

INSTITUTE OF DIALOGUE WITH CULTURES AND RELIGIONS (IDCR)

The Institute of Dialogue with Cultures and religions has been pursuing its three-year research project on Inter-religious violence in Coimbatore in its final stage. It culminated in a National Research Seminar on March 10-11, 2007 on *Communal Violence and Social Healing*. Sociologists, social activists and psychologists explored the avenues of promoting social healing in situations of violence, broadening the field to include other experiences of similar violence in Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad. The results of the field research as well as the papers presented in the seminars last year and this year will go into a book to be published soon. Talking of books, the Institute released two books at its seminar in March 2007: *Inakkalavram* by Fr. Viaguladasan, responsible for our library and documentation centre on the theme of communal violence and *Constructing Dalit Identity* by Dr. Joe Arun, our Executive Director, which explores how inter-caste conflict helps the Dalits to construct a new social identity for themselves. Three more books are in the pipe line for later publication. The Institute is starting another research project, which will run through 2007 to 2010. This will focus on inter-caste violence in Tamil Nadu between Dalits and other castes in two different places in the north and the south of the state. The Institute has now five research scholars who have registered for their Ph.D. Their research topics include: the impact of modern media culture on the youth, the training of religious specialists in various religions, the impact of world religions on tribal cultures and the role of the social sciences in religious reflection. The Institute is exploring possibilities of collaboration with other institutes with a similar orientation: The *Centre for the Study of Society and Secularism*, Mumbai and the *International Centre for Research, Interfaith Relations and Reconciliation*, Hyderabad.