



CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

3 October 2008

PRESS RELEASE

JAN SUNWAI ON RIGHT TO EDUCATION OF CHOICE FUND STUDENTS, NOT SCHOOLS!

The Culmination event of the first phase of Jharkhand School Choice Campaign was held in the form of a Jan Sunwai on Friday, 3 October 2008 from 10 AM- 2 PM at the Vidhan Sabha Maidan, Birsa Chowk, Ranchi. More than 2000 people from all walks of life and from various districts came for the event in busses, lorries, jeeps and also by foot to attend the event. Delegates from 6 districts of the state voiced their concern over the issues of access to and quality of the education the children of Jharkhand get.

Srimati Rama Khalko, Mayor, Ranchi who participated in the event expressed serious concerns of the very low literacy rate among the girl children in Ranchi and was enthused by the awareness among poor parents about the need for quality education. She and Mr Ajaynath Sehdeo, Deputy Mayor, Ranchi, who had earlier chaired a panel discussion, were supportive of the School Voucher idea. They said that this is an innovative scheme that involves both the government and the parents in educating the poor children and therefore must be adapted to solve problems specific to the state. Others who supported the idea were Mrs Pratibha Pandey, President, Pradesh Mahila Congress and Professors R K Jaiswal, and D K Sahai. However, what those present missed due to rain was listening to noted academician, writer and Padmabhusan recipient Professor P V Indiresan. Talking to the press, he said that the school choice idea is the need of the hour.

School Choice Campaign (SCC) is an initiative of the Centre for Civil Society, a public policy think tank in Delhi, which was instrumental in bringing clause IV of the Right to Information Act. School Choice is a PPP idea developed to increase the involvement of parents in responsibly schooling their children by giving them ownership of the task.

Mr Baladevan R, Associate Director, School Choice Campaign said, "Based on school vouchers as a mode of funding the schooling of needy children, School Choice idea is to let the government fund students rather than schools, thereby involving parents (which no other idea so far has done) and reducing disparity in the quality of schooling received in the government schools and the quality of schooling received in non-government schools. The idea also increases accountability, transparency and efficiency in the education sector."

My Ajay Kumar, Secretary, ASHA said that the Jharkhand School Choice Alliance will present the 3,00,000 signature petitions collected from the parents during our mass campaign to the Jharkhand Education Minister, Sri Bandhu Tirki.

The day also witnessed street theatre performances by school choice advocates in various parts of the city.

We look forward to media coverage of this event in your respective newspapers and television channels. Your support is crucial for our campaign to bring to light the people's demand for the Right to Education of Choice!

For further information contact:

Baishali Bomjan
Manager- PR and Communication, SCC
Mob: 098713 66407
baishali@ccs.in
www.schoolchoice.in

Ajay Kumar
Secretary, ASHA, Ranchi
Mob: 98353 21166
asha_ranchi2000@yahoo.co.in

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K-36 Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi 110016
Voice: 2653 7456/2652 1882
Fax: 2651 2347
Email: ccs@ccs.in
Website: www.ccs.in