



**Vikas
Adhyayan
Kendra**

Vikas Adhyayan Kendra (VAK) is a secular voluntary organisation established in 1981 to be an interface between Scholars, Academics and Social Activists; to initiate the process of social awakening through critical reflection and alternative discourse thereby contributing to strengthening people's struggles towards the goal of a just and more humane social order.

Focus

People are the subjects and makers of history. Their creative energies are expressed in their day-to-day activities as well as in their movements. These valuable experiences often, however, remain undiscovered and diffused. A crucial need is to crystallize and consolidate these experiences so as to lead towards a critical social theory.

VAK seeks to contribute to this process through the facilitation of a continuous dialogue and interaction between theoretical research and living experience of the people.

Geographically, though VAK activities focus primarily on the Region of Western India – Maharashtra, Goa and Gujarat – the orientation and spread of a number of its other activities are essentially of a national character. The choice of the region of Western India was primarily because of historical, economical, ecological and cultural similarities between them as well as the popular linkages across State boundaries.

Major Areas of Concern

- ⊕ Dalits and Adivasis
- ⊕ Gender Rights
- ⊕ Livelihood Security
- ⊕ Environment and Ecology
- ⊕ Religion and Society: Secularism and Communalism
- ⊕ Theory and Practice of Social Transformation
- ⊕ Ideology and Culture

Its major activities include:

- ⊕ Study & Research
- ⊕ Consultations
- ⊕ Publications
- ⊕ Documentation
- ⊕ Education
- ⊕ Direct Community Action
- ⊕ Campaigns & Advocacy

Study and Research

This activity is geared to:

- (i) identify the various emerging social trends and processes,
- (ii) understand and bring to light realities of the lives of the people,
- (iii) investigate traditional cultures, wisdom and knowledge systems and practices,
- (iv) critically contribute to the search for alternatives.

Consultations

This activity is designed to facilitate free exchange of ideas amongst activists, and between activists and social thinkers, and amongst social thinkers themselves.

Education

Education, aims to provide analytical and other related skills to activists in order to understand the socio-political realities, and motivate them towards action for the goal of social transformation.

National Forums

Dalit Intellectual's Collective (DIC)

Dalit Intellectual's Collective (DIC), established in 1997 is essentially a dialogue and solidarity forum. DIC's objective is to interrogate and challenge the prevailing hegemonic discourses and evolve a shared understanding of the Dalit universe that seeks

the redefinition of the Dalit-self, both at the theoretical and political realm.

Cultural Studies Group (CSG)

Cultural Studies group is a National Group. It brings together critics, social scientists, cultural analysts, practicing artists, and cultural activists. The major activity is an annual national meeting devoted to a particular theme and besides CSG organises workshops on culture for social / cultural activists and academics.

Publications

- ✦ **“Facts Against Myths”**, a bi-monthly factsheet to expose and dispel the prevailing myths, stereo-types and propaganda perpetuated by the ruling bloc with particular reference to the prevailing hegemonic discourse of the neo-liberal paradigm, communal, caste and other divisive ideologies and practices.
- ✦ **“Factsheet”**, a quarterly journal on Dalit concerns and issues aims to combat the deficiency of information available on Dalits and Adivasis and the skewed nature of this limited information. It serves as resource material for social activists.
- ✦ **“Dalit Bulletin”**, is a quarterly journal. It was conceptualised as a vehicle to communicate more effectively with the activists, media, and mainstream society on Dalit and Adivasi issues. It is also a means to network, lobby and share experiences of struggles and connecting people both locally, regionally and nationally.
- ✦ **“Journal on Dalit Question”**: This journal aims at furthering the ongoing debates and discussions to clarify and arrive at a better understanding of the various dimensions of the Dalit Question and the future of the Dalit Politics, through a process of

theoretical enquiry and critical reflections. It would also develop alternative discourses to the challenges of the prevailing hegemonic discourses and develop a shared perspective on the Dalit Universe.

Books

Books consists of relevant research and study material on contemporary socio political issues: Selected papers presented at the various workshops and seminars organised by VAK forms the material for publication.

Occasional Publications

“Occasional Publications”, comprises of dossiers, reports, monographs, backgrounders, etc.

e-Publication

e-VIKALP is a quarterly theoretical journal on topical issues. It critically analyses the present socio-political context to create awareness and informed discussion on socio-political scenario and on social issues. e-Publication also provides information and analysis on current issues and concerns. Refer Website: www.vakindia.org

Alternative Fairs

“Alternative Fairs” are organised events to create alternative space to exhibit and distribute a wide range of development literature, video-films, crafts and artefacts that activists, action groups, academics and concerned public do not have either the opportunity or access to.

Documentation

The documentation covers a number of topics, compiled from varied sources. The documents classified and stored in our retrieval system are accessible. The other level of documentation is computer based. Information is collected from various sources from the net, compiled, classified and stored in an

easily accessible manner. The documentation is open to all users.

Direct Community Action

These activities encompass work with women and children, health education and care as well as non-formal and supplementary education for children.

Campaigns, Advocacy and Coalition Building

This entails developing and promoting a more focused advocacy, lobbying and campaigning strategies ranging from Dalit to gender rights and from rights of minorities and children to the livelihood struggles of the people, suppression of human and democratic rights and erosion of cultural values. The programme also seeks to promote and strengthen civil society organisations in building solidarity-action networks on critical issues affecting the lives and "rights" of the people.

For further details contact:



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