherwomen with fish baskets on head had attracted the public very much. Govt.

has temporarily withdrawn the move to displace the fisherwomen from wayside markets.

> Seminars were organized on “fisheries management and protection of fish resource” at Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta and one at state level in association with SIFFS.

> A state level seminar has been organized on “Traditional knowledge on fisheries sector” in cooperation with Indian Social Institute.

> A workshop has been organized for the fishermen on computer training so as to make use Information Technological advances in the fisheries sector and to establish Fisheries Information Centers in the fishing villages.

> Discussion had been arranged incorporating selected members from Scheduled Tribe- Dalith- Fishing communities in association with Indian Social Institute. An action plan has been formulated for the combined activities in future. Decision has been taken to formulate an action plan for the environment protection and to regain the integrity and culture of the three communities by ensuring rights of the communities on the resources. Adequate representation in the governance should also be ensured.

> KSMTF actively participated in the Plachimada anti-coco cola struggle organized by NAPM in front of secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram.

> ALAKAL

“Alakal” the fortnightly of KSMTF is being continuously printed and published incorporating the current developments in the fisheries sector. Alakal has already been included in the Govt. media list so that the advertisements from Govt. are being received for publication. The English version of Alakal is available on the website. <http://www.alakal.net>

> City Office

The city office of the federation has been started functioning on 11th April 2006 near the secretariat at Statue, Thiruvananthapuram. This has helped to strengthen the relationship with Govt. institutions and other organizations. The fishermen from other districts coming to Thiruvananthapuram to contact Govt. offices are also utilizing the facilities and contacts of the city office.

>Organizational Matter<

Federation is spending much time to correct the frame work of the organization instead of the discussions and interactions on the issues in the fisheries sector. This is perhaps because of the financial interventions by fr. Thomas kocherry ignoring the frame work of the federation. The state committee has taken certain decision on this. The committee has decided that the leaders including fr.Thomas kocherry would not involve in such activities without the knowledge and consent of the state-district office bearers of the federation so that the constitution of the organization is respected by all means.