

As resistance wanes away, social audit goes on smoothly



Comments 0



editor 27 May 2008 12272 views

Up till now there was a situation of conflict and palpable tension between the Pradhans and the citizens' groups conducting the social audit of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in Miyaganj block, Unnao district. However today surprisingly the tension dissipated after yesterday's dialogue with the Pradhans explaining that the social audit is not to instigate any legal action against them but to enforce all the provisions of NREGS and empower people's rights in the democracy. The pradhans cooperated in the social audit today.

The social audit went ahead in a normal routine way today without any opposition in Himmatkhera, Ahra Dadia, parenda, Miyaganj, Salempur, Makhdoompur Sah, Mahendra, Nauhai, Buzurg, Pathakpur and Purwa Gram panchayats.

The block development officer (BDO) had earlier issued a letter on 13 May 2008 asking Pradhans to cooperate with the social audit. Pradhans had then filed a writ petition in the high court on which they did get a stay order. Despite of this stay order, the Pradhans decided to participate in the social audit and cooperate which is a remarkable achievement of democracy and re-instills our faith in people's rights.

In Gram panchayats Himmat Khera and puran Khera, social audit exposed gross irregularities in what was stated in the muster rolls and job cards and what was verified on the ground. For instance, in Puran Khera, the muster rolls and job cards show a road built from a school to durga maurya's farm, of the following dimensions: length 1350 feet, height 3 feet, and width 20 feet. However upon measurement, the social audit team found the road of following dimensions: length 560 feet, height 1 foot and width 20 feet.

Another example is of a labourer Gaya Prasad (son of Ram Shankar) whose job card shows that he got 10 days of work each in 2006-2007 at beer baba talab and plantation work. However he testified to the social audit team that he didn't do a single day's work at either of these places. Also the job card of Gaya Prasad shows that he has got 64 days worth of work till now, however in reality he has worked only for 16 days.

The social audit team witnessed another incident of Pradhan's terrorizing the people in Nauhai buzurg gram panchayat. Initially the labourers in this village had stated to the social audit team that there were discrepancies in the job cards and muster rolls but upon being terrorized by the Pradhan's men, most of them promptly changed their testimony. Some irregularities the team discovered included the case of Munna (son of Jiya Lal) whose job card shows that he had got work for 14 days on the link road but in reality he has worked only for 6 days. Similarly his job card shows 12 days worth of work for the plantation, but in reality he worked only for 2 days.

Up till now the stiff resistance Pradhans were meting out to the social audit team, waned away eventually under mounting public pressure and resolve to conduct the social audit and exercise their right bestowed to them by existing policies.

Dr Sandeep Pandey

[Author is a noted social activist, receipient of Ramon Magsaysay Award (2002) for emergent leadership and heads National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM) in India]

editor

Please send your comments to editor@assamtimes.org

BY EDITOR

Witch hunting rerun in Chirang!

Police remand for Nagaon culprit

Candle lighting rally

ULFA condoles demise of SS Khaplang

Beef puts M'laya BJP in the red

ON THIS DAY

Road safety awareness programe held in Kokrajhar

Believers Eastern Church Satgaon Mission Diocese Cleanliness Drive

Why has Egg become Danger for Manipur?

Orthopaedic doctors to conduct media OPD clinic

Believers Eastern Church Satgaon Mission Diocese Organises Swachta Hi Sewa

