



RED LIGHT DESPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

My Dream

Delhi: My name is Arti. I belong to Najafgarh in Delhi. I study in Shanti Gyan International School. I live in the school hostel with my other friends. I was admitted to the school by Apne Aap women World Wide. My dream is to become a doctor when I grow up. **I want to become a cardiologist.** There are a lot of people in my neighborhood who are suffering from various heart diseases. It is very difficult for them to get treatment because it is expensive. I want to give the free treatment. I want to help a lot of people so that they do not have to suffer due to lack of resources. I also want to make a hospital where poor patients would be treated for free.

Celebrating Women's Day Hasina Khatoon

Bihar: My name is Hasina Khatoon and I have been working in the Apne Aap Women Worldwide Organization for the past 15 years. We are working for the empowerment of women and adolescents who are living in Red Light Areas and belong to very poor, backward, highly deprived communities.

On 8th of March, 2019 the organization celebrated Women's Day. Various programs were organized in the institution to celebrate International Women's Day. This program was organized at the Ant Knya

Kendra Uttri Rampur run by the organization Apne Aap Women Worldwide in which more than 100 people from the Mahila Mandal and Kishori Mandals were present.

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Attending Adult literacy class Bimla Tamang

Kolkata: My name is Bimla Tamang. I am 45 years old and live in Munshiganj in Kolkata. Apne Aap Women Worldwide started an all women adult literacy program. I am a part of this program. This program targets women living in the red light districts of Kolkata. The adult literacy program is aimed at helping women trapped in prostitution to become literate. Apne Aap started a program for women living in Munshiganj Red light area. This program is all about women liter

acy. Earlier there used to an on-going literacy program but due to some reasons it was closed. Women from the red light area gave us the idea to restart the program. They wanted to be literate.

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'Symbols are powerful'
Ruchira Gupta

Kolkata: On February 23, the Press Club near the Esplanade attracted a moderately large group of about 200 young people and some not-so-young panelists. They had gathered to speak and listen, and participate in a symbolic exchange of love by swapping red roses.

This marked the launch of the Red Rose Campaign, which is rooting for love – not of juvenile crushes, but a more profound universal emotion that the country and the region need at the moment.

Ruchira Gupta was one of the organisers of the event. A visiting professor at NYU, she is also a founder of the Delhi-based anti-sex trafficking agency called Apne Aap. She was reminded of similar movements in the 1960s, like Flower Power.

Gupta said symbols are powerful and remembers the famous picture taken by Marc Riboud of Jan Rose Kasmir placing a chrysanthemum in the barrel of a riot policeman's gun in the 1967 Vietnam War protests. She was also reminded of Yoko Ono and John Lennon's utopian vision in Bed-Ins for Peace, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

"There are similarities across what's happening in India right now with the 1930s in Germany, when Hitler rose to power," says Ruchira. She says atrocities against minorities are being used to gain populist control of the majority through the creation of a new idea of a 'nation'.

Sehrish Hazarika, who leads the Women's Conclave in Jadavpur University, thinks "biases can be created anew with violence and hostility – both active or unspoken".

The Red Rose Campaign hopes to fight that. It doffs its hat at Sophia and Hans Scholls, young Germans who were executed by guillotine for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets following a fake public trial in Munich in 1943.

They belonged to the White Rose, a group working in secrecy to influence Germans to retain their

humanity in the face of authoritarian rule and preserve fundamental human liberties.

It is not clear why the young Germans chose the rose, but white, says Holocaust historian Anton Gill, symbolised they were not inspired by any colour of political thought, but by humanism.

However, Ruchira adds, "Their choice is also associated with the socialist school of thought. Bread and Roses is an iconic socialist song. It originated from a speech given by American socialist and feminist Rose Schneiderman. A famous line in it was, 'The worker must have bread, but she must have roses, too'."

Images can be arguments for peace or instigation of war. Love may indeed be both the practical and mystical route, a 'gulmarg', a path of flowers, to peace.

An event is planned in Jammu on Saturday, March 2; a stand-out in Forbesganj, Araria District (Bihar) and a march in Siliguri (WB) both on Sunday, March 3. Several groups are planning their own events on Friday, March 8.

(This is an excerpt from The Wire's article: Kolkata's Red Rose Campaign Wants to Help Love Bloom Against Anger by Divya Guha published on March 1, 2019)

Diary of a Social Worker *Sanju Kumari*

Bihar: My name is Sanju Kumari and I am the centre in-charge of Ant Knya Kendra (Last Girl Centre), Uttri Rampur run by Apne Aap Women Worldwide India Trust in the middle of Uttri Rampur Red light area. I joined Apne Aap on 13th February 2013. I taught children here and participated in other centre related activities.

This was my first experience of working in the red light area. When I started working here, I was very sad to see the life of the women and girls of the red light area. I had never seen a red light area before. Working here was very hard and also very challenging. It was a matter of great courage that a woman from outside society should come and work in red light area. I have accepted this choice and have done this work for 7 years.

There is a community centre in the middle of red Light Area run by the organization. I am working here as the center in charge. I have organized Regular classes, Bridge courses, Kishori Mandal , Mahila Mandal and several activities like Open Mike Sessions, RLD reading and writing sessions, Asset trainings and other activities in the centre. We also organized stitching training class for the adolescent girls and women there on regular basis as per the work plan given to me with the support of other staff who working here.

I have also visited the Red Light Area and DNT community to collect the children for the classes on daily basis with the support of other staff. We started bridge course for the children who never go to school and prepared them for the school. After the preparation we admitted them in the nearby Government School and visited the school twice a week to monitor them.

I did a lot of work on women's empowerment in these red light areas and also played an important role in the efforts made by Apne Aap for the upliftment of women in the area. I have also worked to create government identity cards such as Voter card, Aadhar card, Ration card etc for these women so that these women can become self-reliant and can save themselves and their daughters from the swamps of prostitution.

I have received a lot of training in Delhi, Kolkata, Patna and other places organized by the organization. After joining the institution, there has also been a change in me. Here I met the leaders and other people of many experienced feminist movements of our country and abroad and learned a lot from them, which gave me much confidence too.

Sanju Kumari
Center In charge AKC Uttri Rampur
Forbesganj, Bihar

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

Blanket Distribution in Jammu, Khushboo Mishra.

Delhi: I have always been reading about Rohingyas and was always curious to know more about the lives of people from this community. Leaving one's own country and memories associated with it is not easy for anyone. Rohingyas are not only stateless and face discrimination on the regular basis but are also highly vulnerable, especially the women and girls.

When the young girls and women from Rohingya community flee their country in order to survive, they fall prey to the traffickers and are subjected to sexual violence and exploitation.

I started working with Rohingya Muslims in December 2018 where I took the lead for the first relief intervention. I, along with my team at Apne Aap distributed warm blankets to the families of Rohingya community at six locations in Delhi NCR. During the blanket distribution in Delhi we visited camps and came across the difficulties with which these families are living here, some with the hope to be accepted in India as the citizens and some

without any hope for the future. They are just living, in present. Mourning over the past and neglecting the thought of future.

Seeing the innocent children suffer we started doing educational intervention at the camp where we conduct workshops and community classes.

A number of Rohingya families cross over into India, paying illegal brokers to transport them across the border. Of the Rohingya families living in India, the majority are in settlements in Jammu (6500 individuals), Hyderabad (8000 individuals), Jaipur (4000 individuals) and Delhi.

This winter, we, at Apne Aap decided to also reach out to Rohingya families in other states. Jammu being the coldest city, we distributed twenty five hundred blankets at the Rohingya camp. The Rohingyas in Jammu are spread across many settlements which are subdivided into plots and sub-plots.

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.

Red Rose Campaign among Rohingya in Delhi
Mamta Tanver

Delhi: My name is Mamta and I work in Apne Aap's Delhi office. I work at the reception desk and occasionally help with the field work as well. Every year in March the organisation hosts different events on the occasion of International Women's Day with the women and girls of the communities we work with. There are open mic sessions, rallies and marches which we organise.

This year we were invited to celebrate Women's Day by the Rohingya community in Shaheen Bagh. We have recently started intervention in the Rohingya community. In January this year the organisation distributed blankets among the community because the community has limited means to survive the harsh winters in Delhi. They were very grateful for our gesture.

We decided to conduct a Red Rose campaign at the community along with the Women's day celebrations. All my colleagues from the office were present for the occasion. We went inside the main office which was a small hut made of scrap. The inside was beautifully decorated by the women of the community. There were beautiful balloons hanging from the ceiling. The women of the community had gathered in the hut. Several women had children as well.

There were women from other organisations present there as well. All of them shared their experiences of working with women and girls in different localities and communities. They also spoke about importance of education, health and hygiene for women and girls. My colleague Khushboo also spoke at the occasion. She stressed on the importance of education for girls of the community. She also talked about early marriage and complications that teen pregnancies cause in girls. Her speech was met with a loud applause. There were members from Don Bosco and Jamia Millia University as well. They also spoke about the importance of women and equality of men and women.

We then distributed red roses among all the women present there. It was a part of our Red Rose campaign which is meant to promote peace, brotherhood and communal harmony among different communities. It is a symbolic representation of spreading love and not hate among everyone.

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First Day at Apne Aap

-Ajitesh Priyadarshi

Kolkata: On 25th March, 2019 I was called for the first time at apne aap Women Worldwide regarding my Internship Application submitted few Days back. I Met the Kolkata head Ms. Tinku Khanna of Apne Aap at Hasting Office. who decided that I was to teach spoken and written English & Hindi, Math to all the Classes of 1 to 9 and work on certain Projects which will be told to me later but before that I have to work on Excel sheet and do entries of Donated Books and my working hours would be from 11 in the morning to 5.30 in the afternoon.

'Apne aap' is a Non Governmental Organisation, a grassroots Indian organization, who works to empower girls and women to resist and end sex trafficking by organizing marginalized women and girls into small self-empowerment groups, where they work collectively to access their legal, social, economic, and political rights and has a vision for a world where no woman could be bought or sold, Apne Aap Women Worldwide is determined to make their vision a reality.

As this was my first internship experience with an NGO considering I have just finished my first semester at law school, I had no idea as to what an NGO internship would entail. This element of newness and uncertainty was both exciting and challenging.

Ms. Tinku Khanna introduced me with my team, whom I'll work with and then we went with our team, Consisting of Ms. Rachana and Ms. Piya to Sonagachi Area to teach the children of that area. We went there in

our Mobile Library and when we reached there, we met Ms. Baby Halder she helped me and introduced me to the children. First of all, we started with an introduction we asked the children to introduce them to us as I was new there. They were very enthusiastic and were eager to learn in our Mobile Library cum Classroom van. There were about 25 children. We had lots of books which had been donated by different individuals and the organization asked the children what they are willing to study, there were different subjects asked by them. So, we took a Hindi short story book and started with a chapter named "Teen Pag Bhumi". We told them what does it mean and started with the stories while I was reading the story, the students paid attention and while the story was going on, I and my team asked the children questions related to the story, so as to make them curious and alert about the story.

After that, I called them and asked them to read the story. In the end our team and I distributed the Books and Dry Fruit packets among the children's taking into account that each and every children must receive a book which he can read and we also gave them the Homework for the next session after this we ended up our session. After that when I reached our Office where I had my Lunch prepared by the staff of the NGO and then I have to make entries of Donated Books on the excel sheet. So, I started with my desk job. So, Overall It's was a nice day spending time with the children and teaching them.

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At first an open Mike session was organized among them and all people present there delivered speeches, poems, slogans, slogans and some adventurous stories.

A Red Rose campaign was also organized on this occasion by the women and adolescent girls of the organization for the purpose of maintaining mutual brotherhood and communal harmony in the society. Under this campaign, Red Roses were distributed among the people of other castes and communities to spread the messages of love, peace, mutual brotherhood, social equality, communal harmony and safety for women and girls in the society at important places of Forbesganj town like the

Government Hospital, Bus Stand, Railway Stations and Sadar Bazar.

I along with the other members and approximately a 100 girls and women participated in the campaign. We started the campaign from Ant Knya Kendra Uttri Rampur at 10 am and thereafter visited many place. The campaign march ended at the office of Apne Aap organization in Jagdish Mills compound at 2 pm. We held banners, posters, placards and shouted slogans in the rally. It is a very big event and we all participated and enjoyed it well. All the women and girls who participated were very excited.

Stitching new Dreams -Madhu Kumari

Bihar: My name is Madhu Kumari and I am a resident of Kali Mela Road Farbesganj. I started work in this organization Apne aap Women Worldwide India Trust in 2016 as a trainer in the sewing class and I teach girls to sew here. From 2016 till now I have trained about 200 girls in stitching at the centre.

I have taught girls here to sew Petticoat, Blouse, Kurta, Pajama and other clothes well for six months. It is a six months training course. After completion the course some of them have bought their own sewing machine and started sewing work in their own house and they earn some money now. With this initiative organization and my efforts, the girls are getting stronger on their feet and becoming self-reliant.

Apart from sewing, I also work here with the Mahila Mandal and Kishori Mandal for their empowerment. In these endeavors, we work with government identity cards like Voter card, Aadhar card, Ration card and other documents and government facilities such as Ration, Housing, Toilets, and Employment etc for the women and girls who are the victims of prostitution. I have

participated in a lot of trainings while working in this organization and today I am helping these helpless women through these trainings to empower them.

In these efforts of empowerment, we are teaching tailoring classes for 35 girls in four batches per day. By learning the stitching skills, these girls earn some money and become empowered themselves. Organization's motto is to empower girls and I am doing the job by the support of the organization.

I am working here from last 4 years and very satisfied about the job. I am very thankful to the organization Apne Aap Women Worldwide to provide me this kind of space to empower the girls who are belonging from very poor deprived DNT and Nat community who are the victims of Inter Generational Prostitution.

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The program was re started in Munshiganj. The classes began with six women who came to learn and be literate. Now the number of women has increased to 16. Women are showing a lot of interest in it.

I love coming to the classes as I am learning new things every day. We started with the basics- alphabets and numbers and then making words with them. I am very excited about the learning. I had never been to school when I was a kid but I am glad to get this opportunity as an adult to start afresh. I work very hard to learn and remember everything I am taught at the class. I also go back and practice what I am being taught.

This program gives me hope that I can start things anew. I want to get educated and start my

life again. I want to be a part of Apne Aap Women Worldwide. Through the organization I want to help more women like me. I want to thank Apne Aap for this opportunity.

The program was re started in Munshiganj. The classes began with six women who came to learn and be literate.

Poems

Humpty Hump, rider,
if he falls, then he cries out
should he fall into the pond?
no one will find him soon.

Humpty Hump, rider...
should he fall into the ditch?
then the crows will eat him.

Should he fall into the pit?
then the rider goes... splash

*Md Imran
Age 12 years*

Kolkata



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