

Economic and livelihood freedom for the rich has increased but not for the poor. In the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World Report 2006, India's rank has improved from 80 in 1990 to 53 in 2004. This overall increase in economic freedom has not been the same across all classes. The poor still live under the draconian license-permit-quota raj, as the system of extensive government intervention in India is known. Today setting up a factory or a call centre requires no government license. But anyone wanting to run a tea-stall or to become a street hawker or a cycle rickshaw puller or to work as a railway porter requires a license. For entry-level professions that need low skills and little capital, licenses are still mandatory. According to the 'National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector', about 77 percentage of the Indian population is engaged in the unorganised or informal sector to make their living. The sector contributes to more than half of the national income. A very large number of vocations and professions are undertaken in the informal sector, from Street Hawkers, to Cycle Rickshaw pullers, to Barbers and Dhaba operators. They can be aptly called street entrepreneurs.

One of the biggest chunks of Unorganised Sector is Street Vendors who are under constant exploitation by the authorities and compelled to live under forced poverty. Street vendors are often those who are unable to get regular jobs in the remunerative formal sector on account of their low level of education and skills. However, they contribute significantly in the budget of every household specifically middle class family by providing 'affordable' as well as 'convenient' services by their self generated means of employment by vending or hawking. It has been seen that public authorities often regard street vendors as a nuisance and as encroachers of sidewalks and pavements and do not appreciate the valuable services that street vendors render to the common man. Street Vendors have also existed since ancient time and are part of social and cultural fabric of India. They are the one who are keeping the local art, culture and tradition alive for a long time and create the mood of festivity to make India, Incredible India.

As a part of the campaign we plan to work with active responsible citizens of Jaipur for sensitizing the common masses. In this regard we are plan to organize a **Human Chain on June 29, 2010** at **Jal Mahal** at **6 PM** with the participation of active civilians of Jaipur to raise a voice for the poor section of the society to provide them a legal status and to make them an advantaged group of the services that the other formal sector receives as the part of the society. Your active participation will highly encourage and motivate people to work for this noble cause with more enthusiasm and would also bring attention of other civil society organizations to come out for this noble cause of protecting livelihood of urban poor.

Please Contact

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Centre for Civil Society (CCS) is an independent, non-profit, research and educational organization devoted to improving the quality of life for all citizens of India by reviving and reinvigorating civil society. CCS has been established as a research and advocacy organisation from 15 August 1997. Since then it has worked with policy makers, media, the youth and the public to bring about meaningful changes in the areas of education, governance, livelihood, and environment. Its motto is '*Social Change through Public Policy*'. Eminent citizens and academics like *Gurcharan Das, Swaminathan Aiyar, Jagdish Bhagwati, Meghnad Desai, Kirit Parikh, Isher Ahluwalia, and Suresh Tendulkar* among others have been associated with CCS. CCS, recently ranked in the **Top 10 Think-Tanks** in Asia by the *University of Pennsylvania*. Please visit www.ccs.in for more information.

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In 2004, CCS brought out a book that documented some of the entry-level professions in great detail titled *Law, Liberty, and Livelihood: Making a Living on the Street*. The book and the related advocacy work won an international award in 2005, the **Templeton Freedom Award** for Free Market Solutions to Poverty. In 2008, CCS studied the regulations on the entry level professions in 63 cities under JNNURM and created a website www.livelihoodfreedom.in for accessibility of the information in public domain in partnership with *Centre for Public Policy Research, Cochin*. Now CCS plans to build up on its learning and run a nation wide campaign to reform the informal sector.

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