

# Minutes of IGC- WSF India meeting

## held at Chennai on 13-14<sup>th</sup> October 2023

1. **Introduction of Participants:** The meeting began with the introduction of the participants. 52 participants participated in the meeting.

### 2. Sharing by States

The highlight of the sharing by the states was the announcement of dates of different state social forum programs. The dates are as under:

1	Tamil Nadu Social Forum	28 October
2	Jharkhand State Social Forum	30-31 October
3	Bihar State Social Forum	6 November
4	Maharashtra Social Forum	18-19 November
5	Odisha State Social Forum	18-19 November ( dates under discussion)
6	Kerala State Social Forum	25-26 November
7	India Social Forum	2-4 December.

- Since there is some overlap in the dates of the Maharashtra and Odisha state social forums and the Maharashtra process has taken a longer road ahead, the IGC suggested the Odisha State Social Forum to consider postponing their dates. The Odisha team will share the fresh dates soon.
- Representatives of all the state forums mentioned above shared the details of their preparations. Brief information on the state-level processes in other states (UP, Gujrat, Karnataka, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, West Bengal etc) was also shared.
- Participants from all states are invited to these individual state social forums.
- Responding to a question, it was clarified that, WSF-ISF processes encourage participating organisations to organise their own events during the ISF, some events (plenaries) may directly be organised by the organising committee (which itself is constituted by representatives of various organisations and campaigns.)
- The state social forums were suggested to invite, as **speakers**, other eminent social workers, academics, dignitaries and activists and not limit themselves to inviting IGC members only.
- An important suggestion was about making the state social forums **more inclusive**. It was cautioned that participation in these programmes should not be limited to a few organisations and streams. It should be broad-based and social movements and mass organisations from various secular, democratic and rights-based streams should be engaged, and their participation be facilitated by the organising committees.

Representatives from the Bihar State Social Forum and hosts of the India Social Forum at Patna shared in detail about the preparations for ISF. They thanked the India General Council-WSF for giving the opportunity to Bihar for organising India Social Forum. Historical importance and values originating in Bihar were mentioned such as the place of early democratic republics (Vaishali), being the Land of Lord Buddha and Mahavir, Ashoka and

Nalanda University (the millennium-old educational centre) and it being the land of even modern-day democratic and social-political movements. Not only in terms of the cultural, social and political environment in the country, the challenges are also there in terms of financial resources in organising such programmes. The Bihar team also requested other state teams and IGC to extend all kinds of support to the Bihar team for the successful organisation of the India Social Forum.

### 3. Website

- The website was shared, and its live screen was shown. Tab related to the registration of the organisations and participants was also shared. The website is still a work in progress, A lot of corrections and additions have to be made. Participants were requested to expedite the registration from their states.
- More phone numbers for the secretariat need to be mentioned in the website contact section.
- The colour in the photograph on the Top of the homepage needs to change.
- Modification is needed in the address given on the website.
- Title should be India Social Forum and not Indian Social Forum
- Names and numbers of convenors of different committees will be given on the website. Names of all committee members will also be given.
- The main contact number on the website will not have any name.
- WhatsApp groups related to WSF will continue to remain one of the most used channels of communication, so, everyone should keep using them.
- The website link is: <https://wsf-india.in/>
- All state teams are requested to send photographs and news for this website.
- Logo and slogan were discussed but the decision is to keep them as they are.

### 4. Facebook account & Twitter account

- Links to the Facebook account and Twitter accounts were shown and a request was made to popularise them.
- Authorised persons from the states can send the material for posting on the Facebook and Twitter accounts to the Patna secretariat.
- Link to the Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/world.social.forum.india?mibextid=ZbWKwL>

### 5. Programme Structure

- Venue:** The venue of the programme of the India Social Forum is Bihar Vidyapeeth on the banks of the river Ganga.
- Plenaries:** Topics of the plenaries for the first two days were agreed. 4-5 speakers from across the country could speak in the plenary session.
- A suggestion made about **inviting political party leaders** to speak in the concluding session was not agreed.
- After a lot of discussions, the Programme and Methodology Committee was suggested to **relook at the entire 3rd day's programme** and redesign it. Some questions and comments in this regard are:
  - Rally time:** 1 hour is less. Rally and conclusion programme need 2 – 3 hours' time.

- b. Are we **marching** from Vidyapeeth to Gandhi Maidan and will we have a stage and conclusion programme there?
  - c. Shall we march from Gandhi Maidan to Vidyapeeth and have the concluding session there?
  - d. The march can have mobile cultural programmes and people in their traditional dresses (suggestion).
  - e. The concluding session should have all **state social forum representatives as speakers.**
- v. **Possible Speakers for plenaries:** Participants suggested some names for speakers which were noted for further action and exploration: Bhanu Pratap Mehta, Medha Patkar, Ruth Manorama, Vandana Shiva, P Sainath, Raghuram Rajan, Arundhati Roy, Javed Akhtar, Swara Bhaskar, Aruna Roy, PV Rajagopal, Dr Arjun Karki ( Nepal), Akhil Gogoi, Kancha Illaiayah, S K Thorat, Prashant Bhushan, Kannan, Wrestlers team, Prafull Samantray, Disha Ravi, Mira Sanghmitra, ( People can continue to suggest names) Neha Singh Rathore ( for cultural evenings)
- The Programme and Organising Committee will finalise the speakers and send invitations to them.
  - Some speakers/ victims can be adjusted in parallel sessions as well and for the second plenary out of the above list.
  - Controversial personalities shall not be invited as speakers.

## VI. Parallel Sessions (seminars/workshops/trainings etc):

- No. of parallel sessions could be kept around 50-80 with the flexibility to increase. It was agreed that logistics would be arranged accordingly if there were more applications for organising parallel sessions.
- Duration of a parallel session could be 1.5 hrs. If any organisation wants to organise longer sessions, they can apply for two parallel sessions in continuation at the same hall.
- The parallel sessions will be organised in the forenoon of 2<sup>nd</sup> December, the forenoon and afternoon of 3<sup>rd</sup> December and the forenoon of 4<sup>th</sup> December.
- For the **current list of proposed topics** for plenaries and parallel sessions, please refer to **Annexure 1** of this document. The topics for parallel sessions are only suggestive and the applicant organisations can refine a particular topic under discussion with the Programme and Methodology Committee (PMC). The IGC agreed to allow flexibility to the PMC in deciding topics of parallel sessions (adding, deleting or editing in the current list) keeping in mind the 8 agreed themes mentioned in the ISF vision document and demands from the applicant organisations.
- **Translators** for Hindi and English will be provided by the organising committee. State language translators will be brought in by state teams.

## 6. Fees

- a) Registration for individuals: Rs 100, which can be reduced on request in case of very needy groups.
- b) Registration of Organisations: Rs 500

- c) Registration for events: For a 1.5-hour session, Rs 1000 (up to 100 participants) and Rs 2000 (for 100 and 200 participants). For events involving more than 200 participants, the PMC will decide later. For 3-hour sessions, Rs 2500 and Rs 5000 (up to 100 people and 100- 200 people, respectively).
- d) Stalls: Rs 2000 for 10 ft x 10ft, Rs 5000 for 10ft x 20ft space for non-commercial stalls. For commercial (food etc) stalls, the rates will be decided later.
- e) Registrations for stalls/ parallel sessions **will be closed on 31<sup>st</sup> October. It can be extended up to 7<sup>th</sup> November.**

7. **Souvenir:** The idea of publishing a Souvenir was agreed. An editorial committee will be constituted. It will have 3 perspective papers on the 8 themes of ISF. It may have about 40 advertisements for Rs 10,000 each spread over 20 pages. This will be used as a fundraising tool as well. Non-commercial organisations can also advertise. Each state was requested to mobilise 1-2 advertisements.

#### 8. Other Points

- Stalls should be eco-friendly and green protocol should be followed in the programme including cloth banners and no plastic use.
- IGC advised less active states to expedite their social forum processes. IGC members would reach out to less active states and support their processes.
- The media and communication committee needs to work faster.
- States can publish the flyers ( and any other material of ISF) in their state languages and ensure that the contents and positions in the ISF material are not compromised in the translations.
- The PMC will meet every Friday at 7 p.m. for updates.
- The Organising Committee will also meet weekly. Day and time will be shared soon. It should have at least one member from each of the active states.

The meeting ended with thanks to the Tamil Nadu organising team and all the participants with a commitment to work harder to make the India Social Forum a success.

(Email ID of Patna secretariat: [wsf.india.2023@gmail.com](mailto:wsf.india.2023@gmail.com) ( to be used for applying to book parallel sessions and stalls)

## Annexure 1

<b>India Social Forum, 2-4 December 2023 , Patna</b>	
<b>Plenary Sessions</b>	
<b>Dec 2nd</b>	“Democracy with Dignity, Justice and Peace” (2 PM to 5 PM)
<b>Dec 3rd</b>	“Future Strategies for Pro-People Socio-Economic Change” (4 PM - 6 PM)
<b>Dec 4th</b>	“Patna Declaration or Vision 2023” (To Be Confirmed - under discussion)
<b>Note</b>	<b>Suggested topics for Parallel Sessions (session time 1.5 hrs)</b>
	Topics for parallel sessions can be refined by the organisation proposing to organise the event on that subject in agreement with the Programme Committee. This list is flexible and new topics may be considered if suggested by the participating organisations and found appropriate by the Programme and Methodology Committee
	Please write to <a href="mailto:wsf.india.2023@gmail.com">wsf.india.2023@gmail.com</a> for booking events.
<b>Dec 2nd</b>	<b>Forenoon parallel session topics are being identified</b>
<b>Dec 3rd</b>	<b>Forenoon Sessions</b>
	1 Indian Democracy: Possibilities and Challenges
	2 Women's Rights: Challenges and Future Strategies
	3 Dalit Rights: Challenges and Future Strategies
	4 Adivasi Rights: Challenges and Future Strategies
	5 Agriculture and Farmers: Challenges and Future Strategies
	6 Labour Rights: Challenges and Future Strategies
	7 Drive Away Hate and Unite India
	8 Minority Rights: Challenges and Future Strategies
	9 Child Rights and Safeguard Mechanisms
	10 Emerging challenges for youth in India
	11 Fisherfolk Communities: Challenges and Future Strategies
	12 Protecting Environment
	13 Documentary Film Shows
<b>Dec 3rd</b>	<b>Afternoon sessions</b>
	1 Inclusive Education: Possibilities and Challenges
	2 Inclusive Development: Possibilities and Challenges
	3 Local Self Governance: Possibilities and Challenges
	4 Forest Rights: Challenges and Future Strategies
	5 Land Rights: Challenges and Future Strategies
	6 Unorganised Sector Workers: Challenges and Future Strategies
	7 Right to Decent Housing: Possibilities and Challenges
	8 Climate Change and Natural Disasters: Mitigation and Risk Management
	9 Inclusive Rural Reconstruction: Possibilities and Challenges
	10 Right to Food

11	Right to Health
12	Respecting Cultural Diversity and Resisting anti-people culture
13	Peoples' Science
14	Documentary Film Shows
<b>Dec 4th</b>	<b>Forenoon Sessions</b>
1	From the Prism of Manipur: Understanding State Violence
2	Gandhi Ji and Dr Ambedkar: Their Relevance Today
3	International Politics and Economics: Our United Response
4	Right to Employment/ Work, MGNREGA and Urban Employment Guarantee
5	Role of Media in Strengthening Democracy
6	Sexual and Gender Minorities: Dignity and Participation
7	Electoral, police and Judicial Reforms
8	Displacement due to mining and development
9	Right to Water and Living with Rivers
10	Caste Elimination and Caste Census
11	Civil Society Sector: Rights and Challenges
12	Inclusive City planning and rights of urban poor
13	Documentary Film Shows

<b>Note</b>	If some organisation wants to organise a longer session, it can book two 1.5-hour sessions in continuation.
	<b>Fee for registration</b>
	Individuals: Rs 100; Organisations: Rs 500 ( for being a participant in the ISF.)
	<b>For event registration</b>
	Rs 1000 for 1.5 Hrs with less than 100 participants,
	Rs 2500 for 3 Hrs with less than 100 participants,
	Rs 2000 for 1.5 Hrs with 100 - 200 participants,
	Rs 5000 for 3 Hrs with 100 - 200 participants,
	For events with More than 200 participants, the proposing organisations can write at the email given in the website.
	<b>Booking of stalls</b>
	10 ft X 10 ft: Rs 2000
	10 ft x 20 ft: Rs 5000