

21 cases of Serious Violence Prevention and Conflict Resolution in Bihar by Swaraj Peeth Gandhi Shanti Mitra



In Bihar Swaraj Peeth's Ganddhi Shanti Mitra (Nonviolent Peace-Maker, Peace-Keepers now nine districts, between July 2014 and July 2015, intervened in 21 cases that included communal caste and group conflicts which could have easily resulted in violence, deaths and communal,

caste and group riots. Two groups, one in Banka under the leadership of Bhola Prasad Yadav , a former 'Area Commander', and one in Bhagalpur dist under the leadership of Krishna Kinkar Mandal, a seasoned peace-maker, took out respectively one-week and three-week nonviolence march; one to change the popular attraction towards Moist radicalization among the youth; and, another to defuse huge tension every year resulting in bloody clashes in three blocks effected by Ganga and Kosi river monsoon-floods resulting in yearly disappearance and re-appearance of flood-fertilized lands (*diyara*), with some changed contours that cause ownership issues. In tribal Banka District (Bihar) villages, issues of social corruption and theft of public resources like electricity, besides land disputes that often see guns-blazing in this radicalized tribal area were handled by the Gandhi Shanti Mitras. It is worth a mention that Bhola Prasad Yadav, ever since he changed his path to nonviolence two years back, is so much overwhelmed by demand to intervene in such cases that he and his team are almost every day out intervening in disputes and problems. In a place in Darbhanga Dist a case of land dispute between temple and mosque almost similar to the one which erupted in communal riot between Muslims and Sikhs, killing of two and injury of 20 , scores of arrests and curfew in Saharanpur in July 2014, was handled deftly in nonviolent manner by Gandhi Shanti Mitra Ajit Kumar. A tense dispute over a passage for Dalits from a Brahmin-owned land, often triggering violent caste conflict ,was handled nonviolently by Amarkant Lal bringing a consensus resolution of the passage which , besides man secures safety for women. Otherwise they had to walk 6 Km extra, through jungle, during early morning and late evenings for going to work.

These are just to mention some typical cases out of twenty one. This four-day Nonviolence education-cum-training camp was for only those of our Gandhi Shanti Mitra who had during past one year nonviolently resolved serious situations of conflicts, violence and social-communal strife and polarization.

Most of the 26 of the Bihar Core Group Gandhi Shanti Mitra have attended several , at least two four-day Nonviolence study camps whereas half of them have been there attending for past five years. 14 year old school girls of Girls Nonviolence Group under mentorship of Dilip Kumar Zha, one of the initial Gandhi Shanti Sainik from Bihar, had conducted a successful nonviolent Girls' Education Campaign for upgrading their school up to high school standards so that they don't drop out after standard 5. Recently, when a new school building was being constructed in their village, one of the girls, 14, was asked by the head master, administration and the contractor to lay the foundation stone for the school, something never happens! Rajiv has visited twice this India- Nepal boarder village, conducted Swaraj Dialogue in winter of 2010, and stood by them during the Education Satyagraha campaign in 2012.