

BY GOLDIE ARANHA

In an increasingly globalised environment, information has been recognised as the key to development. And for all of you who believe that such information should be relevant, easy to read, current and in-depth, The Centre for Education & Documentation Centre (CED) at Colaba is the place for you.

For over 25 years now, CED has been a crucial source of information on contemporary social issues like human rights, civil society, gender, environment and development for more than 3,000 users including students, journalists, NGO leaders, activists, campaign organisations and concerned professionals.

What started of in 1975 during the emergency, as a modest documentation attempt by Mr. John D'Souza was registered three years later as Centre for Education and Documentation in the voluntary sector with the help of Mr. Pradeep Guha. Today, this NGO has a dedicated staff who have been culling information on a daily basis from newspapers, magazines, journals, pamphlets and notes as well as books monographs and manuals.

What is unique to CED, is their Clippings' Files section which represents contemporary history particularly of development and Human Rights. This section is by far the most popular. "A variety of people who are interested in informing themselves about social trends from a critical standpoint, such as students, teachers, researchers and activists from several states in India, media personnel as well as others, use this facility extensively," said Mr. D'Souza the founder and executive director of CED. "We get around 25 students on an average per work-

CED: Mumbai's very own Doccentre

This centre is a crucial source for any individual seeking information on any issue



Rekha Bhimani (left), a freelancer and other students regularly browse through the Clippings' files at the CED library.

ing day," he adds.

Some of their documentation particularly on issues like Bhopal, Ayodhya, the opening of the economy, is only available at CED. Those who want to reproduce the article in their projects, can acquire a photocopy of the clipping priced at Rs. 4 from the Centre itself.

While books have a longer turnaround time, reports are the next best windows to contemporary affairs, especially in NGO-active sectors. CED's collection of reports authored by NGOs and government bodies mainly containing policy, analysis and situation exposes on critical issues of the day. For the more serious or long-term researcher, they have back issues of over 100 journals and NGO newsletters. Apart from their library of books they also have an AV Documentation section consisting of CDs and videos, especially documentaries on various issues.

"My husband and I are making a documentary film on child labour for which we have been doing a lot of research work from CED," says Rekha Bhimani, a freelancer who has been making use of CED's facilities for ten years now. As for Tresha Guha a BMM student of K.C. College, CED's Clippings Files have been of immense help to her for most of her projects. CED's information base, documentation and classification systems have been consistent over time which can be seen through its popularity as an information hub for alternative material.

For those who are interested, life membership is Rs. 2,000, annual library membership is Rs. 350 with a Rs. 200 deposit. There is also an Life Institutional Membership is Rs. 7,000 and the annual membership is Rs. 1,000. For additional information, contact: 202 0019.