



# BULLETIN : 6

from **DURBAR**

15<sup>th</sup> September 2011

## Durbar won 'INDIA NGO AWARD 2010' for its endeavoring work



*Ms. Bharati Dey, the Secretary of DMSC receiving the 'India NGO award 2010 on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2011*

Durbar won the most coveted award called 'India NGO Awards 2010' held in India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 5th August 2011. The Award is a unique national competition that celebrates and rewards the best non-governmental and non-profit organizations which aims to advance India's non-profit sector by acknowledging organizations that have demonstrated best practices in creative

resourcing, financial management, governance and impact in the community. The Award program was a joint venture between The Resource Alliance, an international charity organization and The Rockefeller Foundation.

Non Governmental Organizations from across the country were encouraged to send their entries under one of the three categories based on their annual budget (income) for 2009-10. The categories were (a) Small category with an annual budget under Rs 50 lakhs, (b) Medium category with an annual budget between Rs 50 lakhs and Rs 5 crores and (c) Large category with an annual budget over Rs 5 crores.

This year, a record of 210 organizations applied for the Awards — reflecting their desire for openness, transparency and accountability. Among a large number of entries, Durbar made her own space in the contest and was selected as the Special Mention Regional Awardee from the **EAST Region in LARGE category** for the India NGO Award 2010. Mr. Salman Khurshid, Hon'ble Minister for Law and Justice was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

Other winners of the India NGO awards were Development Association for Human Action (DEHAT) and Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children (MNC) for small scale category, Pardada Pardadi Educational Society for medium scale category.

## **KOMAL GANDHAR**

### ***Celebrated its 13<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary***

Komal Gandhar, a cultural wing of Durbar celebrated its 13<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary in Mohit Mancha, Kolkata on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2011. Many eminent personalities from various sectors of the society were present in the program. In this program not only sex workers' children but also the children of domestic and construction workers performed as a part of Komal Gandhar under DMSC. The performances of Komal Gandhar were enjoyed by the audience.



*Performance of Komal Gandhar in its 13<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary*

DMSC in early days observed that sex workers and their children had an immense cultural potential. To provide space and opportunities to these children Komal Gandhar was formed. It is an effective medium of communication facilitating self expression and self identity through music, dance and other performing arts. The forum provides sex

workers and their children an opportunity to bring their potential talents. They perform regularly in various conferences and seminars organized by DMSC and on special days like Women's Day, World Aids Day, etc. From its inception, Komal Gandhar has been an effective tool for propagating STD/HIV, in addition to rights of marginalized communities among the wider community of sex workers as well as those outside the sex industry. Various performing arts are incorporated under Komal Gandhar and there are troops who perform drama, music, mine dance including Durbar band.

### **Durbar's participation in the ICAAP**

International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP) is the largest meeting on HIV and AIDS in Asia Pacific and the second largest in the world. ICAAP provides a forum for the release and discussion of scientific, programmatic, advocacy and policy developments in the global response to the issues of HIV and AIDS, and promotes opportunities for greater regional collaboration and sharing

of ideas. This year the meeting was held in Busan, Republic of Korea from 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August. The theme of the 10<sup>th</sup> ICAAP is “Different Voices, United Action.”

ICAAP brought together approximately 4000 attendees from over 70 countries in the region. Dr. Smarajit Jana, the Chief Advisor and Ms. Parbati Halder, Program Director attended the program on behalf of the organization. Two posters and two oral presentations and one symposium were awarded to Durbar. In the said conference, the oral presentations were made on the topics:

- Creating Space for Legal Change In Support Of Intervention Program
- The economical empowerment of sex workers in West Bengal, India
- Community Led Structural Interventions-(Symposium)

## One more feather in the cap of Durbar

The Centre for Corporate SPJIMR

Social Impact since 2005, to appreciate the best implemented by the from various fields. has partnered with Development of (DOCC) for the event 2011 in SPJIMR,

selected as one of that were

students this year. Ms. Bharati Dey, the Secretary of the organization received the award attending ‘**Cummins - DOCC Awards 2011**’ ceremony in Mumbai.



*Cummins- DOCC Awards 2011*

Development of Citizenship (DOCC) at has been organizing Awards, every year recognize and projects

NGO's

This year Cummins Centre for Corporate Citizenship held on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, Mumbai. Durbar was

the best 5 projects implemented by the

## **Sex workers of Shantipur got back their shelter**

Durbar always fights against the injustice meted out to sex workers through various interventions and actions including legal intervention. Generally sex workers are criminalized by the enactment of the country which violets their basic human right. Very recently it was observed that a sex worker of a red light district in Shantipur, Nadia, West Bengal was murdered. Investigating on that the Officer in Charge (OC) arrested the owner of the house under IPC Section 302. Honorable Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, Ranaghat, Nadia lodged a case (151/2011) under ITPA section 20 and ordered to vacate the brothel immediately. As a direct result of these order more than 600 sex workers including and their family members became homeless within a day. The school going children of the sex workers of that area became drop outs and their mothers became jobless. Immediate actions were taken from Durbar after knowing the situation of the incident. A group of advocacy team including a professional advocate from the Central Office of Durbar reached immediately on the spot and after investigating the matter, they made the general sex workers understand about the legal issues. Bela Bibi, a general sex worker then filed a petition to quash the lodged case and the order passed by the learned Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, Ranaghat, Nadia. DMSC put all its support behind Bela Bibi and became a party to the case and provided our lawyers.

In terms of section 20 of the ITPA, 1956 a Magistrate may take appropriate action laid down therein for removal of prostitute from any place including step for vacating any premises occupied by any tenant, occupier or licensee etc. But schedule to the Act has authorized the District Magistrate, Sub divisional Magistrate or any Executive Magistrate specially empowered to exercise such power.

The Honorable Judicial of Kolkata High Court Quashed the order of Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, Ranaghat, Nadia as the sufferings of children of sex workers was an important issue what cannot be accepted in the eyes of law.

Individual sex workers and sex workers collective has rarely won legal battle in the court as the law regulating sex work i.e., (ITPA) often used against the sex workers what absolves rights and dignity of sex workers and their children.

## **DURBAR participated in ‘Dharna’ for sex worker’s labor rights**

‘Shramajivi Swikriti Mancha’ in collaboration with ‘Shramik Sangrami Mancha’ organized a ‘Dharna’ at Metro channel, Kolkata from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> September followed by a mass gathering on the 8<sup>th</sup> September. The programme is designed to press a couple of demands that we have been agreed upon by the unions and networks of various unorganized labours in West Bengal, India. The aim of the



**Swapna Gyan, ex secretary of Durbar delivering lecture in the 'Dharna'**

program was to draw public attention as well as to engage ministries and departments who are responsible in making demands. All together 25 organizations, representing two networks participated in this ‘Dharna’.

Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee along with other organizations associated with the unorganized labour sector developed a state level forum followed by a

state level convention held in February 2011. The name of this network is 'Shramajivi Swikriti Mancha'. The objective of this network is to strengthen the movement of the unorganized labour sector in West Bengal.

Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee and Binodini Sramik Union, being the member of the 'Shramajivi Swikriti Mancha' participated in this programme with their specific demand to get recognized as worker. Various organizations representing under labor lent their full support to sex workers labor rights.

### **Collective demands which were raised during those three days:-**

1. Recognition and issuing of identity cards to all unorganized sector workers (including sex workers) ;
2. Fixation of minimum wage for all unorganized sector workers as per the norms of the 15th Indian Labor Conference , along with strict implementation of the Minimum Wages Act;
3. Provision of cheap food for all, starting with 7 kgs of rice per adult at Rs. 2 per kg;
4. Call for strict implementation of MGNREGA (To ensure 100 days of work, in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, with expansion to a guarantee of 270 days of work in rural and as well as urban settings).
5. Inclusion of all unorganized sector workers, including workers of closed factories, as priority group or BPL in the 2011 Socioeconomic Survey
6. Stringent implementation of the Forest Rights Act (Scheduled Tribes and Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Rights) Act);
7. Permanent status for all contract workers employed in perennial jobs in the organized sector;
8. Recognition and extension of facilities available to all socially backward castes and tribes.

From 6th to 8th September 2011, during the 'Dharna', delegations from the unions have met Industries and Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Shri Partha

Chatterjee, Labour Minister, Shri Purnendu Basu, Backward Classes Welfare Minister, Sri Upendra Nath Biswas and Minister for Fisheries, Sri Abu Hena. They have also met Shri Kathiresan, Food Commissioner and Principal Secretary of the Food and Civil Supplies Department, Shri Barun Ray Principal Secretary of the Panchayat and Rural Development and a representative of Public Health Engineering Minister, Shri Subroto Mukherjee. The Charter of Demands was shared with them followed by fixing future meetings for better interaction.