



# RED LIGHT DISPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

## *My Dream - Puja*

**Bihar:** My name is Puja Kumari and I am 17 years old now. I live in Kali Mela Ground in Forbesganj in Uttri Rampur panchayat. My mother's name is Sarswati Devi and my father's name is Shri Arjun Sahni. I am a member of Sarojini Naydu Kishori Mandal run by Apne Aap Women Worldwide in Ant Knya Center in Uttri Rampur ward No.-03 from last 4 years. We are learning many things in the group like craft, stitching, computer etc. After completion of my study, **my dream is to become a teacher and provide free education to the poor students** whose parents cannot affordable to education for them. I realized the feelings because I am also from a very poor family and my parents are unable to provide me proper education.

## *Blanket Distribution among Rohingyas in Delhi - Khushboo Mishra*

**Delhi:** Spending nights on the streets in the harsh winters of North India is not easy. Think about all the poor and the homeless, who have barely any ways to cope with the season. It becomes even more challenging when with the status of a refugee. Imagine a little girl, around 10-year-old in a neighbor country, alone, with no food, no clothes, no blankets, standing on the busy road. How safe is she?

Delhi hosts many Rohingya Muslims from Ankara region of Burma. They were not allowed to carry even their identity docu-

ments while leaving the country. I remember a student at the Vikaspuri camp sharing his story, 'We have the freedom of movement and to live, in India. In our country, neither we can speak freely nor can we move from one place to the another. We thank the Indians for accepting us with love'. The boy was completing his school education through NIOS in Delhi.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## *Picnic in the sun*

**Kolkata:** My name is Amisha Gupta. I am 14 years old and study in class 8. I come to Apne Aap's community centre regularly. I attend various classes that are held at the centre. I have learned to use computer at the center. I can now do a lot of things on a computer. I also attend the dance classes at the centre. It is so much fun to be there.

Last week we were told that Apne Aap will be taking us for a picnic. All the children got ex-

tremely excited on hearing the news. I along with my friends started guessing as to where we will be taken for our day out. We were told that it's a surprise. Didi informed us to gather at the centre early the next day.

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*Sufi singer Zila Khan on talent hunt among children*  
*By Jhinuk Mazumdar, The Telegraph*

**Kolkata:** Young children from streets and slums of Calcutta — some shy, some apprehensive and many who have never sung even in a school programme — auditioned in front of Sufi singer Zila Khan at a recent workshop.

Khan, daughter of sitar maestro Vilayat Khan, almost cajoled every child to sing during the four-hour workshop that was organised on December 3 to create a band of musicians and singers and “empower them to make their livelihoods better”.

The selected children will be trained in the basics of music by students of Vilayat Khan and others. Zila will come back after a couple of months to “see their development.”

The 75-odd children were tested on their sense of rhythm and quality of voice. Their writing skill was also tested when they were asked to jot down whatever they wanted, but only “in metre”.

The parents of most of the participants are daily wage earners or domestic help from Sonagachhi and Kidderpore.

Zila said he wanted to teach the children classical music as well as contemporary popular music, which will help them earn a living.

“We all know that in classical music the earning power is not as much as in popular music. I want to empower them with classical music but also teach them how to perform today’s music. The way I do it.... The reason why some kinds of music or some kinds of tradition get lost is that people cannot earn from it,” she said.

Zila said she had been conducting workshops over the past 15 to 20 years across the world. Not all participants are underprivileged or children.

She also teaches the privileged and adults who are musically talented so that “India can have my kind or better musicians and singers... who take our culture abroad, who retain it and also take it forward”.

The children who participated in the Calcutta workshop came from three NGOs — Apne Aap Women Worldwide, Help Us Help Them and Disha Foundation.

Apne Aap will liaison with the music trainers and Zila to create an opportunity for the children.

“We were figuring out how to conduct the training with the help of Vilayat Khan’s students and we will

keep in touch with her (Zila Khan) and give her updates to nurture fresh talent,” said Lata Bajoria, a trustee of Apne Aap.

Nazia Parveen was among those who impressed Zila. The 12-year-old’s father is a daily wage earner.

At the workshop Zila sang with 16-year-old Sultana Khatoon, who has learnt whatever she knows about music listening to songs on cellphones.

“Our goal is that people who know musically talented children learn about this and send them to us. It is especially for the underprivileged because they hardly get a chance. Others usually find a way,” Zila said.

Before leaving, she promised to come back and take the ones who are really good under her wings.

“The ones who are really good and will take up music professionally, I will take them under my wings. In between I will take them along with me to sing on international platforms,” she said.

## Diary of a Social Worker

### Bihar

**Bihar:** I am Tabiea Teepee, an Intern in Apne Aap Women Worldwide, Forbesganj, Bihar from Germany for three months starts from 4th June 2018 to 30th August 2018. India is a huge and diverse country with multifarious social issues. After my first journey two years ago I decided to travel to India again. I want to try to understand these issues. I'm a student of social sciences and during my studies, I've been concentrating on gender issues in an inter- and transcultural context. So I joined Apne Aap Women Worldwide to learn more about sex trafficking and intergenerational prostitution. Particularly Bihar operations allow me to get in a deeper touch with the affected in a region which has far lagged behind the other Indian states in terms of social and economic development.

Yoga is an old school of mental, physical and spiritual practices which originated in ancient India. The positive effects on the body and mind are even in Western Society well-known. That is why Yoga has become so popular. I've been practising Yoga for some years now. I tried different styles like Hatha Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga and Kundalini Yoga. I have occupied with Yoga as a spiritual practice in depth during my stay in an Ashram nearby Rishikesh two years ago. I experienced how Yoga can have a deep impact on your way of living. After I visited twice an Ashram in my mother country Germany. These happenings gave me the chance to get a look into myself and to rebuild my inner balance.

Referring to my own experience with Yoga I wondered how I can teach the children of Rampur centre and what can I teach them. A suitable age to start practising meditation is in general for around ten years. Furthermore, you need concentration to focus on yourself during practising the Asanas. But kids are kids, they can't concentrate for a long time and they have a desire to play. And what about the language barrier? The children speak and understand barely English. How can I explain to them the exercises? So I created a programme that includes simple Asanas which are named after animals or objects like a tree. Learning some English words is a surplus value for the kids. And it makes it easier to remember the exercises. Additionally, I implemented elements of Laughter Yoga. There are surveys that found out that it makes no dif-

ference if laughing is caused naturally or artificially. The effect is the same, particularly forced laughter results in contagious and real laughter. So Laughter Yoga makes fun and has a benefit on your mood. I try to improve the sense of community of the children by practising in a circle that we all can view each other. We do some exercises while linking our hands so that we feel more connected. The kids have a lot of fun and enjoying themselves during the exercises. It's very childish and playful. This is good because you can't force them to behave like adults. Furthermore, it's a pleasure to observe them coming out and having fun. Besides, I notice how they improve those exercises which train the physical balance. These are Asanas called "flamingo" or "tree". One of the funniest exercises is the "bee". You sit and put your forefingers into your ears. Then you close your eyes, inhale and while exhaling you chant the "OM" and try to focus on the vibration in your head. We all have to laugh every time because the sight of this scenery is too funny to keep serious. Also, the teachers at Rampur centre join us and have fun. I'm glad and grateful that they support me. Sometimes it gets very chaotic. I'm not a trained social worker or teacher and don't know how to cope with it when the situation is too chaotic and the children are wild.

I see how proud the children are to show me their development. They shout loudly "Didi" to get my attention. I commend it with a "very good!" or "amazing!" to encourage their efforts. I have begun to include some "adult" exercises like the shoulder stand or the bridge with the appropriate opposite exercises. These ones are a little bit more ambitious, but in my opinion, it's important to show them how to develop themselves. I'm happy to be in deep touch with the children. Sometimes we are loud together and I wanna support their coming out. With easy breathing exercises I wanna calm them down. This doesn't always work, but that's okay. I wanna let them be children who are having fun and enjoying themselves. Additionally, teachers help me to manage chaotic situations.

Finally, this is my aim in which way I can contribute during three months with Apne Aap Women Worldwide in Forbesganj, Bihar.

*Distribution of Notebooks and Pencils among children from Rohingya community as a Christmas gift, by Khushboo Mishra*

**Delhi:** What could be better gifts for children than education and health? Thus, this Christmas we decided to gift notebooks and pencils to all the children at the Rohingya community in Shaheen Bagh, Delhi. These children were forced to leave Burma and move to India with their parents. There are many such children across India, living as refugees. They are forced to live in dire circumstances which make the girls in these camps highly vulnerable to trafficking and prostitution.

This Christmas, we wanted to give them the hope to learn and to grow. We wanted each child to dream, of a brighter future, of a good education and of dignified job opportunities in the future.

When I reached to the camp site, I was directed to a small room, with an asbestos roof. It was inevening and the roofing had made the room temperature chilling. Most of the children had no socks and many weren't even wearing a sweater. They were sitting on the tarpaulin spread on the

floor. I wondered how the children managed to sit like that, when my own feet were getting numb with the cold.

A teacher at the camp, aided by some of the older boys, distributed the notebooks and the pencils, and I sat with the group of younger children, ones were familiar only with alphabets and counting. I could see the happiness on their faces. Certain emotions could only be felt and for me, it was at that moment that I felt it quite strongly, in a way rather inexplicable

Of the children I met at the camp, some go to a nearby government school and some do not. I found girls were very shy and sensitive. Seems the adversity in life have forced these little girls to grow up prematurely.

After the distribution, some children recited poems in Hindi and Burmese language and we parted for the evening with smiles and a promise to meet again in a week.

**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.

***Celebrating Human Rights Day***  
***-Sneha, translated by Khushboo Mishra***

**Delhi:** My name is Sneha. I study at ninth grade in a government girls' senior secondary school. I live in Dharampura with my maternal grandmother and aunt. My mother often has to travel other states of India or Nepal in search of work.

In our Sapera community, families also move from one place to another for work. **Men work as snake charmers and put up shows with monkeys, occasionally they also play drums at weddings to earn some extra money.** In addition to the money, people sometimes also donate clothes, sweets, flour, rice and pulses which help us manage a square meal a day

I have been associated with Apne Aap since I was very young. I never to miss an opportunity to attend the workshops. A week ago, on 10th Dec, we celebrated Human Rights Day in the community. All the children from Perna, Sapera and Singhi community were invited to be a part of that workshop.

In the workshop, we were asked about our rights as children. Later, we were informed of the rights to which we, as children were entitled to. **I wasn't aware that children too have rights. In our society, all the rights belong to the men, women are supposed to only obliged to the men.**

Right to education, to health, to practice religion, to speak, to safety, to no discrimination etc, we learnt many about many rights that we have.

After discussing the human rights, there was an activity session where we made paper birds, and colored and decorated them. Then every child made a big leaf

with paper, wrote one human right on it which they really liked and colored it. Once everyone had a leaf, they exchanged it with each other and decorated its boundary with glitters. I, along with Tanya, Sunaina and Suhana, my friends in the community, pasted the birds on the wall, and then all the leaves around the birds, which looked very beautiful in the end.

We all repeated the human rights on every leaf around the birds and learnt them by heart

**After discussing the human rights, there was an activity session where we made paper birds, and colored and decorated them**

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## *Observations in the field for Project Parivartan*

**Delhi:** The team of Youth for Peace international visited the Najafgarh field for its Project Parivartan aimed at starting a sustainable community development initiative. There were three target communities:

1. Prerna: Community whose women are into prostitution.
2. Sapera: Community whose women are prone to prostitution. Currently, earning through snake charming, quilt and 'chunni' making.
3. Singhi: Community whose women are prone to prostitution. Currently, earning through selling toys.

### **Problems of the Target Community:**

1. Patriarchy: Husbands take control of the actions of the women. Husbands don't do any work; they get clients for their wives. They practise gambling and dangal. Also, control wives' income. Men affect any NGO work which

is driven to bring women out of prostitution.

2. Low Income: In all the communities, the income is irregular and as low as Rs. 1000/2000 per month. Exact details need to be collected in next visit.

3. Illiteracy: Women and men both face illiteracy and hence, subject to fears of meeting new people and travelling long distances.

### **Steps Ought to be Taken:**

1. Inclusiveness of men: Important to take time to connect with the community through health centres and community classes by Apne Aap. Gaining the trust of men can enable them to listen to us.

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### *Continued from page 1*

We distributed warm blankets at six locations in Delhi/NCR, two in Faridabad and four in Delhi, all situated at great distance from each other. The conditions in which the families live is quite abject. We started distributing from Titu colony in Faridabad. There were around hundred families staying at the camp. They had created a makeshift tent with the help of cloth and tarpaulin, to protect themselves and the children. There were huge piles of garbage scattered around the camp. As there's no water supply, the families are forced to buy drinking water. The camp lacks in basic sanitary amenities. Some men at the camp work as rag pickers. Police personnel visits the camp at least twice a day to keep a check on the members of the community. We were unable to meet some of the families at the Titu colony camp as they were at the police station getting their biometric done, including a woman with a week-old baby.

At the Madanpur Khadar camp, we met many children, especially girls who are were supposed

to be at schools but didn't have access to one. They spend their days roaming around or doing household chores.

Shaheen Bagh camp, a one-hundred-and-forty-acre piece of land where around seven hundred families live, includes ninety-four families of Rohingya Muslims and other families have migrated from Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Bihar. All the families are equally poor and struggle to meet the basic needs. The huge expanse of land has around twenty-five hand pumps to cater to the needs of seven hundred families.

Vikaspuri camp is a relief to some teenage children who are trying to complete their school education through NIOS in Delhi. I also met two men, one seventy-two years old and the other twenty-seven, who were mentally challenged and lived alone at the camp, without kin to tend to them. The blankets distributed by Apne Aap to Rohingya families would at least help them to cope with this winter in Delhi.

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2. Saleable product design: Women are open to majorly, catering and stitching related job work. However, are open to any work that can be done from home.

3. Confidence in women: Women need to be taught and made believe that they can learn new skills and can earn money through them! Literacy or just self confidence can enable them to go an extra mile to empower themselves.

**Challenges faced by them:**

1. Prerna community can be uplifted, not by direct interaction, but through indirect trust building and communication.
2. Any plan that works around Prerna community shall go through empowerment of communities around them.

3. No plan should lead to in-house domestic violence with the ladies by men. Hence, confidence of men in the team and plan is important.

4. Brining the business plan and the consumer market close to the community..

5. Identifying or creating a community leader in each community to bridge the gap between the Project plan and community needs.

*Continued from page 1*

I couldn't sleep out of excitement. My mother then told me to sleep so that I can wake up fresh in the morning. I went to sleep immediately. The next day I got ready really quickly and reached the centre. The whole place was buzzing of excitement.

We all started from our centre and were taken to a big house with a beautiful garden. We were told that its Lata masi's house. I was in awe of the beautiful house. It had a huge garden in front and so many trees in it. There were even fruit trees there. So many of them. We were taken inside the house in a big hall. We sat in a circle and were we had lunch. After lunch we were given delicious sweets as dessert.

After Lunch we all went out to the garden to play. There were swings and slides in the garden. All the children got excited to see that. Then Lata Masi

came and told us that there was a surprise at the back of the garden. We all went with her. There was a shed like structure which we entered. There were many animals and birds there. I was surprised to see such beautiful birds. There was a family of rabbits as well and also a huge snake. She explained to us that they are rescue animals. I had never seen so many colourful birds. She helps them to get to the right places and saved from being killed.

In the evening we had tea and snacks before leaving for our homes. I had a wonderful day . I want to thank Apne Aap for giving me an opportunity to have so much fun.

## Poems

### Thank you, Lord

I thank you, my lord  
I thank you everyday  
I thank you for everything  
For showing me the right way  
Thank you for love and care  
I get everyday  
Thank you for your blessings  
Which you shower everyday  
Thank you for my family  
For a safe house to stay  
Thank you for all the friends  
I get to play.

Name: Varsha  
Age: 11 years  
Community: Perna

### Help the needy

Come friends, let's do some work  
We should help everyone  
Never should we lie  
And hurt anyone  
Come friends, let's do some work  
Tell each other good things,  
Never wish bad for anyone  
Help the needy  
Come friends, let's do some work  
Give water to thirsty  
Give food to feed the hungry  
Bring happiness to poor  
Come friends, let's do some work.

Name: Aarti  
Age: 9 years  
Community: Perna



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## Red Light Despatch

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