

Good from far, far from Good

German Parliamentarians' indepth exchange with CNI-SBSS surfaced the price the tribals & *Dalits* are paying to make India the next Economic Force in the world. Renate Blank of Christian Social Union (CSU) led the German delegation with Ingo Schmitt (Christian Democratic Union, CDU), Winfried Hermann (Alliance 90 /The Greens), Barbara Blum (Deutscher Bundestag) along with Ernst Stoeckl-Pukall the Economic & Commercial Counsellor with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany. The delegation was interested in gaining deeper understanding of the emerging role of Civil Society Organizations and the real socio-political scenario in India.

CNI-SBSS was represented by Dr. Shailendra Awale, Rev. Mrs. Manjiri Nanda and Bibhudutta Sahu. There was an in-depth exchange on the prevailing problems in the country with the contrasting perceptions of 'India Shining' and it being touted as the next economic force in the world. This has deflected from the existing reality that the tribals and *Dalits* have had to pay a heavy price: sustained social exclusion. The notion of 'development at any cost' has cost the tribals their ancestral homeland, resources and their identity and pushed them to the periphery of subsistence. CNI-SBSS supports the struggles for structural change in society through the pro-poor policies and radical strengthening of the grassroot democratizations of institutions. The attempt of the CNI-SBSS has been to network with organizations engaged in exposing the gulf between the formulation of policies and their implementation. Furthermore the needs of the marginalized communities for justice are being ignored. This is a struggle against centuries old practices of societal repression and the structures which are preventing the *Dalits* and *Adivasis*(tribals) from taking their rightful place in India.

German Corporate investment in India should address ethical concerns said Dr. Shailendra Awale. Metro Cash & Carry is coming to India in a big way and is affecting the unorganized retail sector. To this Ernst Stoeckl-Pukall replied that they are ensuring that the Metro Cash & Carry will give an opportunity for the local produce to get access to the global market. They will see to it that the local produce is outsourced by Metro Cash & Carry so that it benefits the local retailers.

The interaction veered towards the activities of CNI-SBSS amongst children as education is the foundation of development. Attention was drawn to CNI-SBSS's stellar role in the campaign on *Janadesh* (land rights movement), CBCLA's, local level struggles and the mainstreaming of congregations in the wider issues of the communities. It was emphasized quite clearly that the CNI-SBSS was engaged with communities in asserting their political rights and that its work was secular in nature.

The lunch meeting ended with the acceptance of CNI-SBSS publications and the recognition of the CNI-SBSS work and its inclusive nature by Renate Black.