



CBCI OFFICE FOR SC/BC

**Catholic Bishops' Conference of India(CBCI)
Office for SC/BC(Dalits and Backward classes)
CBCI Centre, 1 Ashok Place,
Goledakhana, New Delhi - 110 001**

Your Eminence/Beatitude/Grace/Excellency/Father/Sister/Brother

Happy Easter. I am happy to share with you some of the events and programs that took place in the past few months. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) Office for Dalits and Backward classes undertook many programs to empower the Dalit Christians by networking with the regional secretaries. Besides the regular small meetings, visits and regular works we undertook the following activities at the National level. I sincerely thank you all for your prayers and support in executing our work for the empowerment of the Dalits.

Fr. Devasagayaraj, Secretary, CBCI Office for SC/BC

National Dalit Christian Women Leadership Meet

The Dalit Christian Women Leadership meet was organized at the national level by the CBCI Office for SC/BC at Indian Social Institute (ISI), Bangalore on 13th February 2017. The purpose of the meet was to analyse the reality of Dalit Christian women, to discuss the way forward and to enhance the capacity of Dalit Christian women leadership. The program was inaugurated by Fr. Selvaraj Arulnathan, Director ISI, Fr. Devasagayaraj, Secretary, CBCI Office for SC/BC, Fr. AXJ Bosco, the Former Regional Secretary for Telegu Bishop's Council, Commission for SC/ST/BC, Fr. Shaj Kumar, Regional Secretary, and Sr. Robancy, Program Coordinator, CBCI Office for SC/BC. Forty five Dalit women leaders from Andhra, Telengana, Kerala, Karnataka, Pune, Odisha, Tamil Nadu Participated in the program.



At the end of the program, Dalit Christian Women for Change (DCWC), a national level movement was formed and the office bearers are Ms. Isabella Xavier, from Karnataka, Adaikala Mary Jayaraj from Tamil Nadu ,Sr. Saral, from Tamil Nadu , Ms. Pushpa Christy, from Kerala, Mrs. Jayalakshmi, Representative for Andhra Pradesh, Mrs. Laxmi Kanthamma - Representative for Telengana, Mrs. Jayanti Patole - Representative for Maharastra, and Ms. Smita Nayak, Representative for Odisha.

Launching of Dalit Policy



The Policy of Dalit Empowerment in the Catholic Church in India was officially released on 13th December 2016 by His Eminence Cardinal Cleemis the President of CBCI at

CBCI Centre, New Delhi. The mega launch of this Dalit Policy took place at Indian Social Institute (ISI), Bangalore on 14th February 2017 by Most Rev. Neethinathan, Chairperson, Bishop of the CBCI Office for Dalits and Backward Classes. Most Rev. Joseph Raja Rao Thelegathoti, S.M.M. Bishop of Vijayawada, Most Rev. D. Prakasam, Bishop of Nellore, Most Rev. Antony Poola, Bishop of Kurnool, Most Rev. P. Soundararaju, SDB, Bishop of Vellore. Most Rev. Thomas Paul Samy, Bishop of Dindigul, Chairman, TNBC, SC/ST Commission, Most Rev. Jayarao Palimera, Bishop of Eluru, Chairman, TCBC, SC/ST Commission, and Most Rev. Thomas Dabre, Bishop of Poona released the Policy in different languages. Regional and diocesan secretaries of the SC/ST commissions, priests, religious, Dalit Christian leaders from different parts of India were present for this historical program.

Releasing of Dalit Policy in Tamil



The CBCI Dalit Policy was released in Tamil on 25th January 2017 at Loyola College, Chennai. The event was organized by dioceses in the North Zone, Tamil Nadu coordinated by Rev. Fr. Regis, VG, Chengetput diocese and Fr. Nelson, secretary Tamil Nadu ST/ST/BC Commission. Most Rev. A.M Chinnappa, Archbishop Emeritus of Madras- Mylapore and the Founder of Kingdom of God, Most Rev. Neethinathan, Chairperson, CBCI Office for SC/BC, Most Rev. Thomas Paulsamy, Chairperson, TNBC Commission for SC/ST/BC, Most Rev. Soundaraju, Bishop of Vellore and Rev. Fr. Devasagayaraj, Secretary, CBCI Office for SC/BC felicitated the event. Fr. Maria Arul Raja explained about the Dalit policy in detail. He said that the Dalit policy is for empowering ourselves as Dalits.

Releasing of Dalit Policy in Malayalam

The CBCI Dalit Policy was released in Malayalam by His Eminence Cardinal Cleemis on 10th March 2017. A package of 15 crores has been announced by the Kerala bishops to build houses for 300 Dalit Christian families in Kerala. These houses will be built in the course of three years. Thanks to the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Conference

and to the Regional secretary Fr. Shaj.



"Efforts will be made to appoint competent and enthusiastic Dalit priests as secretaries for the SC/ST/BC commissions at the regional and diocesan levels. A lay Dalit person will also be appointed as Joint Secretary" CBCI Policy No. 96.C. According to the above action plan, the KCBC (Kerala Catholic Bishops' Conference) has appointed Mr. James Elavumkal as the Joint Secretary of SC/ST Commission to the Kerala Region.

Meeting with Arturo Sosa, Superior General of the Society of Jesus

On 27th February 2017, Fr. Devasagayaraj, Secretary along with Sr. Robancy, Program Coordinator, CBCI Office for the Dalits and Backward Classes handed the CBCI Dalit Policy to Fr. Arturo Sosa, the superior general of Jesuit congregation at ISI Delhi with Fr. Denzil the director, It was also presented to Fr. Vernon D'Cunha, Regional Assistant for South Asia and to Fr. Tomasz Kot, Regional Assistant for Central and Eastern Europe. Fr. Arturo Sosa promised his support for the Dalits.



National Journalism Award for Mr. Gengai Kumar

In the 22nd National Convention of Christian Journalist, organized by Indian Catholic Press Association (ICPA) held on 24th and 25th of February 2017 at Nagpur, the National Award for Dalit Reporting sponsored by CBCI Office for SC/BC was given to Mr. Gengai Kumar.



NCDC Annual Meeting

The National Council of Dalit Christians (NCDC) annual planning meeting and General Committee meeting took place at Sarvodaya, Mumbai on 18th and 19th of March 2017. His Eminence Cardinal Oswald Gracias the Archbishop of Bombay was the Chief Guest who inaugurated the program. In his inaugural address, Cardinal assured the support of the CBCI in resolving the issues of the Dalit Christians especially in demanding the religious freedom to the Dalit Christians by granting SC status to them. He said that the Church is 110% with the Dalit Christians.



Discrimination against anybody on the basis of caste is a sin against God and humanity

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