

International Labour Day Celebration at PAX Odhav....

On 1st May on the eve of International Workers Day, St Xavier's Social Service Society -SXSSS in collaboration with Aajivika Bureau organized a seminar at the premises of PAX Society, Odhav on Challenges faced by the Labourers working with small scale industry and at the construction sites in Odhav, Ahmedabad.

73 people (21 women and 52 men) working in small factories, at construction sites, domestic works and daily wage work, took part in the above seminar. Besides the director of SXSSS, Fr Isaac Rumao SJ the occasion was graced by the



eminent labour lawyers Adv. Mr V K Rathod, Adv. Mr Pankaj Zhapdia and Adv Mr Ranjeet Kory. The anchor of the program, Mr Bhargav Oza of Aajivika Bureau welcomed the participants and the invited resource persons and began the seminar by reading the preamble of the India's Constitution.

Fr Isaac Rumao SJ, in his inaugural address highlighted the history and significance of the workers day. He also briefly mentioned about the difficulties and challenges faced by the migrant workers during the pandemic Covid-19 and how this led the Society of Jesus' South Asian conference to start the program called Migrants Assistance and Information Network -MAIN in 13



states of India including Gujarat to address the difficulties and challenges faced by the Migrant Workers in their respective workplaces. He also announced of starting the Free Legal Clinic at PAX Office, Odhav to help Migrant Workers to get their problems resolved with the help of expert lawyers. At the end of the program the Free Legal Clinic at PAX Office was inaugurated by the director of SXSSS Fr Isaac Rumao SJ.

Advocates Mr V K Rathod, Pankaj Z and Ranjeet Kory talked about the provisions under various acts like Minimum Wage Act 1948, Employees' State Insurance Act 1948, Factory Act 1948, Building & other Construction Workers Act 1996, Unorganized workers social security Act 2008 which ensure safety and wellbeing of the workers in the small-scale industries, factories, at construction sites and in domestic work. They shared of their experiences working with cases like workmen compensation, wage theft, accidents at the workplaces, harassment at the workplace, lack of social security and Employees Provident Fund. The lawyers urged the migrant workers to



register themselves with the state governments labour commission department so that in case any accident happens to them at their respective workplaces then their relatives can easily process the paper work to get full compensation under the law. They lamented that many migrant



workers do not register themselves with the competent authorities thus are not able to get due benefits under the law in the time of major accidents.

The advocates urged the participants to be part of the workers unions so that if they encounter any problem at their respective workplaces then the workers union can fight along with them for securing justice for them. The helpline number of MAIN was shared with all present and the migrant workers were invited to make use of the Free Legal Clinic started at PAX premises in Odhav.

