



# RED LIGHT DISPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

## *My Dream* *Kanak Singh*

**Kolkata:** I am Kanak Singh, 9 years old staying at Sonagachi red light area. My mother was a prostituted woman. She got affected with HIV-AIDS. When I was 6 years old I lost my mother. My father is physically handicapped. At present my father's sister, my aunt, takes care of me and my brother. My aunt is also in prostitution. From last 2 years I have been studying in Apne Aap Center. Baby Aunty is a good teacher. She teaches us all subjects. We play carom and ludo here. We also learn drawing and dance. Sometimes Apne Aap sends us to take part in football match. We love our center and teacher. Every Monday Rachna Di and Piya Di comes with Mobile library where we learn many things. I dream to be school teacher where I can teach many students and could see them bright and established in their life.

## *Once again a terrible flood in Bihar's Forbesganj- A brief Situation Report—Praveen Kumar*

**Bihar:** My name is Praveen and I am an active member of the organization Apne Aap Women Worldwide. I have been associated with the organization for the last 12 years and am struggling for the empowerment and rehabilitation of women and adolescent girls here in Red light areas and of Dalits and Denotified castes.

I am managing the state program here in Bihar's Forbesganj office and have been successfully maintaining and managing various programs run by the organization for these poor dalits, extremely

backward and the prostituted

women and adolescent girls. Due to the efforts of the organization, there has been a lot of change in the Red Light area of Forbesganj, many women there have now joined the main section of the society and are leading a respectable life out of the quagmire of the body trade.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## *Attending a Gender Training Workshop* *Payal*

**Delhi:** My name is Payal. I am 11 years old. I live in Najafgarh in Delhi. I Study in MCD Primary School. I am a student of class 5.

I took part in Gender Training Workshop held by Apne Aap Women Worldwide in our school. They keep coming to our school and conduct sessions. They are fun and informative at the same time.

This time they were there for a session on Gender Training. Two white chart papers were put up on the wall of our class. On those chart papers were drawn two boxes.

Then we were asked to do our introductions. We all introduced ourselves to the class. After that we were told that we would be doing a fun activity. We were asked to name as many professions as we could. Didi who was conducting the workshop wrote down all the professions we could remember.

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## *SC Johnson and the United Nations Association of the USA Bring Acclaimed Anti-Human Trafficking Film to Global Leadership Summit*

Johnson and the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA) hosted a screening of the acclaimed film "Love Sonia," the story of a young girl's journey to rescue her sister from the dangerous world of human trafficking after their debt-ridden father sells her into prostitution. Inspired by real-life events, the film is the directorial debut from "Slumdog Millionaire" producer Tabrez Noorani and exposes the disturbing issue of international human trafficking. The film was shown to nearly 500 attendees at the UNA-USA's annual Global Leadership Summit.

"Human trafficking is a devastating and heart-breaking issue that impacts millions of people around the world," said Fisk Johnson, Chairman and CEO of SC Johnson. "By sponsoring this film and sharing it with the people who are on the front line fighting this issue, we hope that we can foster the kind of conversation that leads to new ideas to effectively fight this issue globally."

"We are thrilled to have partnered with SC Johnson to share this powerful film at our annual Global Leadership Summit," said Hon. Teta Banks, UNA-USA National Council Chair. "UNA-USA members are united in their commitment to create a better world. Showcasing 'Love Sonia' will empower our members to understand human trafficking and its tragic effects."

"Love Sonia" stars Mrunal Thakur in the title role, Richa Chadha, Freida Pinto, Adil Hussain and Demi Moore. The film is produced by Academy Award® nominee and critically acclaimed producer David Womark. The film received support and guidance from three of the world's largest anti-trafficking NGOs, including UNODC (UN Office of Drugs & Crime), CAST (Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking) and Apne Aap Women Worldwide. The film will be available on iTunes beginning this fall.

Human trafficking affects an estimated 25 million people around the world. SC Johnson believes it

has an obligation to help protect the most vulnerable and has long supported anti-human trafficking efforts. These efforts include the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the Consumer Goods Forum Social Resolution on Forced Labor, its priority principles, and the International Labor Organization core standards on forced labor, child labor, freedom of association and discrimination.

UNA-USA's annual Global Leadership Summit convened 500 grassroots volunteers from across the country to support the United Nations' role in confronting global challenges such as human trafficking.

SC Johnson sponsored the U.K. theatrical release of "Love Sonia" earlier this year. The company hosted a screening at its global headquarters in Racine, Wisconsin on June 13 for an audience of law enforcement professionals, educators, medical professionals and community leaders.

***Voice Of Red Light Area***  
***Sahana Dasgupta***

**Kolkata:** My name is Sahana Dasgupta. I live in Kolkata. I started working with Apne Aap women worldwide in 2002. I am grateful to Ruchira Gupta for providing me with the opportunity of working with the organization. I work in the field in Kolkata for Apne Aap. While working with the organization, I met many people and came to know about their life. In Munshigunj and Sonagachi red light areas, I met many prostituted women and their children. We at the organization refer to them as ‘Maa’ meaning Mother. I have seen their poverty stricken lives and the distress they live in. The women are brought to the red light area by provocation or force. None of them has come there willingly, they are trafficked into prostitution. Girls are sold here by parents, boyfriends, husband or friends.

After they are brought into the brothels, they are then subjected to all kinds of physical, mental and sexual abuse. Their lives are controlled by pimps. They don't have any freedom in their life. They are forced to take drugs and alcohol till they become habitual and form an addiction. They are careless

about their health. They can take any kind of risks in their life.

On July 25<sup>th</sup>, Apne Aap arranged a program in AC Market Auditorium. The name of program was Voices of Red Light Area. I spoke on that occasion and narrated my experiences of working with prostituted women in the Red Light Area. My colleague, Baby Halder was also speaking at the event. I have seen many horrible things happening to women and girls in that place. I have seen many murder cases of the women. There was a girl Seema who was killed by her “customer”. I have seen a girl being burned in a brothel. I feel very sorry for the situation of these women and I requested all the audience to be with us and help us to save these women and their children.

### **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

### *Case History: Heera Das*

**Kolkata:** My name is Heera. I live in Kolkata in West Bengal. I was born in Burdwan in West Bengal into a very poor family. My parents were farmers and use to cultivate in the field. We were five siblings and all of us five children used to help in the field. We lived in terrible poverty.

**My father got me married when I was only 14 years old.** Although my husband was educated, but he was very lazy. He never worked and did not earn anything. I got pregnant and had three children. Then one day my husband died suddenly.

After his death I started a tailoring shop. I met a man who told me to accompany him to the city. He told me I would get a better job and earn more than what I earn from tailoring. **I believed in that person and accompanied him to Kolkata city. He brought me to Sonagachi and he sold me into a brothel.** My life totally changed after that.

I want to leave this prostitution and live a life of dignity. I come to Apne Aap center regularly. I share everything the staff there. All the Didis there listen to us and our problems and give us good suggestion. They love me and respect me. Now, I have started writing my own life's story at the centre. I am trying to write the story of my life. I hope Apne Aap will publish it and all of you read my story and pray for me.

#### **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.

## Distribution of Flood Relief Materials among the 50 victims by Apne Aap Women Worldwide organization- A brief Report

**Bihar:** My name is Madhu and I am working in Apne Aap Women Worldwide organization for the empowerment of women and adolescent girls and the elimination of prostitution and sex trafficking. I have been working here for the last 4 years as a sewing teacher and teaching women to help earn livelihood and empower them. I have trained over 100 women and adolescent girls in sewing in four years and many of them have made it a means of employment and have started sewing work in their home by purchasing their own sewing machine. They are successfully earning from it.. The teenagers and women who come to learn also bring clothes from their neighborhood and stitch them here to earn some money. It helps with their studies and other work. Women and adolescent girls come to learn stitching from Mela Road, FCI Chowk and Jumman Chowk.

On the night of 14 July, there was once again a terrible flood in Forbesganj. The water flow was very fast. There was at least 4-5 feet of water everywhere. Many of the affected houses were either broken or washed away in the water stream. The people had become homeless and destitute overnight. They took shelter in higher grounds to save their lives.

The affected people come from the Dom community of Mahadalit caste. They belong to the lower castes and are seen differently in society and nobody wants to stay with them. Even in these difficult circumstances, people don't forget to discriminate against them. They were sheltering themselves in a small warehouse. There was nothing to eat with these people. When the people of the organization went to look around then they came to know their state.

The organization met with the community and gave assurance of providing all possible help. A list of women and adolescents was also prepared. I also took special initiative in all of this. The people of the organization meet the other people in the city and asked for food and other items as help from them for the distribution. Food items and other essential items were collected and according to the list, relief materials were distributed to them on 18 July. All the activists of the organization have been active in collecting and distributing relief materials and these people were also quite happy with the relief material. The institution reassured that they would help people in the future. The community thanked us all. It was very reassuring to see them happy and safe.

**Madhu Kumari**  
**IGP Trainer, Apne Aap**  
**Forbesganj, Bihar**

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We have been trying here continuously since 2004 and all this is the result of so many years of struggle that once 150 women and adolescents were trapped in the body trade, their number is now 8-10. We have been trying here continuously since 2004 and all this is the result of so many years of struggle that once 150 women and adolescents were trapped in the body trade, their number is now 8-10.

Even before 2008 and when there was a terrible flood in 2017, our organization helped people with food items, clothes, etc. and also made their home that was broken in the flood and also helped them financially for employment in small scale business. The organization is working day and night for these women and teenagers to escape and revive the body trade and also to save their daughters who are the next target of the body trade because they have the practice of inter generational prostitution in their society.

Once again on 15 July 2019, there was a terrible flood in them and has devastated the devastation of at least 24 panchayats out of 32 and 6 Wards in the Forbisganj town area. This flood has caused the most devastation in Forbisganj and around 2.78 lakh people have been badly affected by it. Flood water has also penetrated in subdivision hospital of Forbesganj, block and subdivision office, subdivision court, fair road and other wards. People's houses are submerged in water, roads have been cut off from the water flow, and people have taken shelter at high places and highways. Children, old men, women are all badly helpless and upset and have all the help of the government help around the gates. Relatives and family members are missing and here about 15 people have died due to drowning in water. There is a hazard all around and people have taken shelter in high places hungry and thirsty poor. People are afraid of fear of disease and epidemic. Arrangements have been made by the government but they are not getting adequate.

***Flood Situation in Red Light Area, Forbesganj***

Here is the red light area in Ward number 3 of North Rampur Panchayat of Farbisganj. Here is the red light area in Ward number 3 of North Rampur Panchayat of Farbisganj. Even here the houses of 112 families have been completely wasted and about 570 people have been affected by this. Here people live in who are from the Nat community involved into Inter generational body trade and pulled their daughters only to the swamp of body trade. Men only brokerage their sister daughters, and the main way of earning is body trade. The floods have caused terrible catastrophes in their neighborhood. Even in these poor and helpless women, this flood has broken into a hail 4-5 feet of water is also flowing in their homes and people have left the house and have taken shelter in high places. No one is going to take care of them, and till now no relief has been given to the administration in the name of relief, no government official has even come to see them.

These people have been starving for the last two days with family and children in some way. The situation here is quite pathetic and they need immediate help. The organization has been helping all of them for the last two days, but there is a need for more help. No government official is listening. Children are starved of hunger and many people have become sick. The situation of women and girls is quite miserable. They are quite insecure and have increased the risk of body traders. The traffickers have become active and at any time, these people are trapped and push in their clutches and in the disgusting swamps of the prostitution. Therefore, there is a lot of work to do especially for people that they can be saved from the body trade. At any time they can be human trafficking and they can be taken out by luring them. There is a lot of help needed from all these here and for the purpose of avoiding the lives of these people.

## *Meeting Photographer David Goldman* *Anisha*

**Delhi:** My name is Anisha. I am a student of Shanti Gyan International Boarding School. I belong to Najafgarh area in New Delhi. I have been associated with Apne Aap Women Worldwide since I was a child. I used to go to the classes that they conducted in our community. I was very enthusiastic about studying but my parents couldn't afford to send me to a good school to study. Apne Aap took interest in my studies and helped me get admission into a good boarding school. I am very happy here.

This month I met photographer David Goldman in my school. He is a very famous photographer from America. He came to the school to shoot me. I had met David back in 2015 when he visited our community. He had taken so many lovely pictures of us. He remembered meeting me in the community. He also told me how happy he was to see me studying in such a big school.

We began by taking pictures in the hostel. He asked me to do my regular activities in the hostel as he wanted to capture my hostel life. Then we

went to the classroom where I study. We also took pictures in the volleyball court and the soft ball court. I also showed him our computer room. We took pictures there as well. It was a great experience to meet him again.

I told him that I also want to visit United States of America someday and see all the tall buildings. I also want to see the Statue of Liberty. He was happy to know that I want to come to the US. I had a great experience with him and wish to do it again.

### *Continued from page 1*

We then were told that one by one we have to draw them on the chart. One by one we drew a doctor, a teacher, a policeman, a tailor, a dancer etc on the chart paper. We had a great time drawing on the chart. After we were all done drawing, we settled down again.

Didi asked us to look at the chart where we had drawn and spot what was wrong with the drawings. We pointed out that in some drawings one leg was shorter than the other or some noses were wrong. But she pointed out that we had drawn different genders for different professions.

Then she explained, we had drawn a woman as a teacher and a man as a doctor. Similarly a dancer was a woman where as we drew a policeman.

She told us that this was called "stereotyping". It means looking at something in groups. A

woman can be a doctor and a man can be a teacher. We think that specific gender can do a particular job. It was a very informative session. I learnt that I can dream of being anything I want.

## Poems

### Lessons of Life

The art of learning,  
Starts every morning.  
You will love the fun of subjects,  
Where each one is diverse from the next.  
Maths is easy,  
But the calculations make everyone busy.  
The Chemistry & History,  
Where everything remains a mystery.  
The theory of Physics,  
Are like English lyrics.  
So take interest in every subject,  
They will make you the best.

### My Father

This earth is not the only planet,  
this galaxy is not the only one,  
but if I were to name someone who is only one of his kind,  
he is my "Father".  
No matter how much we fight,  
whether it is sun or moonlight,  
I know, I really know,  
that my Father is there always.  
Without you my life would have been a desert,  
You added flowers to the barren land,  
this is the truth, this is the reality,  
I become speechless when it comes to you,  
I have no words but a bag full of emotions,  
I have no lines but plenty of feelings,  
which cannot be described,  
but only thought, felt and absorbed.



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## Red Light Dispatch

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