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USHA organised a seminar at Visva Bharati, Sriniketan

On 20th August 2015 USHA Multipurpose Cooperative Society in collaboration with the Department of Social Work, Visva Bharati, Sriniketan organised a seminar on the eve of 20 years of celebration of USHA Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd.

The topic was 'Articulating Policy of Development through Samabay Movement'. The objective was to sensitize students on related cooperative issues and to discourse on various challenges. The English, Rural and Mass



of discussion 'Articulating development Samabay The objective sensitize cooperative issues and to discourse on challenges. department of geography, Development Journalism

communication also participated in the program. The day was dedicated to the memory of Prof. Amlan Dutta, the former vice chancellor of Visva Varati, was a close associate of Durbar after his retirement.

The program started at 2pm where Dr. Samar Kumar Dutta, Retd. Professor of IIM Ahmadabad, Prof. Prasanta Kumar Ghosh, Head of the Department (HOD), Social Work, Retd. Professor Dikshit Sinha, Dr. Smarajit Jana, Chief Advisor, Usha, graced the program with their presence. Other than the invitees, the staffs of Durbar and USHA and more than 200 students of the University did attend the program.

The program started with a welcome song performed by the students of social work department. Thereafter Prof. Prasanta Kumar Ghosh, HOD, Social Work explained the objective of organising the seminar and congratulated Usha for its endeavour.

Dr. Jana narrated the formation of USHA cooperative, its journey and the struggle faced to get the cooperative registered. He also informed that in the year 2014-2015 Usha has been recognized as the best cooperative in West Bengal by the Cooperative Department, Government of West Bengal. He mentioned that though Prof. Amlan Dutta was not very close to Usha but was very close to sex worker community and Durbar. He concluded his speech with a note of Rabindra Nath Tagore, '*jare tumi niche phalo se tomare bandhibe niche, poschate rekhecho jare se tomare poschate taniche...*' (if you force someone to live behind, will drag you down).

Dr. Samar Dutta enlightened over the thoughts of Rabindra Nath Tagore on Cooperative movement in the context of rural reconstruction. In his speech he also elaborated 'The Cooperative Principle' of Tagore and the historic background of the establishment of Sriniketan with a long term goal for comprehensive development of communities. Retd. Prof. Dikshit Sinha highlighted on Cooperative as a tool for development. Ms. Esha Chakraborty, a student of journalism discussed about contribution of media for the development of cooperative.

The program ended with a vote of thanks by the representative of Usha.

Procession to raise awareness on ending child marriage

AMRA PADATIK, an organisation of sex worker's children in association with Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee took out a rally on 4th September 2015 starting from Abinash Kabiraj Street moving across the bylanes of Rambagan and Sethbagan and areas followed by the procession through the Bidon meeting crossing of C. R. Street. The inauguration was hailed by the local Sunanda Sarkar, Dr. Chief Advisor of Durbar, political other leaders and stakeholders who gave short speeches highlighting harmful effects of child marriage.



The main objective of the rally was to raise consciousness among the sex workers of Sonagachi as well as for general masses regarding child marriage and how to address the social menace which has fetched implication in the society and for the country as a whole.

Dr. Smarajit Jana, Chief Advisor, Durbar said that 'We should strengthen hands of the mothers of bridegroom to stop child marriage and child labor which is a criminal offence.

Puja Roy, Secretary of Amra Padatik mentioned in her speech that Amra Padatik is aware of the fact that child marriage did happens in sex work community as they consider 'girl child' as burden of their family which has to be addressed. This practice is rooted deep into the values and practices highlighting gender inequality in our society. If enforcing child marriage is not made a priority, the potential of millions of girls would be lost. Most of the speakers put stress on educating girls and building awareness generation among the commonness.

AMRA PADATIK, is active in addressing child marriages in various red light areas of West Bengal since 2007. To ensure the Rights of sex workers children Amra Padatik has mobilized the sex workers' children and took initiative to empower them and to help raise their voice against various socio economic issues by which the community faces harm. Amra Padatik is fighting for the rights of their mother & demanding recognition of sex work like any other work. From its inception Amra Padatik is committed to provide child friendly environment for their peers numbering thousands living in the red light districts of West Bengal. In Global scenario approximately 14 million girls got married under the age of 18 every year. And 40% of the Child marriages in the world occur in India.

The rally saw an active participation from the members of Amra Padatik. More than 1000 sex workers and their children joined the rally and walked together raising slogans with colourful posters and placards to stop child marriage.

An exposure visit in IIM Calcutta

On 27th August 2015, IIM Calcutta organised a day long exposure visit for the students of Rahul Vidya Niketan and the players of Durbar Sports Academy. The students were



welcomed by generic speeches by the students of IIM Calcutta followed by the motivational speech by the faculty member, Prof. Devi Vijay. The students were briefed about the basic principles of management, how the workers behave in organisation. The students were also told about how the management tried to focus various social issues in our society. They were also given a brief idea about the IIM, its working and the selection procedure and its crucial role in

the development of the nation. Moreover they were told that the government is committed to remove economic hurdles so that bright students can enrol in premier institutes like IIM, Kolkata without any discrimination. A campus tour and a visit to the class rooms, auditorium were also forms a part of the program.

A friendly football match was also organised between the 2nd year students of IIM Calcutta and the players of the sports Academy. The campus witnessed a livid competition between the two teams. In addition to that for the small kids few cartoon movies were screened which was enjoyed by them.

It was a rare experience in the life time of many of the participants and all of them cherished every moment they spent there.



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF USHA MULTI-PURPOSE COOPERATIVE

Sustainable Development through Cooperative- An Open Ground Fair

Respected Sir/ Madam,

We are elated and feel great honor to let you know that the management of **USHA Multipurpose Co-operative Society Ltd.**, run by the sex workers collective of West Bengal has planned to celebrate completion of its 20th birth anniversary with a series of social and cultural activities. Programme includes discussion, debating session, Seminar, Panel discussion, focusing issues on social and economic interest of poor and marginalized communities. The day long programme will be followed by various cultural activities e.g. Drama, Mime show, Musical concert etc. The event will be staged at **Sraddhananda Park** from **27th September '15 to 2nd October '15**. The programs will start from 12 noon every day. We believe that USHA Multipurpose Cooperative Society will impress you. We feel extremely happy to relate that USHA Multipurpose Cooperative also won the "BEST MAHILA COOPERATIVE AWARD 2014" in West Bengal as the best run cooperative.

On this occasion we would request you to grace the 'inaugural function' of the Mela to be held on 27th September 2015 at 2pm as well as attend the Mela at your convenience. You are cordially invited to participate and eulogize the Mela with your presence.

With Regards

Bharati Dey, Convener, Usha mela.



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