

# **SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL**

## **SCI India West Bengal Group**



**Centennial Anniversary Commemorative Souvenir**



With Best wishes

# MAA TARA ENTERPRISE

96/5, Dharmalala Road Salkia, Howrah.



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# Centennial Anniversary Commemorative Souvenir

**Service Civil International India, West Bengal Group**



# DEEDS NOT WORDS

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## THE GLIMPSE OF ACTIVITIES OF SCI INDIA WEST BENGAL GROUP

By Tapas Kumar Sur



***SCI India, West Bengal Group***  
**103, Tentultal Lane, Mankundu, Hooghly**

**List of Executive Committee Members**  
**Year 2019 - 2020**

Sri Bikash Chal,	President
Sri Partha Sarathi Biswas,	Vice President
Sri Tapas Kumar Sur	Secretary, SCI WB Gr.
Sri Kausik Mukherjee	Assit. Secretary
Sri Goutam Karmakar	Treasurer
Ms. Chhanda Das,	Member Exe. Comm.
Sri Ashoke Kr. Mondal	Member Exe. Comm.
Ms. Soma Hazra,	Member Exe. Comm.
Ms. Ruma Mandal,	Member Exe. Comm.
Ms. Puja Das,	Member Exe. Comm.
Ms. Shyamasree Adhikary	Member Exe. Comm.

***SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL-INDIA***  
**SCI-India building, J.J.Colony, Nangloi, Delhi-110041**

**List of National Council & Central Working Committee Members**  
**For the Year 2018 - 2020**

Mr.M.N.Ganesh	President, SCI India
Mr.OP Yadav	CWC Chairman
Mr.R.Arulraj	Vice President, SCI India
Mr. Y.Shanmugam	Vice President, SCI India
Mr. Srinivas Sawanth	Vice President
Mr.A.Suryanarayana	Treasurer
Mrs. Alpana Bijon Bhadra	I C Delegate
Mr.Bholasankar G.	Alternate IC delegate
Mr. Tapas Kumar Sur	Secretary West Bengal Group
Mr. Venketesh	Secretary Karnataka Group
Mr. Ravi Kumar	Secretary Tamil Nadu Group
Ms. Pravin Damle	Secretary Maharashtra group
Mr.BhupenderYadav	Coordinator Delhi Group
Mr. Bikash Chal	NC Member
Mr. Vikram Lal	NC Member
Mr. S. Kishore Yadav	NC member
Mr. Antony Raj Thevar	CWC Member
Mr. Subhash Daima	CWC Member
Mr. Manoj Nawaria	CWC member
Ms. Shoma Chakravorty	NC member
Mr. Bhabesh Saha	NC member

# **FOREWARD**

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings from SCI India, West Bengal Group!

Though it was a spontaneous proposal to publish a Centennial Commemorative Souvenir from our group secretary yet we all executive committee members accepted it very enthusiastically. We started it in mid November but unfortunately it got delayed due to interrupted transport and economic activities. However we received warm responses and contributions to the souvenir from different prominent peace activists. We are happy to present the souvenir to you.

As a matter of fact this endeavor has been greatly beneficial to us, as we have enriched ourselves not only with the rich history of SCI but also it has promoted us to ensure active contact with lots of SCI friends and well wishers in home as well as in abroad. It has also renewed the spirit and philosophy of SCI for us. We have realized our weakness and felt the need of creating some infrastructural facility and organizational uplift.

The content of this souvenir has been divided in 3 strata;

1st. part brings you the experience of the present peace volunteers/ activists of SCI today 2020

2nd. part introduces the readers with the initial (historical) phase of SCI and we have focused to reveal initial period of SCI India in particular. Also contemporary situation of SCI India.

The 3rd. part focuses attention to the actions of SCI India, West Bengal group through pictures.

Although we are a bit late still we are happy to offer this Centenary Commemorative volume to mark the 100 years of SCI with due respect and hope that our members local and abroad will take some time to go through this humble offering.

This souvenir is dedicated to those who made the marathon journey of 100 years possible carrying the ideals of SCI without any interruptions.

We are happy and grateful to Prof. Rathindranath Chaudhury for publishing the Souvenir on 20.02.2021 at Vivekananda Wisdom Mission School, Mankundu,

With warm regards,

Executive Committee Members  
SCI India, West Bengal Group.

Place : Mankundu, Hooghly,  
West Bengal, India

Dated: 20.02.2021 Time 1.00 p.m.



## EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

We are happy to come out with this Centenary Anniversary Commemorative Souvenir and offer it to our SCI friends, well wishers and we will be happy if it finds potential people who would come forward to take up the cause of promoting peace for Self, Society, Nation and mankind as a whole.

Pierre Ceresole, the founder of SCI lost his mother as early as 9 years of age, he was in search of love and peace since he was an adolescent, a brilliant student, studied Mathematics and Physics and became a teacher of Mathematics but he left his home and job at the age of 31 to have a world trip in order to learn about the life of the common people across the Globe but he had to come back home from USA as World War I broke out. In USA he did common men's job such as a gravedigger, using a pick and shovel for the first time trying to understand the life situations of the poor and their mind. While the massive destruction took place during World War I, Ceresole raised his voice against the war and started campaign of "Conscientious Objector" in 1917. In 1920 he mobilized volunteers to reconstruct the houses of war affected people and subsequently a world movement grew with many devoted souls.



The movement passed through necessary evolution and adoptions to meet up the emerging challenges with the time like, from Campaign of "Conscientious Objector" to War Rehabilitation and Conciliations, subsequently Disaster Relief, Humanitarian help, Development Aids, Development Education, Human Rights, Environmental issues and Sustainable Development. SCI withstand the test of time.

While the root that urges for Peace is within every one of us, the summit of it is the furthest point to reach. There is so much to do. So peace is not only a destination but also a process. SCI has already done a commendable job by introducing the concepts of peace building to thousands of volunteers each year and offering them to do practical work through short term and long term volunteering work for last 100 years. Yet we have seen as Covid 19 emerges, the manhandling of the states, religious groups, political parties, in communities, between patients families and neighbours, everywhere conflicts offered tremendous challenges, not to speak of terrorism or state sponsored violence. So the scope to work for conflicts resolutions is endless and at the same time too much use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides bringing misery in a massive scale in 3rd. world countries and in addition, our lifestyle aggravating the issue of climate change offering an unprecedented threat. The so called development has become a side and sick game. So the need to focus on the subject of sustainable development is absolutely the need of the hour.

We have huge differences of Knowledge, Skills, Ideologies, Religions and locations of Natural Resources but the mankind is univocal regarding necessity of Peace and its sustainability. So as Pierre Ceresole said it may take 1000 years but let's do one part of it this year. With this slogan we have flourished during last 100 years and we must grow and go further ... "Long live SCI movement" ...

We believe by sharing experience of present volunteers and revisiting our history we will get ourselves reconnected with the dedication, strength and commitment of those great personalities who started building this unique global movement and we will rediscover the source of inspiration and strength out of it.

I sincerely thank to the contributors to this souvenir, to name a few the International President Ms. Jackie Purves, who readily agreed and send an encouraging message, Mr. Heinz Gabathuler, Coordinator of SCI International Achieve, Ms. Claudia Strambini, C & V Coordinator, SCI IS, Stephen Nah and the Executive Committee members SCI India, W. B. Group.

I wish all of you a Safe and a belated Happy New Year along with a renewed mission of SCI.

Tapas Kumar Sur  
Secretary, SCI India, West Bengal Group

## ***The Founder Of Service Civil International***



**Pierre Cérésolle**

17th. August 1879 - 23 October 1945, Lausanne, Switzerland

“Self-denial becomes the foundation of his struggle and action his creed. His spiritual development leads him to distance himself from official religious institutions, without however, putting into question the existence of God. He is trying to find his own path in life, clarifying his way of thinking, whilst erecting courage and truth as the essential virtues he strives to attain.”

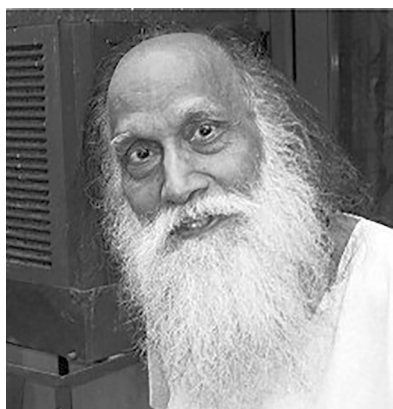
Quoted from a brochure written by Sylvie Beguelin and Michel Megard,  
Compiled by Philipp Rodriguez in Words about Deeds



## ***Our Heartfelt Tribute to Bhupender Kishore***

“Joy of leaves,  
More than flowers,  
Changing colours  
“Dry the Leaves”  
You have come to meet me  
So meet you I”....  
See how one can live a different life from others.

Our sincere tribute to Bhuppy, He internalized the values of SCI thoroughly and delivered the same with great sincerity and sense of humor, an artist by profession, a poet by heart. He had great towards new concepts, firm on his conviction, outstanding communication skills. All these qualities helped him to contribute to SCI movement for three decades. He will be ever remembered in SCI family as a source of inspiration and strength. “May his soul rest in Peace” and heartfelt condolence for family and friends.



Bhuppy was born in 1936 in Delhi. He worked as Art Teacher till 1965. He joined SCI India and worked in a leprosy project till 1967 and then he was sent to Switzerland & Italy as a volunteer. He came back on 1968, worked as secretary of SCI India till 1974. Then became Asian secretary and continued till 1980. The next 5 year he worked as International Vice President (till 1985), Thereafter he worked with Afghan refugees till 1995. In total he was involved with SCI activities for three decades.

As a freelance peace activist he was active till he breathed his last on 31st dec 2020.

“Dry the Leaves”  
You have come to meet me  
So meet you I...  
See how one can live a different life from others.  
Some others may do so too.  
Joy of leaves,  
More than flowers,  
Changing colours  
“Dry the Leaves”  
You have come to meet me  
So meet you I...  
See how one can live a different life from others.  
Some others may do so too.  
Joy of leaves,  
More than flowers,  
Changing colours  
From green to yellow and brown,  
Changing shape.

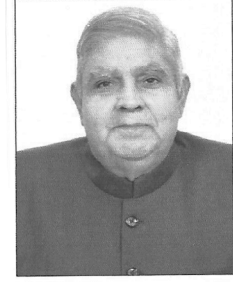
See how one can live and enjoy a different life.  
The same is true of the music of birds.  
Leaves on windy days of storm...  
Sun may bring both pain and joy.  
So does life.  
New ways and surprises.

2nd December 2018.  
(In honour of Nigel Watt's visit).  
Written by Bhupender Kishore

## ***Message From Governor of West Bengal***



**राज्यपाल, पश्चिम बंगाल**  
**Governor of West Bengal**  
**রাজ্যপাল, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ**




27<sup>th</sup> January, 2021

### **Message**

I am glad to learn that Service Civil International-India, West Bengal Group, is bringing out a souvenir to commemorate its 100 years of involvement in benevolent activities.

It is laudable that this voluntary Organisation is working hard for promotion of peace and sustainable development of people in the society. Sustainable development is the need of the hour.

I wish the publication all success.

  
Jagdeep Dhankhar

# ***Service Civil International***

**An organization committed to promote world peace since 1920**

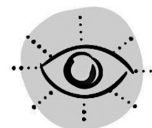
SCI is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting a culture of peace by organising international voluntary projects for people of all ages and backgrounds. The organisation consists of 42 branches and an ever growing number of partner organisations.

SCI is open to all. It was one of the first organisations to divest itself of all political or religious affiliations in its work of promoting peace and intercultural understanding through practical action. Throughout the years SCI has made a major contribution to the development of the main forms of volunteering. Year after year, the organisation enables thousands of volunteers to participate in community projects around the world.



## **SCI's vision**

is a world of peace, social justice and sustainable development, where all people live together with mutual respect and without recourse to any form of violence to solve conflict



## **SCI's mission**

is to promote a culture of peace by organizing international volunteering projects with local and global impact



## **Values in SCI**

We are working towards having every volunteer project, meeting, exchange or train: our common values as follows:



## **Volunteering**

In the sense of acting out of self-initiative, without seeking material reward and for the benefit of civil society, as a method and a statement for social change, whilst never competing with paid labor nor seeking to contribute to strike-breaking.



## **Non-Violence**

As a principle and a method.



## **Human Rights**

Respect for individuals as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.





## **Solidarity**

International solidarity for a more just world and solidarity between human beings on all levels.



## **Respect for the environment**

Respect for the environment and the ecosystem of which we are a part and on which we are dependent.



## **Inclusion**

To be open and inclusive to all individuals who share the aims and objectives of the Movement, without regard to gender, color, religion, nationality, social status or political views, or any other possible grounds for discrimination.



## **Empowerment**

Providing people with means (knowledge, tools) to understand and act to transform the social, cultural and economic structures that affect their lives at all levels.



## **Cooperation**

With local communities as well as other local, national and international actors to strengthen the positive potential within civil society as a whole.



There are 34 national branches where numerous events, Projects, and training are organized during the year, on community, local group, national and international levels.

In 2019 SCI mobilized, 2270 volunteers, Organized 270 camps, Worked with 134 Organizations in 94 countries.

One can volunteer with SCI for short term (10— 15 days) & Long term (1 month to 12 months.) Since Pandemic has been announced, different branches of SCI have launched online training and workshops. So volunteers can participate in SCI activity online also.

SCI focuses on its values and practise them in each action to promote a culture of peace and sustainable lifestyle. We work on Climate justice, Refugee, Human Rights, Organize Training, Workshop, Seminar with youths to introduce a way of life free from consumerism and glamour, to connect with conscience and inner self, sheltered in human/spiritual values and peace.

Every chapter of history presents its own challenges. SCI was created to respond to such challenges of war, destructions, injustice and violence. In the last 100 years SCI has proved its of commitment to promoting

a culture of peace, SCI has also responded to post world war situations, natural disasters, ecological and social challenges.

Today climate change is for us what World War I was to Pierre Ceresole in the early 20th century: it presents a growing threat to peace, nonviolence and human rights. The climate is changing rapidly around the planet and this change is without question caused by humans. Our fossil-fuel based economy and culture of consumerism is contributing significantly to this process.

SCI has consultative status with the Council of Europe, Operational relations with UNESCO and is a member of CCIVS, YFJ, and closely works with Council of Europe and European Union. A member of “United for Intercultural Action”— a European network against Nationalism, Racism, Fascism. In 1987, SCI was awarded the title of ‘Messenger of Peace’ given by the United Nations in acknowledgement of its efforts to promote peace and understanding.

Thus SCI is the gateway of a Global movement to improve quality of life, promoting a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Lifestyle on this planet.



Punniya, President of SCI Nepal, Goska Tur— out going President, Stephen Nah, Alexandra Vasileio, International Treasurer Hemamali Perera, Vice President, In ICM 2020

## **SCI TODAY– 2020**

Goodwill Messages and Contributions by  
Members of Differnt Branches of SCI





‘The Working Hands Are Holier  
Than The Praying Lips’

— Mother Teresa

# Message From Ms. Jackie Purves

## International President, SCI



From the time that our founder Pierre Cérésolle from Switzerland organised the first workcamp in Verdun in 1920 to rebuild a World War One damaged village, a reconstruction that was both a restoration of the buildings and homes, and the emotional rehabilitation of the local community. An international group of French, Swiss and German volunteers worked together as a symbol of reconciliation.

Cérésolle then went on to campaign for civil service as an alternative to military service.

Conscientious objectors were given an alternative option rather than going to jail. SCI has taken part in many of the defining moments in history in Europe, Asia and Africa. SCI from 1920-1945 worked towards creating a civilian service. The first social and environmental project was in Britain in 1931, followed by relief work in India after the earthquake in Bihar in 1934. Cérésolle through friends of Mohandas K Ghandi launched the first workcamp outside of Europe in Bihar. Later, SCI worked with refugees after 1947, focussing on peace and reconciliation in their workcamps. To quote SCI India on the ethos of SCI— *there are people coming from different backgrounds but who are willing to put themselves in that situation because they care about far-away people. They do not come with the ideas of changing others or being a big help, but it is more to be together with people with a sense of solidarity.*

It is this inner calling for solidarity that has seen SCI India-West Bengal work so hard for many years and in this difficult year of 2020 to support local projects to help people during the pandemic. They have shown such resilience and helped so many. SCI India West Bengal are a credit to the name Service Civil International.

The year 2020 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SCI, and what a year! However, the pandemic only served to show the dedication of SCI members and volunteers, and their willingness to act when needed, to follow the SCI motto of Deeds not Words.

SCI India-West Bengal shows a marvelous legacy of living the values of peace, solidarity and compassion.

I wish all at SCI India West Bengal the very best for the future and the next 100 years. Working together, we can change the world- one project at a time.

My Best wishes and support go to all at SCI India, West Bengal. Wishing you strength and courage to prevail.

Your friend, Jackie

Jackie Purves, International President of Service Civil International

# **Message From Sub-Divisional Officer**

**Chandernagore, Hooghly**

**Smt. Debarati Sarkar, WBCS(Exe)**



D.O. No. *374/c/cgr.*

**SUB-DIVISIONAL OFFICER**

**CHANDERNAGORE, HOOGHLY**

Off. 2683-5324

Resi. 2683-5325

Fax 2683-5460

Date *10.12.2020*

*I am glad to know that Service Civil International is celebrating its centenary year in 2020 and its West Bengal Group is going to publish its commemorative volume to mark the same.*

*I believe that this commemorative volume being released on this occasion will contain articles illustrating the great spirit of Service Civil International and it will be useful to introduce the meaningful activities of the past and inspire the young generation to follow the core values of Sustainable Development and Culture of Peace in the World.*

*I wish the celebration all success.*



*[Signature]*  
**Sub Divisional Officer  
Chandannagar, Hooghly**

# ***Message From Ms. Gos'ska Tur***

**Former International President of SCI 2015-2020**



Dear readers,

The year 2020 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Service Civil International. Our movement started as a grass-root, visionary activity of a group of peace-builders led by Pierre Cérésolle, and nowadays is a global, well-established organisation, with thriving branches and partners all across the world.

Throughout the decades, SCI has continued to pursue its mission to promote a culture of peace by bringing thousands of people of different backgrounds together, equipping them with conflict resolution skills and inspiring individuals to incorporate peace practices into their daily lives. We grow older— and also more experienced— every year, and we use this experience to reflect, assess, and evaluate our actions. By this we learn how to do improve and to find new, successful ways to work even more effectively for a peaceful world.

An important chapter of SCI's work has taken place on the territory of India. The first international workcamps and local activities started back in the 1930's, and since 90 years the Indian branch of SCI has been inspiring peace activists from numerous countries. The impressive range of actions includes both practical, hands-on work, such as food distribution, environmental projects, and natural disaster relief efforts, and— as an added value— education and capacity building, which includes activities dedicated to both the youth and adults.

Please accept my sincere congratulations on these achievements! Your drive and passion are outstanding!

As we all know, peace is not only the absence of conflict, but also it is the good that we awake in every human, the open-mindedness to another culture, the belief that every person is equal and should be respected. These seeds of peace are planted and grown by numerous social activists, and with this message I also want to appreciate the impact of every single volunteer of SCI India. Your actions make persons you work with cherish these values, and by workcamps, campaigns, educational activities, and various other projects, thousands of people you reach become involved in making our planet a better place to live for everyone.

All the best to you for the upcoming year, and congratulations on your continuous efforts to make peace possible!

Amitiés,  
Goška Tur

## ***Message from VSI Ireland***



### **Voluntary Service International (VSI)**

20 Dominick Street Lower  
Dublin 1  
D01 YP97  
Tel: +353 1 8551011  
[www.vsi.ie](http://www.vsi.ie)

Comhghairdeas Congratulations to SCI India West Bengal Group on their production of their souvenir publication to commemorate the centenary year of SCI. We, in VSI Ireland, are happy to be associated with the publication.

- 1934 was an important year for SCI with the first International Volunteer Project (workcamp) in Bihar, India when Pierre Ceresole and several international volunteers joined with local people to rebuild villages destroyed by a devastating earthquake. Rajendra Prasad was a visitor to the project and he later became the first President of India. Indeed he invited SCI back to India to help in the building of houses for refugees in Faridabad.
- VSI Ireland became a branch of Service Civil International in 1973 at the International Committee Meeting held in New Delhi.
- Here in Dublin we have a statue of Rabindrath Tagore, the great Bengali and Indian writer in our city centre park which is a symbol of the close links between our two countries.



## MESSAGE FROM ATHIMULAM ARJUNAN

President Sci Malaysia  
Penang Chapter



**SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL (S.C.I.)**  
(Pertubuhan Perkhidmatan Awam Antarabangsa) Penang, Malaysia.  
(No. Pendaftaran: PPP/PG 3360 - 974)  
CO-32-GF, Kompleks Masyarakat Penyayang, Jalan Utama, 10450 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia.

Fax: 04-643 3569 | H/P: 012-4122014 | Email: [sci.penang@gmail.com](mailto:sci.penang@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.scipenang.org](http://www.scipenang.org)



Dear President, Executive Members And Friends Of Sci West Bengal, India.

It Is Indeed A Great Honour To Be Able And Given An Opportunity To Write A Message To The Organisers Of This Precious And Noble Event Celebrating Sci 100 Years Centennial Celebration.

Sci Is A Global Peace Movement And A International Voluntary Organisation Which Is Proud Of Its Past, Present And Optimistic About Future. We Are One Of The Worlds Largest Volunteering Organisation That Coordinates Short And Long Term Voluntary Social Projects For People Of All Ages And Background.

Throughout My Involvement In Sci, I Had The Chance To Meet And Work Together With Several Of Your Colleagues (Sci India) Remains A Renewable Source Of Enthusiastic Volunteers With High Respect For The Core Values Of Our Movement, Good Messengers Of Sci's Vision Of A World Of Peace, Social Justice And Sustainable Development.

My Heartiest Congratulations To The President, The Excetutive Committee And All The Members Of Sci West Bengal Group For The Exemplary Efforts In Making This Sci 100 Years Centennial Celebration A Success.

Thank You.

Thank You.

Athimulam Arjunan

President

Sci Malaysia Penang Chapter

11Th December 2020.

## ***Message from Mr. Amul Roychowdhury***

**IAS (retd)**

**Former Secretary, Labour department, Govt. of West Bengal.**



I am a little bit associated with Service Civil International - India, West Bengal Group for the last two years. Service Civil International was founded by Pierre Ceresole a Swiss engineer one hundred years ago with a view to promoting brotherhood among conflicting nations after the first world war. It is basically a welfare organization, committed to promote world peace and sustainable development.

The organisation reached India first in the year 1934 to help earthquake affected people of Bihar with a small team of volunteers and was hosted by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, our first President. Prior to that Pierre Ceresole had met the father of our nation M.K. Gandhi in 1931 in Switzerland when Gandhi ji invited him to work in India. SCI has stepped into 100 years of dedicated service to the world community. This is a momentous occasion and gives us immense pleasure. When an organisation successfully completes 100 years of existence, it proves the inner strength of the organisation.

World peace is still a far cry. Spectre of third World war looms large in the horizon. Moreover, there are civil wars, ethnic conflict, racial, communal violence, terrorist massacre.

In this context, SCI, India, I sincerely hope will play the leading role in the world as India is, after all the land of Goutam Buddha and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

I am glad to know that SCI India, West Bengal group is going to publish a souvenir to commemorate 100 years of their existence. I wish them all the best on this great occasion and I firmly believe that they will re-dedicate themselves to promote world peace and sustainable development.

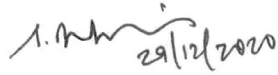
## ***Message from District Programme Officer (ICDS)***

**Government of West Bengal  
Office of the District Magistrate and Collector, Hooghly  
P.O. & P.S.-Chinsurah, Dist-Hooghly, PIN-712101  
(District ICDS Cell)  
E-mail : dpoicdshooghly.75@gmail.com**

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Date: 29/12/2020

It is nice to hear that Service Civil International is going to publish a souvenir to commemorate its Centenary year in 2020. I convey my warm wishes for their endeavour and believe that they will continue good & valuable service to mankind in future.

  
(Sanjeeb Rakshit)  
District Programme Officer, ICDS  
Hooghly

## ***Message From a Well Wisher***

It is my pleasure to comment on the activities of Service Civil International India, West Bengal Group and I am glad to know that the organization is very much active in promoting Social Service specially amongst the weaker section of the society.

I convey my heartiest greetings to the organization whose endless effort and involvement in social activities to promote social justice, peace and sustainable development amongst different communities marks a sign and an indication of future reference to the generations at large.

I wish every success of the organization that Celebrateds its Centenary Year in 2020 and ventilate the souvenir on this occasion of World Justice Day 2021.

— Alokesh Das  
Judge

## ***Message From Bikash Chal***

### **President, SCI India, West Bengal Group**



From the deep in my heart I pay my homage to the founder of SCI, the Swiss pacifist, Pirre Ceresole in the centenary year (2020).

Peace is the fundamental prerequisite of human lives. But peace is very often disrupted with the increasing violence by community, state, and hunger. We see the series of unrest and crisis in the Middle East and North African countries which create a hurdle for sustainable development.

Civil war in Somalia , Etyhopia - Eritrea conflict for decades have worsen the peace situation. Drought also have added extra salt to the war injuries, resulting billions of starved population.

Global climate change is also a major threat to peace and development. Climate change creates tension and anxiety among affected population, especially when the question of food and water arises .A survey shows about 970 million people live with high/ very high exposure to climate hazard 40% of them compromise peacefulness. Millions of people are displaced for climate change. We urgently need a better understanding of the condition which can resolve the environmental disputes by cooperation rather than conflict. If the global community prefers a peaceful planet, tackling climate change has to be the part and parcel of the equation our slogan may be... . ASPIRES TO INSPIRE BEFORE WE EXPIRE



## ***Retrospection By Devinder Das Chopra***



Service Civil International has the Motto: “DEEDS NOT WORDS”. Fine in itself and as far as it can go. Words and thoughts have to be communicated and to be of some worth in today’s world. Last 30 years of the wide world has been much influenced by the expanding world of communications. Yes, world-wide!

Those who have ignored the Internet world, are left way behind!

In 1959, at the beginning of my Asian Secretary ship I went off to Tezpur & Misamari in Assam, where the Tibetan refugees were coming in from Tibet, seeking refuge from the Chinese invaders. An aerogramme took 10 days to reach the SCI main office in Paris---and another 10-12 days for their reply to come those days ! Now, consultations & decision making is done within hours & minutes ! SCI-India worked with & for the Tibetans from 1959 to 1966--helping to rehabilitate them in India. The Govt of India to our visit with them had allowed only SCI vols. from wherever to work in their rehabilitation. Long term volunteers from UK, France, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, Ireland, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Japan etc. served in this historic work. The Tibetans are a forward looking people and within 30-40years got resettled in Dharamsala hills, plus the south in Bylakuppe and all over the world. I recall that effort by scores of SCI volunteers worthy of “deeds, not words!”

SCI India and its regional Branches like your own, since early fifties have done their bit in a host of projects. Such as: Refugee relief work, Agricultural long term projects, Slum rehabilitation, Leprosy rehabilitation in Orissa, upgrading Tata TB Sanatorium, building Community Centres, Cherian Nagar long term project in Chennai and so on including many short term projects in Bengal and other parts of the country. From mid fifties the Govt. of India provided 50% concession to ALL SCI volunteers when travelling on the Indian railways! That included the ones from overseas as well.

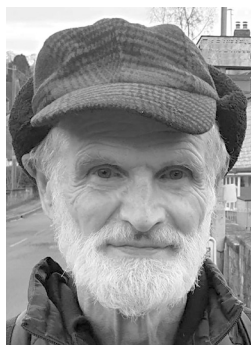
SCI has grown worldwide in East & West Europe, Africa, Australia, USA, and Asia {India, Japan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Malaysia to name a few } and is now in the process of celebrating its 100 years. Sadly it falls in the year of the Pandemic !

My years of SCI work “trained” me to work for the US Peace Corps, Special Child Relief work--Unicef in India, Christian Childrens Fund, UNICEF-India and Yemen. Till the point of retirement in 1994. We work for Peace and for the common people, always avoiding the points of discord on account of race, colour or creed. All people are born equal and so it must also be where the gender issue is concerned, in today’s world.

With these words I send you and all your members my warm & good wishes and to Stay Safe in Good Health and in Peace. 9810338049. ddchop47@gmail.com

# ***Looking Back— And Forward***

**By Roger Gwynn, England**



My first workcamp was in a village in the Taunus region of Germany. It was run by a small local organization called Aufbauwerk der Jugend (Young People for Development). There were volunteers from Germany, France, Denmark, Sweden, Algeria and England. The work was unambitious— cleaning up the public areas in the village— but the camp was very successful in bringing people together. We volunteers bonded like brothers and sisters, and we also made friends with the village folk. The second World War had ended only fifteen years earlier, so reconciliation and the need for mutual understanding between nations were live issues. In this respect the camp resembled the earliest SCI workcamps which had been held, not far away, about 40 years before.

Subsequently I joined a forestry camp in Austria held by the Steiermärkischer Waldschutzverband (Styrian League for Forest Protection); a camp in Sweden with Agni, a movement for international brotherhood; a camp in Spain run by the Delegación Nacional de Juventudes (National Youth Organization). Each of these camps had its own distinct character; all involved volunteers from at least three countries.

Then I heard about “long term” voluntary work. After leaving university, in the summer of 1963, I headed for St Giron in the French Pyrenees to join an SCI orientation programme which was being held there for prospective long term volunteers. The programme involved study sessions, with lectures by Jean-Pierre Petit, Etienne Reclus and others, plus short workcamps in Ariège villages.

Immediately after the orientation programme I got an opportunity to see long term voluntary service at first hand. I hitchhiked with another volunteer through Spain and Morocco to Tlemcen in Algeria. In a makeshift encampment on a rocky hillside I worked with French SCI volunteers who were carrying out a health and education programme with Algerian war refugees. A derelict hut, used

by goats as a shelter, was to be restored and converted into a bedroom. My job was to clean it out, plaster the rough walls and make a new wooden door. The highlight of this brief placement was being invited by one of the refugees to share a meal of couscous in her tiny shack.

Back in England I got involved with IVS, the UK branch of SCI. I joined the London group and became a “regular” at its weekend workcamp programme— which mostly involved painting and decorating in the homes of disadvantaged people in run-down areas of the city: the aged, the disabled, the mentally ill. The participants in these camps were mainly middle-class and English. Here the international dimension was lacking, but we experienced a different type of diversity, segregation within our society. For a middle class individual like me it was a revelation to see the dismal and often sordid conditions in which less fortunate Londoners lived. On some occasions we were joined by inmates of Wormwood Scrubs prison, who were allowed out on day release for the purpose. This was another mind-broadening experience: I could now see “criminals” as fellow humans, very much the victims of circumstance.

I applied to IVS for a place as a long term volunteer. The fact that I had no special skills to offer meant that it took time before a suitable unskilled vacancy could be found. At last the right kind of opening appeared: I could go to Pakistan to offer assistance to the separate SCI groups in West and East Pakistan and encourage their development.

In those days IVS volunteers were still being sent to Asia by boat. There were six of us in a little batch of new LTVs setting off from Victoria Station, London, on 5th October 1964. The other five were girls. Nina Atkins, a nurse, and Anne Harland, a teacher, were to work with Tibetan refugees in Kasauli in northern India; Margaret Sargeant, a social anthropologist, would be posted in Kanya Kumari in Madras State, south India; occupational therapists Judy Wallis and Jackie Horner were heading for Chiang Mai in northern

Thailand. We travelled by train to Marseilles and boarded the SS Vietnam, a cargo cum passenger ship operated by the French company Messageries Maritimes. It took us almost a week to reach Bombay via the Suez Canal, another day to get from Bombay to Delhi by train. Before scattering to our various destinations we attended our first Asian workcamp in a village not far from Delhi—a congenial introduction to rural India.

I then visited West Pakistan to meet the SCI groups in Lahore and Multan; returned to Delhi and went by train to Calcutta, then on to Dhaka in East Pakistan.

For the remainder of my first year as an LTV I worked with the SCI East Pakistan Group. I was immediately adopted as a brother by the local volunteers, and they took turns in welcoming me to their homes as an additional family member. Thanks to the friendliness and generosity of my hosts I felt completely at home and quickly fell in love with the country and its culture.

Various kinds of voluntary work were undertaken by the group. The first international workcamp I attended was held on Sandwip, a beautiful island which had recently suffered cyclone damage. We helped with the construction of a new primary school building. Then, back in Dhaka, there were weekend working parties attended by local students, doing such things as cleaning ponds and levelling playgrounds.

After a while I was sent away to a northern district called Rajshahi, where I joined in the activities of a new local SCI group and encourage its development. To fill in time between work programmes I stayed at a nearby Roman Catholic mission and taught English at the mission school.

When another cyclone hit the southern part of the country I was recalled to Dhaka to take part in relief work. I joined a team of SCI volunteers who were put at the disposal of the East Pakistan Red Cross and helped distribute emergency supplies in Barisal district. After that I was included in an official SCI survey team which toured the cyclone affected area of Patuakhali to identify a suitable location for a long term development project. The island of Moudubi was eventually selected as the site.

Not long after that fighting broke out in Kashmir and diplomatic relations between Pakistan and India reached a low point. There was a brief war between the two states, and although East Pakistan was scarcely affected by the hostilities normal activities had to be suspended and endless discussions went on among SCI members about the political and military implications of the conflict.

There was some talk of SCI holding an international workcamp to bring together volunteers from India and Pakistan; however the tense political situation and closure of borders made this impracticable. Instead a residential work and study camp was held in the grounds of a school in Dhaka, which was centred on tree-planting for the future. And then my year was up.

My time with SCI brought three specific benefits. Firstly, the habits of patience and frugality derived



from workcamping taught me to enjoy whatever fell to my lot and to be a more responsible citizen of this crowded world than I would otherwise have been. Second, the knowledge and experience which I gathered during my time abroad became valuable resources I could use in my work. But third and most important, I gained lifelong friends. It is for blessing me with these special, long-lasting friendships that I'm most grateful to SCI.



It's now sixty years since I attended my first workcamp and became enthused by the idea that relations between nations can improve when individuals from them come together to cooperate on practical projects. The world has changed a great deal since then, and it is hard to pretend that international harmony has increased. Yet the formula established by Pierre Ceresole remains valid— when individual members of hostile groups find themselves working together for a common goal they really do lose all fear and suspicion of one another. Today's world certainly needs SCI more than ever. The challenge is to entice more people (young people in particular) out of their comfort zone into purposeful activities involving individuals from many different backgrounds. That is not an easy task, but we must keep trying.



Relief distribution at Patuakhali, Bangladesh in 1965

# ***My Experience And Involvement With SCI Movement***

## **Stephen Nah**



Looking back... it's been 50 years since I joined my first workcamp in Penang, Malaysia in Dec 1970. I was single, in my 20s, and now I am nearing 70s and a grandfather.

During my 50 years with SCI, I went through a few critical and significant phases of my life beginning with bachelorhood, seeking employment, then gainful employment, marriage, further education, retirement, post retirement and the present moment... cherishing each day whilst staying healthy, happy and providing supportive engagement.

My volunteering life experience and involvement in SCI includes taking on the many and varied Roles— within the Organisational Structure as a Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, President, Ex officio, Coordinator and even as a Board members in the IEC.

All these have been an enriching learning experience for me, and thank God, there were always people willing to teach, guide and help out. Our internal leadership transition has always been smooth.

SCI Education has taught us to have an open mind, learn new techniques including simpler and more effective tools to solve an issue, conflict, disagreements, and whatsoever differences we have. Most of us went through a process of learning, delearning, relearning, paradigm shift when we attend courses, seminars, talks, read books, watch videos and nowadays attending Webinars.

There are so many opportunities for us to improve ourselves and what I learnt has helped me in managing people in my place of work and in my career advancement. All in, I had 6 promotions from a supervisor to a board member of a multi-national company. In my 31 years of work, I had not issued a Warning Letter nor ever shouted at a staff. And have cultivated many dear friends along the years. Thanks to SCI training— I am more patient, understanding and respectful for others.

SCI workcamps taught me many simple things in life such as working and living with others in a simple and shared environment with patience, humility, democracy, and treating the young and old, rich or poor, have or have-not, from whatever race, colour, and creed, with the utmost respect. We learn to be a friend to all, learn to value and appreciate each other's culture. It also gave us the opportunity, to serve our community be it helping to paint the place, repair something, plant some trees, entertain the children or the elderly, and to do something good and useful for them.

During the 1 - 2 weeks workcamps we learn to share our tasks be it cooking, washing, cleaning etc. It's an endearing and humbling experience as we learn to value and appreciate each other's contributions. I have learnt a lot. For those who come and boss around, and want to be treated like a hotel guest or VIP, they will surely miss the experiential learning for self-development and peace.

Peace has over a thousand definitions and expressions. Through SCI I have learned to Think Global but Act Local. Let us start with ourselves, be at peace with ourselves, with our family, colleagues and community. Let's keep our tone soft and low, have laughter in our voices and smiles on our faces. Let's help wherever we can. Let's learn to give and forgive. Let's do whatever within our capacity, sincerely and joyfully. From Peace within, let Peace spread out to others.

This has been my joyful experience with SCI and thanks to John Orijitham, Navam Appadurai, Valli Seshan, Ataur Rahman, Uncle Dev, Abang Faruque, Prof Anwar Faizal, Isabelle, Ingrid, Goska, and the many unnamed friends and mentors who came into my life. Thank You, Salam, Amities

## ***Hard Work, Simple Food & Great Fun*** **Mohamed Rajudeen— SCI— Sri Lanka**

I am indeed honoured to be invited to write a few lines to the proposed souvenir to be published by SCI India, West Bengal Group to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

I joined SCI in 1967 and served as a volunteer for many years. I also had the good opportunity of being the National Secretary of SCI-Sri Lanka Branch, Member of the Asian Executive Committee and also as member of the International Executive Committee. I am proud to state that I have been very active over all these years and shouldered many a responsibility for SCI— Sri Lanka in particular and for the region and International as a whole. I had the chance to meet and work together with several famous SCI personalities from all over the world like Navam Appadurai, Hirato Sato, Ralph Hagneur, Teddy Vanfellenbourg, Helen Honeyman, Valli Seshan, Chandru & Krpa, Bhuppy, Ataur Rahman to name a few. They were all great personalities on their own BUT had one thing in common. They were all truly dedicated to the cause of peace and gave their best to keep the SCI flag flying.



What really attracted me most and kept me going in SCI, for donkeys years, was undoubtedly the WORK CAMP. I have had many fascinating and unforgettable experiences at work camps not only in Sri Lanka but also in Asia and Europe as well. Hard Work, Simple Food and Good Fun was our recipe and was a good forum to bring people together irrespective of their colour, nationality, gender, race, religion or political affiliation. Young and old, men and women, abled and the disabled worked hand in hand to promote peace and understanding— which was an automatic outcome. Volunteers have been our most valuable asset. We don't own buildings, furniture and fittings or bulging bank accounts BUT volunteers— we have many who have participated in our work camps or exchange and training programmes. However it is sad to note that the concept of the work

camp is gradually losing its significance/shine in the present day SCI set up. “Deeds Not Words” is becoming only a slogan. In my experience I have found that only a person who has actually participated in an SCI work can understand and appreciate this approach. For many others it sounds strange and waste of time. A work camp not properly planned and organized could also prove to be a disaster. Many volunteers go disappointed and frustrated due to our lapse in this regard.

Our values and priorities in the present day world are being challenged. Institutions are tottering. The earth is being raped of its scarce resources. The ecological crises is closing upon us. Injustice, terror and violence have become the order of the day. Covid 19 pandemic has brought the whole world down to its knees. The so called rich, affluent and the mighty nations have been rendered powerless and helpless. It is a great pity that beginning of the pandemic coincided with our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Hundred years of active existence is a great landmark for any organization. As SCI members we all can be very proud to have been a part of this great organization or more appropriately this International Movement. All branches, groups and SCI members were making elaborate plans and programmes to observe the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a fitting manner But the Covid 19 has put a stop to all these and we have been forced change our plans accordingly.

I wish to congratulate SCI India, West Bengal Group for initiating the publication of a souvenir to mark this important event and wish you all success.

# ***100 Years Of International Peace Work***

**By Lisa Monhoff, SCI Germany**



2020 is a special year for Service Civil International (SCI) as an international movement and of course also for the German branch of SCI.

One hundred years ago, the first SCI mission took place near Verdun in France to send a civilian signal for international understanding and cooperation immediately after the First World War. A group of volunteers from Great Britain, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Hungary and Germany came together to help rebuild the village of Esnes, which was destroyed in the war - the birth of SCI and its voluntary work for peace and understanding.

Today SCI has 43 national branches and a growing number of partner organizations on five continents. Short- and long-term voluntary work takes place worldwide and promotes peace through concrete acts of solidarity and international cooperation. In seminars, trainings and workshops we prepare our volunteers and activists, reflect on our work and develop new ideas for our commitment to peace.

In Germany, around 45 international workcamps take place annually, in ecologic and climate protection projects, in memorialsites of concentration camps, in social institutions, community projects and in innovative cultural projects. Long-term voluntary services are also an important part of our volunteer programs. Volunteers can work in another country for up to one year and support a charitable project.

In 100 years SCI was confronted with diverse social, ecological and peace policy challenges. With volunteer work and in educational projects, SCI has repeatedly dealt with these challenges and contributed to possible solutions. This included the right to conscientious objection and the recognition of community service, ending colonialism and apartheid, overcoming the Cold War, debating the dangers of nuclear energy and the fight for gender justice and much more.

In this anniversary year, we want to honor the committed work of the volunteers in the past and learn from them for the future.

Today we face enormous challenges and developments that threaten peace, increase the divide between rich and poor and which even endanger the life of humanity on the planet. In more and more countries, authoritarian governments and dictatorships are restricting human rights, democracy and freedoms. We are witnessing wars and armed conflicts in many continents, even in Europe. Countries have innumerable weapons of mass destruction and are continuing to expand their military potential. Growing nationalist movements and right-wing extremist parties go hand in hand with isolation, hatred and increasing violence against those who think differently. A dramatic climate change is on the horizon, the effects are already being felt in many parts of the world.

In view of this development, do we need radical changes in Europe and in the world? What role can SCI play to strengthen - through volunteering - civil rights, reduce social inequalities, resolve conflicts and avert the climate crisis? How does SCI have to position itself to meet the new challenges? Where do we set our priorities so that we can take a step towards a more just and peaceful world? How can we inspire and mobilize more people?

Numerous events of the international SCI and the German SCI branch were planned to celebrate this special year. Unfortunately, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, many of them were cancelled or have to be postponed.



# ***The Changing Climate: Facts And Realities***

**By Dr. Baibaswata Bhattacharjee**

Associate Professor, Dept. of Physics



Climate change is considered as a change in the average conditions, such as temperature and rainfall, in a region over a long period of time. Global climate change refers to the average long-term changes over the entire Earth. Global climate change has typically occurred very slowly over thousands or millions of years.

Climate change can be attributed to different natural as well as manmade factors. The natural factors include changes in the Sun, emissions from volcanoes, variations in Earth's orbit and levels of carbon dioxide present in the atmosphere. On the other hand, humans are increasingly influencing the climate and the Earth's atmosphere by burning fossil fuels, cutting down rainforests and farming livestock. These add enormous amounts of greenhouse gases to those naturally occurring in the atmosphere, increasing the greenhouse effect and global warming.

Burning of fossil fuels clearly plays a major role in the climate problem. Industrialized countries have managed to de-link sulphur dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ ) emissions from economic growth. In other words, emissions have fallen even as national income has risen. But they have failed to do the same with carbon dioxide ( $\text{CO}_2$ ) emissions. Per capita  $\text{CO}_2$  emissions remain closely related to a country's level of economic development and thus standard of living. It is evident that as long as the world economy is carbon-based, driven by energy from coal, oil, and natural gas, growth cannot be de-linked substantially from  $\text{CO}_2$  emissions. The foremost way to prevent climate change is to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases significantly, though it is not very easy to achieve this goal. Every human contributes to the  $\text{CO}_2$  concentrations in the atmosphere. However, the person's lifestyle decides the amount that is emitted. The more prosperous a country's economy is higher is its fossil fuel consumption, resulting in higher greenhouse gas emissions.

We are all well aware of the consequences of the climate change throughout the world. Increased temperature, drought and insect outbreaks, increased wildfires are all linked to climate change. Reduced agricultural yields because of declining water supply, health impacts in cities due to heat, flood and erosion in coastal areas are additional concerns related to the climate change. It is now identified as one of the biggest developmental challenges for our planet. Its economic impacts, particularly on the poor class, make it a major worldwide issue as well.

While different nations are making their policies and taking actions to fight against the climate change in a larger scale, we can also accelerate the whole process by taking small individual steps. As we all know that the little drops of water together can make a mighty ocean, our tiny steps will certainly help to strengthen this fight against the climate change. We can check the misuse of water; we can go for plantation at small scales in our own houses. We can also stop the abundant uses of the air conditioners in households of cities and towns. There are also scopes of using the public transports instead of using personal vehicles. A little curtail in our individual luxury will certainly give a boost to our fight against the climate change. Let's act keeping our hands together and hope for a brighter future.

# ***My Training In India As An Ltv***

**By Mohamed Farook, Sri Lanka**

It was 55 years ago (in 1965), when I had just finished schooling and was doing nothing at home when a friend of mine informed me about an SCI programme in Bandarawel. Travel, food and lodging were assured. The adventure seemed very inviting. So I made all the arrangements to go and packed my bag. But alas ! At the last moment I was informed that the programme had been cancelled. So my first opportunity to get to know SCI was a disappointment.

I got the next opportunity to attend a work camp in the SCI Long term Project in Pahariya in 1966. The work to make cement blocks and it was very hard but still we enjoyed it. Since, then I never missed a cap for several years.

## **Fund raising walk**

I presume that this walk was on 5<sup>th</sup> of October, 1968 to raise funds for the Pahariya project. Many foreign and local volunteers took part in this walk from Pettah to Mount Lavinia along Galle road. It was on the day that I was told by the then Asian Secretary late. Navam Appadurai that I have been selected to attend a Leadership Training Camp in Bombay, at the end of the month.

During the last week of October 1968 I left Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) to participate in the leadership training camp. I sailed to Rameswaram and from there to Bombay by train via Madras. It was the first time I spent two nights in the train. The camp was at Yogeswary, the suburb city of Bombay. While in India I attended work camps in Bally (West Bengal), Hatibury Leprosy Colony (Orissa) and Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh). I returned home in January 1969 it was indeed a great and unique experience WHICH I WOULD NEVER FORGET.

In 1976 I got the opportunity of working as an LTV at the national Secretariat of SCI India for one year. The life at K5 was interesting and exciting. At that time was a hive of activity. Living with foreign and local volunteers who were speaking different languages sharing whatever was available and working as a team member was an invaluable training that has helped me throughout my life. After the initial two weeks at K5 I was sent to Vision Villi Farm which was run by Sato San and his wife Phyllis. I was accompanied by the British volunteer Trisha Walsh. The orientation programme was thorough and well planned. I enjoyed it and learnt a lot. We were back again at K5 after two weeks.

The work at K5 was attending to correspondence with foreign and local contacts, organizing work camps and assisting the National Secretary, Jagwat Chowdry, when required. Attending work camp was also a part of my assignment. I had the opportunity to take part in the peace walk in 1976. Rainbow News Letter No. 4, dated 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1976 was published by me and I assisted the National Treasurer Mr. Ramesh Nangia in preparing the budget for the year 1976.

In 1976 the British volunteers, Trisha and myself were sent to Vedanthagal Long Term project of SCI India. The project was situated in an interior village in the South of Chingalput District. The situation in the project was not very satisfactory. The villagers were under the impression that SCI was Christian Missionary. The local volunteers considered their work as a job and there was no volunteering spirit. So as a first step we organized several meetings with the villagers to explain about SCI and what our motive and objectives were. We also had to intervene to settle petty squabbles in the village— mostly originating due to caste differences. The Rettiyars belonged to the higher caste and the lower caste were the Villi's were at the mercy of the Rettiyars and were very often beaten and abused.

I returned to Sri Lanka by the end of June 1977 after an exciting and wonderful learning experience which I could not have acquired in any University— thank you SCI India and SCI- Sri Lanka for this great opportunity. **It is a pity that we don't hear of any Long Term Volunteer Exchanges within the**

**Asian Region where there is a wealth of knowledge and experience and opportunities for training in promoting peace, non- violence and reconciliation.**

On my return to Sri Lanka I was called to volunteer at the Mahakande Development Project which was started in the aftermath of the 1977 communal riot. I worked here till September 1979.

Since then I got the opportunity to work with several foreign NGO's like the Redd Barna, Save the Children, Foster Parents Plan International. My SCI experience and training helped me a great deal in my work and winning the confidence of my superiors.

In 1991 I was once again requested by SCI to help them with their relief and rehabilitation project in Puttalam with the IDP's who were mostly Muslims- chased away by the LTTE. So I decided to give up my lucrative job with the SCF and help SCI at a time of real need.

During the last stages of the project I was taken sick by a "mysterious ailment"— still not properly diagnosed. I am happy to state the SCI did not abandon me. Large number of friends from all over the world helped me a great deal to meet my medical expenses. They also created an international fund through which I was able to purchase a house, where my family and myself are able to live peacefully. This is something which SCI doesn't do or is unable to do however they did it for me.

This was an act of great generosity and acknowledgement of my contribution to the organization. LONG LIVE SCI.

## ***My Experience Of Long Term Volunteering In India*** **By Anna Husslein, LTV, SCI Germany**



I applied for a long term voluntary service in India through SCI Germany in 2012/2013 and got it. It was one of the most formative periods in my life. It was a time of giving but mainly receiving, a time of teaching but mainly studying, a time of supporting but mainly being guided and being more than welcome, a time of traveling but mainly a time of finding a new home.

It was definitely not the easiest period of my life, but a very intense and special one. It has influenced many decisions in my life since then. Not only did I find my fulfillment in working partly as a teacher, partly as a social worker. Most of all I did find true and persisting friendship and a home more than 10 hours flight time from my hometown. I was given the opportunity to do something that really matters to me and that gives me satisfaction. I was given the opportunity to learn a lot - about myself, about others, about political and social issues, about racism, stereotypes, gender, climate change, development cooperation, discrimination, colonialism, exploitations and many other topics in a global context.

And of course there were many moments full of joy, laughter, exploring, enjoying and definitely wonderful memories. Not for anything in the world would I miss this amazing time.

## ***100 Years Of Voluntarism And SCI***

**Jayaprasad Kumar, Former Hon' Sec. SCI India**



The idea of voluntarism was experimented by the founder of SCI Pierre Ceresole way back in 1920 by bringing enemy countries to stop destruction and war and bring about changes by doing constructive work by resurrecting destroyed homes of people through work camps which was a big success. This later on spread to other countries of the world even in peaceful times to work for humanity at large from man made calamities like war to natural calamities like famine, drought, flood, storms, earthquake and Tsunamis.

After travelling hundred years in modern world its relevance is still needed at very many areas. Work camp is the backbone of major activity which binds the hearts of people who involve for a cause in the beginning later become from individual to a family and part of a world family. This pure thought is achieved through voluntarism which helps in shredding the difference of rich-poor, color, cast -creed and above all the religion and politics. The work camp is fun, it teaches many things in life. It brings about unity in thoughts to many problems in world through discussions and debates. It teaches every participants to live together as one world family. Voluntarism inculcates each one in sharing and caring attitude. The dynamism of SCI's mission and vision will live as long as the human race lives in this world.

## ***Workcamps— Future Of SCI***

**By R. Arulraj, Vice President, SCI India.**

### **After the First World War...**

International workcamps originated after the end of World War I. The first international workcamp was organized in 1920 in Verdun, France, next to the German border. Teenage volunteers from France and Germany, who were former enemies during the war, cooperated to reconstruct the destroyed farms.

The volunteers in the workcamp impelled others to work for peace. Thus, more and more volunteers participated in the move and their works were supported by the people and the governments.

Early development of workcamps mainly focused on construction work organized in newly independent countries and peace promotion in Eastern and Western Europe. Later on, the education and the international exchange became more important. Workcamps were regarded as a tool for creating intercultural understanding and solidarity among people.



### **• By giving you will receive!**

Voluntary work can easily be thought of as a trade: by working I get to live in a foreign country. My own experience tells me, that voluntary work isn't a trading business. When you put in your own effort for a common cause, and your own personality into building the camp atmosphere, great moments are bound to follow!

- **Travelling doesn't need to be about spending**

At workcamps, there's no need to think about souvenirs, because you will not be able to forget your trip and the new friends you met. One of the core values of volunteering is sustainable development.

- **Friendships are built on shared experiences**

Two weeks can seem like a short time in your calendar, but when you spend two weeks sleeping in a tent, doing physical work, staying up at night and travelling with new people, it feels like a long time. Working together brings people closer and creates companionship and friendship.

- **Moving away from your comfort zone**

In everyday life, it is easy to get stuck thinking that you are only capable of doing the things that you are used to, have been trained for, or that you have practiced. At work camps, you are faced with completely new circumstances and tasks.

- **Physical labour**

In work camps outside work, such as raking leaves or shoveling, is refreshing for me. Carrying a big backpack, sharing common spaces, cooking and working outside, are a fun struggle, where you start to re-examine what is necessary, and what is not.

- **New skills**

Opportunities to learn new things, and have chances to enjoy trying out new recipes, and practising foreign languages on camps. Many skills required at workcamps have to do with working in a team. The fact that you've learnt these types of new skills doesn't necessarily sink in before you need them at the next camp or in some other new group situation.

- **Interaction and intercultural encounters**

It can be strange to represent your own nationality among other nationalities. What does it mean that I am Indian? How does my cultural background show up in an intercultural situation? You will find both cultural differences and shared interests with your new camp friends.

- **Memories**

Each camp has been a one-of-a-kind experience that would not have taken place in normal everyday life! Workcamp memories are like treasures that you can look back on by browsing through photographs and Facebook messages.

## **Benefits to volunteers**

Work camps can basically defined as the 12-day mission trips which comprises of individuals from various backgrounds arrive to work as a team and exchange ideas just for one single goal, that is to improve the lives of dying communities. Meanwhile, it is no gainsaying that volunteering workcamp is not only rewarding to the local communities, it also adds valuable impacts to the volunteers. That is to say, even the volunteers are positively affected in the following ways:

- ***It gives more cultural understanding:*** *You will inevitably learn and appreciate new cultures because you are mixed up with different group of people from different parts of the world. While in workcamp,*

*every participating volunteers and local members are living just like one large family. This implies that you will enjoy the support and cooperation of your workcamp family.*

- ***Self Satisfaction or fulfillment:*** *It is always a rewarding experience when you spend time with the less privilege and see how you have improved their lives.*
- ***It is a plus point for your resume:*** *Your resume is added more value just by mentioning volunteer experience in it. This is because majority of employer are actually looking for a dynamic, dedicated, and selfless candidates with interpersonal skills.*
- ***Expand your friendship circle:*** *It may interest you to know that workcamp is the collections of various individuals who come from every part of the world. As a result, you are sure of finding individuals who have common interest as you and thus can develop solid friendship which may last for a lifetime.*
- ***Career Development:*** *Your participation in work camp can also be essential for your career development. creative workshops, environmental conservation, HIV awareness programs, orphanage work, teaching and a lot more. Indeed, many have used these opportunities to decide their professional objectives which they initially found difficult to do. Better still, you are sure of gaining tremendous practical experience in Workcamp project which may never be possible in any school.*
- ***Learn new skills:*** *The experience awaiting you as volunteers in workcamp is rich beyond your wildest imagination. Apart from learning new language and culture, it is also an avenue to explore your hidden attributes in another dimension under different environments.*

### **Workcamp— Host Organization**

- ***The 1<sup>st</sup>. & foremost duty of the host organization is to arrange meaningful work for the volunteers and ensure good report with the local people.***
- **Accommodation:** The host of the workcamp provides simple accommodation for the volunteers during the whole project. In certain circumstances it is even possible to accommodate the volunteers in tents. The accommodation should include showers, restrooms and a possibility of common cooking. Normally simple bedding is offered but the volunteers are requested to bring their sleeping mat & bag, mosquito nets, plates etc
- **Food:** The host of the project should pay for meals for the volunteers. They also arrange for oven and utensils required for cooking. The cost of food is given to the volunteers. They purchase and cook their own food.

Based on our experience, we found that the common cooking can contribute to a faster strengthening of the group spirit and it is also an important part of the intercultural learning on the international projects. The volunteers can prepare typical meals of their countries for the rest of the group. Such an intercultural evening can also be a great opportunity to meet the local people.

**The local transport:** It is important to arrange proper transport and to provide information about it before hand.

**The material and equipment** to meet the requirement of the volunteers should organized beforehand

### **A knowledgeable camp coordinator is essential for a camp.**

Workcamps are a unique form of non-formal education— both for the volunteers and for the local community. Apart from the desire to help to a particular cause or the opportunity to get to know the people from all over the world, volunteers have other motivations to participate in a workcamp. One of the reasons to take part in a workcamp may be the desire to find out more about your initiative or about the general topic of your project. Many of the participants also want to meet the local people and discover more about their everyday life.

SCI India organizes workcamp with the help of its groups located in Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Karnataka and Tamilnadu. The summer workcamps are organized during July— August and winter workcamps are organized during November— December. All are requested to take part in the workcamps of SCI India and harvest the above said benefits.

## ***Social Media Training— Program In Hong Kong***

**By Partha Sarathi Biswas, Vice President, SCI I, W.B. Group**



SCI is an wonderful platform that I ever explore in my life. Since 2011 I am attached to SCI and attended many local events like International peace day, International women's day, workshop on Grass root Youth Democracy and building Inclusive Path. I also attended a workshop in Hong Kong. The workshop was on Social Media Training. It was my first time that I met such a big group of international youth, from India we were 4 volunteers. Everyone was quite enthusiastic to meet each other and was looking forward to know about the most influencing aspect of today's life "Social Media".

We were housed in Mt. Davis Hostel, a beautiful place on sea facing Hilltop, the place was really awesome and so was the local people. They were extremely friendly and helpful.

On the 1<sup>st</sup>. day I was a bit nerves. I was wondering what would happened. I thought that this would be same as the other training program which I attended in my academic and professional career in India. But I was really surprised when I met and interacted with all the participants.

The main motto of the training was to make the volunteers aware about the Social Media and use the platforms to promote **SCI** through online. One of the interesting part of the Work camp was 'HUMAN LIBRARY'. We, all the participants, went to a Local Higher Secondary School where they shared their knowledge with the students individually. We also learned some Chinese culture with the help of local students.

After attending the training program, I can say that workcamp or training program of SCI is not just an activity it's more than that. Beside the technical thing, I learned lots of social skills and this camp gave me lots of confidence, I learned how to work in a team. Most importantly, that training program gave us lots of good friends from different countries and I will nurture this experience throughout my life.



# ***Challenges Of Peace Making; With Especial Reference To Sri Lanka***

**A report by Gargi Sur**



I am happy to share my wonderful experience that I had during 12th Dec to 20th December 2010. It was really an exciting time for the participants who came from Malaysia and India to attend the workshop on Challenges of Peace making: with especial reference to Sri Lanka organized by SCI Sri Lanka in Kandy

We arrived early in the morning on 12<sup>th</sup> December. Madhu showed us our rooms, we took rest till breakfast. After having breakfast we went to the hall of Blue Rose Training Centre. Mr. Karu and Mr. Rajuddin started the introduction program officially. There we were introduced with each other who were supposed to be present through the workshop. There were senior members as well as young members. It was very interesting to hear some pieces of experiences of the senior members present there. After having a short introduction we went to have lunch together. Sameera was introduced as our coordinator.

Within a short period of introduction we became close friends with each others. We came to know about Lalita Aunty and Matilda Aunty from one of our senior member of SCI, Bharati Aunty. We had a short discussion of old days on the lunch table. Lalita Aunty was mainly in charge of food for this workshop but she had a lot of helpers like Indika, Madhu, Nirosan and others who prepared various kinds of Sri Lankan and South Indian dishes. Being among them, on the first day I never felt as a foreigner. After lunch we went to settle down in our rooms and took a short nap till the next program starts.

The next activity was a game organized by our coordinator. The game had a value; the aim of the game was to know about other participants through gestures but not using words. After the game we were asked to register our name and everyone got a SCI folder. Then we went to have dinner. After dinner a traditional dance was arranged to introduce us with the traditional cultural of Sri Lanka. It was amazing. We enjoyed it out and out and took a lot of pictures with the dance participants.

The next day was started with Yoga session. Yoga was included in the routine of our everyday programme. It used to start at 7 am but it was optional for the volunteers. After Yoga we started everyday with tea and breakfast. Breakfast of each day was a new experience, we got some new dishes every day. Then we started to prepare ourselves for the next event that was –SCI 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference. The conference started at 10 a.m. sharp in the morning and continued till 5 p.m. in the evening. In this International gathering we received our Chief guest Dr. A.T. Ariyaratna, he was the founder of Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka, a man of high guts in Sri Lankan society. There were other speakers like Honorable Vasudeva Nanayakkara (minister for languages and Social Integration), he gave us information about the language issues and Peace reconciliation process. He spoke about ethnicity and cultural diversity, settling nationhood/new nationalism- which can be achieved either through expansion or elevation of indigenous cultural and ethnic diversity. He spoke of Multiculturalism which is the appreciation, acceptance or promotion of multiple ethnic cultures applied to demographic make-up. He also gave us information's about language policies which aims at multilingualism or linguistic pluralism. The other speakers were Bhupinder Pratap Singh and other Senior Indian Delegates.

Dr. Ariyaratna gave us information about the area of Sri Lanka, about the composition of religion in Sri Lanka, about the roots of Sri Lankan Conflict, the impact of war, the impact on IDP's, caring of the IDP's,

UN Guiding Principles on Internal Discipline, Peace Building and so on... After listening to our guest and honorable members we had a long discussion among all the participants taking part in the workshop. Some raised questions, some replied them, in this way the workshop on 13th December achieved a great success...

After 5pm, i.e. after the workshop we went to see the town with some members, we walked beside the lake, saw a Buddhist temple and came back to Blue Rose for our next programme. Coming back we had our dinner. After dinner our next programme organized by Sameera was a film of Mahatma Gandhi. Though it was not compulsory to watch it but everyone went to watch the movie. We got a lot to know about the way of bringing peace though surrounded by a lot of difficulties. It was a well related and perfect movie for the peace reconciliation workshop.

On 14th. morning we started with the yoga and after that we took tea and breakfast as scheduled. The day's session was opened with reflection on the previous day's work ( 13th. ) for a short period of time, then Sameera introduced us with Professor Kamala Liyanage, we had a presentation followed by discussions on Human Rights and Women's Role in Peace Making. We got short breaks between the presentations like tea and lunch. After she finished her presentations we made some charts to show what difficulties we are facing till now and what the remedies to them are. We had some participants rather two girls from Jaffna who shared their difficulties and also a Muslim lady from Sri Lanka who shared her experience on the dowry system prevailing in their religion till date. Professor Kamala also gave us a handout on Human and Women's Rights in the Post Conflict Challenges. Our group prepared a chart which consisted of difficulties including women's situations prevailing in India, Tanya from Mumbai along with Charita presented those points from our side. Thus the workshop on Human Rights and Women's Role on Peace Making also went over successfully...

After the workshop we went to have our evening tea and saw a movie called Hotel Rawanda at night. This movie was also related to the conflict situation between two groups which gives a perfect example about the scenario which prevailed in Sri Lanka all through these years...

### **15/12/2010**

On 15th December again we had a presentation on Geopolitical Constrains and enablers in reconciliation of conflicts in modern world by Professor Hennayake. He gave a brief review of history of the conflict in Sri Lanka and geopolitical issues included Governance and the State. After his presentation we had lunch and got free time in the evening so we went for a walk in Kandy.

In the evening again a presentation was given by Mr. Jayaprasad on Challenges of Peace Making. I liked his presentation very much because the presentation was well organized through games and nice pictures and his way of presenting it was clear, systematic and lively.

After the nice presentation we all went to have dinner. And after dinner we saw a Chinese movie regarding election among small children in their classrooms and their way of getting elected.

### **16/12/2010**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> we started our journey to Mutur at 6am by bus. We enjoyed a lot in the bus. Most of them stood up and started dancing in the bus. We also heard songs by JP Uncle. Riya and I also sang some Bengali songs. On the way we visited the IDP's. We had interactions with the local people. We had lunch on our way to Mutur. We reached Kinniya in the evening. We took shower and served dinner to all the members, that night we had nice dinner. After dinner we had discussions about the visit to the villages and about the conversation with the local people and their experiences during the conflict by various groups of participants.

### **17/12/2010**

On 17<sup>th</sup> morning we had breakfast early in Kinniya. Then we started our journey to Pulmude. On the way to Pulmude we visited a papaya garden, we went to the beach, had lunch and finally started the journey. But

on the way due to some inconveniences we had to get down from the bus and we had to spend a long time beside the streets in a curd shop. We waited for the bus there. We had curd with honey, we sang songs, and we took rest. Finally we returned to Kandy at 11pm on 17<sup>th</sup> December.

## 18/12/2010

18<sup>th</sup> was the last day of our workshop. We had breakfast. The last day was allotted for discussions and evaluations of the past days activities.

On this day we got a interesting presentation on “Muslims Concerns in The Post War Peace Making Efforts” by Shahul Hameed Hasbullah.

It included Ethnic conflict, Civil War, Muslims of Sri Lanka, Islamic Culture prevailing there, their language, scattered minority, their religio-cultural identity etc... He also gave information about the Impact of War in Sri Lanka which was a massacre by the armed groups.

The Muslims were ethnically cleansed by the armed groups. There existed problems of the state policies/ land policies/education policies/ feeling of insecurity etc. They were restricted minorities, they lost their lands, lived in pockets and were disconnected. They did not have the allowance to join either the government or the LTTE. Some of them were killed, abducted, attacked and harassed against individual and community. They tried to become friendly with Tamils by Cultural activities and religious customs like Sufism. The Tamils used to identify the Muslims as KAKA which means Crow. Thus this shows the position of Muslims during the conflict period.

These were the kinds of discussions followed by the presentation. After the presentation we interacted with him. During this interaction a lot more interesting and unknown information came up. After this we had lunch and concluded our workshop with the exchange of cordial and peacefully greetings and hopes to promote peace in our own societies.

## A DREAM

There should be somewhere on earth a place which no nation could claim as its own, where all human being of goodwill who have a sincere aspiration could live freely as citizen of the world and obey one single authority, that of the supreme truth; a place of peace, concord and harmony where all the fighting instincts of man would be used exclusively to conquer the cause of his sufferings and miseries to surmount his weaknesses and ignorance, to triumph over his limitations and incapacities; a place where the needs of the spirit and the concern for progress would take precedence over the satisfaction of desires and passions, the search for pleasure and material enjoyment.... In short, it would be a place where human relationships which are normally based almost exclusively on competition and strife, would be replaced by relationships of emulation in doing well of collaboration and real brotherhood.

The MOTHER,  
Arabinda Ashram,  
Pondicherry  
India

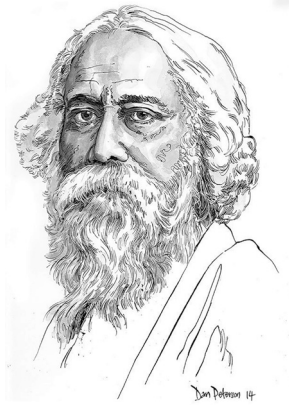
## **SCI In its formative period Since 1920**

All articles in this section are taken from SCI International Archives  
and Words about Deeds



Be the change you like to see in the world

— Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi



***Where The Mind Is Without Fear***  
**By Rabindranath Tagore**

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;  
Where knowledge is free;  
Where the world has not been broken up  
into fragments by narrow domestic walls;  
Where words come out from the depth of truth;  
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost  
its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;  
Where the mind is led forward by thee into  
ever-widening thought and action  
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.



**Behind Every Great Man, There Is a Great Lady**  
 Pierre and Lise Ceresole 1945, Le-Daley Switzerland

## ***A Lifetime Serving Peace***

**The early years of Pierre Ceresole (1879-1945),  
 the founder of Service Civil International**

Collected from Words about Deeds

*Before Pierre Ceresole submitted his proposal for SCI's first work camp at the Bilthoven Conference in 1920 (see article 101), he looked back to remarkable life journey. In fact, he already had travelled the world once. The following text (1) describes how Ceresole had grown up & become a determined & respected pacifist. His getting to know the religious society of friends, the Quakers, was significant.*

### **His youth & family relationship:**

The founder of Service Civil International, Pierre Ceresole is a little-known figure in the history of Swiss & International pacifism. Born in Lausanne 17<sup>th</sup> August 1879 he was the ninth child of Paul Ceresole (1832-1905) lawyer, federal judge & formal federal councilor, & Emma Ceresole, nee Secretan (1841-1888).

His childhood is marked by the loss of his mother when he is only nine years old, leaving a profound effect on him for the rest of his life. Later on, though a gifted young man, he has a poor self image & lacks confidence. Several years later, he refers to this tragedy in his diary, wondering whether he is actually capable of loving anyone at all. [..]

His elder sister Blanche, who is sixteen when their mother dies, instinctively takes on the maternal role as to maintain affection & stability within the family. Throughout Pierre's life, she remains as essential reference & confidante, even after her marriage to Dr. Gaston Chatenay.

### **Escaping the new world:**

In adolescence, Pierre's sensitivity intensifies even more as he is wounded & tormented by existential questions. At the age of seventeen, whilst walking alone in Gantenaz Woods, he realizes what he would like to do in life. He decides to live a life without trickery, subterfuge or compromise; abandoning the conventional ways, mapped-out by the conservative middle-class. It is up to him to define & position himself with regards to his wishes & his skills. Self-denial becomes the foundation of his struggle, and action his creed. His spiritual development leads him to distance himself from official religious institutions, without however, putting into question the existence of God. He is trying to find his own path in life, clarifying his way of thinking, whilst erecting courage & truth as the essential virtues he strives to attain.

After finishing grammar school, he embarks upon a course in mechanical engineering at the Swiss Federal Institute of technology in Zurich. In 1901, he was awarded his diploma in honours. A brilliant student, Pierre Ceresole is naturally drawn towards a PhD in Science, which he attains in 1903. This foreshadows a promising academic career, as he goes on to further study in Germany in the field of physics & mathematics. However, in March 1909, to everyone's amazement he turns down a professorship at Zurich 'Polytechnicum'; a chair in mathematics, which the renowned school hands him on silver platter. Following a suggestion from one of his brothers, he leaves & goes travelling. It is to be journey that lasts five years, first in America, & then rounded off with a stay in Japan from 1913 on. Whilst travelling the length & breadth of the United states from east to west, he turns his hand to all sorts of trades, both manual & intellectual, thus becoming something of a complete all rounder. He discovers life, & society, & becomes a more well-balanced individual attaining a certain inner peace. He is convinced that he will be able to make a modest contribution to improving the world.

### **In the torment of war:**

Pierre returns to Switzerland at the outbreak of the World war I. Reinforced in his ideal of life of hard work helping others, he donates his personal wealth to Swiss state, in the form of 48 Nestle shares, worth 400 swiss francs each, which he has been bequeathed by his father. He wants to earn his own living, avoiding reliance on any form of acquired family inheritance. A few months later he is taken on as an engineer by Brown Boveri in Baden.[..]

Faced with the human disaster that is looming, all the international pacifist association get mobilized. Those linked to the 'Peace through Rights' movement— a middle-class pacifism of 'liberal' inspiration which defends the stabilizing of existing order by reinforcing international legislation- or the working class movement- a more radical form pacifism which demands through reshaping of the entire socio-economic order, & which has Christian-Social wing. In June 1915, the country is shaken by the pioneer case of a young primary school teacher, John Baudraz from the canton Vaud who refused to continue serving the Swiss army on the grounds of conscientious objection. First his imprisonment, then his trial, provoke a lot of debate, in the religious press-L'Essor & the Semeur Vaudois &, before long, in the secular media. Pierre Ceresole takes a distinct liking to this profound & sincere man who dares stick to his convictions.

## Making speeches in Lausanne & Zurich:

Out of his feeling of solidarity with Baudraz, Pierre organizes a meeting on 29<sup>TH</sup> Jan 1916 at the Salle Centrale in Lausanne, to which he invites his friends to come & discuss religion & patriotism. Before a small audience he steps up onto the platform, pallid & over-whelmed with emotion; he only manages to blurt out one single sentence:

The worst thing in the present war is the lying that brought it about.

A difficult experience for the speaker who takes it as a personal failure; nevertheless his audience is touched by his attempt. Supported by his friend the church minister Maurice Vuilleumier- a fervent defender of conscientious objectors- he feels the need to follow up in a more direct way by taking concrete action. 16<sup>th</sup> July 1916, just after John Baudraz has been convicted for the second time, Ceresole refuses to pay his military tax. The district of Baden tribunal sentences him to a day in Jail, which he serves in March 1917. Strengthen in his convictions; once again he longs to express them publicly. So, he invites his friends to the Salle Centrale in Lausanne on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1917. It is not to go back to square one that he

mouthed the rostrum, but to get things on the move; ushering in a long series of meetings and debates, lectures and public demonstrations to defend the pacifist cause, fully supported by the Christian Socialists.

On 4<sup>th</sup> November 1917, at the French Church in Zurich, with the permission of William Cuendet, the church minister, Ceresole makes a speech at the end of the service. The text he reads accuses the Church head on, of fostering two lies he can no longer condone: that of the 'Christian soldier', and that of the 'rich christian'. In the congregation, a certain Rene Bovard, like the rest of the congregation, received the message with agitation. Pierre's charisma has its effect, and he makes quite a strong impression. The local newspapers spread the news of the scandal, which Ceresole himself describes as 'very painful'. He emerges relieved from this episode: he has dared speak out frankly, breaking with the hypocrisy prevalent among those who call themselves 'Christians'.



## Ceresole and the Quakers

Pierre Ceresole's Standpoint on matters has isolated him; he often feels and misunderstood. At the inaugural meeting of International Fellowship of Reconciliation in 1919, for the very first time, he finds himself amongst a group of like-minded people, including several Quaker, one of whom, Henry Hodgkin is co-founder of the movement. From then on, Ceresole has permanent link with the Quakers movement: he teaches in a school run by a British Quaker, founds the SCI





with the support of the Quaker Hubert Parris, meets the Geneva group of Quakers, and in 1931 his friend Helene Monastier becomes a member of the Quakers. His simple way of life, his social commitment, his religion of the spirit makes Ceresole himself an excellent candidate for membership.

On the other hand something which no doubt delays his becoming a member, is that he is rather 'ill at ease with every kind of arrangements... by which one is supported to be brought closure to God' including the Quakers' silent services. Later he is quite happy to be accepted into the religious society of Friends (the Quakers official name). Like other Swiss people, Ceresole comes to Quakerism because- among the other things- he feels that no one accepts him, or even takes any notice of him, in the Protestant Church. He immediately plays an important role in the Quakerism. Coming back from his work in Bihar, he stops over in Philadelphia and takes part in an international meeting of Quakers, where he decides over the session devoted to the state of world. Between 1939 and 1944, he supports Helene Monastier at the head of the Swiss Quaker. Despite his declining health, he takes part in the several conferences and committees upto the November 1944.

*The text has been written by Sylvie Beguelin and Michel Megard in a brochure about Pierre Ceresole which has been published in 2010 [1]. It has been compiled by Philip Rodriguez for this book.*

### **The building of a peace movement Excerpt from Words about deeds**

Many texts about service civil International (SCI) mention the first work camp in 1920/1921 on the battlefield of Verdun(France). It was really from this action for post war reconciliation that brought SCI into being (101). However, the camps that followed it in 1924 were part of a campaign. By means of public appeals, volunteers were sought to help clean up after natural disasters and to promote this through alternative service for conscientious objectors in Switzerland, Ceresole's country of origin (102). A first highlight in the 1920's was the cleansing up of flooded agricultural land in 1928 in Liechtenstein. Over 700 volunteers from all over Europe and beyond joint to this SCI service (103).

Behind these work camps stood a timid and religious man who became a radical passive fist during the war years 1914 to 1918(104). Pierre Ceresole convinced that the propaganda of militarism could be overcome through practical volunteering on an international basis (105). He showed great diplomatic skill in bringing together opponents as well as supporters of civilian service and deploying the help needed e.g in the devastated village of Safien in 1932 (106). But his pacifist commitment needs to be seen in the context of the 1930's, when militarism regained ground. As a response to this, Otto Weis who took part in the SCI service in 1928, organized passionate lectures about SCI in the emerging Nazy Germany (107).

In the 1930's SCI services expanded into new areas. The 1931 Brynmawr work camp first addressed social issues such as widespread unemployment in the coal mining region of south Wales (108). The SCI founder Pierre Ceresole took the 1934 earthquake in Bihar (India) as an opportunity to initiate an unprecedented solidarity action by bringing SCI relief services to earthquake affected areas in India for several years (109). This also led the foundation stone for SCI's presence in Asia after World War II.

Another milestone was the SCI's expansion into Humanitarian aid during the Spanish civil war (1936-1939). Several relief organizations commissioned SCI to help refugees in Spain and later in France (110). SCI not only provided help, but also change the volunteers themselves. Outstanding volunteers like Irma Schneider who represented SCI in Spain (111) or Elizabeth Eidenbenz, who made a major humanitarian commitment in France (112) internalized the values of the organization and lived by them.

But there were also great people in the background who steadily supported SCI in its early period. The socially committed Swiss Helen Monastier helped Pierre Ceresole to network internationally in the early days of SCI and took part in several work camps. In 1947 she became the first international president of SCI (113).

# ***The first work camp and the founding of SCI***

**By Philip Rodriguez**

Collected from Words about Deeds

*From 20<sup>th</sup> November 1920 to 21 April 1921, the first work camp of SCI took place in northern France in order to reconstruct war damaged village. Behind this initiative was the Swiss pacifist Pierre Ceresole, who saw this as a solution to overcome nationalism and militarism. Subsequently, he used this method of peace work to introduce civilian service as an alternative to military service. This service could provide aid after a natural disaster.*

When more than seven hundred volunteers took part in a work camp in 1928, an international organization was founded, Service Civil International.

## **The Conferences in Bilthoven 1919 and 1920**

During the First World War Pierre Ceresole (see article 104) became known because of his publicly voiced opposition to war. In the summer of 1919, the well known theologian and pacifist Leonhard Ragaz invited Pierre Ceresole to a peace conference in Bilthoven (the Netherlands), where several Christian pacifists founded the fellowship of reconciliation. At the conference, Ceresole made many likeminded people and future companions. He was especially impressed by the pacifist tradition of the Quakers, a denomination of which he would become a member 17 years later.

Due to his extensive language skills, he was elected as conference secretary. Appointed to advocate international reconciliation, he suggested a fraternal work camp, which should be organized in a similar manner to the deconstruction work of the Quakers in Poland and in France. At the second conference of the fellowship of reconciliation again in Bilthoven, in July 1920, his suggestion found great support. A German participant declared his willingness to help repair war damage, as his brother who had been a soldier, had contributed to the devastation in northern France. Inspired by this after the conference, Ceresole decided to travel to Germany to find participants for his project.

## **The project in Esnes in France 1920**

The English Quaker Hubert Parris, who had experience in organizing relief work, supported Ceresole in preparing the project. In the autumn of 1920, they travel to an area in north eastern France where the war had



taken an extremely high toll. The authorities gave them permission to carry out a reconstruction project in the village of Esnes with German participation.

Esnes had been destroyed during the battle of Verdun in 1916. The reconstruction team intended to build emergency accommodation for the farmers. In the middle of the icy November of 1920, Ceresole and Parris started building a shelter for the volunteers who would be arriving in December.

During the winter months the volunteers built several huts for the village. Already in January the working conditions deteriorated, and the work of the volunteers became more demanding. The French government reduced the funds more the building materials and in March prefect of the department de la Meuse forbade the Mayor Esnes from allocating work to the volunteers. The difficult political circumstances of that time when the negotiation concerning the German war reparations has just failed, explain the prefect's decisions.

Still, this did not prevent the volunteers from continuing to help the farmers, who appreciated their work. In addition, a neighboring village put forward a new agricultural reconstruction project. Subsequently the rapport with the local population worsened. The continuation of the relief work was now subject to the condition imposed by the authorities, that the German volunteers must leave the area. Driven by the desire to the achieve reconciliation, Ceresole did not want to comply. The team finished its work in April 1921 and left Esnes.

### **Petition for national civilian service in Switzerland 1924**

After the first work camp in France, Ceresole was appointed to teach a newly opened private school in Gland, near Geneva. Using alternative teaching methods, he taught French, German, Esperanto, mathematics and science. Meanwhile his commitment to the implementation of a civilian service continued going on: men who refuse to do military service for reasons of conscience should, in his opinion, be allowed to do an alternative kind of service. Together with Leonhard Ragaz and other pacifists, Ceresole launched a petition and submitted 40,000 signatures to the Swiss parliament in Bern in 1923.



### **Schaan (Liechtenstein) 1928**

#### **International solidarity action becomes largest work-camp ever.**

At the end of 1927, the river Rhine flooded large areas of Liechtenstein, leaving vast amounts of mud and debris. The damage for the local population had been huge, as nearly all the cultivated land was lost. Pierre Ceresole appealed for volunteers, not only from Switzerland, but also from abroad. In 1928, more than 700 volunteers from over 20 countries responded to his call in order to help the population by removing the debris.

The organization of the service was led by Ernest Ceresole's brother Pierre. The service received support from the governments of Switzerland & Liechtenstein. Volunteers were equipped with old soldier's uniforms & boots, & travel costs were covered.

The experience in Liechtenstein & the enthusiasm of the volunteers became a model for future work camps, which from 1930 onwards were carried out in France, Great Britain & other countries.

Haakon Nederland, a young Danish volunteer in Liechtenstein wrote letters to his mother. In the third letter he described the daily life. (18 May 1928)

*'[...] Mother, you think that I should make more effort with my handwriting; please do not forget that I am doing hard*



work here. Holding a spade in my hands all day has made my fingers stiff. What is more, I do not have a great deal of time to write. We have to be in bed by ten because that is when the lights are turned off. When you are sleeping in dormitory you have to show consideration for others. The next day we all have to get up at 6 a.m. & work hard all day...

We can have a shower every day & a hot bath once a week in Vaduz, which is not far from here- but we have to pay for bath.

We have to line up for roll call at 6:30 in the morning before we set off

for work. Then we walk to the site, where we arrive at about 7 a.m. Our lunch break is from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. We have to line up again for roll call before we go back to work. We stop working at 6 p.m. We sleep in club house & on the balcony. Some of the volunteers also live in the village kindergarten. We can sit down where we want for our meals. We Danes do not all sit together.

We also work in mixed groups along with other foreigners which is a good thing for that is when we learn the most. There are four Danes in my group, but there are also three Swiss, one German, one Frenchman, one Englishman & one volunteer from Liechtenstein. So, we are a motley crowd, but I do not find that we are all different. The canteen & kitchen are in the basement in the Club House. There are no tablecloths or waxed tablecloths on the tables, & we eat from aluminum plates.

We get a small piece of meat & some potatoes about once a week. I have been told that they have also had bacon before. There has never been any fish.

In the evening, when we are free, we write letters or sleep or chat with each other or walk through the streets of the village. The stage for amateur productions has been turned into our common room. We can spend our evenings there or in the canteen. We can read or come up with our own entertainment. There are some really funny fellows here who can pull faces & put a show. We have enjoyed ourselves immensely. The Germans & Swiss can sing very well- & they can even sing harmony whenever they want to. But the Danes are slightly more reserved.

Although we did sing 'der er et yndigt land' [Danish national song] once in the shed on site during our tea break.

The village does not have a cinema, but it does have three inns. The only thing is that hardly any of us can afford to go there.

We get macaronis in all shapes & sizes. The thickest macaronis taste the worst. A 25 year old Swiss girl runs the kitchen. We call the female volunteers 'sisters'. There are also a few volunteers who are your age, Mother. There is a laundry in the village. If we want to do our own washing, we can get hot water in the kitchen. Yes, we do have a radio but only a few people are allowed to operate it. That is why we do not listen to the radio often. [...]

Figures	Liechtenstein
Country:	
Period:	02.04. – 05.10.1928
Number of Volunteers:	710
Female volunteers:	78
Average participants:	104
Average stay per volunteers:	25 days
Number of volunteer nationalities:	20
Type of work:	Reclamation after flood

# **PACIFISM AND COLONIALISM**

## **Earthquake relief in Bihar (India), 1934-37**

**by Eleonor Marcussen**

Collected from Words about Deeds

*Pierre Ceresole first read about the devastating earthquake in India and Nepal in January 1934 in a small leaflet written by Rajendra Prasad, later to become the first president of independent India in 1947. With the help of a network of British Quakers and friends of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, among them Charles Freer Andrews, Ceresole launched SCI's first work camp outside Europe during three successive journeys to India. In the worst affected earthquake area SCI cooperated with the Indian National Congress and the local colonial government in resettling villages threatened by floods after the earthquake. Ceresole noted several problems with introducing SCI's ideas, but overall regarded the project a success.*

SCI's potential to make a meaningful contribution and receive support by local partners [2]. Following the earthquake, the precarious flood landscape of northern Bihar threatened a number of villages. The region was, and still is, known for rural poverty and devastating floods, which the earthquake further aggravated in 1934. Ceresole was quick to identify relief in the form of resettlements of villagers as a task for SCI. In June 1934 Ceresole returned, and in all three volunteers from Europe would take part: the 25-year-old Englishman Joe Wilkinson, Frazer Hoyland, a senior schoolteacher from Dorset (Great Britain), and Paul Schenker from Switzerland

### **Pacifism and colonialism**

Initially Ceresole aimed to organise international labour teams with volunteers from other parts of India, foreign SCI volunteers and local labourers. However, even if funds collected in Europe covered the expensive journey to India, the cost of keeping a minimum living standard for the SCI volunteers among Indian labourers in abject poverty was seen as directly discouraging a large European participation. As result of both the expensive journey and the local poverty, only four European SCI members travelled to Bihar. The original idea of having Europeans and Indians working side-by-side was thereby thwarted.

### **Why India?**

Ceresole had met M.K. Gandhi through their common friend Romain Rolland during Gandhi's visit to Switzerland after the Round Table conference in London in 1931. When the earthquake struck northern India and Nepal in 1934, Edmond Privat suggested it would be an opportunity for SCI to help the 'Indianfriends'. Ceresole was immediately taken in by the idea, partly because it would be an opportunity to show in person to Gandhi the peace method that he had argued for when they met in 1931. Through a network of friends and pacifists in England, many with connections to the Indian Conciliation Group in London, Ceresole got the support of Andrews who was closely cooperating with the relief committee of the Indian nationalists. In this way, Ceresole first sought the approval from the leaders of the Indian relief committee before beginning to plan SCI's first non-European venture. A major question was the passage to India for European volunteers, which many supporters of the project questioned since labour was abundantly available in India. Ceresole adamantly explained the purpose to be beyond manual labour: interpersonal meetings and cooperation between 'East and West' formed the kernel of the project, as international labour camps was 'beyond and above material help'[1]. In all, Ceresole would visit India three times between 1934 and 1937. During the first journey from April to June 1934, Ceresole travelled via Mumbai to Bihar in order to investigate

In fact, the low level of European participation would work contrary to the fundamental principal of the project. Instead of joint teamwork as Ceresole had envisioned, Europeans would come to work as leaders of labour teams made up of local day-workers. Although the Europeans did take part in manual labour, it was as the volunteer Wilkinson described, often seen as a spectacle when the Indian workers, children and women would gather to see an ‘Englishman’ work in the field, to add to the show, without a shirt. Ceresole and volunteers complained that the Indian volunteers, mainly sent by the Indian National Congress, did not initially satisfy the requirements of participating and working as labourers, but overall Ceresole was content with their contributions. For the polyglot Ceresole, who with ease could communicate with most participants in European work camps, having to use an interpreter with the Hindi-speaking labourers complicated his work significantly.

In the end, interpersonal cooperation between Indians and Europeans gave way to institutional cooperation between the Bihar Central Relief Committee, mainly managed by members of the Indian National Congress, and the local colonial government of Bihar. SCI acted as mediator and facilitator for these two unlikely partners to contribute with funds (50,000 INR each), land and human resources in the reconstruction of villages. At Sonathi Relief Centre, Ceresole, the Indian manager Phanindra Mohan Dutta with family, as well as staff and Indian and European volunteers lived while undertaking the resettlement scheme.



*Di Biden  
Manager*

## Rural relief

In all, about 1,500 families were transferred to new sites. Ceresole could make use of his knowledge as an engineer by measuring land levels and comparing past floods levels in order to find suitable land for the new villages. An important contribution for the inhabitants of the new settlements was the right to land ownership granted to landless peasants and wage labourers. The land acquisition was made with the funds provided by the local government and the BCRC from landowners, the *zamindars* (landlord). In the context of Bihar in the 1930s, landownership was a controversial topic as peasant movements were constantly in conflict with the landowning classes.

Finding the right type of land for the new settlements was complicated due to landowners' reluctance to sell land, the flood situation and the difficulty in finding agricultural land according to the preference of the people being relocated. The flood problem was however far from solved in the new villages. Shantipur, ‘Village of Peace’, although a so-called ‘model village’, faced several problems. A year after its settlement, it was flooded and had to be rebuilt, while the plans of starting a village school for girls were still in the making in 1937. Another village called Minapur had, like Shantipur, mud-walled houses instead of thatched houses of grass. Material from a failed housing project in Muzaffarpur town, the Damuchak Colony, built in part with corrugated iron sheets donated from England, was reused in the new village settlements. For both SCI and the cooperating partners, the village resettlements were not just disaster relief within a pacifist

project. The rebuilt villages were meant to offer improved living conditions for the inhabitants. The idea for making improvements followed two conceptual strands: the colonial civilizing mission and M.K. Gandhi's rural reconstruction programme. The government servant F.L. Brayne's ideas of 'rural uplift' by sanitation, farming practices, seed development and education in Punjab was widely known in colonial administrative circles in Bihar. His 'village improvements' were also introduced to Ceresole who by chance met him on board a ship while leaving India in 1936 [8]. More important and certainly more influential among the Indian National Congress workers, 'The two managers', Ceresole and Phanindra Mohan Dutta. (1935) who were central to the village resettlements in Bihar, was M.K. Gandhi's programme of rural reconstruction. Similar to Brayne, Gandhi aimed to improve rural living conditions, but by different methods. Gandhi's rural reconstruction centred on self-sufficiency in terms of local resources and personal restraints, while Brayne's method focused on installing industry and thrift among the villagers who were seen as lacking in attitude rather than access to resources. These ideological strands in the village resettlement plans overlapped with a general discourse of improved hygiene and health as integral to social development. In the new villages in Bihar 'development' included the introduction of schools, tube wells, a meeting hall and a free medical dispensary. Specifically improved hygiene and methods to counter water logging were strategies for preventing the spread of malaria that was endemic in frequently flooded villages. Integral to the new settlements were the village welfare cooperative society of which every adult had to become a member.

## **Back in Europe**

After returning to Britain, the work camp participants Hoyland and Wilkinson narrated their experiences from Bihar as a source of inspiration for furthering the IVSP work in England and Wales where the organisation had been active since 1931. At Pembroke College in Cambridge, C.F. Andrews gave the example of the work camps in Bihar for introducing the idea of unofficial diplomacy in foreign lands. Accordingly, a 'Minister of Reconciliation' with a small team could be enough to create a spirit of international good will. The failure to send a large number of European volunteers to India was transformed into an example of how small means could make an impact - as long as the spirit was right. The presence of only four European volunteers significantly affected the nature of collaboration. Reconciliation shifted away from an interpersonal level when Ceresole took on the role as mediator between political entities. Yet the reconciliation process remained central to Ceresole who regarded successful cooperation between the Indian National Congress and the local colonial government as the pinnacle of the project.

After 1937, SCI did not return to South Asia until after Independence. In the winter of 1949-1950, a small team of Swiss volunteers began work in Faridabad, a new town settlement outside Delhi for about 20,000 refugees from Pakistan. The volunteers participated in construction work on houses and roads of the settlement. In the following years, SCI volunteers from Japan, Europe and North America worked with building infrastructure and settlements in Himachal Pradesh and reconstruction after an earthquake in Assam in eastern India. If the work camps in Bihar focused on reconciliation and disaster reconstruction, the SCI's projects of the 1950s aimed to make a sustained impact by improving living conditions for local communities and at the same time increase awareness about 'western' and 'eastern' culture among non-Indian volunteers. In the early 1950s, a small number of Indian and Pakistani volunteers joined European workcamps. In the first half of the 1950s, SCI organised long-term volunteers mainly through representatives of the Swiss and British branches, until SCI's Indian branch was founded in 1956.

*References: SCI International Archive*

# INDIAN



SERVICE  
CIVIL INTERNATIONAL  
MEHRAULI,  
DELHI STATE.

# NEWS BULLETIN

Issued by A. S. Seshan, 26, Pataudi House, New Delhi

March 1954

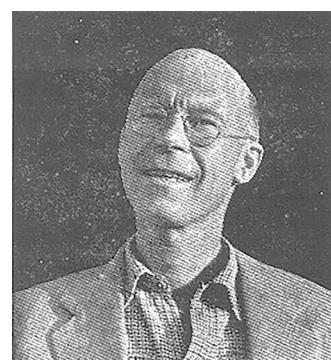
## **PIERRE'S FAREWELL MESSAGE**

To all SCI friends in India,

Four years ago, it was my privilege to be selected as one of the team members coming to India. In June 1951, when our friend and leader Ralph Hegnauer went to Pakistan, I took over the responsibility of the team.

At the completion of my team, the time has now come to hand over this task to new forces, and this should be a farewell message.

It is no easy joy to express my feelings on leaving my present work. What an abundance of memories gathered in course of the last past years from our first Faridabad camp to the present one in Warora. I was able to leave plenty of sweat, little blood and no tears in nearly every one of our camp in Himachal Pradesh, Assam. Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Mysore, Sevagram, and Warora more than buildings or roads. I cherish the tie of friendship made with such a wide range of human beings; volunteers, hosts of friends in Hindu, Moslem, Parsi, and Christian homes, fellow passengers in 3rd class trains, where I have spent many a night !



The love I felt for India and its people even before coming here has gained in strength and depth as time went on. Although I am relinquishing my work with SCI, I am now planning to spend at least one or two years in India to learn more about the traditions and philosophy of this land of ancient culture and to share with its people the efforts to find a new form of social life in harmony with the Spiritual heritage of the nation. Happily I am staying on in India and want to continue my association with SCI which goes back to 1926, the days of Pierre Ceresole.

The development of our movement in India has been slow. Although an Indian branch of SCI has just been formed, we are still far from a well-established organisation. Much spade work has to be accomplished before we reach full maturity. Our first SCI Rally at Sevagram has proved, however, that we now have in

India a nucleus of friends ready to carry on, in their own way, the message SCI has to give to the world. I trust that the All-India, and the Executive Committees, in co-operation with the team and the new SCI Representatives, will work out the general policy and internal organization which will make SCI a real indigenous movement with an influence radiating all over Asia.

Welcome to Ethelwyn Best, my successor, who is not unknown in India since she was also a member of the first team. All good wishes in the accomplishment of her new tasks as SCI Representative in India/Pakistan.

Anything we have achieved so far depends on many people and I wish to extend my wholehearted thanks to SCI and Indian friends for this rich and blessed experience. With my sincere wishes for future development.

Haimavati, Almora, U.P

March 3, 1954

Yours in fellowship  
Pierre Oppliger

Collected from SCI International Archive



# ***Recollections From Dorothy (Abott) Guiborat***

**Collected from Words about Deeds**

I first heard of SCI when I was working with Friends' Relief Service (Quakers) in early 1946, in South-East Poland, far from the peaceful Essex village where I had been brought up in England between the two World Wars. As I think back, I remember how we were wonderfully free, but also how hard were the physical conditions of life: no gas or electricity for instance. My parents came from London and my father continued to work in that city, but both wanted a country life. We had a big garden like everybody else, flowers and vegetables, an orchard, a dog, a ferocious pony and numerous cats. Later on, we had a tennis court which we made ourselves. There was no school, so my three sisters and I and a few other children walked to the next village, having a lot of fun on the way and were often late, especially when the pond was frozen or there was snow. There were no cars. School ended early and we loved wandering over the countryside or slipping under the barbed wire into the woods, returning home with arms full of bluebells in the spring or bagsful of chestnuts in the autumn. There was no home-work.

Things were more serious at Brentwood County High School, but I had learnt to enjoy life and loved school, especially languages, history and sport, hockey and netball in winter, tennis and cricket in summer - for everybody- and matches against other schools on Saturday mornings. I then studied French and Latin at London University, with a final year in Oxford, marvelous Oxford, after evacuation from London during the Blitzkrieg. I was expected to become a teacher, but finally decided on a branch of social work— housing - which made a further two years' training necessary, in London's East End and Rotherham in the Midlands, where living conditions left by the industrial revolution were disastrous. The training included elementary building construction, accounts and preparation for social work. I liked the combination of technical and human. My first job was in Birmingham and it was there that I came to know the Quakers and joined their evening classes preparing for work in ex-Nazi Germany with deportees from Eastern Europe, who were living in deplorable conditions. Return to their home countries was uncertain as the Soviet Union began taking over.

## **In East Europe**

The war was ending. I resigned from my job, had a further 3 months' physical and cultural preparation in London (Mount Waltham) and our team finally left in 1945 for Holland. This because the Quakers could not accept the Army's non-fraternisation rule for relief workers going to Germany. There, at an orphanage near The Hague, we looked after young children whose parents had either been executed as collaborators or were in prison. Nevertheless, after three weeks, we were, transferred to Germany and set to work in camps near Wolfenbüttel. Conditions were bad and our first task was to obtain blankets, DDT, school material and so on from the local ex-Nazi authorities, then to work with the camp authorities to get things in place. It would be many months before people from the Baltic states, Poland and the Ukraine could return home, or go elsewhere (ten years later, I was on an old American troop-ship accompanying the last Ukrainian refugees to the United States).

While in Germany, I visited Bergen Belsen and other recently evacuated concentration camps, afterwards meeting a few survivors being cared for in Goslar, where we had been transferred from Wolfenbüttel. The utter horror of these camps, and especially Auschwitz which I saw later in Poland and where three million Jews had been exterminated, left me in despair. At that time, we thought that this could never happen again, anywhere in the world.

Less than a year later in 1946, I was in Poland. I had been learning Polish for some months and could work without an interpreter in the villages. I was one of twelve members of a British Quaker team and our main work, at first in Kozienice, was to distribute food and clothing regularly in about fifteen, often totally

destroyed villages, as the German-Russian front had swayed back and forth on both sides of the Vistula. The Polish authorities had distributed building material, but there were many widowed families that needed help. There was also the school to rebuild. David Richie, a well-known initiator of weekend workcamp in the slums of Philadelphia had joined our team and organized in 1947, in Lucimia on the Vistula the first international voluntary workcamp in Poland. SCI and IAL (the Swedish workcamp organization) sent several volunteers. I left the Kozienice team to join in the workcamp. Then Stefa, a Polish student, and I took on the job of recruiting for future camps and visited universities all over the country, while Alun and Mistek found suitable work projects. We had camps the following spring and summer and during the weekends.

In autumn 1946, all foreign relief teams were forced to leave and a year later I was sadly expelled too. It was difficult, but possible, to keep in touch with Warsaw friends throughout all these dark years and to this day. The communist regimes in East Europe organized ideological workcamps for hundreds of young people mostly nationals or from other East Europe countries, though it admitted some West Europeans, including SCI members.

## Paris

During the autumn of 1949, a Polish plane landed me, the solitary passenger, in Brussels. From there, I took the train to Paris and was offered a job as liaison secretary for the nine organizations, including SCI and AFSC (Quakers), whose aim was specifically 'for peace'. By now, the workcamp method was being used extensively with various aims. It was very interesting work as it included staying for short periods in different camps - from Finland (KVT) right down to Greece, then getting to know the people in the secretariats and editing a monthly Newsletter for all. My office, or rather my desk, was at the Paris Headquarters of



AFSC. I was not far from SCI's International Secretariat, where I met Willy and Dora Begert, SCI's first International Secretaries. From them, I heard about the work in India and, as my year with the liaison bureau was coming to an end, they encouraged me to apply to IVSP, the British branch of SCI in charge of work in India during the first years following Independence.

## India

In November 1950, after a long sea journey on the moribund SCI India line with Bent, an SCI Danish carpenter, and time to read the Bhagavad Gita and learn more Hindustani, we were welcomed to Bombay (Mumbai) for a few days by Fali Chotia, then set off by 4<sup>th</sup> class train to the new township of Faridabad, near Delhi, which was being built for Indian refugees from the newly created Pakistan. It Dorothy Abbott was hot and the dust, oh the dust. Ralph Hegnauer was in charge, and a severe leader, as hard on himself as he was for all the team. Constantly in mind was SCI's vocation to demonstrate how an international constructive service could replace national military service. Not only the Indian workers on this immense site, but also

important visitors from New Delhi, were impressed by these unusual Europeans. Following this short briefing and a day's visit to the Taj Mahal, Bent and I took the train -days and nights, first to Calcutta, then on to Gauhati in Assam, terminating by boat, up the immense Brahmaputra river to Tezpur, by bus to North Lakhimpur and Land Rover through the jungle to Pathalipam. Here the first of a series of workcamps took place rebuilding schools with local bamboo after the terrible earthquake and floods that had devastated the low-lying region of North-East India between China in the North and Burma in the South.

Everything had been well prepared, thanks mainly to Mr. Bhandari who had been an active member of the Gandhian movement for Independence in South India. He had been sent to Assam by Gandhiji and started a dispensary and a school in the remote village of Barama. He was loved and respected by all. Our camps were added to his other tasks by the local authorities. His wife and I became great friends and exchanged letters for more than 50 years. The children and even the grandchildren keep in touch. I also remember the help to SCI from Amalprava Das, an outstanding social worker who had founded the Assamese branch of the Kasturba (Gandhi's wife) Trust for women's work in the villages. She sent a member of her team to work with me, both of us mostly in the kitchen. Sometimes I went on visits, squatting on the ground and chewing betel nut by way of communication. I also broke stones with the local women on the road-side when an occasional Englishman would whiz pass in his car, smothering us with dust, for there were still a few tea-garden managers and missionaries in Assam. They lost no time in sending a delegation to our camp to inform me that my behavior was 'below the dignity of a European'. The all-European team, led by Pierre Oppliger (he called me 'the sister') was soon joined by small groups of high school boys from North Lakhimpur, Laksmi, Profulla and others, given time off to work a couple of weeks with us. Then Max from the US, Seiji from Japan, PK from North Lakhimpur and others joined us. When the school was built we moved onto another village and then there were two teams, working in different places. During the hottest months and heavy monsoon we worked in the beautiful green valley of Khajjiar, surrounded by snow-capped Himalayan mountains. There, north of Chamba and not far from Kashmir the men laid a pipeline to bring water from a mountain spring to the village, more than a kilometre away. A small group of volunteers from a well-known boys' high school in Delhi joined us, with two from Assam, and work began with about 15 volunteers, including Idy Hegnauer and myself for the cooking. We both had counted on doing some other work besides all the domestic chores and were rather disappointed. We made endless chapattis at one point, late with breakfast and reprimanded (??) by Ralph. Idy threatened to return to Switzerland, which I think she did. She was a most warm-hearted but determined person and I missed her. The root cause of the friction was again the role assigned to women volunteers. I wonder if Devinder, who was in the group from Delhi, remembers these incidents? All in all, the camp was successful and the water from the spring reached its destination. Between these two camps, I was back in much loved Assam, further east, near Dilbrugarh, still school building. Then back to Delhi. After two years in India, I had been offered a job with the recently created women's section of Bharat Sewa Samaj, but did not take it up for several reasons; including treatment I needed at the London hospital for Tropical Diseases. I would have loved to stay in India.

## **International Secretariat**

I travelled by sea from Mumbai to Naples, where I left the ship to visit Pompei, Rome, Florence ... and so to Paris. There I was offered the job of International Secretary, in partnership with Ralph, who had taken over from Willy and Dora Begert. Willy had created the Coordination Committee for International Voluntary Service under UNESCO's umbrella and was now working there full-time. Ralph would be mainly at the Zurich headquarters, while I would stay in Clichy, near Paris, where the French branch let three rooms to the IS. It turned out to be an extremely interesting and challenging job and I stayed for seven years from 1953 to 1960, not paying much attention to the poor living conditions. Friendships were rich and varied.



Devinder Das Choprawas there for a short time, together with Mohammed Sahnoun. Yvonne Elzière came in on Saturday to do the accounts; Asian volunteers arriving in Europe would stay for a week or two, likewise some of the European or American volunteers going to India. The work as International Secretary kept me in touch with the European branches (about ten in 1953); Asian groups, the US group Algeria, and the CCIVS and workcamp organizations in general. Also UNESCO's Youth Department which gave a yearly travel grant for Asian or African volunteers was interested in my efforts to include women volunteers and two grants in 1957 enabled four volunteers to come to Europe: Valli (see article 210) and Rohini from India, Alice Appeah and Rose Kwei from Ghana. Valli became well-known all over SCI, first in Europe and then particularly for her work in India and as Asian Secretary. Alice was deeply attached to promoting women's status in West Africa.

I was interested in starting leaders' training camps. At that time they were regarded with some suspicion by some of the older Swiss and French members of SCI, but the German branch and others were in favour and helped to find suitable places for manual work, plentiful in those post-war years, with study and discussions in the afternoons. Dorothea Woods, a former AFSC work-camper from the UNESCO's Youth Department came to some of the camps and helped lead discussions. Another series I called 'Orient-Occident' where we concentrated on bringing together Asian, African, Middle Eastern (Arab and Israeli) volunteers. We worked together on the same pick and shovel job in the mornings and in the afternoons, with the help of outside speakers, discussed burning issues which separated our countries. Once on a bus in Germany I was explaining to a local passenger who we were when she said astonished: 'Are Jews there too?' We rarely in SCI spoke of the Holocaust. Was it too close, too terrible or did we then think that it would never happen again?

Has SCI ever thought in general of forming follow-up groups with the local people in places where we worked? We were, doubtless, too busy, too inexperienced. I know I neglected follow up, even among the volunteers. Now Jean-Pierre Petit's preparation and follow up work with North Africa and Nicole Paraire's with West Africa are admirable examples of what can be done. I did however, when I visited traditional

camps, ask them to reserve one evening for discussing a peace related theme and this was usually well-accepted in spite of some branch secretaries' doubts. There was always the lurking danger of being just workcamp organizers. At one particular camp in Switzerland, just down the road from Lise Ceresole's home -she had found us a place to stay - we concentrated on practical problems facing women volunteers in Asian and African countries when we were told to do 'social work'. Paulette Rabier, a nurse and teacher who had been working in Tunisia and Algeria was there for First Aid and Hygiene, a doctor from the WHO visited us, a dressmaker came for several afternoons to teach us how to cutout and sew basic garments(shorts and shirts) and Alice Appeah showed us Ghanaian cooking and so on.

### **From the United States to Pakistan and Algeria**

There was not always enough money to pay to International Secretaries and during my six months' compulsory leave period I got a job on an old troop ship taking the last Ukrainian war deportees to the 'promised land 'of America. Oh, the joy and emotion as we approached New York, the Ukrainian national anthem rang out as we fell on our knees and contemplated the glorious sunrise beyond Manhattan's skyscrapers! I had been invited by the Quaker Social Order Committee to take part in their weekend camps in Philadelphia slums, then went down to the on-going work in Mexico and El Salvador. The main aim of this work was to introduce privileged young Americans to social problems, both in the USA and in Latin America. I returned to the States in time for the first US-SCI camp there. It was held in Indianapolis, where Bob Stowell had organized work for the group in a cooperative of Afro-Americans building their own houses. Bob emigrated soon afterwards to New Zealand, far from the incredible difficulties of the McCarthy period. Other outstanding volunteers carried on after him and developed SCI in the US. As far as I am concerned, Ralph was not particularly interested in work study groups and each of us concentrated on what we had most at heart. But we met regularly to discuss the overall picture after exchanging copies of all



our correspondence. We prepared International Committee meetings together and probably quite a lot of other things. For instance when Ralph joined in Lebanese activities I went to Israel, where we had volunteers ,to join a camp run by AFSC. We had different temperaments however and though we had worked well together for years, suddenly the weight of his personality got me down and we went our different ways. I stayed in Clichy and Noël Plattew joined me at the Secretariat. Ralph became International President I think. His life-long allegiance and contribution to SCI was very important and he influenced many volunteers, men rather than women, I think. It must have been in 1957 that I was invited by the CCIWS to a big UNESCO sponsored workcamp Conference in New Delhi. From there, I went on to a work and study camp near Calcutta, led by a professor from the university who had been taking his students regularly to work in the villages. From there I went on to Barama Ashram in Assam, to see the Bhandari family.

SCI had started work nearby in Pakistan two or three years earlier and I appreciated this opportunity to see the work that had been done and the follow up. It was strange to be a lone woman in Karachi - object of curiosity among the men in the crowded streets or among the women in the buses, where they were huddled together in a small enclosed space in the front, just behind the driver; or elsewhere in accompanying the 'begums' in their beautiful silk saris, to see the social work they sponsored. Continuing by train up the Indus valley, I next visited the village of Barbaloi where Marius and Marianne Boelsma had left an indelible mark. It was a bit frightening not to be met at all in these strange places, for the atmosphere was very different from anywhere else I had been. Did they not want me to come, though I had written and been accepted? Where should I sleep and eat? I was an enigma to fellow passengers, but it was thanks to them that at last I got to people's homes and was welcome! I had read books about Islam and extracts from the Koran, but the reality of practical life was still very unfamiliar to me. At one place, I was introduced by my host's wife into the 'purdah' world at a sort of club for women. It was fascinating and friendly. My Pakistani friends in Lahore, whom I knew from UNESCO, did not meet me either, but I found their house in the end. They guided me round this beautiful town where life, at least among the educated people, was more open to strangers. I think it was in Lahore that I discussed with Minjah, our first Pakistani SCI secretary, questions relating to the exchange of volunteers. All that was a very long time ago.

Algeria, though essentially a Muslim country, had at this time a large French minority. I had been in Algeria for about six weeks in 1954, in Algiers where most of our members lived and at the workcamp near Orléansville, after a terrible earthquake which had destroyed many villages. While the men helped to re-build, I accompanied an Algerian nurse in the team along narrow mountain tracks to different villages where we were greeted by numerous barking dogs. They alerted the people and only then we got to work.

During the war for independence SCI was regarded with suspicion by the French Authorities in Algeria. When individual members were arrested, limited financial help was collected by the International Secretariat coming mainly from Britain and Switzerland. I transferred this aid to Simone Chaumet on the spot, who took the risk of getting it to friends in prison or to their families in need. It's profoundly sad but necessary to add that Simone was shot in the lawless period towards the end of the war, along with Emil Tanner, former SCI secretary.

**L'AMITE WH NEHERU**

# ***Nehru Opens International Hostel In Sewagram***

Collected from SCI International Archive

## **A Press report description:**



On January 5, Mr. Nehru declared open the international hostel built by Service civil international in Sewagram.

The movement of Service civil International owes its origin to a group of people who, after the First World War, met in a camp in the worst affected parts of France and began the work of repairing ruined homes under the leadership of a Swiss civil engineer by name Pierre Ceresole. This camp in France turned out to be the nucleus of this movement and soon groups were organised in other countries.

The movement aims to create new spirit which will make it 'morally impossible for

one country to make war with another'. And establish an international service which will 'eventually replace military service'. It also aims to give practical assistance through voluntary helpers from all countries in times of natural catastrophe and provide a sound system of training in mutual help and international understanding and involuntary discipline and comradeship.

It is interesting to recall that Pierre Ceresole had visited India in 1984 and organised the first Service Civil International camp in India during the Bihar earthquake later. On invitation by the government of India, a team was sent by the organisation to help in the construction of the Faridabad Township for refugees. This was followed by other camps in other States.

The camp in Sewagram was opened in September 5 last year. It was planned to build three houses in the living quarter and study centre, under the auspices of the Hindusthani Tamil Sangh. Foreign volunteers on this project have come from all over the US, Austria, Denmark, the U.K., France, Germany, Norway, and Switzerland not to speak of Indian volunteer has gone to join the camp in Pakistan and a Pakistani volunteers will shortly join the Indian team.

In his speech Mr. Nehru deprecated "the loud ways and aggressive manner and behaviour of individuals" which he said had become "the fashion all over the world". Even the word "peace", he said, was mentioned in terms which almost spelt "war". The work seemed to have different meanings in different context. "one does not quite know where one is and what one is aiming at" he added.

Mr. Nehru also said it was an odd contrast between this "simple and quiet way" in Sewagram and the loudness and shouting and aggressive manner "found elsewhere. Coming to Sewagram, one finds oneself in a complete different world, in sense. It is possible that some people will feel uncomfortable in this atmosphere though I doubt that anyone who come here, will not carry away some novel experience".

On arrival at the International Hostel, Mr. Nehru was received by Mrs. Ashadevi Aryanayakam and Mr. Pierre Oppliger. The volunteers of the Service Civil International were then introduced.

Mrs. Aryanayakam said that though the work which Mr. Nehru had come to see was "small", it had great significance in the world of today.

Mrs. Aryanayakam said that a desire for sharing in life and work of constructive workers at Sewagram had grown since the death of Mahatma Gandhi and the Sewagram Community had been happy to welcome

friends from outside India who come there for fellowship. The need for a permanent international center at Sewagram had been felt and they were glad to welcome International Volunteers Service for peace. The hostel had been built by the united labours of Indian and International volunteers.

The world, MRS. Aryanayakam said, looked to Mr. Nehru who steadfastly worked for peace and it was a matter of joy for them to have the hostel opened by him.

Mr. Pierre Oppliger, Service Civil International Representative in India, welcoming the prime minister of India on behalf of the SCI said that it aims were to create a spirit of friendship between people by bringing together men and women of different nationalities and outlook to join in undertaking useful work for the community's benefit.

Mr. Nehru told the gathering that he would like to come to Sewagram oftener because in the context of the world situation a visit here was "good and beneficial. Any work done quietly and with truth and honesty behind it, was good and proved beneficial to the community."

After chatting sometimes with the Service Civil International volunteers and after partaking coffee with them, the Prime Minister left.

## ***Pakistan***

### **Babarloi**

Collected from SCI International Archive

This is the new village (of 2000 inhabitants) in Khairpur State to which the Pakistan Team has moved. They express some relief at leaving Latifabad, for owing to lack of practical cooperation of the authorities apathy among the refugees, a difficult climate and other problems, the whole year has been one of disappointments and frustration. However the team never felt that they should give up, and at the end they at least had contacts with numerous schools and college students.

The present project is within the frame work of States Rural Development

Scheme Mehdi Razvi, who has worked two years with the team, has written an interesting and detailed account of their investigation and choice and project. Marius Boelsma describes the beginning of the service: "on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December we shifted to Babarloi and started to put up our tents, a difficult job with which the villages helped. A village Development Committee of 16 (sixteen!) member was formed. Sindhi Muslims themselves proposed to appoint a proportional number of refugees and Hindus.... It was decided that every day ten villagers should work with us." The forest project is pulling down of ruined houses and clearing the debris—work beneficial to the whole community—and the space salvaged materials can be used for a building of general purpose.. "It is rather dangerous—pulling down walls, and rather hard—carrying big 'taselas' on the head... Village 'volunteers' and other problems, you will hear about in due course..."

February reports have just now come; it is encouraging to note that work is getting on splendidly and all is well. Owing to lack of space we have to be satisfied with this. More details will be in our next bulletin with a photo graph if possible.



# ***Brief Account Of SCI In Asia (1934 - 1976)***

**by Hiroatsu Sato**

Collected from SCI International Archive

Excerpt from Seminar Report 'Developing Development Education— Solidarity work and Volunteer Exchange' Benburb (Northern Ireland) 5— 9.April 1987

The first phase of SCI development in Asia was initiated by European long-term volunteers, including Pierre Ceresole, the founder of SCI, for Bihar earthquake victims rehabilitation work (1934) and later Muslim and Hindu refugees rehabilitation work after the partition both in Pakistan as well as in India.

The second phase started in the 1950's under the representative of SCI, Mrs. Ethelwyn Best, joined by European and Japanese long-term volunteers as well as Indian and Pakistani short-term volunteers. During this period 5-6 weeks workcamps were organized throughout India and Pakistan, preparing to form Indian as well as Pakistani National Committees. The dignity of manual labour and mutual appreciation of Orient and Occident were the backbone spirit of this period's SCI Activities. The historical landmark event took place in 1956 when the Indian National Committee, composed of all Indians took over the entire responsibility of SCI programme in India from Mrs. Best.

In 1958 Devindra Das Chopra and Valli Seshan (then Chali) were appointed as the Asian Secretary and the Assistant Asian Secretary respectively to see that the SCI activity spreads beyond Indian subcontinent. Subsequently SCI work spread to Sri Lanka, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Nepal and South Korea, in addition to India and Pakistan, then Bangla Desh, when East and West Pakistan were separated. Along with the geographical spread of SCI activities in Asia, another significant development, initiated by the AS and later given the support from branches and groups was to establish long-term projects in order to meet the enormous challenge of community development needs. This required much more substantial commitment in terms of time, finance, and skills than the traditions short-term workcamps. Cheriannagar project in Madras, Hatibari Lepracy colony project in Orissa, Kasauli Tibetan Nursery project, and later Nangloi project in Delhi, Bihar project, Moudoubi Cyclone Victims Rehabilitation Project in Banla Desh, Rapti Agricultural project in Nepal, Paharia Agricultural Rehabilitation Project in Sri Lanka, and Kimpu Pioneering Farm Project in Japan, became main stay of respective Asian branches and groups through the 1960's and short-term workcamps were often organized in and around these long-term projects. Towards the mid-seventies another significant change in trend was introduced by the Asian Regional Committee. Although our long-term projects contributed to improve lives of people in poverty and insecurity to a degree, another challenge was the SCI International Archives, Letter conscientization of the people as regards to their rights and responsibility and getting themselves organized to obtain social justice. This required a much more delicate manner of working in the context of tradition-ridden societies. Foreign long-term volunteers, who naturally lacked the real understanding of traditional society and its culture, became less effective for this type of work. The Animation Programme, which trained the educated local youth as animators and placed them in usual villages in order to stimulate and support the most oppressed sector of the society to get what they were entitled to, became the mainstay of SCI work in Asia for the next ten years.

The short-term workcamp programme declined somewhat during this period. One thing must not be forgotten to mention in relation to the SCI work in Asia, This was the damage done by the one-way flood of governmental volunteers from the first world. After President Kennedy launched the American Peace Corps Programme in the early 1960s, many other industrialized countries followed suit. Although we do not say that nothing good was achieved by these governmental volunteers, nevertheless, this invited strict government control over all volunteer programs including indigenous volunteer groups like SCI branches and groups in Asia. And this control remains even now long after all governmental volunteer programmes were banned from certain Asian countries, such as India. These governmental volunteers' high standard of life-style in the local context tarnished the image of volunteers in local peoples' eyes, and, at the same time

gave the local government a wrong idea of the concept of volunteerism and its usefulness.

Our British Branch wanted to send a large number of volunteers to Asia by taking advantage of the British Volunteer Program. We, SCI in Asia, said 'no' in order to maintain our image, truly volunteers even in the local context and international instead of bi-lateral contact. Internationally the compromise was struck that IVS had a free hand in Africa and was restricted in Asia. Even today the IVS runs a large overseas programme in Africa. However, learning from the lessons in Asia, we must be careful about what negative impact it may have on indigenous volunteer groups in Africa. This is the very brief review of SCI development in Asia from 1934 to 1976.

# PAX INDIA

Newspaper of SCI-India

Vol. XX/2/92 December

## Editorial

## When will they ever Learn

### How Long Will You Remain Silent:

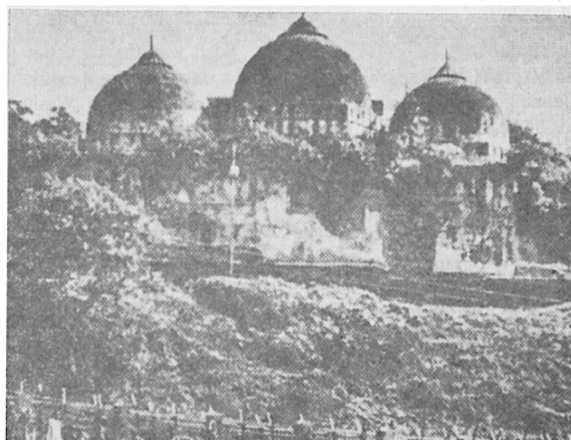
Every other day we are caught napping by the incidence of political, religious or ethnic conflicts that sometimes lead to situations like in Yugoslavia, Somalia or the demolition of Babri Mosque in India.

Violence in the name of politics and religion is on the increase day by day. The fundamentalism is again on the rise. Many a Governments are under great pressure from the fundamentalist forces and at times helpless as large section of the masses come under their sway.

Political and religious groups freely propagate hatred, jealousy among different communities unchecked by anyone for years together at times.

Many of us feel these should not happen—it's wrong. But how many of us find time in our day to day life to do something that would help in bringing people together, shed their prejudices, organise healthy dialogue between disputed communities or with those who spread hatred and jealousy in the name of politics, race and tribal loyalties.

Everyone seems to have left these tasks on the Governments (as their elected representatives). But do the Governments have time—for all these beside keeping themselves in power? Can all these be left for the Govern-



The inaction of the Government and the vandalism incited by politicians and some religious groups have resulted in the destruction of the beautiful historic "Babri Mosque" at Ayodhya in India.

Due to this action at Ayodhya the secular tradition of India has suffered a great set back. It has caused great pain not only to the muslim community all over the world but to all peace loving people also. "Our heads hang in shame".

Hundreds of people have lost their life and property due to the riots that followed in India and abroad. Many a temples were also destroyed in Pakistan and Bangladesh. The wounds would take many years to heal.

Who gains from all this? Who cares? Would you like to leave the affair of the state in the hands of such forces?

ments alone? Unfortunately, we suffer more due to our own inaction and wrong policies of the Governments which also results in peaceful and violent protest that turns into nasty clashes between the people and armed forces which the Governments used to suppress any opposition, leaving the people in helpless state (at times).

The masses are crushed between these conflicts and economic conditions that keep on deteriorating due to the chaos that results from these happenings.

How long would you allow this madness to continue? Our inaction would further push us in a state of helplessness.

Collected from SCI International Archive

# ***SCI India Since 1934***

(This Report is not Exhaustive)

**Compiled by Tapas Kumar Sur**

Pierre Ceresole first met M.K. Gandhi in the year 1931 when he later went to Switzerland after the Round Table meeting in England. In 1934 Pierre found a small leaflet written by Dr. Rajendra Prasad emphasizing the need to help the earthquake affected villages in North of Bihar and instantly decided to offer assistance as well as support to the people of the aforesaid villages. Accompanied by his two friends he came to India to materialize his mission. Before arriving at the affected areas of Bihar he, with the help of the nationalist leaders of the then Congress Party succeeded to obtain permission from the “Relief Committee” of the colonial Government. The earthquake was followed by flood. With a view to mitigate the suffering of the people Pierre launched a project with a tenure of three years (1931 – 1937) for rehabilitation of the affected 1500 families in a safer zone that might save them from recurrent yearly flood devastation. Initially, three volunteers came, Joe Wilkinson (English), Frazer Holyand, (British) and Paul Schenker, (Swiss) to join the project. Together with Pierre Ceresole, Phanindra Mohan Dutta (1935) played an important role in this project.

The second phase of SCI activities started in 1949 – 1950. On request from Govt. of India, SCI deputed a small team of Swiss volunteers to Faridabad where Govt. of India started a rehabilitation project for accommodating 20000 Hindu refugees who came from West Pakistan. In the following years volunteers from Japan, Europe, North America, worked hand in hand in constructing building and road in Himachal Pradesh, the volunteers also worked in Assam for erecting housing and constructing roads after an earthquake. Also many short term camps took place near and far from Delhi. The newly independent India was lucky to reap the attention of humanists like Ralph Hegnauer, Pierre Oppliger, Ethelwyn Best and others during this period. Not only physical work for rehabilitation, a social work organization like Bharat Sewak Samaj, which was cropped up during discussion between Ralph and Nehru, was established in 1952 by Planning Commission of India. It is still offering important service to the nation.

SCI India was officially started in 1956, as well as recognized as a Branch of SCI International in the same year and it was officially registered on 19 th february 1961, before that Ralph Hagnaur was heading the SCI team in India for some time and Para Siva Murthy took the charge from him as the 1st. secretary of SCI India. The country wise list of camps available in SCI archive shows that from 1950 to 1960 SCI India organized 44 camps and during 1961 to 1970 it went up to 167. Hence 18 camps were organized in average per year. In 1964 the highest number (23) camps was organized. All most all the camps were deployed for construction of building for different purposes like community center, school building, health/medical clinics, or road constructions etc.. There are just a few exceptions like social work training in Dharmshala. The list of camps available up to 1970, is very useful to know our past as it indicates the dates and purpose of the camps. We the branches can digitalize our activities of past, so that our future generations can easily know about our past.

Several community development projects were started in 1960s and in 70s. The Cherian Nagore, Community Dev. Project (1958 – 1968) in Chennai for the rehabilitation of fisher men’s villages that got burnt, Leprosy Home at Hati Bari, Orrisa (1960), for draught affected people of Jagdishpur, in Bihar(1960s), The slum development project at Nangloi started in 1969. The Rural Development Project, Vedanthangal, Tamil Nadu (1973). The draught affected people in Udaipur, Rajasthan, at a fisherman’s community in Santhome – Domming Kuppan, a Balwadi, Health promotion, medical clinic were introduced near Merina Beach, Tamil Nadu (1965 – 1975), In Lock Nagore a Day care center was started in 1975. The community development projects were started after earthquake for affected people of Koana, Maharastra and Chango village in Himachal Pradesh in 1970s.

Most of these projects lasted for 1 to 3 years although Nangloi & Vedanthangal continued during 1980s and a long term project was taken up in Godda district, in Bihar for development of tribal people called Paharias and Santhal was started in 1980s. The medical, health promotion, educational activities were started. The efforts were made to improve their agriculture and thereby economic status. 4 villages namely Chio, Titmoh, Angwali and Jormoh were adopted.

During 1990s these projects were handed over to the local communities. The slum development project of Nangloi was handed over to Kushali (NGOs) and some Govt. authority supported activities are still going on under supervision of SCI India. Subhas Daima is working there as coordinator for 8 years. In 2014 a boundary wall around the adjacent land to the SCI building was built. On the other hand Laia Foundation an independent NGO has been working at Vedanthangal till 2004. Liuis, a Spanish volunteer who has a Tamil wife, working there for quite a long time as a coordinator. Vedanthangal Rural Development is still attached to SCI India. Time to time SCI India help the project. Both the projects Nangloi and Vedanthangal are working for Child development, Woman empowerment, health promotion and skill generation for women. The Vedanthangal project, being a rural development project, having some more components like agricultural training, herbal garden, rain water harvesting, Zero garbage project and computer training class.

### **Refugees Support Service**

SCI as its basic principle stood beside the refugees for resettlement and reconciliation, regardless of the causes. The cause might be a cross border war, a natural catastrophe, a big developmental projects or communal riot. The refugees came from North, East, South, North East in 60s, in 70s, in 80s. SCI always tried to play its role in keeping with its principle.

In 1960s SCI took initiatives to help the Tibetan refugees who were forced by the Chinese to migrate to India. SCI India helped the refugees and arranged for education of children and subsequently in 1964 health care activities was undertaken.

In 1970 during freedom movement of Bangladesh, 10 million Bangladeshi refugees came to West Bengal. There were camps along the border of West Bengal as well as in Salt Lake. The conjunctivitis and skin diseases were spread among the local people in a big scale. However, SCI India took up rehabilitation and health care activities mainly for child bearing mother, sick and elderly people. Food grains were taken from Dinajpur to Bangladesh.

In 1980s repatriates from Sri Lanka to Tamil Nadu was attended by SCI India with empathy. The education and training for special skills were offered near Chennai and Madurai. Professional social workers, teachers, doctors and volunteers were deployed to help the repatriates.

At the same time (1980) Afghan refugees also came to Delhi. 3 centers were set up to help them to learn language, health care and counseling. This project continued for 15 years with the help of UN Human Rights Council.

In 1985 International secretariat of SCI shifted to Bangalore for a few years. Raghavan Ramchandran and Valli Seshan together with their spouses Krpa and A. S. Seshan. The Bangalore IS used run a International Resource Centre also. They supported Youth Induction and Training in different fields mainly serving Asian Branches. We are proud to remember their contribution with gratitude. I found a list of special people prepared by Bhuppy, who offered their precious service for promotion of peace with SCI India such as Father Ceyrac, Das Chopra, Villy Seasan, N.N. Chari, Nripen Sen, Phillis Sato, Alfred Kanaus, Anthony Dass, Prabhu Dayal, Giridhar Mathur, Shankuntala Gupta, Kaneje Toyoda, R. Kannan, Beijit Ghosh, Rama Nadar, Hans Kumar, Jagvant Chaudhury, Pandey Rajan, P.N. (dada) Banerjee, H. Sato, Navam Appdurai, A.S. Seshan, Kusula Abhhayvardhna, S.K. De, Deena Taneja. If I am to add a few more names who I know are J. S. Kohli, Surender Sharma, Jayaprasad Kumar, M.G. S. Ramu, R. Arulraj, Ravikumar, K. Thangavelu, M. Murali, M. Sivagnanam, Dr. Shoba Rani, M.N. Ganesh, Bharati Ganesh, Vivek R.K. Lavaraju, Prabhu Devaiah, A.G. Janarthanam, Ramesh Nangia, from West Bengal Dr. B.N. Roy, Sunil Sarkar, Samarjit Bakshi, Arabinda Ghosh, Pradip Das, Bhabesh Saha, Jaba Mukherjee, Tapashi Sarkar, Dr. Sujit K.r. Brahmochary.

Bhuppy withdrew from secretary ship of SCI India in mid 1995 (approx) and Arulraj joined as secretary on 1st. May 1998, in between Swapan Chakraborty, Monaj Pandey and Alokananda were there as secretary.

Arulraj tried to spread the SCI network in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, in Barbani of Maharastra, and in Ranchi of Bihar(with help of J.S. Koheli)

### **The International Committee Meeting 2000— Bangalore**

In 2000 ICM was organized in Bangalore by Karnataka Group with the help of SCI India. It was a great exposure for the members of Indian branch. The local members got to know about the structure and working method of SCI. Some of the senior members were felicitated in this great occasion.

### **The Gujrat Earthquake In 2001 and the school project in Janan, Gujrat.**

SCI India plunged into action immediately after Gujrat Earthquake in 2001. It was the 52nd. Republic Day of India, 26th. January, at 8.46 a.m. a severe tremor spread over from the Run of Kutch of Gujrat to Southeastern part of Pakistan. In Bhuj, Anjar and the area around were severely affected by the earthquake. 20,000 people were killed 167,000 were injured and nearly 340,000 buildings were destroyed. Immediately after the incident Monaj Pandey visited the affected area and prepared a report of the grave situation. SCI India sent out an appeal requesting help for the devastated people. SCI Japan came forward to rehabilitate a village called Janan which was selected by SCI India. Mr. Toyoda came to visit the site. Jayaprasad, Surender Sharma and others accompanied him to the spot. Mr. Toyoda raised USD 9000 from Japanese Postal Foundation. Mr. Toyoda also sent Japanese volunteers to work in the project. The local Panchayet offered land to build a school. SCI appointed a local building contractor who built six class rooms, staff room, Library and Washroom. The project started in 2002 and in 2005 it was handed over to the local committee.

### **A Crash Course on Social Work for the youth, 2003 & 2018**

In 2003 SCI Mumbai Group organized a Crash Course on Social Work in cooperation with care Mumbai. The course was supported by SCI India. This project promoted SCI among young social workers. A large number of students took part in the course. Some of them became SCI members and participated in SCI work camp. They repeated the same course in the year 2018 in co-operation with Care Int. and with the financial Support SCI India.

### **The Community Eye Care Programme**

In 2003 with the initiative of Arulraj SCI India managed to receive a Community Eye Care project from Sight Saver International (SSI). It was a Comprehensive Eye Care Project to be implemented in Maduranthagam and Acharapakkam blocks covering a population of 2,12,000.

The three major components of the project were Prevention & Curative actions for welfare of the eye sight and Rehabilitative arrangements for people having eye problems.

The project sensitized a population of 1,75,000 villagers about Eye Care, Offered treatment and skill trainings to the individuals having vision problem for their economic rehabilitations.

SSI evaluation team was happy with the outcome of the project and SCI became well known in these two blocks.

### **The Tsunami Relief and Eye Care Project 2004**

Tsunami hit the southern coastal area of India at around 8.00 a.m. on 26th. January, the 52nd. Republic day of India rendering 10,749 people killed, 5,640 people missing, caused huge loss to the coastal people.

SCI Tamil Nadu group members promptly responded to the Tsunami affected areas nearby. They met the immediate need of the people with whatever they had. They offered food; drinking water and medicines. Subsequently a spot study report was prepared with the help of ICOW (a local NGO). 7 eye check up camps were set up to offer free eye check up. A proposal was submitted to Sight Saver International which was accepted and the Community Eye Care programme for Tsunami affected people was started in August 2005 for 105 Kilometer area covering a population of 1,16,000. The transport facility in the area was poor, hence it was challenging to discharge the duties, however the project was implemented in time and the SSI evaluation team was satisfied with result of the project.

### **The participation in World Social Forum in Mumbai**

In 2004 Convention of World Social Forum was held in Mumbai. On behalf of SCI J. S. Kohli, Jayaprasad, Ramu and Arulraj took part in this convention. Boa (USA) and Arun took special interest to arrange the activity. SCI India gave a small stall and distributed pamphlets of SCI India. Arulraj spoke in a discussion organized by SASA net of Sri Lanka.

After departure of Arulraj from National secretary ship by late 2006 (Approx), most probably Alokandana, then Surender Sharma looked after K – 5, office for some time. Then Hari Khurana was appointed as NS on 1st. October 2007. From November 2008 Shubha Pandey took over and then from 1st November, 2009 Jayaprasad was appointed as Secretary of SCI India. And continued up to October 2015 and then in November 2015 Bhupender Yadav became acting national secretary who is perhaps still continuing. I think we need to have a cordial review of the last decade and prepare a road map for the current decade. We need to think what we want to achieve in coming 10 years. I would like to suggest a 3 years SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) Strategic Planning.

### **The Publications in SCI India.**

As recorded by Bhuppy SCI India Bulletins were published from 1963 to 69. In 1970 onward PAX INDIA was in circulation disseminating information of peace education training, rallies that were organized to focus on different issues like, Human Rights, women issues, environment, peace promotion etc. The PAX INDIA editorial had a caption in 1980s “How Long Will You Remain Silent”? It generally promulgated against WAR toys & Video preaching of hatred by extremist groups, Nuclear disarmaments. The Asian News and Views was also published in India from 1974 to 78 when AS was in New Delhi. A book was also published in 1970 at the 50th. Anniversary under title “We shall Live in Peace”. It contained details of volunteers, Camps and Projects in Asia.

### **Special events 50th Anniversary Celebration of SCI in New Delhi**

SCI India celebrated its Golden Jubilee in New Delhi with an extra-ordinary zeal. It organized a Peace March from K-5 New Delhi to Nangloi, 30 K.M. walk for peace with huge number of students and international volunteers. The members from different state groups also participated. A 50 days workcamp was organized in Nangloi with 100 volunteers who made special kind of brick with cement. The construction of a community center at Nangloi was designed by our Japanese friend Kaneie Toyoda and he also funded and labored for constructing it. The volunteer also constructed houses for rehabilitation of the refugees there. We also remember with gratitude the name of Lotti Baumann, a donor of Nangloi project. By the way, the SCI India's new office at K-5, Green Park, ND, was also opened in 1970 beside starting of Nangloi project.



The SCI India's News Letter PAX INDIA was also started in 1970. A book “ We shall Live in Peace” was published with the help of Asian secretariat. So the 50th. anniversary really became a golden time for SCI India.

### **The 70th. Anniversary Celebration in 1990**

From 1920 to 1990, it was a long meaningful journey to focus on Promotion of Peace. The Platinum Jubilee of SCI was celebrated at Anandwan, near Warora. The place was associated with the organization of Baba Amte. Baba Amte was a well established lawyer by profession at Wardha in Gujrat. After meeting Gandhiji he became a Gandhian. He was a renowned social activist. He took part in “Quit India” movement

and dedicated his life for the welfare of the leprosy patients. In 1949 he, along with his wife he started a hospital at Anandwan for leprosy patients. He also worked for their social and economic rehabilitation. He did yeomen's service for environmental awareness and ecological balance. He was with Narmadabachao movement. He is recipient of India's sound highest award Padma Bhushan award and many others. Hence the volunteers were inspired by him during our 70th. Anniversary as it was organized in cooperation with Baba Amte's organization. SCI India had its camp there since 1953. So SCI India was well connected with Baba Amte and his association.

### **80th. Anniversary Celebration of SCI in 2001**

SCI India celebrated 80th. Anniversary of SCI in Chennai on 21 July 2001. The Chennai state group published a souvenir which documented well the history of the group. It contained many other activities, seminars and cultural programme. A handsome number of people attended the celebration from different state groups.

### **SCI India celebrated its 75 anniversary in 2007**

The Karnataka state group arranged to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of SCI India in Bangalore on 20th. & 21st. January 2007. The event was full of interesting activities, cultural function, Lectures and discussions. The Karnataka state group published a souvenir which was full of interesting articles and information. A good amount of people participated the occasion and enjoyed the same.

### **SCI-INDIA National Convention 2014**

The national convention was held on 15th. and 16th November 2014 at Tanesan Institute of Cooperative Management at Shanti Colony, Anna Nagore West, Chennai 600 040.

The Convention was inaugurated by Hon. Justice Gnanaprakasam and Key note address was delivered by Dr. Mohan, VC Annamalai University.

The different speakers spoke on Peace & Sustainability, Community and Peaceful Co-existence, Global Community and Coherence, Sustainable living for Global Peace, Equality and social brotherhood, Women and Child welfare, Peace and Environment, Climate for Peace.

A huge exhibition was organized on Gandhiji's life and Peace. West Bengal Group displayed their activities through pictures. A gala cultural function was presented by the TN Group. About 60 student took part in a 2 hours' workshop on Climate for Peace.

The Convention also adopted a declaration on "Climate Justice as follows:-

### **SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL – INDIA, CHENNAI DECLARATION on "CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR PEACE & HARMONY"**

#### **CONTEXT:**

SCI-India since has taken 'Climate Change' as one of the core area of volunteering to reduce & control environment degrading activities and to promotion and maintain various initiatives towards containing climate change that – if not contained – may lead to natural & man-made disasters in the near future.

In this context, SCI-India as part of its 80th year commemoration, has brought the members (current & old) and interested youth & students and volunteers to interact on the topic " Climate Justice for Peace & Harmony " – a two-day workshop at Natesan Institute of Cooperative Management in Chennai on 15 & 16th Nov and took the following action-plan as ' Chennai Declaration 2014 '

### **We the members present recommit ourselves**

- to promote & be part of the Volunteer Study Centers (VSCs) on various aspects & concerns relating to climate change
- to promote, strengthen and support internally and with all the interested ‘Think Tank’ & Action to create & work for several replicable models to spread the impact
- to undertake, facilitate & support research on causes & reasons for Climate change and document the efforts taken - and initiate local action with volunteers promoting eco & environmental friendly actions containing degradation & negative impact and that of exploitation, privatization and commercialization of water, energy and environment & other forms of Natural resources
- request SCI-India to commit to network with other stakeholders for sharing expertise and experiences and be part of the joint action / ventures for better awareness among the People and action for change process, and in preserving Nature and in reducing / containing and avoiding Natural calamities especially that are man-made and share widely the efforts (that needs to be) taken for corrective action.
- as part of SCI-India, commit to facilitate, network and strengthen the local initiatives and with each Branch in India and with alliance partners to be part of the Action centers initiative in undertaking needed activities / action locally & encouraging effective information sharing and supporting initiatives at local, National & International levels; taking-up cases / concerns that warrants action by local, National & international Govt.’s and agencies like UN in pursuing needed policy changes and / or for containing adverse climate change and / or pursue through non-violent action that needs correction by them
- request SCI-India to take the suggested action points as a policy through CWC and at other bodies as “ SCI-India’s Policy & action points ” for the next 5 years and initiative support & network with Asian & Global networks –both forward & backward as prioritized action program towards needed

**“ Climate Justice for Peace & Harmony” – all People in this Globe.**

Solemnly affirmed by

All participants in the two-day National Convention

### **The SCI ICM and APM 2018 in Bangalore**

The International Committee Meeting 2018, was held in Bangalore from 5th to 9th December. SCI India proved its ability to organize the mega SCI event. Everything went on well in a luxurious hotel of Bangalore. There was perfect service of food, accommodation and logistic support and even online live service. The ICM members and all the observers expressed satisfaction about the arrangements and efficient management of the meeting. About 60 ICM members and delegates participated in the ICM, Prior to ICM, APM took place on 5th December 2018.

### **Community Green Roof Project**

SCI India proposed to provide a terrace garden kit to charity homes such as orphanages and old age homes.

Accordingly they selected six care homes in Coimbatore district, Tamilnadu State, India.

Aravanikum Anbu Illam ( Orphanage for boys 40.

Eranenjam: A care home for the destitute elderly women. 75 inmates.rs.

St. Thomas old age home: 35 inmates

Little Hearts: A care home for the adult psychiatric patients. 45 inmates

Centre for Development and Rehabilitation, 22 girls.

All the six selected care homes were selected on the basis of their year of service and nature of service such as free service for the inmates.



## The Present Position of SCI India

### The Office of SCI

The SCI India's office was shifted quite a few times. in 1950s the 1st. office was in Faridabad, from there it went to Mehroli, from there it moved to Rohtak Road, in 1956. In 1970 it moved again to K – 5, Green Park, New



Delhi group enthusiastically cleaning the Nangloi campus in July 2020 photo shared through whats app on 17.07.2020

Delhi in 1970. On 14th. May 2013 we had to leave the office after a court case since 2007. The then temporary office address was Jayaprasad's house at 204-B, Pushkar, Bhabola, Opp. Vijay Sales, Vasai West, Thane-401207 and the office material and documents were shifted in a rented house in Delhi and subsequently all the materials of SCI India office had been shifted to Nangloi in 2014. It may be mentioned here that we have a big piece of land adjacent to the building at Nangloi and also we may recall that SCI India received a building fund in 1980s as donation from a senior SCI member (I cannot remember her name) from Europe while Deena Taneja was there. Also we received Fund against our office of K – 5 Green Park, ND in 2013. In 2018, if I am not wrong SCI India raised some Fund for the same purpose. We are hopeful to have a permanent professional office for SCI India. This can be immensely useful to promote SCI in South-East Asia.



Whats App post on 16.07.2020. The work is appreciated by Jayaprasad, O.P. Yadav, Arulraj, Ravikumar, Bhola Sankar, Vivek Patil & Shoma Chakravorty

At present SCI India has six state groups namely SCI Delhi Group, Karnataka Group, Andhra Pradesh Group, Tamil Nadu Group, Maharashtra Group and West Bengal Group. SCI India is also partnering with ICWO Chennai, Human Wave, West Bengal etc. Mohan Cadre India in Tamil Nadu.

SCI India organises the short terms work camps but in these camps the number of volunteers' participation is going down each year. In addition SCI India participates in international volunteer exchange programme and also transnational workshop and training projects on different social issues. There is a huge potential of bi-lateral short term work camp to explore. We are waiting for the call from within.....



Blood pressure. Sugar and H B Testing  
Health Camp. posted on whats app on 3rd.  
Feb. 2021 by Subhas Daima

### The Highlights of Statutory Structure of SCI India in nutshell

- Name : Service Civil International India
- Registered Office : SCI-India building, JJ Colony, Nangloi, Delhi-110041
- Membership : Membership is open to all above 18 years of age, irrespective of race, religion, Nationality, Political belief but believe in aims and Objectives of SCI India. There are 3 kind of membership. The Service membership, Subscribing Membership and Life Membership
- Management : SCI India coordinate all its activities of all the state Groups and Manages all other matters connected with SCI India through the National Council and its Central Working Committee.
- National Council (NC) : National Council is the Supreme Body of the SCI India determining and Governing its Policy and activities.
- Composition of NC : The Composition of NC is as follows:
- A. The 2 representatives elected by each State Groups
  - B. In case no state group are formed, the recognized local unit may be invited to join the NC at the discretion of the Central Working Committee.
  - C. The Elected AEC / IEC / IC member (s) of SCI India
  - D. Secretaries of the state groups and the Coordinators of the long term projects
  - E. The NC has power to co-opt maximum 5 members

The following shall be the office bearer of SCI India:

1. President, 2. Vice Presidents, (Not exceeding 3) 3. National Secretary, (Ex-Officio) 4. National Treasurer, 5. Chairman of CWC They tenure of NC is two years. NC must meet at least once in year.

The Composition of CWC :

1. President, 2. Vice Presidents, (Not exceeding 3) and 3 .N.C. members nominated by the NC in the national Council meeting. The National Secretary, (Ex-Officio). They tenure of CWC is two years. The CWC must meet every 4 months.

#### Reference:

- Souvenirs SCI 80th. Anniversary & SCI India Golden Jubilee Celebration & SCI India Reports.
- SCI International Archive.



## ***SCI Song***

We shall overcome  
We shall overcome  
We shall overcome, some day  
Oh, deep in my heart  
I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day  
We'll walk hand in hand  
We'll walk hand in hand, some day  
Oh, deep in my heart  
I do believe  
We shall overcome some day  
We shall live peace  
We shall live in peace  
We shall live in peace, some day  
Oh deep in my heart  
I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day  
We are not afraid  
We are not afraid  
We are not afraid, today  
Oh, deep in my heart  
I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day  
The whole wide world around  
The whole wide world around  
The whole wide world around some day  
Oh deep in my heart  
I do believe  
We shall overcome, some day.

## **THE GLIMPSE OF ACTIVITIES OF SCI INDIA WEST BENGAL GROUP**

## ***SCI India West Bengal Group Since 1957***

(This Report is not Exhaustive)

Compiled by Tapas Kumar Sur

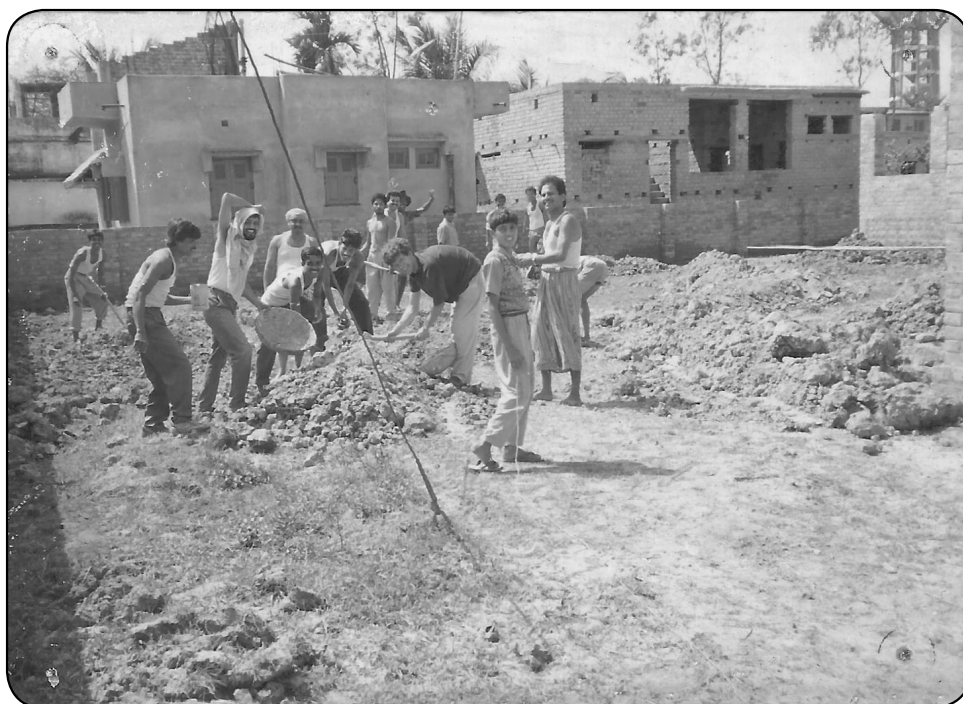
In an article Ms. Dorothy Guiborat mentioned that she came near Calcutta in 1957, led by a professor from the University who had been taking his student regularly to work in the village.\* In 1962\*\* SCI members worked in a camp in a Muslim village in Chinsurah, Hugli, West Bengal. They repaired a school building. In 1970 Prof. Phanindra Nath Banerjee (DadaBanerjee). Arabindo Ghosh and other 5 volunteers attended the peace rally from K – 5, Green Park to Nangloi. From 1970 onward, weekend camps used to take place in Kolkata. Sunil Sarkar, Prof. Nirajan Halder, Swapan Chakraborty and others were active members. The weekend camps used to be organized in a blind school for children in Uttara para also. In 1978-79 after a huge flood a community development work was introduced by West Bengal Group with the help of SCI India in a refugee community in Mankundu where a tube well was setup and a small road was constructed and adult literacy class was carried out for a year. Chandru visited the camp and stayed overnight at Arabindo's house. At that time Arabindo was the secretary of the group. In 1981 we made a staircase to get down from Mankundu railway station by railway sleepers. Then in 1982 Tapas became secretary of the West Bengal group. In this year a fund raising programme was organized through a cinema show. The name of the Movie was 'The Amphibian Man'. All though a meager amount was raised, we enjoyed doing the activity. In 1983 a short term camp was organized in ABNR. In 1985 Subrata Chatterjee, a college student, became secretary of the group but next year he died in an accident. Then Bhabesh Saha became secretary of the group. He organized some activities with the help of the NS. Then for some time the group was dormant. The subsequent activities are in the pictures in the next pages.

\*Reference: "Words about Deeds" 100 years of voluntary service for peace

\*\* Reference: List of workcamp, SCI Archive



Dr. B.N. Roy with workcamp participants, held in Calcutta in 1983 organised and led by Tapas Kumar Sur. Secretary, SCI I, West Bengal Group. It was a 15 days camp at A.B.N.R, at Kolkata. We cleaned the center and white washed the same with 10 volunteers, 6 from Mankundu and 4 from Orissa.



The SCI volunteers from Mankundu, attending a weekend camp at IIMC Sonarpur, South 24 Paraganas, W.B to build an indoor nutrition centre for poor malnourished children. In the 1994.



The short Term work camp at village school for painting, white washing & tree planting at Raidighi, South 24 Paragas, W.B. led by Tapas Kr. Sur in 2006.

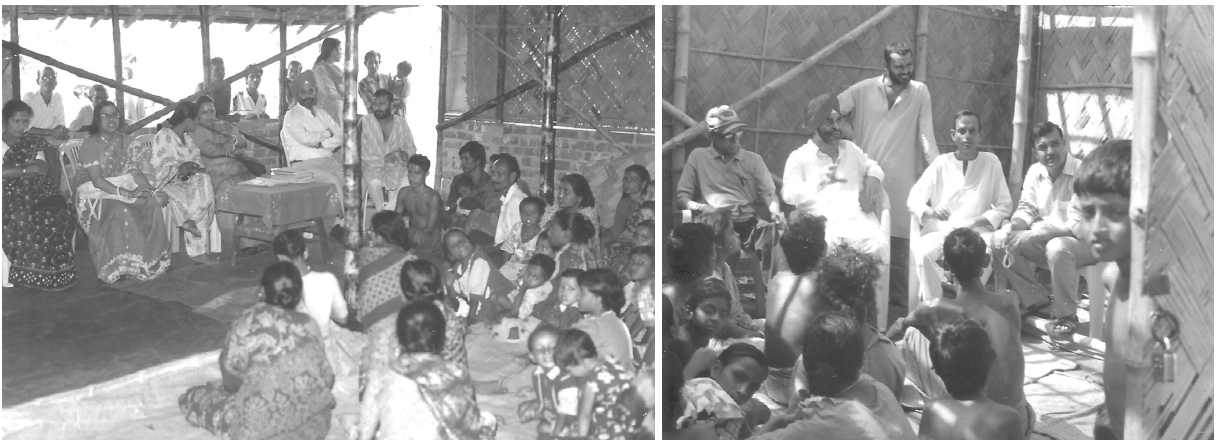




An Irish volunteer carrying bamboo with a local person.



Dr. Bishakhi Barui carrying on health check up of the children at Mankudu slum 2006

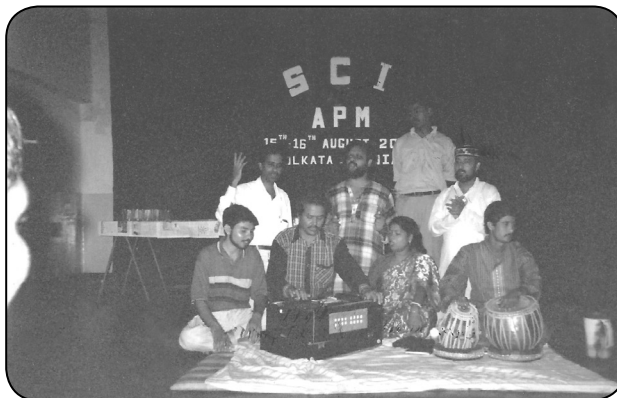


Mr. J.S. Koheli in a awareness meeting in a slum community in Mankundu 2007





Ratna Sur, Mili Roy, Tapas Kr. Sur, J.S. Koheli, Dr. S. Roy, Samarjit Bakshi, etc.. S.C.I. meeting at Human Wave office at Mankundu 2003



Jayaprasad, Manoj, Tapas, Arabinda, Sankha and others in Kolkata APM 2003



Jayaprasad, Ganesh, Arulraj, Samarjit bakshi and others in Kolkata APM 2003



Legal Awareness Camp at Mankundu

## Hiroshima Day 2010 At Mankundu



Samapti, Bhagabat Dutta, Jaba & Ashoke Mukherjee, Johanna & Axel German LTV, At Human Wave



Bhabesh & Kausik & Jolly 2012



A week-end camp in June 2012 at Mankundu

SCI India, West Bengal Group organized a workshop on  
 “Grounding our future— Youth and the challenges of climate change”.



21 participants attended the workshop at Kishore Sangha Club Hall, Mankundu, to take part in this even't implemented in cooperation with Human Wave.



German volunteers, LTV at Human Wave Kiera Nordmann and Richard Gross gave a presentation on climate change.

## “A Step Towards Future” Workshop on Climate change, 2012

SCI India, West Bengal Group in cooperation with Human Wave organized a Two days residential workshop on 12 & 13 January 2012 to promote awareness among youth. 30 participants most of which were college students attended the workshop. Renown environmental activist of India like Mr. Jayenta Bose, Biswajit Mukherjee, Chief Law officer of State Govt. of environment dept. and Headmasters of 2 Higher Secondary School spoke on the occasion. 4 German volunteers who were working in Human Wave as LTV also participated in the workshop.



Dr. H. Bhattacharyay, Dean, Geology & Environment Management System,  
Presidency University, Kolkata, Delivering his lecture.





Observing Pierre Ceresole's birth day in 2012 at ABNR



Prodip & Ashoke at Both ends Arabinda & Bhabesh Are in the middle and others



## Cleaning of Adarshanagore

On the 25th of March 2012 a weekend camp was held  
By SCi India West Bengal group alongwith the teenagers of the slum called Adarshanagore.  
Two German volunteers Markus and Milan also participated in the weekend activities.



Raising awareness about polythine was focused.

## Hiroshima Day observed at Mankundu in 2013



## International Peace Day Rally of 2014

On the International Peace Day 21 September a Cycle Rally organized by SCI India West Bengal Group in cooperation with Human Wave spreading the message of Peace and sustainable development. A cultural function was arranged at the end of the rally at Chandernagore Strand by singing songs and dance, all in the presence of distinguished guests like Mayor of Chandernagore, Sub-Divisional officer of police, School teachers etc.



## A seminar on Grass Root Youth Democracy Programme and Impotence of Water Conservation on 20th to 25th June 2015

On the International Peace Day 21 September a Cycle Rally organized by SCI India West Bengal Group in cooperation with Human Wave spreading the message of Peace and sustainable development. A cultural function was arranged at the end of the rally at Chandernagore Strand by singing songs and dance, all in the presence of distinguished guests like Mayor of Chandernagore, Sub-Divisional officer of police, School teachers etc.





## A Workshop On Human Rights And Youth Democracy



Andromachi, Greece and Benedetta, Italy, conducting a workshop



20 local volunteers 2 German Volunteers 1 Italian & 1 volunteer from Greece Participated in the workshop held at Mankundu jointly organized by Human Wave and SCI India West Bengal



Dance performed by children



Water Treatment Plant at Bhadreswar

Jesmin, Sarah, Jemai and local volunteers singing a Bengali song on Rabindranath Tagore's birth day.  
Children of the slum are performing a drama at Mankundu.



## International Peace Day 2015



On 21st. we observed world peace day at Mankundu Library Hall. It was attended by Sub-divisional Magistrate, Chandernagore, Mayor of Chandernagore Corporation and Ex-Chariman of Bhadreswar Municipality and the local 200 residents. The speakers highly appreciated the ideology of SCI India and its activities for promotion of peace. Prof. Rathin Chowdhury said peace is an essential aspect of our life. We need to be aware to ensure it.



International Peace Day observed at  
Vivekananda Wisdom Mission School in Mankundu 2016



Non-violence Day observation 2016



Drawing competition organized on International Non-violence Day 2016

## The International Women Day 2017





In pursuence of climate action programme. In 2017 with the students of Naskarpur High School students. It was a two days programme. 1st day awareness at school, 2nd day tree plantation.



## International Peace Day 2018



In our town time to time we face tension among religions hence we organized seminar on religious harmony.

## International non-violence Day (Gandhi's birth day) 2018

At Vivekananda Wisdom Mission School SCI India W.B. celebrated Gandhi's birthday on 2nd October 2018.



## International Women's Day 2018



A community leader is felicitated because of her outstanding courage to speak against the local political leaders.



## International Peace Day by SCI India West Bengal Group 2019



Mr. Amal Choudhury, IAS, Delivering Speech on International Peace Day





## The International Women's day observation 2019

International Women's Day 8th March 2019 with some project people, office staffs and teachers of the tutorials at the roof of Vivekananda Wisdom Mission school. Our LTVs" Luise, Lynn, Leah and Soha led the workshop.



## The International Women's day 2020



The welcome song sung by our local member Mrs. Chhanda Dutta and German volunteers



## The International Women's day 2020



Dr. Achala Dutta, Dr. Ratna Munshi and our Mrs. Soma Chakraborty , N.C. member are Inaugurating the occasion



## Relief During Lockdown for Covid -19



## The International Peace day 2020







Weekend camp at Mankundu, Abhijit, Jaba, Barnali, Ashoke and Prodip behind in 1997, organized by Mankundu group

In 2001 a short term work camp took place in Gopalnagore, South 24 Paraganas, W.B., organized and led by Tapas Kumar Sur. 10 European volunteers and 5 local volunteers took part in the camp. Here are some pictures of the camp. The volunteers repaired village road and build a tutorial hall for poor students, 1st. generation learners of a cobblers' community.



Short term summer camp at Gopalnagore, South 24 Paraganas, W.B. India, 2001. The camp was organized and led by Tapas Kr. Sur



The volunteers repairing a village road. 2001



Making decorative items for a rally





The volunteers prepared placards for a rally



Rally with children and campers at Gopalnagore August 2001



The volunteers prepared this tutorial. The tutorial was started in 2002 with 50 students and 6 teachers for 2 hours 6 days in a week and continued for 10 years by Human Wave. Hurry Loams an Irish volunteer came back after two years and donated us 23000 rupees for infrastructure development. IIMK, Belgium paid the running cost for 10 years





Tarpaulin sheet distributed among the slum dwellers who lost their earth tile roofs in Amphan storm



## Awareness Campaign Against Covid-19





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