



RED LIGHT DESPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, MUMBAI AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

My Dream

“To run a tea stall”

—Anjali Das, aged 50 years

Kolkata: I am Anjali Das. I am 50-year-old. I live in Munshiganj, Kolkata. Originally, I am from Murshidabad. I had a family back then—mother and sisters. My mother was a daily labourer. We were poor. My mother had arranged my marriage with a man, whose intention was not right. I came with him in Kolkata. After some days, I was informed that he had sold me in a brothel in Munshiganj redlight area. I tried to run away, but failed. Initially, I refused the buyers. But, I was tortured and later succumbed to their demands.

Once I visited Apne Aap’s center. I have seen many helpless girls and women like me were getting education, vocational training and learning dance, songs. I was inspired. First I had enlisted my name in Apne Aap’s Adult literacy class. From my childhood, I dreamt of becoming a teacher. Apne Aap helped me to fulfill it. Now I help other survivors from Munshiganj redlight area to exit from that place and also spread awareness about the importance of education, asking the community women to admit their children to schools, hygiene and primary legal rights issues. It helped me to raise my voice against injustice and made me so strong to fight for own and also for others rights.

Now, I dream of starting my own small business of running a tea stall in the area.

A prostitution survivor files an FIR against her trafficker

— By Nageena Khatoon/ as dictated to Praveen Kumar

Bihar: My Name is Nageena Khatoon and I have been a victim of prostitution. Sadly, now I am also a mouth cancer patient. I was trafficked from New Delhi to Bihar by a trafficker named Md Muslim Khalifa. He is from Forbesganj redlight area, Utri Rampur.

In 1995, when I was 14-year-old, he kidnapped me and brought me to this place, where he forced me into prostitution. It was worse than hell for me. I tried to escape countless times, but was caught and later beaten up mercilessly.

This process of trying to flee away from his clutches, getting caught and physical and mental abuse continued for quite a long time. Eventually I gave up to my bruises. I was forced

to attend as many buyers send to me.

I don’t even try to look back. It was a hopeless life. It was a prison for me. In the process my health gave away. I am suffering from mouth cancer. The treatment for it was too expensive. I tried asking my money from him, but he refused. I somehow managed to escape from his clutch and took shelter somewhere else in Kali Mela, Forbesganj. The person who took me in is a daily wage earner and has few mouths to feed. So, it was not possible for him to arrange money for my treatment. When I hear that Apne Aap Women Worldwide, an anti-sex trafficking organization works in our area who supports the prostituted girls and women.

(Continued on page 6)

Apne Aap girl receives a Brilliance Award, 2016

— Varsha/ as translated by Khushboo Mishra

Delhi: My name is Varsha. My family lives at Dharampura in Najafgarh. I belong to Perna caste where most of the girls are not in schools. And even if some choose to study, their schooling is discontinued before they could reach class 10. Most are married off early and are prostituted.

I got admitted to a residential school named Shanti Gyan International School in 2015. Prior to that, I was studying in a government run MCD Primary school in our locality.

I don’t have a father. He has passed away when I was little. My mother takes care of all her children. We are four siblings. All are girls. My two elder sisters are married and the younger one is studying with me at

Shanti Gyan International School in 5th standard.

Recently, I received a Brilliance Award 2016 by Bhawna Kala Mandir. This award was given to those students who excelled in studies and art performances. There were 15 students from my school who were acknowledged for their hard work. I was one among them. That day, when I was on the podium with a certificate and medal around my neck, my mother was beaming with pride. I could feel the unspoken emotions. She was so proud seeing her daughter on stage.

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Op-Ed— Ruchira Gupta's article "Gaping Hole" published in The Telegraph

Ruchira Gupta is a feminist campaigner, writer, visiting professor at New York University, adviser to the UN, and founder of Indian anti-sex trafficking organisation Apne Aap Worldwide. This opinion piece was published in The Telegraph

In a shameless hoax, India's ruling party pushed through a legislation recently that said it was banning child labour in its first paragraph, but actually legalized 90 per cent of the country's child labour of all ages through a clause in a later paragraph. Section 3 in clause 5 of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act allows child labour in family, "family enterprises" or "as an artist in an audio-visual entertainment industry". The majority of India's child labour is caste-based work in poor families that are trapped in intergenerational debt bondage.

Placed on July 19 in the Rajya Sabha, the legislation moved rapidly to the Lok Sabha on July 26 and was signed by the president on the morning of July 27. Many members of Parliament had read only the first few pages of the 82-page bill when it was presented to the Rajya Sabha in the afternoon just after lunch. At first glance, the legislation seemed extremely progressive. Not only did the bill increase the age to 18 for children to be kept out of work but also imposed huge fines on "whoever" employed children. This would surely protect children, thought two MPs from two different political parties that I spoke to. They did not realize that the 'whoever' included huge fines on poor parents, already under the control of powerful contractors and employers. This law would push parents further into debt bondage and in the control of contractors.

Dark secrets

Nor did they realize that buried deep, on page 79, Section 22 dangerously shortened the list of hazardous occupations for children to just three things: mining, explosives and those in the Factory Act. A sample list of work no longer hazardous for children is mixing dangerous chemicals, recycling garbage, welding and electric units, slaughter houses, brick kilns, orchestras, selling at traffic signals, domestic work, casting couches of TV and movie studios, sexualized dancing and singing and back-breaking agriculture. Or that the word "omit" was surreptitiously introduced in Section 4 on page 49. Under the new law, government authorities can now "omit" anything as being listed as hazardous, even mining and explosives and other dangerous work listed under the Factory Act, without going to Parliament.

Thirty seven Lok Sabha MPs across parties, including one from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, realized the devastating consequences of the provisions and spoke up against the bill. They forced a five-hour debate but could not overcome the overwhelming majority that the ruling party has in the Lok Sabha. Activists sent a letter to the president, asking him to send the bill back for review. Strangely, he signed the bill in less than 24 hours of getting it from Parliament.

There are 1,01,28,663 child labourers in the country aged between 5 to 14 years as per the 2011 census. Not only will the Act lock children in caste-based occupations for generations, it will also increase the drop-out rate in schools. While professing that children should work only after school hours or during vacation, the Act does not define the number of hours or the site of work. How will a child be able to cope with both school and work? The Act contradicts India's constitutional amendment to Right to Education and the Juvenile Justice Act, which promises protection to children in need. It also contravenes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to which India is a signatory.

Eighty per cent of India's child labour comprises Dalit children. The other 20 per cent are from underprivileged groups. The fatal combination of legalizing child labour, the closure of schools and the stopping of mid-day meals due to fund cuts can only lead to the 'final solution'. The Nazis buried children. In India we will work them to death.

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Diary of a Social Worker

—*Rachna Nayak*

Kolkata: I am Rachana Nayak, working as a teacher with Apne Aap Women Worldwide. I am teaching bridge course and remedial class for the students coming at Apne Aap centres in the redlight areas.

Few years ago, I was a student of Apne Aap where I learned computer, spoken English, importance of health and hygiene, office management. I have also done personality development course in Apne Aap. My association with Apne Aap goes back to December, 2011.

I have seen it for myself how Apne Aap is committed in working for uplift of the helpless, and vulnerable to prostitution girls and women. The organization always stood for the truth.

I was pained to see girls and women were beaten up and tortured by pimps, brothel keepers in red light areas. The events have personally affected me so much that I decided to join Apne Aap and work for these girls.

As a woman, my responsibility is not only limited within my own family. Being a sensible human being, my duty is for the betterment of society too. Apne Aap has provided me such a wonderful opportunity to work for the women.

While being associated with Apne Aap, I realize the meaning of life in a deeper sense. I am a teacher. I have a responsibility towards my students' life. I cannot guarantee success for each of them. But, I am resolved to teach the difference between wrong and right and make them be able to stand for their rights in future.

Working with Apne Aap gave me closer look of the girls and women who are in prostitution. Empathise with them, understand their pain, suffering and emotional wounds.

Along with the girls, I am discovering my life's meaning in a new way. I found the objective of my life as a woman, as a teacher, as a mother. I am inspired each and every day by the activities of Apne Aap for its devotion to others. My duty is to supervise Munshiganj center, where I am teaching community mother and children of Red light area.

I visit Munshiganj redlight for two days in week. I meet the mothers of my students, who are coming from

that particular area. I collect information regarding their educational progress, and other helps. If need be, I also visit their schools. While taking Adult literacy classes for Munshiganj mothers, I feel very honored and responsible to share my knowledge with these lovely mothers.

Some days, the students are irregular and miss the classes, but I have been able to convince them to take interest in education. It was important to instill the value and power of education to them. I was able to admit some of them in a government school in Khidderpore.

My eyes are sometimes filled with tears when I observe their daily struggle and sufferings as red-light areas' mothers. I am honored and feel proud to be a member of the organization like Apne Aap, where the respect, justice, fight for helpless women's right is able to inspire many people.

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Mahila Mandal planning to file PIL against illegal eviction from Forbesganj Mela ground

— *Raso Devi/ as dictated to Mohd Kalam*

Bihar: My name is Raso Devi. I am 32-year-old. I belong to denotified community. I don't own any land to claim as mine. However, I had built a house in Mela ground (Government property), the land was not being used by the Govt. We are 38 families who have settled here since 12-15 years ago. Unfortunately, the government officials are evicting us from this land, saying it's their property.

We have made this our home, because, we don't have anywhere else to go. Also, we don't have access to the government benefits. Most of the families living here work as a Rickshaw puller, cleaning staff, daily wage labor and prostitutes. This is our survival skills.

It's difficult for us to move or settle in remote villages. We live in huts here. We encounter lots of problems during rain and floods. We don't have any toilet infrastructure. Despite many difficulties, we battle every day to survive and prepare our children for better future. For instance, our little boys and girls are sent off to schools, colleges, vocational trainings etc.

When the government officials asked us to vacate this place, they also warned us of dire consequences if we fail to listen to them. We requested the SDM, DM and other officials to allot land for us. We were told that only those belonging to scheduled caste communities (those in Bihar Mahadalit list) will be rehabilitated, but not in the same place.

Despite many efforts, no one came to our support. Then one day Apne Aap activist Kalam came in our place and met Mahila Mandal members. On that day, we only shared our situation we were in and danger of being evicted. Next time, we rearrange Mahila Mandal meeting along with other male members from the community.

During that day, we pondered upon some points. For instance, what are their rights? What problems will the mahadalits community face after the eviction? Following a detailed conversations, around 10 of us decided to file a PIL in Patna High Court. Most of the families have fear of police and local administration.

We, the ten women submitted our identity proofs; voter card, aadhar card, electric bill, ration card etc to established the fact that we have been staying in the area for a long time now. Our initiation encouraged other male members to also join us in filing the PIL. We have understood that the authorities do not have the right to evict us from the land. Although, we know the entire process might take time, but we have our hopes high and also PIL is before the court, so till the final order, we won't be touched by the authorities.

We are also planning to go Patna and meet Human Rights advocate. Women are hopeful of the PIL. It's a joint effort from AAWW and the community members. I have a dream to get my land and build my own home.

It's difficult for us to move or settle in remote villages. We live in huts here. We encounter lots of problems during rain and floods. We don't have any toilet infrastructure. Despite many difficulties, we battle every day to survive and prepare our children for better future. For instance, our little boys and girls are sent off to schools, colleges, vocational trainings etc.

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

A girl from Perna caste participates in painting competition “Expression 2016”

— *Kasak/ as dictated to Khushboo Mishra and Shashibala*

Delhi: My name is Kasak. I study in 5th standard at an MCD Primary school near my locality. I live in Dharampura, Najafgarh and belong to Perna caste. When I am not studying I like to spend my time by drawing and painting. Colours are something which always makes me happy. My friend, Sunaina, in community also likes to paint too. So, we both paint together.

Recently, I participated in a Painting Competition at Noida. I went to participate in this competition with other girls from my community. Two days prior to the competition Shashi Didi from Apne Aap informed us about the topic and asked to practise it. I was very excited, knowing that I will be going for competition. I wanted Sunaina too, to come with us for competition, but unfortunately, she wasn't well.

The name of the painting competition was “Expression2016”. When I asked Khushboo Didi, ‘Why its named as Expression2016?’. She replied with a smile ‘ So that you can express yourself with colours in this year of 2016’. I was enthusiastic to participate in this competition.

The competition was held on Sunday. I had prepared myself well. I woke up early in the morning and was ready before time. My mother made Maggie for breakfast. As soon I finished breakfast, Shashi didi came to take all of us for competition. After reaching the venue, we handed over a packet which had all painting items like pencil, crayons, sketch colours, water colours, pallets, erasers and more. Every student was given one packet, already prepared at office.

We collected our admit cards and went to our respective rooms. When I reached my classroom, I received a big white sheet at my seat and refreshments. My topic was ‘Monster’. I needed to draw what I think monster should look like. I was little nervous seeing other students of my age painting so well. They all were using either crayons or sketch colours. **I opened my packet of painting utensils, sharpened a pencil and started to draw the beauty of nature. On that, I drew a big monster, destroying our environment. Once I finished the pencil work, I didn't know how to fill it with colours. For instance, whether to use water colors or crayons. I decided to use water colors. I hadn't use it before though.**

The teacher in my classroom gave an encouraging smile after seeing paintbrush in my hand. This gesture boosted my confidence.

I painted the nature with different colours of environment like green, brown , orange etc. Then, it was the time for monster. I again had to decide what colour my monster should look like. I took a deep breath and opened a cap of pink colour. **So, here it was, my Pink Monster all over green environment. After finishing my painting, I enjoyed my refreshment and received my participation certificate.**

There were many people, approximately 1000 from different age groups painting different things. All the paintings looked so serene and beautiful. I have decided to be an artist once I grow up and complete my higher education.

Join our campaign to [#QuitChildLabour](#). Sign the petition to revoke laws that enable [#intergenerational](#) prostitution <http://ow.ly/z2zH303xsS1>

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



My First Day at Apne Aap

—*Madhu Kumar/ as translated by Praveen Kumar*

Bihar: My name is Madhu Kumar. I work with Apne Aap as an IGP trainer in Bihar office. I live with my mother and two younger brothers in Mela ground, Forbesganj. My father has passed away.

I am a divorced woman. I have two little children who are dependent on me. Before joining Apne Aap, I worked as a teacher in a private school. I have been appointed as an IGP trainer in the anti-sex trafficking organization since July 1, 2016. It is a livelihood program for the marginalized girls who falls within the category of Below Poverty Line (BPL). The program is run by Apne Aap to provide sustainable livelihood options to them.

When I was appointed, there were only four girls who came to the IGP class on regular basis from Kubertola, Forbesganj. Unfortunately, they stopped coming to the centre. Later, we got to know that the girls were not willing to pay Rs 50 per month as a fee. I was disappointed.

The situation made me to discuss about the issue with Praveen, who is incharge of IGP program in Bihar. He suggested me to enroll those girls attending computer class in our centre and are also in need of the skills.

Subsequently, I organized a meeting with these girls. Total of 10 girls joined for IGP stitching class that day.

We have all the necessary items like needles, scissors,

sewing machine, and other items. The small items are purchased from the monthly fees of the girls, which is Rs 50. Now more and more students are joining.

Currently, we have the strength of 20 students in IGP class. We run the class for six days in a week from Monday to Saturday at 3 pm to 5 pm. We have divided the girls into two groups of 10 girls and arrange the class on alternate days. I train the girls on cutting and stitching blouse, petticoat, pant, pyjama, salwar suit, pillow cover, and cushion cover etc.

I have noticed that the girls are very diligent and hardly miss classes. They are enthusiastic and eager to learn every time I teach them something new. I feel glad when they are happy and learning something. Because, I know in future it'll be of some use to them. It makes my work so much easier.

I teach the girls and in the process I have got the platform and the opportunity to earn and live with dignity.

The students and I are so very grateful to Apne Aap Bihar team for coming out with this project. I specially want to thank Rajni chachi, who had guided, and supported us to do better in our life.

Continued from page 1

I reached out to them and visited Basti Vikash Kendra of the organization which is situated in the Red Light Area locality. I met with Apne Aap activist-- Fatima and Sanju Ji. They listened to my story and ensured to support me.

The first advice I received was to ask for my money for the treatment from Md Muslim. Initially, I was hesitant. But, Apne Aap activists accompanied me. Still, he refused to return my money. Later the activists had discussed the matter with other senior members and had decided to file an FIR against Md Muslim for trafficking and forcing me into prostitution and not giving me any money for my treatment whereas he has earned thousands by exploiting me.

I went to the police station Forbesganj with Fatima and lodge the FIR against him on September 2, 2016. The FIR no. is 468/ 2016 in Forbesganj PS under Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act- 3,4,5,6 and IPC section - 370 A.

Meanwhile, Apne Aap had supported me--I was sent to

Patna with Sanju Ji for my treatment in Mahavir Cancer Hospital Patna on September 4, 2016. After consulting with the doctor, he prescribed me to undergo six different types of test and also to do it at the earliest possible. I did all the tests on the same day and received the report the very next day.

I met the doctor again. The doctor advised me to operate the affected parts of my mouth within 15 days after meeting him. The estimated cost of the operation was 1 lakh rupees. I was asked to deposit around Rs 20,000. But, I had no money at all.

Sanju ji contacted other seniors and they decided to help arrange the money. The team members of Apne Aap also contacted to District Magistrate of Araria to support me for the operation and he agreed to support me.

The staff of Apne Aap collected Rs10,000 for my travel and other arrangements and Rs 20,000 for advance deposit in the hospital in Patna. They also booked the tickets and Apne Aap activist will accompany to Patna for the treatment and will be with me during the course of the treatment. I can't thank enough to Apne Aap team.

The World Outside

— *Soni Khatoon/ as translated by Laboni Basu*

Kolkata: My name is Soni Khatoon and I am 17-year-old. My home is in Forbesganj, Bihar. Since childhood like everyone, even I had a dream. After getting associated with Apne Aap, my dreams started coming true piece by piece.

Apne Aap assisted and sponsored me till I could complete my intermediate schooling in 2016. Apne Aap taught me how to look forward in life. I feel safe and secured with the staff members. They are like a family now. Apne Aap helped me to get hotel management training in the four-star hotel 'Kenilworth'.

It has always been my dream to become a reputed chef. Coming from a poor family background, the future seemed bleak.

Not one in my family has a slight knowledge about what a hotel management is. But, with Apne Aap support I am getting training from one of the best Hotels in India.

Apne Aap's members looks after me the same way a mother would have taken care of their child. I had to face problems during the initial days of my training because I wasn't fluent in English. I am slowly trying to overcome it.

I considered myself extremely lucky because many students do not get such opportunity even after investing huge

amount of money. When I entered Kenilworth the first day, I found myself in totally different surrounding. I was elated and promised myself to give my best shot for enhancing my skills.

From the beginning of my training, I was put in bakery and confectionery section. I am learning many new techniques to bake cake and prepare cookies. Even the hotel and the staff are so friendly. Feels like home. My working hours is 7 am. To 7 p.m. I want to finish my training programme and stand on my own feet. Then I can help my family and also make Apne Aap proud of me.

This is one of the reasons why I work so hard. I am also able to continue my study, because of Apne Aap's support. I believe some of my dreams have come true and paving my way for the rest.

I am already feeling sad. It's last month of my training here. I am here past three months and time flew so fast. I also received stipend.

I am so very grateful to Apne Aap. Due to organisation like Apne Aap, I am to shape my life for good.

Continued from page 1

I am sure every mother would be equally proud to witness their daughter shining bright amongst others. But, anyone who is born into a Perna community, would understand that this emotion is more than one individual's pride, but a collective happiness.

After being enrolled at Shanti Gyan International School, I faced various challenges related to study, making friends and other issues. Coming from a government school, I had a lot of difficulty in adjusting to new school. Other students were not very friendly, and teachers also used to sympathize with us instead of treating us at par with other children. I was sad and depressed. **But, I remembered my mother's saying "You have received the opportunity to change your fate. I do not want my other two daughters (me and Aarti) to lead the life as I am living. I wish my daughters to be beautiful girls with good job and good family." Her words encouraged me and that was the time I decided to never look back.**

I failed many times but got up again and started to look

forward for my dream and my mother's dream.

My mother is a strong woman, who is also a community leader for Apne Aap. I have been under wings of Apne Aap since many years. Few years ago, I participated in a Bhangra festival at Najafgarh where I learnt Bhangra along with my friends. It was an initiative by Apne Aap. We enjoyed a lot. It is a happy memory for me.

And once, I along with other girls also got the opportunity to perform a dance in front of Rani Mukherji, when she had visited Apne Aap head office in Delhi. She appreciated and asked us to enhance the dancing skills. Later, Apne Aap members enrolled me in Shiamak Davar Dance Academy where I learnt different dance forms. Those were technically beautiful. I was able to learn different dance moves under the mentorship of supportive people.

I had also participated in many other competitions and received certificates and medals. My mother always supports me to study hard and be nice towards everyone. She prays for my success. Whenever I receive any medal or award, she is the happiest one.

Poems

Father, don't kill me

Father, I join my hands, asking you to love me
Father, I want to come in this world, don't kill me
I will do all household chores
I will brighten your family name
Father, don't kill me
Let me come in this world.
You rejoiced on the birth of son
But why my mother cried on my birth
Father, don't kill me
Let me come in this world.
Girls face many problems
But now they are educated, they are successful
They look after their family
Father, don't kill me
Let me come in this world.

Name– Sunaina

Class: VIII

Area: Delhi

The Flag

The Flag gets hoisted at Red Fort
Reminds us of people separated.
Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!
Where is Bhagat Singh,
Who has fought for our freedom
Accepted punishment to be hanged till death?
And also sacrificed himself for the country.
Vande Mataram ! Vande Mataram!
Where is Rani Lakshmi Bai
The Queen of Jhanshi?
She fought courageously
Her Blood flowed like water
Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!
For the sake of this flag, we are ready to lay
down our life
We will not let it's respect go down
Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Name– Dimple

Class– VIII

Area: Delhi



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