



RED LIGHT DESPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

My Dream *Abdul*

Kolkata: My name is Abdul. I am 10 years old. My dream is to become a pilot. In my school I have studied about modes of transport. There are different types of transport and air transport is the fastest means to reach any place. By using air transport we can reach places which are otherwise impossible to reach. It is also faster than other transportation. We have a big airport here in Kolkata.

I would like to be a pilot one day and fly planes. I will go to different places with the plane. The plane would crossover oceans and mountains. I am sure it would be a beautiful sight to watch. When I become a pilot, I would take my mother on a world tour. I want to show her all the different countries around the world. I will study very hard so that I can fulfill my dream.

Baten Aman Ki—Hosting a Rally *Praveen Kumar*

Bihar: I'm Praveen, the Sr. Program Manager of Apne Aap Women Worldwide organization's Bihar office, which is situated in Forbesganj, Araria district. I am in charge of the Bihar program and all the events and programs organized there, including monitoring and coordinating, with the help of my team members.

On August 29, a journey, "Baten Aman ki", arrived here and was hosted in Forbesganj by our organization and as the leader of my team, I had a major share of the responsibility.

The Yatra was attended by 25 women's groups and several intellectuals of the society who came together from different states and shared their experiences. The Yatra was started with the purpose of peace and brotherhood, and to protect the constitution of our country. The participants rallied against violence and hatred against women.

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Completing Usha Training Course *Radha*

Kolkata: My name is Radha. I am 17 years old. I live in Kolkata. I am a part of Apne Aap Women World Wide's network. I along with my friends come to the Apne Aap's centre regularly. We get to learn a lot of things there. Many people also visit us and we meet new people from all over the world. It feels really good to interact with them and learn about their experiences.

Many women and girls from the surrounding neighbourhood come to the centre. They all belong to poor and marginalized

communities. Many prostituted women also come to the centre. Apne Aap provides us with different trainings. We have been given legal training where we were told about our legal rights. We were also given media training in which we were taught how to put our point forward in front of media. Different interesting workshops are also held at the centre which teach us a lot. We are also provided with skill developing trainings here.

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The trafficking bill can be misused against victims and activists
Ruchira Gupta

The Centre has passed the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018, in the Lok Sabha that leaves out millions of victims of sex trafficking from its very definition. While the Bill mentions that “trafficking in human beings may be for sexual and physical exploitation,” sexual exploitation is not mentioned either in the definitions section or in the criminal provisions.

In 2011, India ratified the Palermo Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children. So, it has an obligation to implement it domestically. The definition says that human beings are trafficked for different types of exploitation, which “at a minimum includes the exploitation of the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” Even under aggravated forms of trafficking, the Bill lists forced labour, begging and marriage but omits sexual exploitation and “prostitution of others”.

The Bill refers to another law — Section 370 of the IPC — to define sex trafficking. But by not explicitly mentioning sexual exploitation in definitions, while explicitly mentioning trafficking for labour, marriage and begging, the Bill creates ambiguity. This vagueness in definitions gives more power to the police and judiciary, who will become the interpreters of the law.

Combined with powers of surveillance that the Bill bestows on the National Anti-Trafficking Bureau in the name of investigating cases and coordinating between law enforcement agencies and NGOs, it is likely to be used against victims and activists. Thousands of victims, many of them illiterate, will have to depend on the mercy of the thana (station) officer, to interpret the words in the Bill’s statement of objects, to even register a police complaint against their traffickers.

Similarly, frontline social workers will have to depend on the whims of the judiciary to interpret the law or furnish them with older laws for define

tions of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Multiplicity of laws mostly confuses victims and creates their dependence on educated lawyers and judiciary.

Interestingly, the Bill places the blame for trafficking exclusively on “poverty, illiteracy and lack of livelihood options,” and not in any way, shape or form, on sex/gender/caste inequality as a significant vulnerability to being trafficked. This lets the government off the hook in punishing buyers and traffickers for sexual exploitation. It also takes away any obligation to address the vulnerability of gender or caste inequality through increased budgets for marginalised groups.

The existing 16 million victims of sex trafficking in India today are mostly Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs and denotified tribes. They may be listed in government data as victims of trafficking. Or not. Omission from definition in the so-called comprehensive law on trafficking will leave out large numbers of victims in reported data.

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The passage of the Bill, bypassing the demands of several MPs to send it to a Standing Committee for further scrutiny, is decidedly odd. It is similar to 2016, when, by removing millions of children in family based-enterprises and audio-visual entertainment from the definition of child labour, in the Child Labour Act, the government was able to show that child labour had come down in India. The National Crime Records Bureau revealed that rapes of children spiked by 82 % in the following year. These invisible children pushed out of schools and into the workforce may be missing in the data, but they continued to exist for the perpetrators.

The same will be true for victims of sex trafficking. They will continue to be raped for profit and their numbers will increase, as there will be impunity for traffickers and difficulties for victims in even defining who they are. Government data may show that child labour and sex trafficking

have come down, but the flesh and blood experiences of millions of vulnerable girls will tell a different story.

(This article was originally published in the Hindustan Times on August 2, 2018)

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

Khushboo Mishra, shares her experience of working in Bihar field

Delhi: Bihar office is just fifteen minutes from the Jogbani Border. This border marks the division of territory between Nepal and India, from Bihar side. Since India shares a porous border with Nepal, lot of trafficking takes place through this border. On my first visit to Jogbani border, I met field representatives from various anti-trafficking organisations and we all exchanged information on this heinous crime. They told me about a case that happened just a week before I was there. She was thirteen year old girl with Rs 100 in her hand from a Muslim community, wearing a red frock. Her village was in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. She ran from her home to meet someone in Mumbai. She didn't know the train name to Mumbai and had no address or number of the person. She just climbed the first train she saw and reached Jogbani border. After the counselling by field representatives at the Jogabni station, she was handed over to Child Line. My first visit to Bihar have been a great exposure to the ground realities of the extremely backward caste communities settled in Forbesganj. Walking through the lanes of red-light areas in Forbesganj, I met women and young girls who had dreams which they remember no longer. They do dream for a good life for their chil-

dren but are sacred too as people from the red-light areas are expected not to come out of the cocoon. They might dirty the lanes of the mainstream society. The women from Nat community are not supposed to sit at the same level as the men. Even the little girls are discouraged to sit on the chairs in front of the father, brother or uncle. The women serve only one purpose, of entertaining men and earning for the family. Among the Nat community, parents force their daughters as young as age ten to join prostitution. The parents negotiate the money and bring clients home. The daughter and the client are put into one corner of the one room house. Her tears and her call for help, all gets ignored by the family members who sit at the door outside waiting for the client to give them money when he comes out. I was in Bihar marking the one year when flood swept away houses of hundreds of people. They are still waiting to receive the compensation from the government. The Apne Aap's community center of Forbesganj was damaged after the floods. Only after some days, the functioning started again, catering the educational and nutritional needs of the women and children from the red-light areas. Visiting the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya in Simraha have been a proud moment. Apne Aap enrol young girls from the red-light areas to the KGBV here and till now 367 girls passed this residential school, out of which many are in college, breaking the cycle of inter-generational prostitution.

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>

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.

[Sex/624526271001934](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cool-Men-Dont-Buy-Sex/624526271001934) with #CoolMenDontBuySex #Selfie #ApneAap.



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.

Experience of Archive training- Kathmandu Visit *Sanju*

Bihar: My name is Sanju and I have been centre in-charge for Apne Aap Women Worldwide at AKC Uttri Rampur since 2013. At the centre the work shift is from 9 in the morning till 4:30 in the evening. we start by visiting the community to collect the children from their houses for the school. School starts at 9.30 and ends at 12, post their mid day meal. There are a total of 40 children. There are two Kishori Mandals, run by us and twenty girls who are associated with them, who visit for various activities like open mic sessions, RLD reading and writing sessions, Asset training, Stitching classes, etc. We also provided them with nutritional support.

One day, in the middle of July, I heard that we have to go to Kathmandu, Nepal, for Archive training. I was excited because we would be travelling by air and this would be my first time on a plane. Other than I, Praveen Ji and Amit Ji ,Khushboo, Ashmeet, Afzal from Delhi's Apne Aap team and Laboni and Tinku Di from Kolkata team were also attending the session. On the day of the journey, we arrived at Biratnagar Airport in our office car. The flight was on time and all the necessary formalities done by us on the ticket counter.

We reached Kathmandu around 3 pm arrived at the hotel we were staying at. A taxi was sent by the hotel to pick us from the airport. In the evening, we visited the local markets. Tinku Di, Khushboo and Afzal reached there at 10 pm on the same night and Ashmeet reached the next morn-

ing.

The next morning we have prepared for departure to the training venue at Hotel Grand Hayat, Kathmandu after breakfast. Two taxis were booked and we reached the venue at 10 am. Here we meet Ms Angana Chatterjee, the Archiving Specialist who was hired by our organization for the archiving work. Our organization, Apne Aap wants to document and archive all its activities and programs to be preserved as a historical heritage.

After the introductory session, she briefed us on the importance of archiving and explained the process of archiving. It went on for the entire day and by the end of it we had a better understanding of the importance of the process. The next day, she enquired about the existing practices adopted by us for archiving. After the session she also taught us how to sort files head-wise. Then she talked about tagging the papers and how to do the entry work in Meta Data

After the two days of training, we all understood the technique of Archiving and its importance. This training program was very helpful for us and would help us with the archiving process for our organisation, in the future. It was great experience. I am very thankful to our organization for providing this kind of training and support for our betterment. Thanks a lot to Apne Aap for the support.

Snaju Kumari

Center in Charge

**Follow us on www.facebook.com/apneaap
www.twitter.com/apneaap**



Ek packet umeed

Riya Chauhan

Kolkata: My name is Riya Chauhan. I am 10 years old. I live in Munshiganj in Kolkata. I have been coming to Apne Aap's centre since I was a small child. I used to come to the centre with my mother. I have taken many classes at Apne Aap's centre. I am currently in class 4. I study in Lajpat Balika Vidyalaya. I love coming to the centre because we do so many interesting activities there. We have dance classes, music lessons and also computer classes. We also go on a lot of outdoor picnics and events. I love to go out with all my friends at Apne Aap.

On 25th August, we went for an event called Ek Packet Umeed which was sponsored by Anmol biscuits in association with FICCL, FLO and Round Table. It was a huge carnival happening at Krishna Niwas in Balleygunj. It was specially arranged for underprivileged kids. A lot of NGOs and schools

had participated in the carnival. The shopping carnival started by a speech about shopping. There were so many things lined up at the carnival for us. There was a big magic show. It was amazing to see. I was so excited when I got to know about the magic show. There were also pre loved clothes, toys, books, school bags etc at the carnival for all the kids. There were so many rides as well. We were all worried that we won't be able to have fun at all of them. No one wanted to miss anything. There were games as well. The games had prizes for those who won. They also provided all the children food packets. It was very tasty food. We also were given lots of goodies. We were so happy to receive those goodies. What a day it was! I was so exhausted by the time I got back home. I would love to go there again. I want to thank Apne Aap for this opportunity.

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Aided by Apne Aap Women Worldwide, the Yatra came in our city Forbesganj and was hosted by the organization. Thousands of people from the nearby localities gathered to welcome them.

For the sake of their rights, for their safety, for employment, for education, and for all that our constitution promises them, the women have emerged from every corner of the country, for a dialogue.

On September 25th women had embarked on 5 separate journeys organized from 5 parts of India- Maitri Yatra from Kashmir, Equality Yatra from Delhi, Ekjutta Yatra from Kerala, Ekta Yatra from Kanyakumari and Nyaya Yatra from Jorhat.

'Nyaay Yatra' spanned the first phase of Assam and Bengal, on 27th September, and on the 28th morning, 20 women travellers from different parts of the country addressed a public gathering, sharing their experiences of the Yatra. They discussed the categorical violence directed towards women and children, strongly condemned it and held the society accountable for it. On 29th September, it came to Bihar. The locals participated en masse in this program. The organizer of this journey in Farbisganj was Apne Aap Women World-

Wide, with its members Praveen Kumar, Jai Kishore Agarwal, Khushbu Mishra, three Swedish students, Lisa, Kareena and Maria, and activists Sanju Jha, Fatima Khatoon, Meena Khatoon, Madhu Kumari, Md. Subhan, Shaukat and more, alongside around a 100 women and adolescent girls from the organization.

This journey of the first phase had come from Purnia to Katihar and Araria on 29th September and would continue to Malda hereafter.

Between October 3rd and October 10th, in the second phase, it will cover Patna, Jamui, Begusarai, Darbhanga, Madhubani, Sitamdhhi, Betiaya, Motihari, Muzaffarpur and will address a large public gathering on October 8th. Thereafter, it will move to Jehanabad and Gaya, and then finally reach Delhi where on October 13th there will be a five-way concert for Jantar Mantar.

This was a very big program/ Rally, which was hosted by our institution and we liked it. This contributed greatly to our strength and enthusiasm. I am grateful to our organization for the opportunity.

Gender Training Session *Neha Kumari*

Bihar: On 21st August, a Gender Training program was organized for the girls of IGP Class Kishori Mandal in Apne Aap office premises by Madhu Kumari our IGP trainer in the premises of Apne Aap office. 28 girls were present in the training program on this date. At first the program was started by the introductory session and all the girls introduced him to others. Madhu discussed about gender at length. She talked about the gender biases practised in the society and within the family, and discussed in detail what kind of discrimination between boys and girls are interrupted. The participants were also asked questions which they answered with rationale and logic. This was followed by an open mic session and everyone was encouraged to speak.

Many of the girls shared their personal experiences of gender-based discrimination, as well as similar instances in their neighbourhood and society. They talked about men's society and pledged to overthrow patriarchy. They also discussed how this abominable practice has been going on in our society for centuries and how there is discrimination

between two siblings in a house. Women are still vulnerable

to exploitation, not just in the society, but even within their own houses, and sometimes are exploited by their own parents.

It is the women themselves who must take a stand against this social evil. This is their fight, for their rights and each one of them must participate. In this battle, they have to fight against their family, society. It's going to be a long struggle. After the meeting, the girls linked hands and took a vow to end such rituals in our family, and from the society. They seemed enthusiastic, courageous, and fearless.

Neha Kumari

IGP Class Kishori Mandal

Forbesganj, Bihar

Continued from page 1

I along with ten girls got an opportunity of learning stitching. We got certification from Usha International Pvt Ltd when we completed the course. It was an exciting opportunity for us to learn a new craft which would be helpful in maintaining livelihood. Most of the girls got first division in the course which made everyone at Apne Aap proud. We learned to make Indian dresses like salwar kameez, petticoat, saree blouse etc. They taught us to take measurements and how to cut cloth according to those measurements. Even a little bit of mistake can spoil the entire dress so one has to be careful about it.

I worked very hard throughout the course. I was so happy when I finished stitching my first kameez. This course will help me to earn my livelihood through tailoring. If everything goes well, I'll open up a boutique and sell beautiful dresses to everyone.

I along with ten girls got an opportunity of learning stitching. We got certification from Usha International Pvt Ltd when we completed the course.

Poems

Mother

My mother, Mother

My mother
you hold my heart
a woman, a steady companion

My mother, Mother
though the years, steadfast
a hero through life

my mother, Mother

Renuka
Delhi

Crow

I cannot help but stop and look at the
black bird.

A bird is dark. a bird is clothed,
a bird is angry, however.

The zany squirrel sings like an eagle
A squirrel is sappy.

a squirrel is buffoonish,
a squirrel is fool, however.

Sameer
Delhi



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