



# RED LIGHT DESPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

## *My Dream* *Rozina Khatoon*

**Kolkata:** I am Rozina Khatoon, 14 years old. I study in Ram Krishna Vivekananda Mission in class VIII. My mother is a prostituted woman in Munshigunj red light area. As you know the society doesn't accept the prostituted women and their child. But we get total acceptance from Apne Aap. The staff of Apne Aap regularly uses to come to red light area. And use to talk to the entire mother's and the children of red light area. I joined Apne Aap from my childhood and Apne Aap took care of my education, dance, drawing and music. Latter Apne Aap admitted me in RKVM boarding house now I am studying in class VIII and learning a lot of things. I draw many pictures which are appreciated by all. After completing my education I would like to take admission in Art College to develop my Artistic sense. In future I would like to be an artist and want to establish myself as a famous artist and I want to take out my mother from the red light area and want to keep her in a safe area.

## *'Life cycle of a butterfly'* *- Sunaina*

**Delhi:** My name is Sunaina. I belong to the Perna community. I live with my family in Dharampura area in New Delhi. Apne Aap Women Worldwide NGO comes to the community very often. They keep conducting many sessions and workshops for us in the community. We get to learn about a lot of things. Many important people also visit us with the Apne Aap team. We get to meet so many people and talk to them. I have learned a lot of things from people who visit. I enjoy all the activities and workshops which are conducted in the

community. I have been coming to Apne Aap workshops for many years now and I try not to miss any of them.

Recently Apne Aap held a workshop in the community. The workshop was about life cycle of a butterfly. All of us have seen butterflies here and there. Our area doesn't have many butterflies because there are not many flowers. Ambika didi conducted the workshop.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## *I gave my first board exams* *- Anisha*

**Bihar:** My name is Anisha and I am a member of Kishori Mandal run by Apne Aap Women Worldwide in Uttri Rampur Ant Knya Center for the adolescent girls. My mother's name is Smt. Kunti Devi and father's name is Shree Vikram Das. I associated here in 2017 with Kishori Mandla with my friends. We participated many activities on regular basis here like Open Mike Session, RLD Reading and Writing Session, Asset training, Gender and legal Awareness session and stitching training too. We also received nutritional support twice in a

week by the organization. We reached here at 3 pm for 2 hours for 5 days in a week. We are total 36 girls associated here with three Kishori Mandal. The organization also provide us educational support and after school coaching classes. I have joined the coaching classes here for the preparation of my Board Examination.

*(Continued on page 7)*

*‘Children don’t vote—but you do’: Vote for a better deal for 480 million children*

India’s children too have suffered under the Modi Government, say child rights activists in an appeal issued online. Stating that the upcoming election is crucial for the future of children in India, who are in a state of crisis, they urged people to vote for “our children to grow up with tolerance and love”. The appeal provides details of the regressive laws, budget cuts and crime that have affected the future of children. Among other things, the appeal cites that

- **Crime against children has risen by 16.39% between 2014 and 2016.**
- **Union Budgets for children have declined from 4.76% of the total allocations in 2012-13 to 3.25 % in 2019-20.**
- **Budgets for post matric scholarship scheme for SCs has been reduced by 60%; for girls’ hostel for SCs by 40.32 %; for post matric scholarship for OBCs by 17.35%**
- **An estimated 8,143 crèches have closed between 2013-14 and 2016-17,**

“Let’s vote for Constitutional Rights for all children. Let’s vote against violence with impunity, cuts in funding for food, child care, education and killing in the name of religion and cow-vigilantism,” appealed Ruchira Gupta of Apne Aap Women Worldwide, an NGO working among women and children.

The appeal has been signed among others by Nabaneeta Dev Sen, writer, Shantha Sinha, Former Chairperson National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Jean Dreze, Economist and Social Activist, Ranchi, Deepa Mehta, film maker, Toronto Nilanjana Roy, children's book writer, Delhi, Radhika Menon, Children’s publisher, Tulika Publishers, Chennai, Sanjoy Roy, Founder Trustee Salaam Baalak Trust, New Delhi, Syeda Hameed, human rights activist and Devaki Jain, feminist economist and former director Institute of Social Studies Trust, Chennai.

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On 14 Apr 2019

## Diary of a Social Worker

### *Shashi Bala*

**Delhi:** My name is Shashi Bala. I live in Najafgarh. I am working as a community mobilize with Apne Aap Women Worldwide for eight years. Earlier I was working with a human welfare organization. I am also a trained nursery teacher. I used to teach kids in a school nearby. I joined the organization because I was keen on doing social service and contribute more to the community. In the beginning I was working in the G. R. C . Then I was transferred to the Dharampura office.

When I began working, I had apprehensions of working with the Perna community and I was worried about what would people say. This community is entirely different. The community was hostile to us. They used to hide when they saw us coming to talk to them. They were not willing to talk to us at all. We spent a lot of time cultivating relations with the women in the area. We went to their houses and helped them in household chores and with their children. We had to work very hard to get their children to the community centre. We took the children for picnics and exposure trips.

We used to have nutrition and health camps in the community. We had a Mahila Mandal for the women, a Kishori Mandal for the girls and a Bal Mandal for the kids. We used to have regular meetings for all of them. The organization worked in three areas: Prem Nagar, Ravtamod and Dharampura colony but now we only work in Dharampura colony. I have done different kinds of things in the

community ranging from giving knowledge about different citizenship documents to helping the community with necessary assistance in acquiring them. Among others, we were successful in obtaining caste certificates, birth certificates, labour card, pan cards, Aadhar cards etc. We also helped the community members get enrolled in schemes like Sukanya Yojna and Ladli scheme. A big challenge we faced was acquiring documents because the women in the community didn't want to come out. It took a lot of effort and counseling to make them realize the importance of these documents. With great difficulty we took them to get the documents made. We have put children of these communities in school as well.

The organisation has also provided for computer classes, stitching courses, appliqué work classes etc. Many community members have learned these skills and are now earning their livelihood. Earlier the people from the community refused to send their women and girls to work outside. Their belief was that if we send our daughters outside, they would come under bad influences. Gradually the parents started sending their children to school. We have seen a lot of changes in the perception of the community through the years. I can see the community moving forward. There is a lot of work left to do but the positive changes are a huge morale booster.

### Did You Know?

#### **In India:**

- There are 2.3 million women and girls in prostitution
- A quarter of 2.3 million are under the age of 18
- There are 1,000 red-light areas

#### **Globally:**

- About 58 % of all cases of trafficking detected globally are purpose of sexual exploitation
- About 75 % of all trafficking victims detected globally are women and girls
- About 20.9 million adults and children are bought and sold for commercial exploitation
- About 1 in 10 men in the world have bought commercial sex

*Open Mic at the IGP Centre  
- Juhi Kumari*

**Bihar:** My name is Juhi and I am a member of Kishori Mandal, IGP Class run by of Apne Aap Women Worldwide in Jagdish Mills's compound office. I associated here in January 2019 for received the stitching training.

I am from the near about village named Bathnaha. My father is no longer alive and my mother working very hard to run the family. I have five sisters and don't have any brother. Somehow my mother married four sisters and now I and my mother are in the family. We are very poor and destitute. I have a brother in law who helps us regularly. I have passed the Intermediate examination this year and admitted myself in a college for higher education. I have also got enrollment in the sewing training run by the organization and by doing sewing work here; I earn some money for the family and my studies. I have also got enrollment in the sewing training run by the institution and by doing sewing work here; I take some money for the family and my studies. I want to finish my studies and become a police officer and serve my country and society.

I want cooperation from this organization and I also need guidance because no one who give me any support or guidance for this. I want to learn English and Math. I am a very courageous girl and want to do something on my future. I have heard that this organization helps poor, destitute girls, so I also want the organization to help me too and I can become self-reliant.

We participate in many other events along with stitching here. Here, various training is also given for the empowerment of girls, such as open mike session, RLD reading and writing session, Asset Training, Legal awareness session and Health and Gender awareness sessions etc. I received much training here and participated in all the activities run for the girls of Kishori Mandal here. I learn a lot of things and feel much empowered too. I have also participated in the open mike sessions here. This is really an open platform for everyone in which anyone can talk about their mind and listen to others. Here everyone has the freedom to express their thoughts and everyone openly talks. I like this session very well and I enjoy it very much. Every Saturday, this open mike session is organized in which we all take part and it is also very joyful. I did not know about all of these sessions and this came to light only after coming to this organization and got a chance to participate in it. For this, I want to thank the organization that from there I am getting such support from which my self-realization is taking place. I want the organization to help me further in other activities and in studies so that I can become self-reliant.

**Get yourself involved!  
Be a part of the campaign!**

Click a selfie and share it with us on the Facebook Page 'Cool Men Don't Buy Sex' <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cool-Men-Dont-Buy-Sex/624526271001934> with #CoolMenDontBuySex #Selfie #ApneAap.

The Cool Men Don't Buy Sex Campaign is a call to end demand for sex trafficking which highlights the role that men play in fostering the sex industry.

Apne Aap's "Cool Men Don't Buy Sex" campaign was born to draw attention to the demand side of sex trafficking - the traffickers, pimps, and purchasers of sex. Apne Aap advocates for the criminalization of these individuals – they are responsible for maintaining sexual slavery and continue to exploit women and girls every day in India.

## ***Making Schools Attractive***

**Kolkata:** Apne Aap Women Worldwide has started a school adoption program in Kolkata to tackle early dropouts in schools around red light areas. The motto is to make schools attractive to children coming from the red light areas. This is on the lines of an already existing school adoption program running successfully in our Delhi field. We have adopted two municipality schools in Dharam-pura area of Najafgarh. These schools are attended by children of DNT communities who live in the area. The school retention has increased in Delhi due to consistent efforts of our team in Delhi. They conduct workshops and counseling sessions regularly in both the schools.

Taking inspiration from the Delhi program we in Kolkata also decided to adopt a few schools. These schools are: Lajpat Balika Vidyalaya, Adarsh Hindi vidyalaya and Oriental Seminary Boys School. The majority of children attending these schools come from the nearby red light areas. A lot of them dropout of schools due to lack of interest or due to family instability. These children either find school boring or don't feel school to be that important.

27th April 2019 was the first day we started the program. We were given classes V to X. To make the first day interesting we decided to choose a topic which was common so that all the children

could participate. We decided to conduct the class on Yoga. It was an easy topic As everybody knows about it and once they might have attempted. Our motto was to make the class interesting and knowledgeable. Almost all the children had something to say about Yoga. On the first day itself we taught 700 students. The response from the students was more than what we expected. They were very enthusiastic and forthcoming.

The school authorities were very cooperative and supportive. Without their support it would have been impossible to conduct the session so successfully. We are all looking forward to our interactions with these lovely students and ensuring their retention in schools.

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## *First Impressions from the Field*

*Ambika Kaushik*

**Delhi:** In April I visited a community in Dharam-pura Extension, Najafgarh with Apne Aap to facilitate a workshop with the children there. The community, I learned, is composed predominantly of three castes— the *Pernas*, *Saperas* and *Singhis*, each vulnerable to sex trafficking. Apne Aap works with these groups, empowering young girls to break out of the intergenerational prostitution that pervades their community.

As I entered the locality and made my way toward the *Sapera basti*, I met Shashibala ji who told me she had been working in that community for about nine years. As we walked through the narrow lanes of houses, I was struck by how well she knew everyone, stopping frequently to say hello and exchange greetings. She explained how the community is laid out, the professions commonly practiced by each caste, and the daily challenges faced. As a group of young boys tussled a few feet away from us, I heard a lady frustratedly exclaimed, “Look, the *Singhi* kids are fighting again.”

We held the workshop in what appeared to be one of the larger houses in the community. I was welcomed by a group of cheery children who led me up the stairs to a sunny room, bare, save for a punching bag that hung from the ceiling. The children,

taking turns to swing from the punching bag, teasingly invited me to come box with them. It was clear that they knew one another, and so, as we settled in, I asked them to introduce, not themselves, but the person seated next to them. They would tell the group the name of the person and one fun fact about them— the only rule being that it must be something positive. The group, evidently amused by this task, frequently burst into giggles as we worked our way around the room.

A girl named Sunaina who seemed to be one of the oldest, sat next to me. If any of the children were unable to think of something nice to say about their partner, Sunaina would unfailingly jump in. She would turn to me and say “Didi, actually he’s very intelligent”, or “Didi, she’s very nice and helps everybody”. This made me smile. Going into the field I had known that if there was one thing I wanted to do, it was to project myself as a positive figure for the young girls there. Clearly Sunaina already had that covered.

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### *Continued from page 1*

All the children assembled in a neighboring house. It had a lot of space for all of us to sit. After we all settled down, we were asked to introduce the person sitting next to us. It was unusual because generally we introduce ourselves to everyone. We were also told that we need to tell one good thing about the other person while introducing them. It was a lot of fun. I also helped many kids to tell good things about others.

We started with the butterfly who lays eggs on the leaf, from that caterpillar takes birth. The caterpillar feeds on the leaf, forms a cocoon. Finally the butterfly comes out of the cocoon. It was wonderful to

know how a hairy caterpillar turns into a beautiful butterfly. At the end of the workshop we drew the life cycle on sheets and coloured them as well. We had a lot of fun doing that. I want to thank Apne Aap for organising such informative workshops for us.

*(Continued from page 6)*

Being new to the community and unfamiliar with the interests of the children there, I had chosen to conduct a workshop on the lifecycle of a butterfly, a topic I recall myself being fascinated by as a child. I started by showing the group a picture of a butterfly and asking whether they knew where it came from. I was pleasantly surprised when my question was met by a resounding "A cocoon". When I asked where they had learned about this from, a few of the older girls told me "From here and there. We see things and learn." My happiness with the session carried on into our closing circle time, where I was bombarded by a series of questions, each more intriguing than the last. One young boy raised his hand and asked, "But where did the butterfly that laid the egg come from?" "From an egg," his friends responded.

Dissatisfied with this answer, he prodded, "But where did *that* butterfly come from? And the one before that?" We concluded that perhaps we could talk about evolution the next time.

*Continued from page 1*

The class starts from 4 pm to 5 pm for the students and the teacher taught Math, English, Science and other subjects to us. I attend the class on regular basis and learn the lesson very carefully to achieve a high score in my Board Examination. My teacher also supports me to achieve it.

My teacher told me that I am a laborious student and I will success in my life in future. I labored very hard for the preparation of the examination and very fearful for it. On the time of examination I am nervous and fearful to face the examination but my parents and teacher support me in many ways to grow my moral. Fearful in some way I did the board exam and when the result came I passed in second division with good marks. I was very happy because no one had passed the board exam before my family. I want to continue my studies even further and want to become a teacher. Poor kids like me cannot study and I want to help them so that they can complete their studies.

For this, I want to thank the organization Apne Aap women Worldwide that it has been possible only with the help of the organization. I am very proud that I am a member of the Kishori Mandal of this organization

Thanks a lot to my parents, teacher and specially thanks to the organization for giving me this kind of support.

Anisha Kumari  
Kishori Mandal  
AKC, Uttari Rampur  
Forbesganj, Bihar

## Poems

### **Summer by Astha**

All that is cool is not afternoon,  
afternoon, by all account is warm.

A day, however hard it tries,  
Will always be sunny.

A summery, however hard it tries,  
Will always be zany.  
To get me wondering if the sum-  
mery is clownish.

Just like a last period, is the sum-  
mer.  
Does the summer make you  
shiver?

### **Flowers by Priyanka**

Red, yellow blue and white

And then there are those that bloom at  
night

Some are big some are small

Some smell wonderful and some not at all

Put them in a vase or put them in your hair  
They'll make beautiful whenever they're  
there



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## **Red Light Despatch**

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