

A Profile of Amod K. Kanth, IPS

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Mr. Amod K. Kanth is a social scientist, institutional development expert and a known police officer with more than 33 years of experience in the social sector, pro-active policing, urban development, pro-poor policy analysis and advocacy to serve the best interests of the marginalized groups. In the past 19 years, Mr. Kanth has raised a national level institution, Prayas as the founder Secretary, with convergence of government agencies, UN systems and civil society action groups from its modest beginning with underprivileged children. This institution has now emerged as a model good practice with national and international recognitions in child development, socio-economic empowerment of the marginalized youth and women. He is an Indian Police Service Officer of 1974 batch – AGMU Cadre and the past three assignments being Chief Vigilance Officer of Delhi Jal Board, Director General of Police in the State Governments of Goa and Arunachal Pradesh. As an outstanding police officer, he holds a track record of multiple achievements as a nationally known investigator of some of the most difficult and sensational crimes, for combating terrorism and communal forces, narcotic drugs and human trafficking, and being the recipient of President's Police Medals for Meritorious Service, Distinguished Service and for Gallantry.

Mr. Kanth has carried out a number of most contemporary action researches in urban homelessness, inclusive governance, child abuse, juvenile justice and contributed towards the relevant policy formulations at national and international levels. He has worked in several technical policies and projects in south-east Asia region (India, Nepal and Bangladesh) on critical issues of child protection / juvenile justice, trafficking of human beings, education for the marginalized children sponsored by USAID / UNDP / CIDA / ILO / NORAD/UNDP-Gol project on Urban Poverty and has been recognized as a model public servant for counter-trafficking by the US State Department. He has served in many policy groups as social development expert and policy analyst: Member of the Drafting Committee of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MSJ&E), Government of India (Gol), Core Working Group of the Planning Commission, Central Advisory Body of the MSJ&E, Drafting Committee for Policies on Urban Homeless and Delhi Master Plan, Govt.'s Committee of Street Vendors, Ministry of Urban Development, Gol and Policy Group of the Central Advisory Body on Counter-Trafficking, Ministry of HRD, Gol. In the recent past, he participated in the Path breaking Conference on Counter-Trafficking Laws, 2003 in Washington DC hosted by the US Secretary of State and was honoured as the moderator of the core session on international laws in counter-trafficking.

He was involved as the Team Leader of the National level research study on Child Abuse (the Indian chapter of the UN research study on Violence against Children) and the UNODC sponsored project on Victims' Assistance and Law Enforcement in Counter Trafficking besides a number of action projects, such as, USAID sponsored programme on Alternative Education.

Mr. Kanth has rich experiences in policy advocacy, action research and programming for pro-poor development initiatives in India. His core interest lies in institutional development and cooperation, creating livelihood options, social service and social action for the vulnerable groups and programme management. He has played catalytic roles in promoting various development institutions within and outside the government for social change and socio-economic transformation. His latest understanding on the socio-economic dynamics and challenges of Bihar (during his 22 months study leave from police service) has led him to set-up a number of action projects for the marginalized children, youth and women in areas of alternative education, livelihood options and child protection in the districts of Motihari, Samastipur, Nalanda, Bagaha and Patna with promotion of local initiatives and participation of the state government.

Selected References

- As the Project Advisor of the Action Aid supported project, Delhi for Change, he carried out action studies on Urban Poverty and Homelessness, created shelters and rehabilitative programmes for 1,40,000 homeless in the 14 million population of Delhi. He also founded institutional machinery, a Joint Apex Committee to which he served as the Vice-Chairman with Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), NGOs and State Departments of Government of NCT Delhi besides his unique contribution to the drafting of national policy on the subject (2003-04).
- As the Chief Functionary of Prayas, he has been instrumental in creating a national resource centre: Institute of Juvenile Justice, supported by Government of Norway and Government of India for action programmes for the marginalized children, youth, women and policy research activities in India and outside.

Prayas, the institution founded by Mr. Kanth has now emerged as the national resource centre and a lead capacity-building organization for different governments and NGOs besides the role it has been playing in partnership with USAID sponsored programme on alternative education for at-risk children. This institution directly supports more than 50,000 children and lakhs of families in poverty with a package of integral services of quality education, skill training, health care, shelter and protection against abuse and livelihood for empowerment of marginalized youth and women in seven states / UT in India, namely, Delhi, Bihar, Gujarat, Assam, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh and Haryana. The apex body of Prayas, Institute of

Juvenile Justice has become a voice to reckon with on issues of juvenile justice, trafficking of children and women, alternative education, voluntary sector and development, economic empowerment and rehabilitation of the marginalized youth and women. Prayas' model practices have now received accolades and recognitions by UNICEF and USAID besides Government of India.

- Served as a member of the High Power Committee for Investigation of Custodial Deaths in Juvenile Homes and policy formulation for institutional reforms in Government of NCT Delhi.
- As part of his deep concern on poverty issues, he has set-up an Institute of Economic Empowerment to address sustainable livelihood options for the marginalized women and other vulnerable groups in all its operating states. This institution has been actively involved in promoting an integrated approach of development of skill-based training (both farm and non-farm sectors) micro-credit, self-help groups and marketing of goods and services with a focus on developing community-based people's institutions.
- Set-up the Department of Elementary Education, MHRD, GOI sponsored institution; Institute of People's Education (Jan Shikshan Sansthan), public-private partnership programme on vocational training, economic empowerment of youth & women and has been on the Board of Management as the founder Vice-Chairman.

Relevant Recognitions and Distinctions

- Received recognitions for pro-active policing and outstanding services: President's Police Medals and Gallantry Award for saving thousands of victims of riots in Delhi.
- Felicitated with Outstanding Social Worker on Child Welfare awarded by Government of NCT Delhi.
- Recognized as a Model Public Servant to the vulnerable children of India and the institution, Prayas as one of the world's best practices by US State Department in the Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP), 2005. The report mentions the pioneering work of Mr. Kanth through Prayas in Childcare for protection, rehabilitation and social re-integration at-risk, particularly the trafficking survivors in India. He is identified as one of the modern-day heroes fighting against menace of slavery and poverty.
- Conferred the prestigious-Kumarappa-Reckless Award for his innovative contribution to legal reforms for children by the National Association of Criminology.

Selected Publications

- ◌ Edited the book, *Neglected Child: Changing Perspective*, Prayas and UNICEF, New Delhi, 1995.
- ◌ Unpublished report of the action research study on urban homelessness, 'Delhi for Change', Homeless in an inclusive city
- ◌ Article on children in shadows-child labour in the unorganized sector, National Labour Institute, Ministry of Labour, GOI
- ◌ An article on Deprivation and Poverty amidst Growth: a Situational Analysis of the Indian Mass below Poverty Line (BPL).
- ◌ Role of the Voluntary Sector in National Development, paper presented at the Prime Minister's conference at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, 2003.
- ◌ Voluntary Sector and Social Development: Role of Indian Diaspora, article presented in the Pravasi Bhartiya Conference, New Delhi, 2003.
- ◌ Article on Voluntary Sector and Universal Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI and UNESCO, New Delhi, January 2004.
- ◌ Children of Lesser God: An Analysis of National Budgetary Allocation on Children in India, Hindu, 2003
- ◌ Socio-Economic analysis of Street Children and the Role of the Voluntary Welfare Agencies in their Social Reintegration
- ◌ Paper on Perspective of Child Labour in India.
- ◌ Globalization, Vulnerability and Child Labour Indian Context: published in the journal of the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, New Delhi, 2004
- ◌ Child Trafficking in India: Care, Protection & Juvenile Justice, paper presented in the National Seminar on Trafficking in Human Beings organized by The Ministry of Home Affairs in association with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) & the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), October 2005.
- ◌ Paper on Rights of the Child and Juvenile Justice, November, 2000
- ◌ Paper on Justice for Juveniles & Children in Context of India, May, 2002
- ◌ Paper on Juvenile Justice Act Implementation: Prayas Experiences, December, 2002
- ◌ Paper on Juvenile in Conflict with Law, 2003
- ◌ Paper on Civil Society Organization (CSO) Governance : On the Path from Marginalized to Centre Stage, September, 2007
- ◌ Paper on Trafficking for Forced Labour : Role of NGOs, October, 2007