



ANNUAL  
**REPORT**  
2019-2020

Institute *for* Social Democracy

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## ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

New Delhi, 2020

### Publisher

#### **Institute for Social Democracy**

Flat No. 110, Numberdar House  
62-A, Laxmi Market, Munirka  
New Delhi-110067, INDIA  
Phone & Telefax : 091-11-26177904  
Email : notowar.isd@gmail.com  
Website : www.isd.net.in

### In-co-operation with

#### **Bread for the World - Protestant Development Service**

P. O. Box 40144  
D-10061 Berlin  
Federal Republic of Germany  
www.info.brot-fuer-die-welt.de

#### **MISEREOR**

Catholic Central Office  
for Development and EB  
PO Box 10 15 45,  
52015 Aachen, Germany

### Written and Edited

**Babita Negi**

### Illustrations and Cover Design

**Surender Singh**

## MESSAGE from the DESK



Dear Friends,

Many people in many ways have talked about pluralism and syncretism in plurality. From Historians, to Poets, to Sufi-saints, idioms and proverbs in common people's language and in many other different ways we see prevalence of and discourse on the inseparable diversity of our society.

In words of Prof. Imtiaz Ahmad, "I understand that diversity itself is an expression of nature. So if there is diversity in nature, why should culture and religion not have diversity?"

For many years, ISD has been working to understand, expand and strengthen this very syncretism and plurality, and the diversity. In India and in South Asia, ISD is working with like-minded organizations who believe in peace, in shared culture, in Composite Heritage for peace, harmony and co-existence. The more we are reaching out to people, listening to them, the more we are convinced that if there is anything that can save our society from violence, religious extremism, casteism and many such ailments, it is our way of living with pluralism and syncretism and its inter-relations.

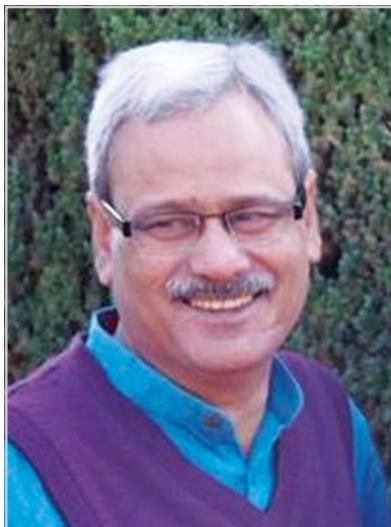
This is true that many times it appears that our society is losing its values of humanity, acceptance and co-existence. There is so much violence, riot, and hatred around us that one cannot believe that humans are capable of such deeds! This reality is not just of contemporary society; our history is a witness to many such times. But this is just one reality. Society is made up of different kinds of people. Whenever sadness and helplessness overwhelms plurality, our syncretism and us gives, us comfort. Our shared existence, our shared culture, our Composite Heritage saves our society from breaking apart. We have to consistently strengthen it, as it is the very foundation of our existence, of our survival. If we are unable to save our diversity, our pluralism and syncretic traditions then we will leave a fractured society for coming generations to live.

Through this report, we introduce you to those people who have joined ISD in its journey to explore and understand Composite Heritage. We bring to you their stories of change, importance of Composite Heritage from their point of view and their opinion on the efforts of ISD. Our achievements of last one year, our journey, changes in the organisation and what people think are presented in this report.

Composite Heritage, peace building, conflict analysis – ISD is committed to these causes. To save our traditions of syncretism and plurality and to strengthen them – these will play major role in maintaining our co-existence and mutual respect in society. It is our joint responsibility to preserve these traditions of co-existence and respect to pass on to next generation.



## INSTITUTE *for* SOCIAL DEMOCRACY



Institute for Social Democracy came into existence in the backdrop of unprecedented violent conflict that South Asia has witnessed over several decades. Now they have become a routine affair. Thousands of women, men and children fell victim to this madness. ISD was established by late Dr. Khurshid Anwar and its work on Composite Heritage was his brainchild. ISD has chosen Composite Heritage as a tool for conflict transformation and violence prevention as no other organisation has yet taken it up. Composite Heritage is chosen as a tool, because of the fact that irrespective of the caste, religion and gender every individual relates to it. It belongs to masses, not an individual. The initial objective of ISD was to provide a common platform for groups and individuals committed to secularism and democracy, to explore and affirm Composite Heritage as a basis for peace and democracy. With this objective in mind, we initiated our intervention through the perspective building and capacity building on the context of conflict and bringing Composite Heritage as a tool to restore Peace, Harmony and Democracy. Through our interventions, we learnt that there is almost total lack of peace movements in the context of sectarian violent and non-violent conflict such as communal, caste, ethnic, linguistic and regional conflicts. In sub-continent, there is a movement for peace when it comes to war and nuclear race issues. There is also a strong and significant feminist movement but when it comes to conflicts mentioned above, our efforts become only reactive. We assume that there is peace because there is no visible conflict. We remain until and unless we are confronted with violent conflicts. Once the violent conflict is invisible, we again assume that there is peace. The biggest lesson that we learnt through these years is that the absence of violent conflict does not mean peace. We also learnt that there are always sources of tension present in the society and they become visible as and when the forces behind the sources become proactive. On the contrary, we also realize that in a given society there are always "Local Capacities for Peace" present. Though we always require them to remain on the surface and help to keep peace and harmony intact we hardly become proactive. During our journey we have evolved not just as an organisation but also the concept of Composite Heritage has evolved and new dimensions are added to it.

# VISION and MISSION



## Vision

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To build a social structure based on peace, harmony and democratic values while accepting social and cultural diversity and establishing dialogue with mutual respect.

## Mission

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- To identify, understand and collect, different forms of Composite Heritage at community level, through research and dialogues.
- Mainstreaming of the concept of Composite Heritage through different mediums for the sake of democratic values.
- To encourage the youth, like-minded groups and different peace networks at South Asia Level, for contributing on peace and harmony by enhancing their knowledge and social analysis.

## Belief

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ISD believes in establishing a dialogue with different social groups and connects with them with full respect towards their social and cultural aspirations and without doubting their intentions. ISD dreams of building secular and democratic society based on human development and dignity of human rights.

# ISD - ITS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE and AREA of WORK



ISD is a trust and has its own organisational structure. Its central unit, which outlays and decides the outline of its programmes is based at Delhi, which also happens to be its main office. Programmes and interventions of ISD are spread across at many levels. With the support of its Delhi and field staff ISD has adopted the structure of adhocery, in which different cells are created and the anchors of each cell works accordingly.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE and AREA of WORK : ADHOCRACY



## AREA OF WORK



ISD directly and indirectly is engaged in enriching and enhancing the concept of Composite Heritage , democracy and peace building in India as well as other South Asian Countries with support of its network partner , likeminded people, comrades and South Asia partners through publication and workshop medium

### Directly

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ISD works at Kullu and Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, Allahabad and Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh, Mukteshwar and Nainital in Uttarakhand, Jamshedpur in Jharkhand, Shopia, Bandipur and Baramulla in Kashmir.

### Indirectly

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#### **Through Publications**

Through publications- ISD has reached out to Andaman, Andhra Pradesh , Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu - Kashmir, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Telangana , Uttar Pradesh , Uttarakhand and West Bengal,.

### Indirectly

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#### **Through Workshops**

ISD has shared its concept of Composite Heritage with diverse groups in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu - Kashmir, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, North-East, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu , Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

### At South Asian Level:

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ISD is involved in promoting and enhancing the concept of Composite Heritage in South Asian countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan through the collaboration with its like-minded groups, by organizing workshops and publications. In addition, it is a part of Local Capacities for Peace network. Through this network, ISD has been constantly working for establishing peace in South Asia.

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#### **Note:**

**All activities of Composite Heritage at Jammu and Kashmir are supported and funded by the Misereor.**

## PROJECTS AND STRATEGIES

To fulfill our Vision-Mission, to keep our faith alive and to sustain peace and harmony in society, ISD has developed certain objectives and strategies to be used in its projects and area of work.



### Main issues

- To address the tensions /conflicts based on communalism, caste, race and gender through Composite Heritage, hence, to establish peace and harmony by bringing different communities together.
- Dalit, Adivasi and Indigenous people's issues related to land right, migration and displacement done by state government's policies, multinationals, industrialists and globalization.
- To identify the local issues related to their culture and dialects."

### Project : Composite Heritage

Composite Heritage is a constant process. Under this concept, we organize series of workshops and seminars with civil society groups and other associations and make them committed towards democracy and secularism.

In this process, we also decide our own commitment to discover various aspects of Composite Heritage and to preserve and strengthen them. We search for cultural expressions like literature, folktales, music and theater through our workshops and research and publication and try to popularize them.

The cultural expressions make us see the secular and democratic values of our common concerns, as well as their cultural compositeness. We have developed lucid and easily available materials, especially for Hindi speaking rural society of North India.

In order to mainstream and develop the concept of Composite Heritage and to revive its forms and aspects for society, we use orientation workshops, publications, network building and training workshops as our techniques. We organize many activities under these.

### Project : Local Capacities for Peace

The aim of this project is to provide aid and address human needs in context of conflict, without making it worse.

At present, there is a network of nine groups from Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India (LCP South Asia Network) which have been working on the important subjects like 'Do No Harm and Local Capacities for Peace through workshops and other activities.

In this context, ISD organises training workshops on conflict transformation, especially for youth. It also analyses the contexts of tension and conflicts through different tools. We mainly aim at developing an understanding of conflict transformation in young people and help them in building their capacities. Various methods like seminars, workshops, training camps and exposure visits are used for the purpose.

## PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES



### Activities: Workshops and Training

**During 2019-20, ISD has organised various workshops on Composite Heritage for children, youth, women, and social workers at National and South Asia level. The purpose of these workshop was familiarizing people with the concept of Composite Heritage, developing its understanding and mainstreaming it at grass root level. The concept is also used in workshops organised under LPC project, which aims at developing local capacities for peace and harmony and preparing future trainers.**

#### Main Activities:

- Orientation Workshop on Composite Heritage with farmers and youth at Mukteshwar, Nainital, Uttarakhand
- Orientation workshop on Composite Heritage at Guwahati, Ullubari, with youths.
- Orientation Workshop with the people of PAD organization at Kodaikanal, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu
- Workshop on Composite Heritage with likeminded people of different NGOs at Srinagar, Kashmir
- Workshop on Composite Heritage with children at Ghat Palhan, Kashmir
- Workshop on Composite Heritage with women at Hazin and Pattan, Kashmir
- Workshop on Composite Heritage at Jaunpur with students
- Workshop on Composite Heritage with youths at Sonari, Jamshedpur
- Workshop on Composite Heritage with students at Banwasi Sewa

Ashram, Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh

- Workshop at Gadagussain, Khauli and Siraj, Himanchal Pradesh on Composite Heritage.
- Two days' workshop on Composite Heritage with students and village groups at Bheedapani Inter college, Nainital
- Workshop at Himachal on Composite Heritage with youth, Anganwadi workers and Asha workers
- Workshop at Gadagusaen, Himachal on 'Local Capacities for peace'.
- Workshops on Conflict Transformation Tools under LCP at, Kalamandir and Sonari of Jamshedpur Jharkhand
- 2 days' workshop and field study under accompaniment programme with PAD organisation staff on Composite Heritage.
- Workshop on Composite Heritage with youth at Lucknow, U.P.



## Meetings and Events

The purpose of meetings and events is to make people aware of the Composite Heritage its concepts and aspects, to familiarise them with their own Composite Heritage and to convey them the importance of the revival of forms of Composite Heritage. These events are organised to nurture the feeling of brotherhood, friendship, Peace and Harmony in community through Composite Heritage and culture.

## Let's Play Together

- A Kabaddi tournament was organised at Titram, Haryana. The purpose was to familiarise children with traditional games and to create a feeling of brotherhood and friendship among them.
- Organised Tuli Lagoon and Ankh-Micholi games for children at Trigam, Kashmir to inculcate a new learning among them and to revive lost traditional games
- "Aao Mil Kar Khele Khel" was organised at Allahabad in Bal Srijan.
- Organised games for children at Junior High School, Srinetganj-Machhlipur, Jaunpur.

## Folk Culture

- A meeting of local artists under Lok Natya Mahotsav was organised at Jamshedpur, Jharkhand for building awareness about folk music and dance among youth.
- For the revival of the historical culture of Ladhishah of Kashmir, a meeting was organised with for women and children. Music, street plays and poetry was presented for the understanding of history of Ladhishah.
- Discussion on 'Bachcha Nagma' and 'Bandi -Pethir'-an important part of Kashmir's folk art and its Composite Heritage was organized with children at Trigam, Kashmir.



- One day meeting at GhatPalhan to know and understand Kashmiri poetry
- Presentation of Ragini by the folk artists in ISD's programme at Kurukshetra, Haryana
- A cultural programme presented by the children on folk music in "Maati Mahotsav" of Titram, Haryana
- For sharing the experiences regarding revival of folk art, songs and music in Chunnar, Himachal a meeting was organised with folk artist and a cultural programme was conducted under Composite Heritage. Along with that, a meeting on organic farming was also held with the farmers.

## Meetings -Discussions and Seminar

- One day meeting held in honour of Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar's 128<sup>th</sup> birthday at Khetasarai, Jaunpur.
- One day meeting was organised with farmers and local people on Constitution and Organic Farming at Khetasarai, Jaunpur.
- Meeting with children to develop their understanding and capacity about social issues, at Madwan, Kashmir
- Meeting with youth on current issues, peace and harmony at Trigam Kashmir
- A meeting was organized on gender issues for children at SMI Mission School and with community people at Jwanipore Pattan Kashmir
- To share experiences, to share the concept of Composite Heritage and its aspects, 'Katha Baat' (meeting) was organised with women at Hasanabad, Srinagar.
- In the backdrop and context of conflict and tension in Kashmir, various meetings were organised with children at Madwan, Hazin and other places, for sharing experiences, and to help them in their education
- With an objective of assessing, the situation of tension/conflict in Kashmir and to plan a strategy for future various meeting held with volunteers and new volunteers were trained.
- A drawing and painting competition held for Kashmiri children at Trigam. Its purpose was to make them aware of Kashmiri Cultural under Composite Heritage.
- On the occasion of Khurshid Smriti Samvad a Seminar was organised on Sufi -Sant Parampra aur Hindustan ki Rawayat at Allahabad.
- To eradicate the practice of Witch Hunting and Witchcraft many joint efforts are taking place in Jharkhand- In this context, a one-day seminar held at Jamshedpur.
- Social issues like violence against women, human -trafficking and drug addiction were discussed at one-day meeting held at Dumuhari, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand.
- A drama 'Nayi Disha' played at Titram, Haryana. The aim was to highlight the importance of education for eradication of social evils.
- Study -Circle was organised at Guwahati, Assam on 'Art and Therapy'.
- A six-day Summer Camp was organised for the children at Bal Bharti School Allahabad. The activities revolved around toys and games, music, dance and current issues.

- A three-day camp held with the youth of Gadagusain to understand the activities of LCP and plan strategies.
- Children of Machlishehar, Jaunpur participated in a meeting to share their thoughts about present issues.
- A meeting held at Lohari and Parsupur villages with women and children in Jaunpur.

## Exposure Visits

Exposure visit provides a good opportunity to youth, so that they can understand the cultural diversity of their region and state.

- An exposure visit was organised for Madwan children to show them the Composite Heritage of Narang, which is located at Gandarbal District, Kashmir.
- As part of an exposure visit, the Staff of Jaunpur ISD along with group of children visited the historical Atala Masjid and Shahi Qila constructed by Firoz Shah Tuglak in 1362. The purpose was to give them a chance to learn about Composite Heritage, culture, and traditions.
- Under LCP programme a youth group of Siraj visited the Thanas village and Gadagusain youth group visited Bahlidhar village. It provided them an opportunity to talk about local tension/conflict and understand the neighbourhood culture.

## Festivals, Fairs and Celebrations

- Bal -Mela at Jaunpur, Bal-Srijan-Utsav at Allahabad were held.
- Kajari -Mahotsav for girls and women held at Allahabad.
- Dr.Bhim Rao Ambedkar Samaroh was organised at Savait, Allahabad.
- On the Independence Day, interesting cultural activities held at different Bastis of Allahabad.
- Composite Heritage Jashn was organised at Badodhar, Upri Siraj of Kullu. Here, activities like traditional games and sports, musical performance and community-feast (Bhoj) were organised.
- Holi Milan was held at Kodhapur and Jamalpur villages of Jaunpur to celebrate the Holi Festival.
- Women's Day celebrated at Jadakpur village, Jaunpur.
- Holi Milan was held at Titram village in which people of nearby villages Payoda, Sasrola, Sangrauli and Karasa were invited, it was a successful effort to enhance local peace and harmony.
- Eid-Milan at Khetasarai, Jaunpur and Jashn -e-Azadi at Saharanpur held.
- Theater and street plays performed by the youth in the villages of Mirzadeeh, Bodam, Eastern Singhbhum and Jharkhand. The focus was spreading awareness to eradicate the practice of Witch Hunting and Witchcraft.
- Two-day programme of games, music and present social issues was organised for the students in Bal Bharati School, Allahabad.
- Women's Day held in areas like Karela Bagh, Gaughat and Koilah Basti of Allahabad.

# PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES



## Activity : Jashn-Sajhi-Virasat Ka : Festival of Composite Heritage

### Sirjan

Srijan is a festival, a celebration of Composite Heritage. It is organised annually during the Magh Mela at Allahabad. It has been long time since ISD has initiated this celebration; she has an old connection and relationship with it. The festival organised on the occasion connects the tourists not only with fair but also community and culture related to it. This year, Sirjan was organised at the Administrative Pandal.



### Chaitru Vith

ISD has been organizing Chaitru-Vith-Mela since last 7-8 years in Himanchal Pradesh. Originally, local Kullu people celebrate it on the first day of the month of Fagun (mid February) in this fair local Devli's (authorities) takes responsibility of all the arrangements and people from lower caste and women are prohibited to participate in it. Chaitru Vith - Mela- initiated and organised by ISD is open for all without any caste class and gender discrimination. This year, this fair was celebrated with sports and games activities at Teel village.



### Raska Ranso Porob

Raska Ranso Porob is an effort to save the dying culture of Jharkhand. ISD with its efforts, has tried to help in revival of the local folk music and dance, it has also helped in building faith and respect of the local people in their own culture. Like previous years, this year also, Raska Ranso Porob celebrated with lots of fun at Gobarghusi village of Patmada, Singhbhum, Jharkhand. The youth of Gobarghusi need a special mention for their help in organising this porob.



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



### Increase in women's participation and their confidence level

The constant efforts of ISD teams in organizing various socio-cultural events, sports events and celebrations, have borne fruits as gradually more and more women are joining in and gaining confidence. In states like Haryana, where girls do not even continue education after primary level, with efforts of ISD at Titram village, the number of girls entering graduation level education has significantly increased. Most of such girls are participating constantly in the events of ISD.

Our volunteers from Kashmir have focused on women empowerment and their mental health through workshops. Earlier women hesitated in participating in workshops and avoided connecting to cultural activities. Now with the support of ISD, they are coming forward. ISD has connected them with Composite Heritage through the medium of folk art and music. Their sense of unity, health -awareness and level of self-confidence has deepened due to efforts of ISD.

The events like Kajari Mahotsav and Mahila Diwas in Allahabad have helped the woman to be aware of their own rights. They are now capable of achieving their own happiness and rights. They have created their own groups in different parts of Allahabad. They participate in various events of Sajhi -Virasat-Composite Heritage and help in taking the efforts forward.

## **Eradicating social evils through folk-arts**

We have started a serious drive against the practice of Witch Hunting and Witchcraft at Jharkhand. For the eradication of this Negative Composite Heritage which includes domestic violence, atrocities against women and superstition, ISD has organised many street plays to spread awareness. These efforts have brought positive results. Now, many dignitaries and officers of Singbhoom are adding their support and noticeable decrease has occurred in such superstitions and practices in Sonari, Govindpur and Bodara villages of Jamshedpur, Jharkhand.

Street plays also focus on creating awareness about women trafficking and sexual abuse. As a positive effect of such efforts, people's awareness has increased and social groups have taken notice of such issues, hence developing an alert and vigilant society.

The Himachal Pradesh team has played a vital role in diminishing caste-system and social-division and created an ambience of equality and respect. They have done it by using folk songs and local musical instruments. Now with ISD initiative, the local artists who also considered as Dalit community people are training people from all sections of society. Hence, they help in preserving the local folk-art and have started a healthy tradition of 'Guru-Shishya Parampara' in different villages of Himachal.

Save-environment drive has resulted positively at Kullu and Mandi of Himachal Pradesh and at Nainital in Uttarakhand. Small groups of local people, especially of women have been developed, who work on issues like-save forests, clean water and saving traditional resources of water. They spread awareness among villagers.

## **Development of positive thinking in youth and children**

With the help of workshop on Composite Heritage, a change has been noticed in the thinking of youth in Allahabad. Their perspective about discrimination based on caste, gender and religion has reduced significantly. They were disillusioned about social rules made by conservative society, which has been broken, and now they have become a new person with better understanding of culture. They speak confidently about changing the society and saving our culture.

The Exposure visits has helped the children and young people to know their own and diverse cultures. They have become interested in preserving it.

A comprehensive impact of Composite Heritage workshop is also seen in the youth of Jamshedpur Bastis-Sidhu Kanhu, Bachcha Singh and Hattu Basti. The youth who had become addicts of different types of drugs, have gradually undergone a vast change after having connected to the ISD and its workshops. They have re-connected to their life and values, leaving behind the bad ways.

The activities like Bal-Mela of Jaunpur have brought development in behavioral skills of children. By an exchange of Hindu-Muslim culture, they have developed a feeling of respect and love for all religions. The foundation of peace and harmony is thus fortified right from childhood.

Because of the positive behavioral change in children of Kashmir, which has taken place due to the ISD workshops with them, not only their parents, but also their teachers are also accepting the concept of Composite Heritage. Earlier they avoided giving permission for such activities. Now, they themselves invite ISD for sports events. This has left a visible impact on people about their own culture.

For mainstreaming and promoting concept of Composite Heritage at the national level among youth, ISD taught this concept at various institutions like Sharda University New Delhi and NID branch of Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, New Delhi. ISD insisted them to use this concept in their future work. NID branch of IIITD, Kurukshetra also invited ISD to share the concept of Composite Heritage with their students.

## **Organic farming and Preservation of festivals**

The interest of farmers towards organic farming has increased in Himanchal Pradesh, Nainital and Jaunpur. They have realized the value of traditional crop farming, instead of cashcrop farming. Since all festivals are associated with agriculture, ISD has started working on the agricultural aspect of Composite Heritage.

## **Our reach at the South Asia level**

At South Asia level, all our network partners have grasped and accepted the concept of Composite Heritage. 'Nagrik-Awaz one of our South Asia Partner has imbibed this concept with their important initiatives and started spreading it out at community level. ISD was invited by the 'Cambodian Institute: Centre of Peace and Conflict Studies'(CPCS) in 'Peace Practitioners' Research Conference (PPRC) to share the concept of Composite Heritage.

## THE STORIES OF CHANGE



### ***Shobhavati Devi, Jaunpur, (U.P)***

Shobhavati of Sondhi village says that she has felt a new change in herself after joining Composite Heritage workshops. Now she looks at society and culture with a different outlook. She performs all her family responsibilities and agricultural activities while keeping Composite Heritage in her mind, if something happens in her village, she tries to solve it by mutual help and sharing. For example—When a Sonkar family in her village lost everything in a fire, she took the initiative and the whole village was united in constructing the hut and collecting household goods for the Sonkar family, She says that the training and participation in meetings of Composite Heritage has brought a big change in the people of her village. If anybody falls sick in a family, they all collect money and provide the treatment. When invited in a wedding, they prepare food together, instead of calling professional cooks. They enjoy together and live happily.

### ***Shyama Devi, Jaunpur (U.P)***

Shyama Devi, a resident of Shekhpur Mansoor Ali village has played an active role in maintaining peace- harmony in her village after attending a Composite Heritage training meeting. Whenever people indulge in any dispute, she pacifies them by explaining the value of unity. People of her village live in harmony now. They help mutually in farming. They have started sharing utensils and other amenities during weddings. It saves their money. They have started preserving their traditional folk songs also.

### ***Salim, Jammu & Kashmir***

Salim, a driver by profession, finds a lot of change in himself after participating in many ISD workshops. Specially after attending workshops on gender, he feels that he has learnt a lot new for the first time in his life. He confesses that earlier he use to think that the only aim of life is to earn money, look after the family, take care of children. However, after connecting with ISD's Composite Heritage workshops, he has learnt that we don't live just for ourselves. We live for society too, and we are responsible towards it. At present, along with other young adults of his area, Salim has been putting his effort in eradicating social evils and reducing tension/conflicts.

### ***Sujata, Allahabad (U.P)***

Sujata who lives in a hut at Karelabagh Basti says that she has five sisters, two brothers and parents in her family. She is studying in B.A (Part II) in S.S. Rachna Degree College. Her father works as a Kabadi (Trash Collector). Her mother is a helper at Anganbari. Sujata says that since ISD workshops and meetings have started in her locality, her life has changed. In her neighborhood, girls are not encouraged to study, and they are married off at an early age. But ISD has changed her family's perspective as well as her own mind-set. She has got a chance to study in a good college. Her brother is a runner. They both want to do something different so that they can help their locality and do something for society. She has no restrictions at home. She attends all meetings and activities, inside or outside her locality. Following her example, other families have started sending their daughters in ISD activities. They have attended workshops at Chitrakoot and Himachal Pradesh and have gathered immense confidence. She teaches the children of her locality in the evening. She had run a 'Bal Bageecha Centre' also for three years but her hut was demolished, and she had to close the 'Bal Bageecha'.

### ***Kumari Arshda, Suidnara (Jammu Kashmir)***

Kumari Arshda says that after joining Composite Heritage she has grasped it perfectly and realised its importance in our society, especially in maintaining peace and harmony. She tells that earlier she would insist her kids to adopt modern games and technology. However, she learnt gradually how important our traditional games and ways are. These days she discusses traditional games and ways during 'Child Collective' sessions and tries to connect it with our culture.

### ***Gyanchand Gindu, Himanchal Pradesh***

Gyanchand says that after understanding Composite Heritage, he not only

believes in preserving saving culture but also taking the responsibility of handling it over to the future generation. Now, he is not just an artist but also a teacher who teaches the village children of all age groups and caste the skills of playing the musical instruments. Gyanchand Gindu visualises a picture of discrimination free society, for which he gives the credit to ISD efforts. He says that ISD's work to save and spread Composite Heritage has given him a new identity and respect in his village. He enjoys this work, as it is an important way of maintaining peace and harmony. It is very important to save Heritage in the present scenario.

### **Shahida, Kashmir**

Shahida is from Shia community. She has been brought up in a conservative family. She shares that Dilshada, who is an ISD volunteer, and belongs to Sunni community was her childhood friend. There is a Shia-Sunni dispute in Kashmir and due family pressure she had to break her friendship with Dilshada. When Dilshada joined ISD, she came to meet her and explained how much discrimination and myths prevail in the society. She extended her hand of friendship again to Shahida, though she herself was in some hesitation. However, after joining ISD and participating in its activities, she realised slowly that division of society based on discrimination is not good. All human beings are alike. Leaving behind their past, they both have become close friends again. Shahida's outlook towards society has changed. They have brought their families together. They say that ISD has given them self-confidence and positive outlook. Shahida who had left school long back wants to re-start her education.

### **Prema Devi, Jaunpur (U.P)**

Prema Devi from Kanwaria village, shares that she has been so impressed by the work of ISD that she has formed a group of women and has started working in a united manner. Various tasks of farming like exchange of seeds, weeding, tilling, and cutting are being done by mutual help. If there is a marriage in a poor family, they contribute money for expenditure and extend help. For the Women's Day celebrations, she connected the women of five nearby villages. They had a music and dance program, followed by a community dinner which was prepared by everybody's help. People call her 'Bua' and listen and follow her decisions.

### **Preeti, Allahabad (U.P)**

Preeti of Gaughat colony has done education until class VIII. She has three sisters and two brothers in her family. They live with their parents. She says that she felt a lot of change in herself and area around since the ISD activities, meetings and workshops have started in their colony. Their colony has a history of communal tension between Dandiya and Basare communities. They hated each other. However, after ISD's intervention, they have started communicating and socialising among themselves. Preeti says that gender meetings and Composite Heritage workshops have helped in widening their understanding. Women came to know about their rights, safety and physical care, which has changed their lives. It has helped in their personal lives also. They came to know about unity, harmony, and difference between uniting and dividing forces. Their understanding has changed.



**“During its efforts on peace and harmony at Jharkhand, ISD realized that the practice of Witch Hunting and Witchcraft is one of the bigger reasons of prevailing tension/conflict at Jharkhand. ISD has started a drive to eradicate it by using street-plays, folktales as a tool. The team has achieved tremendous success in spreading awareness. Social groups and government institutions have also extended their help.”**

# ORGANIZATION AND STRENGTH



For strengthening its work and organization and for adding new creative dimensions, ISD reviews its own activities annually. She learns from them and then shares this knowledge with its partners. This helps in building new creative techniques for future. This not only empowers the organization but also paves the new ways for future. Following this, ISD indulges in follow-up meetings at national and South Asia levels. It is called 'backstopping workshop' as well. Meetings are conducted with the staff, like-minded groups and national and international network partners. They all share their Composite Heritage related work based on which a blueprint for future is outlined. From time to time, ISD also conducts development workshops to strengthen its staff and organization and enhance their capacities.

## Main Activities

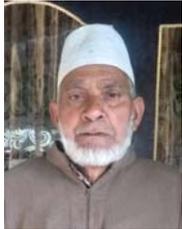
**Follow up meetings at Baramulla, Hazin and Madwan village of Kashmir**—The fact, which has emerged during these meetings, was that the level of tension/ conflict is very high in Kashmir. The prevailing political conditions has worsened the situation, The work, being done by ISD in collaboration with other social organizations is receiving much appreciation. Considering the situation, ISD is focusing on the issues of mental health and education.

**Follow-up meetings at Bhatad, Mohani, Khauli and Teel of Mandi district and Kullu, Himanchal Pradesh** —Here, the main fact, which emerged through these meetings, was that partnership of women should increase and second leadership development should be considered. ISD has become successful in making the villagers vigilant and more efforts will be made to enhance it further.

**Backstopping workshop under LCP, Dhaka, Bangladesh**—In this workshop, the partners from South Asia organisations shared their views and experiences that how they are working for Composite Heritage by connecting it to their own activities of their programmes, They suggested to collect more information for future so that new ideas and techniques can be developed.

**Organization Development Workshop**—The purpose of this workshop was to prepare new strategy and creative techniques. New features and responsibilities were decided in this workshop

## ISD'S STORIES FROM THE FIELD



### **ABDUL RASHID KHAN**

**Village Sarpanch &  
Retired teacher-from Kashmir**

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The most important person of village community-Abdul Rashid says that on ISD's invitation, he participated in many workshops and meetings. He is very happy and excited to see children's development and their growing interest to know about their culture. He wants ISD to reach out on a wider scale so that larger number of people can become part of it.

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### **Rishu**

**Student from Haryana**

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Rishu is a class IX student who participated in Mati Utsav and racing competition organized by ISD. She says - 'I feel there should be an exclusive women' Park in the village, where we can meet and talk or there should be such a place where we can gather.' She also wants an open space where children can play, as there is no open space in the village for children. ISD should motivate more and more children to participate in their activities so they can get a chance to make new friends and can develop their potential. She feels that ISD should make such programmes through which children could feel personally connected to ISD.

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### **Somlal Sardar**

**Shantidoot, Jharkhand**

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Shantidoot Somlal says he has been associated with the activities of ISD for long. He is motivated by the activities, workshops, and street plays, conducted by ISD. Recently, he participated in a Composite Heritage workshop at Lucknow. He is impressed by the knowledge about peace and harmony gathered there. He appreciates ISD's effort to connect people and spread love, brotherhood and harmony. He will continue to associate with ISD.

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### **Kajal**

**Student, Haryana**

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Class XII student Kajal says that ISD makes an effort to establish peace and harmony and brotherhood in society. ISD organises games and cultural programs in my village in which people from nearby villages also come to participate, ISD's activities for children such as music, dance, sports and games and dialogue encourages them and enhances their skills and help in developing a positive thinking. ISD gives them information, gives them a chance to ask questions and seek their answers and makes them aware about their own society, country, history, and culture. It gives them an opportunity to participate in creative activities, which makes them knowledgeable. It opens up their mental capacity to think and understand things. She says- "ISD helps in developing a healthy society".

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## ISD'S STORIES FROM THE FIELD



**Vishwadev Mahato**  
**Folk Artist -Jharkhand**

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Vishwadev Mahato a resident of Shuklapur village of Singhbhum is a popular folk artist of his area. He trains his own kids in folk art and drama. His drama named 'Mansa Mangla', which is based on mythological story, is popular in Shuklapur village for many years. Vishwadev says-Raska Ranso Porob, organised by ISD is a praiseworthy effort in the direction of preserving the local culture and art. He is a great fan of Porob, and performs regularly in it. He says -The folk songs and dances are amazing. He insists ISD to carry on its efforts.

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**Mahatab**  
**Home Maker, Kashmir**

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She is an old aged homemaker. She says that she is connected with ISD activities for long. She believes that if you serve humanity, Allah will bless you. She says she never did anything outside her household duties to serve society. ISD has given her a chance to reach out to the people with a message of peace-harmony and culture. She is always prepared to work for social harmony and says that she will continue to work with ISD till the last day of her life.

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**Daulat Bharti**  
**Journalist, Himanchal Pradesh**

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A resident of Banjar in Kullu District Daulat Bharati says, he is associated with ISD for 5-6 years. He agrees that the work of revival of lost forms of Composite Heritage and culture in Himachal Pradesh is praiseworthy. Our young generation must know about the concept of Composite Heritage. Our society is splitting, and tensions/conflicts in family, as well as in society are increasing. ISD has emerged as a ray of hope amidst the prevailing tensions. Organic farming has been revived, traditional lifestyle, Jwari practice (community farming) has returned. He stands with ISD in its efforts.

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**Asha Devi**  
**Homemaker, Himanchal Pradesh**

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Asha Devi says that whenever she attends an ISD workshop, she learns something new. She is a homemaker and is always busy in farming. She has formed a 'women group 'and trying to revive the traditional organic farming. According to her, the women of her village regularly participate in 'Chaitru Vith Mela' and teach their kids about Composite Heritage and education. She is grateful to ISD for making women vigilant and self-confident. She wants to learn a lot more in future, which she intends to give back to society.

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# PUBLICATIONS

In 2019-20 ISD published Samarath, SACH (South Asian Composite Heritage) and four booklets- 'Anokhe Ahinsak ka Hinsak Ant' Tasawwuff, 'Sadbhav Ki Virasat' and ' Hum Bharat Ke Log: Samvidhan Ki Kalpana Ka Bharat.'



## Samarath : April-June, 2019

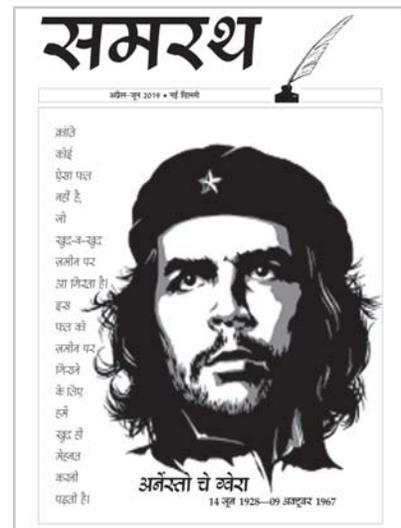
The editorial of this issue of Samarath was based on political concerns and formation of government in our society. The current government, which was elected with the slogan of 'Sabka sath sabka vikas', is caught into rut, the relations between Hindu and Muslims have declined. With such concerns, the publication hopes that the sun of peace and harmony will rise again in our country. Beside this, the famous theater artist Girish Karnad, Che Guvera were also paid respectful homage in this issue. The topics of climatic change and water crisis discussed. The jeopardized Hindu- Muslim harmony, the new aspects in language was also addressed.

## Samarath : July-September, 2019

In the context of 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, this issue was focused on the elements of peace and unity. Mahatma Gandhi had firm faith in non-violence. However, in case of endangerment of country, he supported the use of violence instead of cowardice. But at present, the way violence has become a routine, is very dangerous. As such, Gandhian ideology is the need of hour, so that we face the reality. Apart from this, this issue consists of the articles on- Ideas of Panchsheel; cultural and communal aspects of Premchand, the tribal issues, Durgabai Deshmukh: An example of women's empowerment. The articles on the policies of education and Sethani: A folk -art of Haryana, also added to the interest of this issue.

## Samarath : October-December, 2019

This issue includes the feedback and expression on the judgment on Babri Masjid. Whatever may be the judgment, it respects that constitutional procedures were followed in the process and also appreciates public's adherence to peace and system. There are articles on Mahatma Gandhi and his ideals. Besides this, the current issue includes articles on Sanskrit vs Muslim, ideas of Nehruji, the story of Indonesia, a country that has Muslim religion but the culture of Ramayana.





## SACH : January -March 2020, Issue 57

Based on women's day, the editorial of this issue opines on the demonstration at Shaheenbagh and the participation of women in it. It indicates how the women are demonstrating on roads united for the safeguard of the constitution. Besides this, there are articles on-Historical movements of Manipur in India, the role of women in various movements happening in different parts of South Asia, women's safety, women's empowerment.



### Booklet Series 85

**VIOLENT END OF A UNIQUE NON- VIOLENT :** Based on the memories of Ram Manohar Lohia, this booklet is a story of the last phase of struggle before independence and Gandhiji's contribution in it.

### Booklet Series 86

**TASAWWUFF :** Tasawwuff means Sufi spiritualism. This booklet describes the development of the word. It also touches on its contribution in Composite Heritage. It also indicates that different Muslim groups have described Islam in different ways. Hence, the violence in mosques is increasing. This booklet gives a message of peace and harmony.

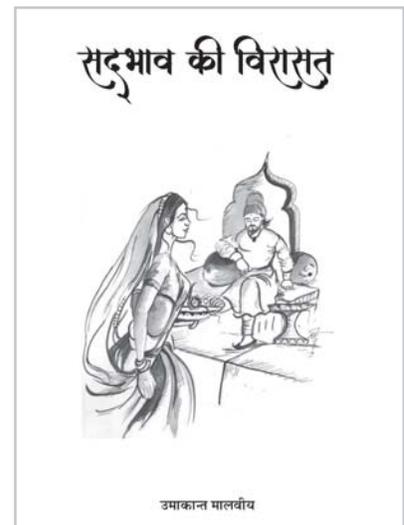
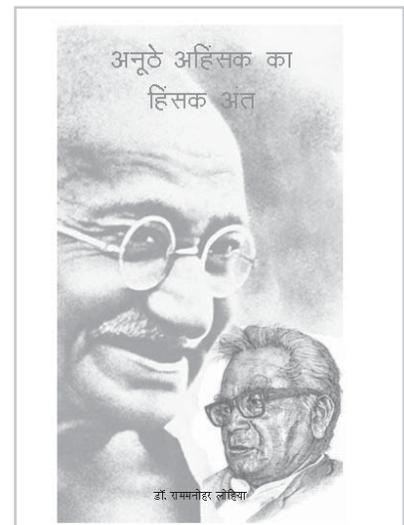
### Booklet Series 87

**SADBHAV KI VIRASAT :** This booklet is written by Sri Umakant Malviya, It is a collection of those references, which occur in classical stories. These references give a message of harmonious living to the readers. In the present scenario, when our culture and democracy is in danger, the dialogue between religion and culture is shrinking, these articles full of tolerance convey a message of love and harmony very aptly.

### Booklet Series 88

**HUM BHARAT KE LOG : India of the dream of the constitution**

This booklet is dedicated to 130 billion of Indians of different villages and cities of India, those following various religions, speaking multiple languages and dialects and bears the shared responsibility of safeguarding the value of constitution. This booklet also touches various topics like- the hypothesis of India, the warriors of the independence movements, meaning of constitution. Besides this, the thought -provoking issues like- Socialism in India, Secularism, freedom, equality, values of brotherhood are also elucidated in a simple language. This booklet is a Composite effort to reach out to people with a real hypothesis of our constitution.



# OUR TEAM

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Qamar Agha  
Jayant Kumar  
Bhasvati Chakravarty

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Shruti Chaturvedi : Chief Co-Ordinator  
Chanchal Singh : Finance Head, Programme Incharge  
Surendra Singh : Administrative Head, Publication Incharge  
Neeraj Sharma : Account Incharge  
Babita Negi : Programme Associate  
Huma Khatoon : Programme Associate  
Shradha Rawat : Publication Assistant and Documentation Incharge  
Ranjan Patra : Account Assistant  
Shri Krishna : Senior Office Assistant

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Utpala Shukla : Field Coordinator  
Vishal Singh : Field Associate  
Sarita Bhartiya : Field Associate  
Nissar Ahmed Khan : Field Coordinator  
Prabha Devi : Field Associate  
Beena Devi : Cadre

## Himanchal Pradesh

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Goutam Gope : Field Coordinator  
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## Jammu -Kashmir

Sania Mushtaq Deen : Field Coordinator  
Dilshada Bano : Community Resource Person  
Sadaf Nazir : Community Resource Person  
Mansoor Ali : Community Resource Person

## Uttarakhand

Bimla Karki : Cadre

*isd*

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**INSTITUTE *for* SOCIAL DEMOCRACY**

Flat No. 110, Numberdar House, 62-A, Laxmi Market, Munirka, New Delhi-110067

Phone : 091-11-26177904 / Telefax : 091-11-26177904

E-Mail : [notowar.isd@gmail.com](mailto:notowar.isd@gmail.com) / Website : [www.isd.net.in](http://www.isd.net.in)

PRINTING : Design & Dimensions, L-5 A, Sheikh Sarai, Phase-II, New Delhi-110017