

Snehalaya flays media for distorted news presentation



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Reacting to a recent news item published in media about a few children who fled away from Snehalaya, Dhirenpara, Guwahati on August 17 last, Fr.Lukose Cheruvalel SDB, the founder director of Snehalaya, through a press release has clarified that the news was not based on the facts and was biased. The children had heard about the glamorous life in Mumbai from a companion of theirs, who had visited Snehalaya recently from Mumbai after which they became curious and wanted to visit Mumbai. They planned to go Mumbai and stay in the hostel of their friend. Since they had no money they decided to travel short distances by train. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) jawans stopped them at Bongaigaon and Snehalaya was informed about it the following day.

The release says, when they were caught by the police out of panic they tried to tell some lies to justify their misadventure. Their statement was blown up by media without going to the root of the news, which was uncalled for and extremely hurting. It adds, Snehalaya is an NGO giving residential care to vagrant children and it is its policy to see that they are not in any way abused. It believes in the rights of children for protection. It is not its policy to use corporal punishment.

The release further adds that the vagrant children running away from institutions for them is no news at all. This was the tenth time for the leader of the group and they were brought back all the times. Snehalaya does not exclude any child. It believes in the preciousness of each child. Hundreds of vagrant children have been reformed. All efforts are done to reform them. Their lies do not bring any news value.

A Snehalaya staff was sent to Bongaigaon to bring back those children with care and affection. They came back and are happy in their abode here uncared of damages the media made for Snehalaya.

Fr Lukose has appealed to the media to join hands with the NGO in promoting the welfare of children and their rights rather than indulge in faulty reporting without having clear understanding of child abuse, child labor and child rights. He appreciated the positive role played by media in the past and wished to visit Snehalaya with open mind, the release said.

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