

AID Conference 2004

Minutes for Session Named Gujarat Cell

Date: May 30, 2004

Time From: 1.30 pm

To: 2.30pm

Minutes Taken By: SHAIKH MUJIBUR REHMAN

Number of attendees: 25

Audio/Visual Component? POWERPOINT.

Speaker/Panelist Names:

1. GAUTAM
2. SHEREBANU FROSH.
3. SUNITA
4. Srinath
5. Sudah

What they are speaking about:

GUJARAT

Main Presentation:

Sunita offered introduction about activists involved, and the key themes of Gujarat cell. Short term goals: resources, goals, study groups; documentation, construction, and positioning and launch of the "For Gujarat" cyber portal. Bridge between global Gujarat community with other India based Gujarat community. Setting up a platform which could communicate with Ngos, activists and intellectuals.

Long terms goals: survey of AID projects, keep Gujarat Initiative alive, collaborate through NGO network, cross-participation with others such as tribal cell, water and women and others.

Over view of Economics: Shree Banu: Economic Development versus Human Development, agricultural stagnation, Lopsided development. Regional variation, Resource problem for human development, Government is not interested in environment friendly development.

Trends in Industrial Development: does not address backwardness; exploitation without benefits; capital intensive from labor intensive; Urban unemployment is going up; showed statistics; imbalances in sectoral growth;

ADIVASI: ISSUES, PROJECTS AND RESOURCES:

15% of its population, Descriptions of various regions of adivasis concentration. Lower literary rate, huge unemployment among educate youths, Drought conditions; communal violence; Hindutva groups; Adivasis participated in 2002 riots; Approches of NGOs in addressing Adivasis; NGOs active: Dishaa, Bhasha Academy, PSS:

SRINATH: Communalism Issue

Past History: Ayodhya Jan 1993; Right wing politics is dominant since the mid-1990s; Exerpts from Human Rights Watch. Offered general trends of Gujarat violence, 2000 killed and 100,000 people displaced, Eliminate Hate campaign; connection with Earthquake relief; Description of various projects involved in Gujarat; Centre for Development and Sprat; The Future Plan; Engage with Teesta Setalwad of CJP, Shanti Avijan, Exit Strategy: Gujarat Community sends back significant, outsmart saffronized groups;

Gujarat Water: Sunita presented facts about water problems in Gujarat.; Urban-rural divide in water distribution; Projects and NGOs working on water problem.

Gautam described regions where all these groups are active; PSS survey and finding; Anandi and Bay Area 's chapter involved. BFSC Center. AID chapters involved: Bay Area, Clemson, Dallas, Duke, Raeigh, Pittsburg; Utthan and AID chapters Austin is also involved. Chapter Dallas is going to take interest in Water.

Divya talks about Varodara Group; Muslim women are encouraged to take part, Human empowerment is the main concern;

Gautam urged participants to sustain their interest on Gujarat even if it is not their direct interest because it would eventually enrich our understanding.

Observations: Even if it was a well attended event, and well presented one as well, there were no Q/A due to time constraint, but that would have made fruitful difference.