



RED LIGHT DESPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, MUMBAI AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

My Dream "To become a teacher" -Bhumi, aged 12

Mumbai: My name is Bhumi Amarjeet Chaurasiya. I am 12-year-old girl, studying in class V at Chandramani Buddha Vi-har BMC School. I am very friendly with people around me. Many believe, I am a smart and intelligent girl.

I go to Apne Aap centre to study English and Basic computer. When I grow up, I want to become a teacher. I am very sincere with my task and attend my classes on a daily basis. I prefer not to skip classes. The more I learn the more knowledge I'll have to teach in future. I never delay my home work and always complete it on time.

I am a very hardworking person. I know I cannot gain much in life until I give in my fullest.

I stay with my father, mother Parvati and younger sister Nilu. My father looks after the children and other household chores. My mother works as a domestic help. She is the only bread earner in our family. Most of the time, she is ill. I want to help her in lessening the financial burden.

Life is a continuous process of learning. Be it from many mistakes or our successes. And I know, I can teach it to the children of next generation to make every learning experience worthwhile.

The govt official refuses to issue Caste certificate to the denotified tribes's first generation applicants

— By Deepmala/ as translated by Juanita Kakoty

Delhi: I am Deepmala, 23 years of age, born and brought up in Najafgarh. I am from the Sapera caste. I have three elder sisters, all married. I have three younger brothers. My father is no more and my mother is a housewife. I was married off at aged 16, but I moved to my in-law's place when I was nineteen. I have studied till tenth from Open schooling through YWCA. I have been to a proper school till sixth, a government school close to home.

My husband is Sagar Nath and he is 24-year-old. He is a snake charmer and also conducts shows with monkeys. I want to work, but not allowed. I have done many courses – beautician, acting/drama, YWCA has published stories that I wrote about myself. My in-law's place is in Haryana.

I got my sister Aarti married to my brother-in-law.

I stay with my mother here in Najafgarh. My husband is now living in Haryana (Rohtak) with his folks since about two months. There has been trouble over matters of money between my mother and my in-laws. They owe my mother some money and they are not returning it saying that it is part of the dowry amount.

I have a son who is one year and fifteen months old, and I am afraid that his future will be affected because he cannot have a caste certificate unless his father has one.

(Continued on page 6)

KGBV girls expectations from the new government in Bihar

—Jiyana Khatoon/ as translated by Praveen Kumar

Bihar: My name is Jiyana Khatoon. I am 14-year-old, and I'll be appearing for my eight standard board exam this time from Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), Simraha. It's been two years, since I started living in this hostel.

My father's name is Mohd Allaudin and my mother's name is Meena Khatoon. I am from Nat community My house is located in Uttri Rampur, Forbesganj.

This year, we had Bihar Assembly Election here. I am not eligible to vote yet, but I take keen interest on the elections. I follow the updates on news sometimes.

My father and mother have voter I-cards and they cast their votes from Forbesganj constituency.

In our constituency, there were 12 candidates for the post, however the main contest was between the BJP and RLD candidates. The Election Day was on November 5, 2015. I was in hostel, but the schools were closed for the day. There were many first time voters. We all were excited to know the outcome of the elections.

The polling started at 7 am and concluded at 5 in the evening. There were long queue of people waiting for their turn to vote. Initially, I did not understand the entire voting system.

(Continued on page 7)

Transcription of “Stopping Sex Trafficking in India” on Global Citizen website

— As transcribed by Alison Adams

Ruchira Gupta is a writer, feminist campaigner, professor at New York University and founder of anti-sex-trafficking organization Apne Aap Women Worldwide (www.apneaap.org) Twitter: @ruchiragupta

TRANSCRIPTION:

Link: <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/stopping-sex-trafficking-in-india/>

Ruchira Gupta: My name is Ruchira Gupta, I'm the founder of Apne Aap Women Worldwide- an organization which is working to end sex trafficking. I used to be a journalist and I made a documentary called *The Selling of Innocents* with 22 women in prostitution from Bombay. And it was a life changing experience for me, at the end of which I ended up setting up this organization.

I was walking through the hills of Nepal when I came across rows of villages which didn't have any girls from age fifteen to forty-five. And I began to ask the men in those villages *where are the girls*. Few answered, and they said *Oh, they're in Bombay, don't you know?*

These village were, you know, two hours away from the road, 1400 kilometers away from Bombay. And when I began to ask the question, the answer was devastating because I found that the flesh trade existed in my lifetime, in my generation, in my country.

Apne Aap means “self-help” or “self-empowerment.” When the 22 women in prostitution who had helped me make the documentary asked me, they said- *Can you help us*. So I said *no I can't help you, ultimately you have to help yourself. Because otherwise the help will not happen.* But they said *but we are not educated, we are not rich, how can we help ourselves?* So I said *that bit I can do and together we can try to help each other and rescue each other.*

TEXT ON SCREEN: WITH HELP, COMES HOPE. A NEW LIFE BEGINS.

The first thing we do in Apne Aap is that we create a safe space inside a red light area, inside a slum- which a girl or woman can easily access because that itself takes them out of the place of exploitation. But the next thing we do is that we form them into a group so they find nine friends where they can talk, laugh, share stories with each other so the isolation goes away. And they realize that this is not their shame.

Then we start a community classroom. We start with the daughters of the women in prostitution because they

definitely want to save their daughters from the same destiny that they had. So we organize them and they access all these things starting from the safe space to ending up becoming in main stream, getting job training, having bank accounts, enrollment for their children in school, an adult literacy program that they've been through and a skill. Savings and inter-loaning among themselves for business planning. The ability to start a small tea store, a grocery store, a something and turning their lives around.

TEXT ON SCREEN: THE APNE AAP ROAD AHEAD. A GREAT JOURNEY BEGINS WITH JUST ONE STEP.

Apne Aap today has grown to more than 10000 (currently more than 20000 women) and girls all over India. Apne Aap is not just an NGO, we are a movement to bring about this change. And we need help because we want mainstream society to join this movement.

The revolution will happen when a victim speaks up and when someone who's not a victim empathizes with her. And we are looking for that moment of empathy from mainstream society. And in different ways- they can volunteer with our organization, they can intern with our organization, they can help fundraise. The women have needs- school fees, pen supplies, legal fees to help them fight it out against a trafficker in court to even run our offices sometimes and to pay the staff.

What people can do is of course go onto our website, apneaap.org, and just donate money to us through Paypal. That is the first and the most easiest option for people.

But it really is transformation. Our mission, of course, is to end sex trafficking by dismantling the system of prostitution. And we see prostitution as a system because we see it has a supply side and a demand side. It's been a long journey and we are hoping to actually create a movement in the world to reach out to at least 500,00 women so that our voice is strong enough for even the most powerful to hear and understand. Thank you.

Diary of a Social Worker

—By Naresh Kumar

Bihar: My name is Naresh Kumar. I have been working with Apne Aap Women Worldwide since 2006. I've learned a lot during these years. I was born in a remote area where no electricity, road or basic health facilities were available.

After completion of my junior college, I had applied for a job at Apne Aap Women Worldwide. I was hired as a music teacher in 2006. I did not have much knowledge about red light areas at that time. Eventually, I started to build a relation with the girls and the boys belonging to RLA.

During that time, there were more than hundred students getting educated at the Apne Aap centre. **I realised that most of them wanted to spend more time at the centre. I learned that the students felt more comfortable at our centre.**

This really touched me because I was told that children from RLA had not interest in any activities except gambling, drinking alcohol and pimping. I realised how much they loved and enjoyed music. I was invited at festivals conducted by the women of RLA. I am treated with lots of care and respect.

The women and girls who are into prostitution have started giving us importance over their customers. They even protected us from the local goons. They say we give them the hope of a better future. I feel that teaching at a RLA has been the best learning experience for me. Later, I was sent to work with the nomadic community in Bathnaha.

This has also been a very interesting and learning experience for me. I would like to thank Kalam as without his help, I wouldn't have been able to reach out to the community people. I was teaching alphabets and numbers and it was the first for them.

Barely 200 meters away from their tents, there was a government school but the authorities down there took no initiative to enroll these children in the school. Their right to education was grossly neglected. The authorities told us that as the children belonged to a nomadic community, they were there temporarily. They believed the elders of the community were not interested in getting their children educated, and rather preferred them to beg.

This shocked me beyond belief and opened my eyes to the real problems faced by India. Even the authorities seem immune to this. On asking the government school authorities, why they didn't enrol these children? We were told that they did not want these nomadic children in their schools. This shocked me even further. We requested the authorities to look into this matter and I hope things change for the better. I thank Apne Aap for showing me what Real India looks, for helping these hapless victims of society and for also inspiring me to help such 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

My First Day at Apne Aap

—*Samreen Ansari*

Delhi: I am Samreen Ansari and I live in Shaheen Bagh, Delhi. I am in my first year at Jamia Milia University, doing BA Honours in Hindi. This year, I passed my 12th exam from a government school in Delhi.

I live with my mother, Rasheeda, father Mohamad Sameer Ansari and my sister. My father works as an auto rickshaw driver and my mother is a tailor. I was introduced to Apne Aap by Juanita Kakoty. She is our neighbour and a dear friend of my mother.

I teach craft at Apne Aap. My first day in Apne Aap was very nice and also the days that followed. I was happy to meet everybody there. Everybody at the office was so warm and friendly. I teach the girls who come from Najafgarh to make different craft items through waste material, and they are always excited to learn something new.

On my first day, I taught them how to make penguins from paper cups. Not only the girls but the Apne Aap office team also made a few along with me. It made feel really on how my presence was bringing this difference. Also, looking at their enthusiasm, I get motivation to learn more and share with them.

Apne Aap is working with the girls and women of de-notified tribes and other extremely marginalised communities. I get encourage to know that I am part of the change maker and I'm able to contribute for a good cause. I pray the organisation continue working for the people and it flourishes until justice is done to the last girl neglected in the village and women forced into prostitution.

Mamta di and Shashibala di works as community mobiliser and their contribution is significant. They are

the ones who bring the girls all the way from Najafgarh to office and back. That's a huge responsibility, really.

I dream of becoming a fashion designer after completion of my studies. Specialising in scarves and kurtas and designer burqa. It'll be my privilege to continue to provide my service to this team and girls for a long time.



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Dimagi Training in Forbesganj

—*Jasneet Kaur*

Delhi: I am Jasneet Kaur. As part of my advocacy and programme activities I visited Forbesganj to participate in the five days training of the CommCare application.

The launch and training of the CommCare application was conducted in Forbesganj, Bihar at the Apne Aap centre from August 24 – 28, 2015. Maryam Khalid from Dimagi Foundation took us through the training process step by step, in a very interactive and interesting way.

With support from Dimagi Foundation, an organization which works to provide technological services and support to the underserved communities, an android powered mobile application called CommCare has been developed.

Apne Aap Women Worldwide with a view to make programme reporting and monitoring simpler and more efficient, decided to enable a digital platform for the 'Asset Card'. An asset card is a tool which quantifies how many assets each beneficiary has received along with its date of achievement. **Apne Aap's 10 x 10 approach lists 10 assets which gradually work to empower a woman and reduce her dependency on the brothel/trafficker. The lists includes safe space, education, self confidence, political power, Government IDs, Government subsidies, savings and loans, livelihood linkage, legal empowerment and membership of a self empowerment group.**

During day one of the training, the Program Officers handling programs in Delhi, Bihar and Kolkata were briefed on Dimagi – the organization, its mission and reach, the mobile application, its uses etc. The day ended with all the team members making flipcharts and images for the community mobilizers to understand better the next day.

Day two of the training focused on a step-by-step introduction of the application to the community mobilizers. After getting their hands on the mobile phone and the basic know-how, they learnt the registration of a beneficiary and updating the assets.

The following day we were all excited to experiment with the application. We were divided in different groups. We went to Uttari Rampur, the Red Light Area in Forbesganj, where we approached each household and tested the application. Dealing with minor glitches and challenges, we managed to use the application successfully.

The last day of the training focused on the monitoring of data on the server as collected by each community mobilizer. We discussed the various methods to filter data, evaluate information and how to use it.

We are thrilled to use the CommCare application. It'll make it easier for us to register the number of beneficiaries and keep track of the impact our organisation is making at the grassroots level.

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Write to us for any queries or comments at contact@apneaap.org
contact@apneaap.org



The World Outside
Colorful decors and dance performances at North East Festival
Nishita / as dictated to Jasneet Kaur

Delhi: I am Nishita. I and other girls from our area in Najafgarh went to an educational trip. It was of a different kind. This time, we went to a mela called the North East festival. All of us were super excited.

I wore my favourite dress with a matching hair band. After the metro ride, we took an auto and reached the venue which was all decorated and colourful. We were 10 girls accompanied by Mamta and Shashi didi. We met Anjali didi, Jasneet didi, Juanita didi and Nana didi there.

When we entered inside, there were a lot of activities happening. First we sat on the open auditorium. Some cultural performances were going on. We saw different dance performances. I and others were told by didis accompanying us that the performers were from a state Manipur, which is located in Northeast part of India. Groups of men performed on drum beats and showed amazing dance moves on the stage. **One of the dance performances also involved tying the eyes of a man with a cloth while he danced, and then he chopped off a few cucumbers lying on the stomach of another man without even looking!** It was very exciting, and all of us cheered a lot.

After the dances, we saw some song performances,

where some singers sang local songs from their regions in their language. **Although we could not understand what they were saying, but they sang beautifully.**

After the performances, we went around the festival, and saw a lot of stalls which were selling a lot of various things from the north eastern region, like clothes, bags, flowers, tea, meat products etc. There was a big eating zone where different varieties of food from different states were available. There was also a rock music performance about to take place, but we missed it as it was getting late and we had to leave.

I love going to different festivals and observing new things and cultures. I am grateful that Apne Aap provides me with such opportunities.

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I want to ask a question – wherever you go, only the father's name is asked. Why is the mother's name not asked? It is the mother who does everything for the child, yet why is the mother's name not enough for the child?

When we went to schools for our children's admission, they asked us for caste certificates as they said our children will benefit from them. **We come in the general category because my husband doesn't have a caste certificate, although we are from a scheduled caste (SC). We need the caste certificate to prove that we indeed are scheduled castes.**

My sister Aarti was the first one who said that we should campaign for our caste certificates. Private schools also have reservations for SC children. **We were told that you get jobs through these caste certificates. In our area there is the Banjara community where people have the SC certificate and we have seen how they have benefitted from it.**

Aarti and I spoke about it to the women and men of other caste communities: Singhi, Dheya and Perna. And all of us decided to get together and visit the Sub Divisional Magistrate's (SDM) office to get our caste certificates. We all went together to the SDM's office

to demand for caste certificates. But the SDM said we need to get some proof that we belong to this caste.

We have a piece of document, which dates back to pre-1984, where it is stated that against a particular *gaj* of land some payment was done. On the basis of that piece of document, it was proved that my parents are from the scheduled caste, whereupon caste certificates were made for us and everybody in our family. But nobody in my husband's family has a caste certificate nor does anyone in the community have any document to prove one's caste.

Aarti got a caste certificate for her daughter by showing her own caste certificate. But this is of no use now because her husband one, whereby her daughter's caste certificate has been brought to nought. So Aarti's daughter couldn't be sent to a private school. We are fighting for caste certificate for the whole community now.

When we went to the SDM, he said he is ready to issue caste certificates to the communities from Najafgarh but expressed fear about his job saying what if he is held responsible tomorrow, what if he is put in jail.

I think we should go to him again and again till he gives us our caste certificates.

Gandhi Jayanti Celebration

— *Nargis Khatoon/ as translated by Sangeeta Singh*

Kolkata: Hello! My name is Nargis Khatoon. I am 16-year-old, residing at Garden Reach Road under a fly-over. It is a slum area, located near Munshigunj (Red light area).

It is difficult for my father to work as he has got a major health issue and cannot take on any laborious task. Hence, my mother is working as a maid in three houses to feed us.

We are three siblings, with my brother and sisters at home. I studied up to 7th standard, then my parents decided they could not afford my school expenses. Due to financial constraints, my brother and sister could not continue going to school.

However, they were a regular in Apne Aap centre to study Hindi, Mathematics and English. Recently I have joined Sanitary Pad Unit at Apne Aap, where I have learnt a new skill of producing sanitary pads.

It is also a means of earning and this way I'll be able to lessen the financial burden at home.

I have attended too many events and participated in end number of activities. This month, on 5th of October, we celebrated Gandhi Jayanti in Apne Aap center. There were over 21 children present during the program. The opening speech was given by Rachna Di and Sudipta Di on the importance of Gandhi Jayanti and highlighting his contribution to the country.

They discussed about his two great rules 'Ahingsha' and 'Antodaya', which is also the base belief of Apne Aap organization. It was also really helpful for improving our general knowledge. There was a quiz competition held. All the questions were related to Gandhiji - like his full name, place of birth, date of birth etc.

It was a memorable moment. We were all in a competitive spirit as to who will give the correct answer. Then Uma Didi performed a dance on Rabindra Sangeet "Boro Asha Kore Esechi Go" which was very pleasant for all.

Lastly, we sang Apne Aap song " Ek Do Ek Do Badhte Kadam" as a tribute to Gandhi ji. Overall, it was an experience, which will bring smile on my face, every time look back at it.

We are three siblings, with my brother and sisters at home. I studied up to 7th standard, then my parents decided they could not afford my school expenses. Due to financial constraints, my brother and sister could not continue going to school.

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My teacher Shruti Priya helped me in understanding the process and the importance of voting. Such as how people use their vote to select their representative for state assembly.

Finally, after a long wait, the results were out. We were informed by our teachers and it was telecasted in television that the alliance of JDU, RJD and Congress won the Bihar Assembly election. And Mr. Nitish Kumar was again voted to power as Chief Minister.

I heartedly congratulate them. I once heard from my seniors that Mr Nitish had once visited our hostel back in 2010 and promised to support us.

In my growing up years, I have realized how important it is to have government's support if we want to create a better society.

Following are some of the demands, I would like to bring before the new government:

- Upgradation of our KGBV up to class 10th
- Arrangement of better education systems
- Increase security for girls and women

- Distribution of bicycles to the girls of KGBV
- Hire more experienced teachers to fill in the vacant posts

On behalf our school, I am looking forward to draft a letter to the newly elected Chief Minister Mr Nitish Kumar to look in to the points raised by me and other girls from our school.

- **Upgradation of our KGBV up to class 10th**
- **Arrangement of better education systems**
- **Increase security for girls and women**
- **Distribution of bicycles to the girls of KGBV**
- **Hire more experienced teachers to fill in the vacant posts**

Poems

We are Girl

We are a butterfly; we want to fly here
and there.
We are Sunlight, sun shine every where
We are music, every one listens to it.
We are Girl, not to play with us.
Sometimes we are simple, sometimes we
are difficult.
Everybody find us in their life
We are hope; we are energy , we fight for the
rights.
For the rights, which has been stripped and
deprived us from attending many goals in life.

Name– Subho Das

Age: 10 years

Area: Kolkata

I am not afraid !

I am Amina. Every night my husband beats
me, without any reason.
I am Rosy; I am Sushmita, every waking
hour different men torture us, for pleasure
unknown to us
I am Hindu, I am Christian, and I am a
Muslim.
Religion, Caste is not of concern, but
violence is to us.
Now I am not afraid of my husband,
Not even the customers and pimps.
We have now become a fighter,
To fight against violence,
Committed by people towards girls and
women.

Name– Pallobi Halder

Age: 13 years

Area: Kolkata



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Organizing communities to end sex trafficking—every woman free, every child in school