

Deaf Leaders team visits Sri Lanka

Staff Reporter

COIMBATORE: Members of Deaf Leaders, a non-Governmental organisation (NGO) working for the welfare of people with hearing impairment in Coimbatore, recently visited Sri Lanka as part of their efforts to empower people with hearing impairment.

K.Murali, Director of Deaf Leaders, and Kajal Dhaswan, a young achiever from New Delhi, who is hearing impaired, visited schools exclusively for the hearing impaired and associations that employed people with the disability in Sri Lanka to assess the situation in the country and establish links

- The team conducted workshops in schools
- Visits rural areas to learn about facilities provided for the hearing impaired

with the institutions. They also visited rural areas to learn about the facilities provided for the hearing impaired.

They conducted workshops and awareness programmes in schools.

The programme, "Deaf Empowerment through Education and Training Leadership in Youth," was aimed at creating awareness on hearing impairment and the importance of education and personality de-

velopment among the youth.

"Only 10 per cent of the hearing impaired are doing well in their academics. It is important to create awareness among the youth about the need to persevere to continue their education," Mr.Murali said. The problems such as lack of reading and writing skills, self-esteem, poor general knowledge and social skills were common among people with the disability. Unlike other disabilities,

the hearing impaired also had poor learning abilities.

Dearth of teachers who could be role models to the youth with hearing impairment was also a challenge. "No or very few activities in the classrooms which did not allow them chances of critical thinking led to very poor social skills too," he observed.

He advised the managements of the schools for the hearing impaired to provide sufficient teaching materials including books and an atlas. "Some schools even forbid the use of sign language. Every school for the hearing impaired should promote the use of sign language," Mr.Murali said.