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Jananeethi in the year 2007-2008

JANANEETHI is proud to present before its honourable members, patrons, benefactors, collaborators and friends its 16th Annual Report with a legitimate sense of gratification having done our best for the good of the society in general and those who walked in seeking help from Jananeethi in the year 2007-08. The most shining experience during the year under report was, our members and patrons profoundly contributed substantial amounts for the survival of Jananeethi as we were operating at great risk because there was absolutely no source of income. Currently Jananeethi’s strength in the office is only five, and obviously we were compelled to cut short our out-reach programmes substantially. We also were unable to initiate new projects, or conduct large scale programmes.

I. Psycho-Legal Therapeutic Services:

The characteristic feature of Jananeethi is its psycho-legal therapeutic services delivered from 1992 to the present to victims of torture, organized violence, corruption, gender bias, religious intolerance and hate politics. The following table gives the number of victims addressed by Jananeethi Law Faculty in the year 2007-08. Each of them had several sittings with the faculty members who are committed lawyers and skilled be-frienders, profoundly humane and fair. Experienced program officers with medical and psychiatric social work background were also engaged by Jananeethi during this period.

In the reporting year there were 283 (two hundred and eighty three) cases where the urgent intervention of Jananeethi was required. Of which, 117 (one hundred and seventeen) were regarding human rights violations at home. This includes dowry related disputes that often develop into physical and mental torture, sexual violence, gender bias and murder/homicides.
There were 52 (fifty two) criminal cases of which 5 (five) were sheer torture cases in police custody; over a dozen SC/ST offences and equal number of rape cases; the rest being criminal assaults/offences where the victims are mostly women or children or marginalized sections of society. There were 7 (seven) child sexual abuses that would have gone unnoticed, had Jananeethi not taken extra attention in checking the corrupt investigation officers from manipulating records in favour of the perpetrators. There were 107 (one hundred and seven) civil cases including property, money matters where again the victims were always the weak and the vulnerable in the society.

**Jananeethi rendered services during the year 2007-08 as shown below:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2007-2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urgent interventions made by Jananeethi</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial procedures initiated in</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amicably settled by Jananeethi</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; Sensitization Camps</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jananeethi has active contacts in:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Panchayaths</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Municipalities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Corporation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women, addressed by Jananeethi through various sessions</td>
<td>Above 50000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**II. Human Rights Training and Clinical Legal Education:**

Human Rights Training was intended for selected segments of society. For example- women from families below poverty line (BPL), adolescent girls, members of Kudumbasree (women’s network), Anganwadi workers, clinical psychologists who provide family counseling, Women representatives in local bodies, student community, University lecturers, parent-teacher association and so on.

Whereas Clinical Legal Education aims at those who are victims of various types of human rights violations. They are in need of reparation both legally and psychologically. The legal injuries and loss of estate could be resolved to some extent by compensation through a process of legal action. However, the emotional and psychological damage caused to her/him could be healed only through long process of clinical in nature. The dignity and integrity of the person have to be restored by binging both victims and perpetrators across the table for constructive deliberations and mutual mending of relations.

Jananeethi has conducted 204 (two hundred and four) human rights workshops in Thrissur district from January 2007 to March 2008. Jananeethi field officer K.K. Radhamani and her associates deserve the credit of conducting the workshops along with other commitments in the
organization. More than 50% of the petitioners who sought help / intervention by Jananeethi required clinical legal education that was given to them as part of their empowerment process.

III. Jananeethi Monthly Magazine:

Jananeethi started publishing its monthly magazine in the year 1994. Ever since, it has been regularly published on the 28th day of every month in vernacular language. The magazine is a link between the public and the Bench and also those who are elected to power through democratic process. Often Jananeethi was quoted in the Indian Parliament, Kerala Legislative Assembly and in the High Court of Kerala. Thanks to the laudable and dedicated services of Shri.T.V.Achutha Warier, the Chief Editor, Jananeethi magazine has seriously and responsibly responded to all major human rights violations occurred not only in India, but also at various parts of the globe. The human massacre in Gaza, the American invasion in Iraq, the mutiny for freedom in Myanmar, the murder of democracy in Pakistan and lately the Tibetan uprising for political freedom etc were handled with due importance and seriousness by the magazine.

Further, it vehemently attacked any and every assault on democracy and human rights in the land of India. Incidence of violence by communal forces in various states of India like Gujarat, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra; the human rights violations by the market and the land mafia manifested in the form of the controversial Special Economic Zones, the market invasion by giant MNCs, the pro-establishment (anti-people) trend of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies, corruption in high places etc were severely challenged and highlighted by Jananeethi magazine without fear or prejudice.

IV. Major Interventions in 2007-08:

- The Wayanad Initiative:

Farmers in large number committed suicide in Kerala, Karnataka Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra due to agro-economic crisis. In Kerala the highest number of casualties happened in Wayanad district where, as per available data, over 1700 farmers committed suicide in last five years. In the context, Jananeethi proposed an integrated program for Wayanad with three major components- human rights, re-defining agri-economy through democratic process using provisions in Panchayati Raj Act, and creating an army of befrienders in every village for strengthening community support systems. Eight major NGOs came forward to jointly undertake the project with financial support from Caritas India. Jananeethi organized training programmes in all the 26 panchayats of Wayanad district and trained 570 volunteers for initiating the people-centered programmes in the district. The project was started in August 2007 and will continue for few years. Jananeethi is actively present in Wayanad at every stage of the project. Representing Jananeethi its Executive Director Advocate George Pulikuthiyil, its Joint Secretary Dr.Francis
Xavier, its members Dr. Abey George, Ajayakumar Melveetil and Dr. K.B. Rajan have been greatly involved in the Wayanad Initiative that is an on-going program.

- **Adivasi (indigenous) community at Pookode: Victims of blatant violations of human rights:**

The *Adivasi* (tribal/indigenous) population residing at the erstwhile Pookode Dairy Project Area, at Pookode, in Wayanad district, Kerala State is in agitation since 2002 against the continued denial of their basic rights for shelter, employment and livelihood and freedom from fear and want. Two documents are very basic and fundamental in this regard:


100 acres of land that formed part of the land assigned to Pookode Tribal Society was transferred as per the above G.O. to Kerala Agricultural University for starting a Veterinary college, subject to the following conditions:

(i) The appointment of farm labourers in the farm attached to the college will be made from the members of the families settled in Pookode Dairy Project;

(ii) While making appointments to the posts in the college, the qualified persons of these families will be given priority.

*This means the entire farm labour attached to the college is the RIGHT OF THE COMMUNITY of settled tribal families in the Pookode Dairy Project. Secondly, qualified persons from tribal community should be given priority while making appointments in other posts in the college.*

**II. Kerala Agricultural University Proceedings: No A4/1343/99 dt. 1.6.2001**

In an Order of the highest authority of the University reads as follows: “The land for establishing college of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Pookode was handed over by the Government on the condition that the tribal...
families living in the handed over land is to be rehabilitated in the balance land of the Pookode Dairy Project. At present 26 Tribal families are residing in the campus and hence 26 housing writs are to be constructed urgently. Accordingly the estimate have been prepared for the above work amounting to Rs. 39.00 lakhs as per University type design of type I quarters. The Hon. Vice Chancellor has agreed to the proposal put forth for an estimated cost of Rs. 39.00 lakhs.

Under the above circumstances, the administrative sanction is hereby accorded for the work at an estimated cost of Rs. 39.00 lakhs (Rupees thirty nine lakhs only). The expenditure on this work will be debited to the head of account “278-26-4499 Works DPP (Plant)-911-733 Rehabilitation of Tribal Families”

These two orders have continuously and consistently been violated by the Kerala Agricultural University from the beginning till present. The helpless and hapless tribals, highly vulnerable and marginalized, who are subject to manipulations and misinterpretations by the socially and politically elite, are divided among themselves and hence are not capable of asserting their rights.

JANANEETHI together with its local counterpart and partner NEETHIVEDI took pain in organizing the tribal community for achieving their Constitutional and human rights protected by the laws of the land and international instruments. Surprisingly, NGOs are seemingly reluctant to openly support the cause of the tribals for the fear of earning the wrath of the Government. Therefore, Jananeethi took the risk of traveling more than 350 kilometers from Thrissur to Wayanad to undertake the responsibility of organizing and motivating the tribal communities for the vindication of their legal rights. Advocate George Pulikuthiyil has spent several weeks and months in Wayanad for the purpose and continues the struggle as the State Government and the Agricultural University continue to deny the legitimate rights of the tribal communities.
• Struggles, agitations and organized resistance against land mafia:

(a) Muriyad Farmers’ resistance: Muriyad paddy field in Thrissur district has been a prime location for brick making industries. Dozens of brick making units function at this area and have created havoc to the farming community who find helpless since their democratic and lawful agitations go unheeded by concerned authorities. Hence the farmers organized themselves and launched indefinite hunger strike under the able leadership of Varghese Thoduparambil, who himself is a good farmer. Jananeethi supported this group from the beginning and has openly declared unconditional support to those who decide to protect food crops despite the repeated threats from the criminalized land mafia.

(b) Erayamkudy Padasekhara Samithy: Again it is another classic example of people’s unity and organized resistance against the socially influential, politically protected, grossly corrupt and criminalized land mafia. Under the leadership of Ms Jayashree the farmers of Erayamkudy, bordering with Thrissur and Ernakulam districts, joined hands to effectively check the brick making industrial units at the cost of extensive paddy cultivation. This is very pertinent in the context of growing food scarcity and escalating prices for essential commodities like rice, dal, wheat, etc. The Chairman of Jananeethi and celebrated poet, Professor K.G.Sankara Pillai served as a great inspiration and motive force to the agitators. The executive director, George Pulikuthiyil, P.S.Manojkumar, and Roy Raphael also actively participated in the struggle.

(c) Chakkumkandam Waste Disposal Plant and People’s Scare: Chakkumkandam is the suburb of Guruvayoor Township. Kerala’s Guruvayoor temple remains a symbol of ‘purity’ for millions of devotees. But it is polluting the entire region by not treating its sewage. The human excreta, human and non-human organic waste from 110 odd lodges, dozens of huge marriage halls and auditoriums, chatrams and restaurants are being let out into what used to be rain water drainage systems which leads to the back waters that affect tens of thousands
of families who are dependants on backwaters for livelihood. Skin and intestinal diseases are common among the locals. Further more, Chakkumkandam falls within the Coastal Regulatory Zone. The people are in agitation for last few years waiting for a political solution, rather a court order with no efficacy.

(d) **Athirappilly Hydro-electric Project and its ramifications:** Kerala Electricity Board with the support of the present political regime in Kerala has come out with a mega hydro-electric project at Athirappilly, near Chalakkudy in Thrissur district. If it happens, it will adversely affect more than 100 tribal hamlets, bio-diversity including the flora and fauna that are endemic and further it is feared that the Chalakkudy River that provides drinking water to many thousands of humans and animals, and for irrigation in over a dozen panchayats will disappear in due course. The affected communities backed by human, environmental activists have been battling against the anti-people policy of the government and the State Electricity Board.

Jananeethi has been deeply involved in all these environmental and human rights issues wherein people’s Constitutional and democratic rights have been violated.

- **Domestic Violence (Prevention of) Act 2006:**

Kerala society is notorious for it’s inhuman and cruel treatment of women at home, in community and at workplace. Hence Jananeethi from 1994 has taken special care in empowering women so that they should be able to defend themselves and fight for their human rights, their dignity and freedom. Jananeethi had submitted to the Government of India its strong views and comments while the law was in its making. Again, Jananeethi intervened as it was being debated upon in the Parliament highlighting its many loopholes and misgivings. After the promulgation of the Act in the State of Kerala, Jananeethi took pains to organize special training sessions based on the various provisions of the law for the implementing agencies like the police officials, the service providers, welfare officers, institution heads, media personnel, clinical psychologists and family counselors. Jananeethi faculty members were invited by police departments of various other districts, university departments, medical college, community and service organizations as consultants and resource persons. Jananeethi has been approved and accredited by the State Government of Kerala as SERVICE PROVIDER under the new law for the victims of domestic violence in the district of Thrissur. This additional responsibility on Jananeethi requires urgent intervention almost every other day at any remote village of the district. A team of women advocates from Jananeethi under the able leadership of Advocate Faritha Ansari are always at the beck and call of women in crisis.
• **Bill on Sexual Harassment at Workplace:**

As a protective measure of women employees in service who are often at risk of sexual offences, a new legislation is under way. Bill has already been passed in the Parliament. Jananeethi was a consultant in the drafting and final design of the law. As per the direction by the Apex court of India in *Vaisakha v/s State of Rajasthan*, anti-sexual harassment committee is a legal imperative in all public institutions. Jananeethi is an official member in many committees formed in several institutions including the District Administration, the Government Medical College, Thrissur Municipal Corporation and Thrissur District Hospital. On the recommendation by Jananeethi, the District Collector of Thrissur passed orders that all government servants in the District and Taluk Administration should attend Jananeethi awareness generation programmes to be arranged at every Taluk head quarters and District head quarters. Deputy Collector Mrs. Marikkutty was asked by the Collector to organize sessions for the purpose. Advocate Faritha on behalf of Jananeethi has completed the series of training sessions.

• **Right to Information Act 2005:**

Jananeethi has extensively used the provisions of the RTI Act in curbing the corruptions of people in public offices. Jananeethi staff including the Executive Director attended several national/regional workshops on how to make use of RTI Act in protecting human rights and ensuring transparency in public offices. Jananeethi has organized over two dozen workshops for social activists and community workers on RTI and helped them to be effective monitors of anti-corruption activities in society. Advocates Sunil Kumar and Faritha Ansari of Jananeethi together with our legal fraternity in and around Thrissur have joined hands in making the best use of the most powerful legislation of RTI for the advancement of social justice and transparency in public offices.

• **Anti-Death Penalty Campaign in Kerala:**

The on-going national campaign against capital punishment was very active in Kerala State for last three years wherein Jananeethi was always an active partner. In the State of Kerala, along with the principal objective of deleting the death penalty from penal provisions of the Indian Penal Code, demand was raised to free all life-term prisoners who have completed minimum number of years in prison. Advocate George Pulikuthiyil, executive director of Jananeethi, was very active in the campaign from the beginning. He joined in the relay hunger strike for persuading the government to resolve to request the Union Government to delete for ever the provisions of capital punishment from penal laws. Adv. George fasted for 5 days in support of the movement, and he spoke at all major junctions of the capital city of Kerala in support of the movement.
• ‘Challenges to Democracy’ Lectures:

Democracy is human right as per Article 21 of Indian Constitution. Hence it was imperative for Jananeethi to step into action when many forces, particularly religious forces and political gangsters, vehemently started attacking democratic values and institutions. Jananeethi opened on 21st September 2007 a weekly discourse on ‘Challenges to Democracy’ by eminent thinkers and socio-political and cultural analysts inviting the floor to actively participate in the debate. Nineteen lectures at nineteen week-ends were organized and Jananeethi is proud to have presented outstanding political thinkers and statesmen for the discourses. Due to paucity of funds, Jananeethi had to halt the lecture series for time being though there is compelling demand to resume the lectures.

1. Dr. Sukumar Azheekode inaugurates the lecture series on ‘Challenges to Democracy’

2. Sri. K.P. Fabian IPS (retd.)

3. Sri. V.M. Sudheeran

• Against Child Abuse:

Jananeethi’s commitment for the safety and welfare of children were well appreciated and approved even by the concerned departments in Government. The State Social Welfare Department requested support and assistance of Jananeethi in providing its expert advice and services to children in distress on many occasions. The Executive Director of Jananeethi was appointed the Chairperson of the District Child Welfare Committee, a very responsible post under the Juvenile Justice Act 2000. While he was holding the office of the Chairperson, Jananeethi office was practically functioning as a court for children in need of care and protection. Child victims of sexual abuse, torture by parents/guardians, child labour, begging and infected or affected children of HIV/AIDS were takers of Jananeethi services during this period.
November 19th, the World Day against Child Abuse was observed jointly by Jananeethi and SOS Village, Mulayam in Thrissur. More than two hundred students and 24 teachers participated in the workshop that was inaugurated by Professor Dr. P. Bhanumathy who also is Member of Juvenile Justice Board, Thrissur. Professor N.N. Gokuldas (social activist), Advocate Faritha Ansari, Law Officer of Jananeethi, Dr. Shylaja Ramkumar (psychiatrist) and Mr. P. Girijavallabhan, Director of SOS Village spoke on various aspects of Child Abuse and its ramifications.

This was followed by a series of sensitization programmes conducted by Jananeethi at different schools in the district of Thrissur. Though there were passive responses from many quarters, by and large the school authorities took keen interest in conducting programmes for their pupil particularly on substance abuse.

- **Joint Programmes with State Women’s Commission:**

In 2007 the State Commission for Women relied more on Jananeethi in conducting investigations and holding conciliation talks. Further Jananeethi organized three one day seminars for women for and on behalf of the Women’s Commission. The Commission requested Jananeethi to present before it pending cases of complaints by women for speedy settlements. Accordingly two Lok Adalats were conducted in Thrissur during the reporting year by State Women’s Commission exclusively on pending cases in the Family Court to which Jananeethi was invited to assist. Advocate Faritha Ansari, K.K.Radhamani, Advocate Sini Saji and Advocate Seena Rajagopal represented Jananeethi on the occasion.
• **District Legal Services Authority:**

Jananeethi is the accredited NGO from the Thrissur district to help sorting out pending cases in courts through the weekly *Adalats* of the District Legal Services Authority. In 2007 this partnership of Jananeethi and DLSA worked quite well. Mr. Mammootty, the additional district judge and in charge of the DLSA held Jananeethi in confidence and invited Jananeethi to organize more *adalats* so that justice administration become faster and easier for the common man.

• **Family Court of Thrissur:**

As in the case of DLSA, the Family Court judge Ms Fathima Beevi was very keen in involving and engaging Jananeethi in its occasional adalat programmes. She has attended few Jananeethi programmes for women and has personally convinced the importance of Jananeethi services. The better understanding with the Family Court and the support given by the judge helped Jananeethi resolve many disputes in amicable situations.

• **Training of PG Students of Social Work:**

As in the past, this year too, Jananeethi organized focused group discussions and training for MSW students of Calicut University on 7th, 8th and 9th of January 2008 on Social Welfare Legislations. Shri. Kamal Pasha, District & Sessions Judge and also the Chairman of District Legal Services Authority of Thrissur inaugurated the three day training. Professor K.V. Mohan, Principal of Government Law College and the law faculty of Jananeethi Institute engaged classes for the students. Certificates were awarded to participants by Mr. P.U. Hamsa, the Corporation Councilor.
• **Jagratha Samithy:**

Following the successful model worked out by Jananeethi in Thichoor, the first litigation free village in India, the Government of Kerala has introduced in all districts Jagratha Samithys linked with the ICDS net work in the State. Jagratha Samithy means a vigil group. The stake holders are adolescent girls and young women. It’s a participatory program to combat gender based attacks and sexual violence in society. This was first experimented in Panancherry panchayat where Jananeethi was invited to demonstrate how the idea could be implemented. In the present set up also, Jananeethi has been invited by several groups to guide them for proper implementation.

• **Kiwanis Project:**

“Strengthening Women against Gender based Violence” – was a six months project undertaken by Jananeethi Institute with the financial support of KIWANIS Netherlands. The implementation of the project was started in August 2007. The major thrust of this project was given to the civil society wherein several sensitization programmes were organized focusing on the comparatively new legislation, ‘the Domestic Violence (Prevention of) Act 2005. Jananeethi could successfully complete the work in the 52 Divisions of the Thrissur Municipal Corporation and could definitely reach out to the people since ours is the only organization recognized by the Government as **Service Provider** to empower and protect women from the gender related domestic and sexual abuse and violence.

• **Training for KSRTC staff:**

Executive Director, George Pulikuthiyil, is regular faculty at the on-going training of KSRTC staff. The Kerala State Road Transport Corporation has introduced a new innovative and improvising programme for its staff to make its services more appealing and customer-friendly, both on efficiency and efficacy. Jananeethi extends its services free of costs to ensure its participation in updating and humanizing the department.

• **Staff Training:**

Advocate P.Sunil Kumar, law officer of Jananeethi represented Jananeethi at a Training of Trainers organized by International Criminal Court, India in Mumbai on 8th, 9th and 10th of June 2007. Sunilkumar tabled some very pertinent apprehensions with respect to the legality and ethicality of certain strategic methods adopted by Indian prosecution system like the following:

i. Sodium pentathlon used as truth serum (the same serum is used in euthanasia).

ii. The lie detector, and

iii. Brain mapping

Sunilkumar argued that these methods are in violation of the Constitutional right against self incrimination. Jananeethi is partner of ICC India in the campaign.
George Pulikuthiyil, Executive Director was special delegate to the Regional Workshop organized by the IGSSS South Region on Women’s Rights to Land and Housing, on 21st, 22nd and 23rd of January 2008, held in Bangalore.

George Pulikuthiyil participated in a Conference on Good Governance in Voluntary Organisations organized in Bangalore by the National Institute for Public Co-operation and Child Development for senior executives of organizations on 12th to 15th of February 2008.

Jananeethi Faculty members, Advocate Faritha Ansari, Dr. Francis Xavier, Professor NN Gokuldas and Advocate George Pulikuthiyil were invited as resource persons to the Staff Training College of Calicut University to conduct sessions on Human Rights in February 2008. The sessions handled by Jananeethi faculty were assessed as the bests during the one month training for the University Teachers.

- **Obituary:**

Philip Francis, a celebrated Ghazal artist, music director and singer who was India’s Cultural Ambassador to the United States of America and a very close associate and benefactor of Jananeethi died in a road accident on the 3rd of March 2008 at Thrissur. Floral tribute was made on behalf of Jananeethi by N.N. Gokuldas and George Pulikuthiyil. Jananeethi magazine condoled his demise in a meaningful way.
V. Certain landmark achievements:

1. **Shyma**: Shyma, 28 years, has been under the care and protection of Jananeethi from 2002. She was implicated in a double murder case for killing her two children (aged 4 years and 18 months) in 2002. In fact, due to unbearable torture and abject poverty due to excessive drinking of her husband, Suresh, she thought of committing suicide. Holding her two kids close to her chest, she walked into the sea. Her children were dead but she was saved by the fisher men. Having lost her children, she developed psychic disorders and was under treatment for long time. She was thrown out of her husband house and from her parents’ too. Jananeethi got from the High Court of Kerala anticipatory bail for her and she was placed in an institution where her life is safe and secure. Her alcoholic husband wanted to get her back but she was not willing to go with him any more. Later he committed suicide. Jananeethi arranged lawyer for her when her cased was taken for trial. The law faculty and field officers of Jananeethi networked with the State Prosecutor and Adv. Saji Joseph who appeared for Shyma. Finally the District Sessions Court, Thrissur acquitted her and an order was delivered to that effect. Shyma thus is back to her life with new spirit.

2. **Kamala**: Kamala, now 48 years, is mother of a girl child aged 7. She is mentally disabled. All the members at home, her mother, sisters and a brother are mentally retarded. Kamala was raped by one Muraleedharan years ago and thus the girl child was born to her. Muraleedharan, a school teacher by profession, joined in BJP for support when there were complaints against him for begetting a child in Kamala. Hence, the complaint was not pressed and Kamala’s plight was not looked into. Years after only, the matter were reported to Jananeethi. Radhmani, our field officer visited Kamala’s house several times, had discussions with Muraleedharan and his family. Later Muraleedharan and BJP political activists came to Jananeethi and spoke in bad language and warned of dire consequences. We went ahead with the plan, produced Kamala and her child before the Sate Women’s Commission in Thiruvananthapuram and finally lodged a complaint against him in the local police station. Finally Mrmaleedharan and his family came for compromise. Jananeethi law faculty negotiated the matter for Rs. 3 lakhs. The money was deposited in the name of Sreedevi, the child, and the interest amount could be taken by Kamala for her and the child’s maintenance. This is a clear evidence for the smart negotiation of our law faculty as the same case would not have been given more than one lakh rupees had they gone to the court.

3. **Shiji**: Shiji, d/o Janu is only 12 years and suffers minor retardation. She has only mother as her father had left her and her mother long ago. Mother is a daily labourer. Janu was molested and sexually abused by one Thomas, over 50 years. The matter was not properly investigated as Thomas had local support. Jananeethi came to the picture on oral complaints. The matter was agitated at Jananeethi between the law faculty and the offender. In fact there was no evidence to prove allegations against the offender. However, we could impress the offender and finally he was ready to pay Rs. one lakh to the child. The amount is deposited in the child’s name. Jananeethi placed the child in an institution where her education and physical needs will be taken care of. The mother also has part time employment through Jananeethi and both mother and the child are happy.
4. **Omana**: Omana believed Shaji that he would marry her, though she did not know any thing more about him. Omana belonged to Thrissur (Mulyam) and Shaji hailed from Nenmara (Palakkad district). They started living together. After a while Omana got conceived and thereafter she has not heard of Shaji. He is believed to be somewhere in Karnataka or Tamilnadu. Omana delivered a girl child. She came to Jananethi and put up a complaint against Shaji. With much difficulty, we could locate his parental home and spoke to his father. He is a poor man having only a small piece of land in his name. At last he pledged that land and settled Omana’s case for Rs. 60000/-

5. **Saleena Devassy**: The petitioner in this case was a widowed old lady who transferred all her landed property to the names of her two sons, Thomas MD, and Biju MD by way of a Settlement Deed. As per the settlement, the petitioner was residing along with Biju and she was allowed to take income from the property allotted to Thomas, till her death. Petitioner came to Jananeethi complaining that Thomas was not permitting her to take income from that property as per the settlement and she was compelled to depend wholly on Biju for her survival.

Respondent Thomas, a retired Air Force Officer, appeared and explained that the real problem was not the property, but petitioner’s strained relation with his wife and he was ready to settle the matter. After initial discussion with the petitioner and the respondent, further mediation was made with the whole family members. The real problem was lack of emotional support to the petitioner and communication between the members of the family. At the end, matter was settled as Thomas agreed to pay Rs 1500/- per month to the petitioner for her subsistence and further to meet her medical expense as it arises.

6. **Parvathy KA**: The petitioner in this case was a widowed old lady who was living with her unmarried daughter and mentally disabled brother. She approached Jananeethi to get her share in the joint family property. She was so depressed when she came to Jananeethi because she was facing recovery proceedings from co-operative bank. Meanwhile marriage of her daughter was also fixed. So she badly needed the partition of the property in question in order to sort out all issues concerned.

Matter was complicated as there were nine legal heirs of the property, and four of them had settled outside Kerala. At the end of several communications through letters and phone calls Jananeethi was able to get hold of all heirs of the property and was able to convince the pressing need of a complete and final settlement of the issues in question. A settlement, therefore, was arrived at according to which the petitioner received Rs.90,000/- (ninety thousand only) in cash. She was able to clear off her dues in the bank and perform her daughter’s marriage.

VI. **Solidarity with International Human Rights Community**:

1. **Letter to Colonel Kaddafi of Libya**: A letter of appreciation and support to Colonel Kaddafi was sent when the Supreme Council of Judicial Authorities resolved to commute the death penalty of five Bulgarian nurses and one Palestinian doctor on July 21, 2007.

2. **Letter of concern to Bangaladesh Regime**: A letter was sent to the political regime of Bangladesh asking to institute urgent judicial inquiry into the death of Jahangir Alan and Zacharia following to brutal torture in police custody.
3. **Political uprising in Burma (Myanmar):** Jananeethi strongly supported the cause of people’s uprising for political freedom and for democracy. Urgent appeals were made to UN, European Union, and other international bodies seeking support for agitating Burmese population and to re-instate democratic rule in Burma.

4. **Murder of democracy in Pakistan:** From the beginning of troubles in Pakistan when the military ruler Mr. Musharraf dismissed the Chief Justice Chaudary, Jananeethi came out in strong condemnation of the heinous action of the autocrat ruler and pleading to the international community to speak for democracy in Pakistan. Jananeethi magazine carried the story over three times as cover story with due importance.

5. **Israel should leave Gaza:** Jananeethi has always spoken for the struggle for survival of the Palestinians in the Middle East. In the recent times when Israeli troop entered Gaza killing hundreds of civilians, Jananeethi joined other human rights groups all over the world for the rights of the civilian people in Gaza for life free from fear.

6. **Tibetan cry for political identity and freedom:** The long pending quest of the Tibetan population for political freedom and nationhood can not be ignored as if it is an internal problem of the Chinese regime. Tibetan people in large numbers are in Diaspora for many decades. They should be allowed to return to their homeland and re-unite with their own kith and kin. Jananeethi made urgent appeals to appropriate international bodies pleading for the rights of the people of Tibet.

**VII. What is happening at Home?**

1. **Iron Sharmila** has entered the 8th year of her fast against the Boarder Security Laws. The people of Manipur and other boarder states are not vegetables. Their human and civil rights are to be honoured. The draconian law should be repealed and compensation should be awarded to all victims of inhuman torture and physical sufferings and mental persecutions. Jananeethi has taken this matter several times before Indian Administration as well as international communities. Jananeethi magazine has given wide coverage for the cause of Iron Sharmila’s fast. We have joined hands with all national and international human rights groups who have taken the campaign in support of Sharmila.

2. **Unlawful custody of Dr. Binayak Sen:** Jananeethi condemned the arrest and detention of Dr. Sen as colossal failure of Indian judicial system and miscarriage of justice as decent and law abiding citizen are under threat unlawful arrest and custodial torture. Jananeethi magazine has taken this issue on three occasions. We also joined other human rights groups who work for the release of Dr. Sen.

3. **Singur and Nandigram** in West Bengal are classic examples of how a socialist pattern of political regime could be morally eroded and declined and further democratic mandate of the people could be misused against them by political mafia. Jananeethi has voiced in strongest terms against the violent attacks on the peasantry who sacrificed their lives for democratic rights.

4. **Society becomes brutal and savagely** at times as it has happened at Bagalpur in Bihar. On August 20, 2007 a 20 year youth, Salim, was brutally attacked and assaulted by the violent mob and two police men for alleged theft. When he fell unconscious, one of the police tied his body to his (police) motor bike and driven off on the rough road. Jananeethi condemned
this virulently barbaric act and asked the National Human Rights Commission to order immediate investigation and legal action against perpetrators.

5. Further, Jananeethi has readily responded when ever a genuine case of torture any where in India has been highlighted for action by OMCT, AHRC, PWAP, ACHR or any national or international body.

VIII. National/international assignments/invitations:

1. Jananeethi was invited by the Asian Centre for Human Rights in New Delhi to present a critique of the Justice Rajendra Babu Commission’s Report into the custodial deaths and torture in Kerala on 25\textsuperscript{th} June 2007 as part of the anti-torture day observance. Advocate George Pulikuthiyil, Executive Director of Jananeethi accepted the invitation and made the presentation.


3. Jananeethi was one of the two organizations invited by the National Human Rights Commission for a 3 day colloquium with NGOs for effective functioning of the NHRC, held in Bangalore. The invited NGOs are deemed to be consultants of the NHRC for investigation into human rights violations and human rights training.

4. Jananeethi was invited by the National Independent People’s Tribunal to present the Kerala scenario of human rights violations with respect to custodial violence and death in custody at its annual public hearing at New Delhi on the 9\textsuperscript{th} and 10\textsuperscript{th} of February 2008. Adv.George Pulikuthiyil made the presentation.

IX. Conclusion:

As in the case of every other year, the year under report too was significant with several rewarding experiences. In almost all the matters Jananeethi had to interfere for settlement, we were able to succeed with out compromise on the fundamental principles of rule of law and human rights. The credit goes predominantly to the dedicated and selfless services of our law faculty, Advocates Faritha Ansari and P.Sunilkumar who often had to give up their lunch and had to sit with the disputing parties from morning to evening without break. Suresh Babu, Jayashree, Radhamani and others (volunteers and interns) were always ready to support and assist in the Herculean task.

George Pulikuthiyil
Secretary & Executive Director
July 27, 2008 at Thrissur.