

The Third State Conference of Sex-Workers



Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee

12/5 Nilmoni Mitra Street, Kolkata 700006

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URL: www.durbar.org

Supported by DMSC-TAAH Project

Designed & Produced by Srijani

7, 2005 University Institute Hall, Kolkata
Organized by : Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee

LIBERTY
EQUALITY
SEXUALITY

মুখ্যমন্ত্রীর অতিরিক্ত একান্ত সচিব
পশ্চিমবঙ্গ
মহাকরণ, কলকাতা
দূরভাষ - ২২১৪ ৩৫২৮



ADDL. PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
WEST BENGAL
Writers' Buildings, Kolkata
Phone : 2214-3528

২৫মে, ২০০৫

শ্রীমতী স্বপ্না গায়ের
সম্পাদিকা,
দুর্বার মহিলা সমন্বয় কমিটি
১২/৫ নীলমনি মিত্র স্ট্রীট
কলকাতা - ৬

মহাশয়া,

আপনার ২১।৫।২০০৫ তারিখের চিঠি মাননীয় মুখ্যমন্ত্রী দেখেছেন। পূর্ব নির্ধারিত কর্মসূচিতে ব্যস্ত থাকায় আগামী ২৭ মে, ২০০৫ ইউনিভার্সিটি ইনস্টিটিউট হলে সংগঠনের রাজ্য সম্মেলনে উপস্থিত থাকা তাঁর পক্ষে সম্ভব নয় বলে তিনি দুঃখ প্রকাশ করেছেন।

মুখ্যমন্ত্রী মহোদয় রাজ্য সম্মেলনের সাফল্য কামনা করেছেন।

ভবদীয়
মু. সিং
২৫/০৫/০৫
মুকেশ সিং

ডাঃ সূর্যকান্ত মিশ্র
মন্ত্রী
স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ বিভাগ এবং
পঞ্চায়েত ও গ্রামোন্নয়ন বিভাগ
পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার
মহাকরণ, কলকাতা




Dr. Surya Kanta Mishra
Minister
Department of
Health & Family Welfare and
Panchayat & Rural Development
Government of West Bengal
Writers' Building, Kolkata

Date 02 June 2005

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee are going to organize 3rd State Conference of Sex Workers at the University Institute Hall, Kolkata.

I wish the conference a success.


(Dr. S.K. Mishra)

Smt. Swapna Gayen
Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
12/5, Nilmoni Mitra Street
Kolkata - 700 006

Md. Salim
Member of Parliament
Deputy Leader
Lok Sabha, CPI (M)
Chairman
Standing Committee on Urban Development



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Ref. No. MP/WB/202-05

Date 03.06.2005

শুভেচ্ছাবার্তা

আমি জেনে আনন্দিত হলাম যে, দুর্বার মহিলা সমন্বয় কমিটির দশ বছর পূর্তিতে রাজ্য সম্মেলন অনুষ্ঠিত হচ্ছে।

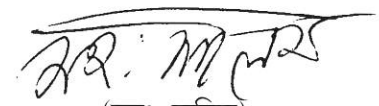
নানা আক্রমণ ও বাধাকে উপেক্ষা করে এই সংগঠন সমাজের উপেক্ষিত অংশের মানুষের জন্য যেভাবে লড়াই চালিয়ে যাচ্ছে তা প্রশংসনীয়।

সমাজে এই উপেক্ষিত মানুষের মানবিক, সামাজিক ও নাগরিক অধিকার কীভাবে সুরক্ষিত করা যায়, আশা করি তা রাজ্য সম্মেলনে আলোচিত হবে ও সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়া হবে।

আমি আপনাদের সম্মেলনের সার্বিক সাফল্য কামনা করছি।

সম্পাদিকা
দুর্বার মহিলা সমন্বয় কমিটি
১২/৫, নীলমনি মিত্র স্ট্রীট
কলিকাতা - ৭০০ ০০৬

ধন্যবাদসহ


(মহঃ সেলিম)

Residence : 1, Beltala Road, Kolkata - 700026, Ph : (033) 2474 8028



Dr. Asim Kumar Dasgupta

MINISTER-IN-CHARGE
Finance Department
Government of West Bengal
Writers' Buildings
Kolkata - 700 001
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May 23, 2005

MESSAGE

It is a pleasure to know that the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee is going to organise the 3rd State Conference of Sex Workers on May 27, 2005 at University Institute Hall, Kolkata.

I wish the conference every success.

As K Dasg

(Asim Kumar Dasgupta)

Smt. Swapna Gayen
Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
12/5, Nilmoni Mitra Street
Kolkata - 700 006



SUBHAS CHAKRABORTY

Minister-in-Charge
Transport & Sports Deptt.
Govt. of West Bengal
Writers' Buildings
Kolkata - 700 001

D.O. No. 766/MTS/2005

Date 2.6. 2005

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee organized its 3rd State Conference on 27th May, 2005 at University Institute Hall, Kolkata.

I extend my congratulation to the organisers, participants and all other concerned.

Subhas

(Subhas Chakraborty)

2/6/05

The Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
12/5, Nilmoni Mitra Street
Kolkata - 700 006

বিশ্বনাথ চৌধুরী
মন্ত্রী
নারী ও শিশু বিকাশ এবং
সমাজ কল্যাণ বিভাগ এবং কারা বিভাগ
পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার
মহাকরণ, কলকাতা ৭০০ ০০১



Biswanath Chowdhury
MINISTER-IN-CHARGE
Women & Child Development and
Social Welfare Department and
Department of jails,
Government of West Bengal
Writers' Buildings
Kolkata - 700 001

Date 25.05.2005

No.

MESSAGE

It is heartening to note that Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee of 12/5, Nilmoni Mitra Street, Kolkata 700 006 is going to organise 3rd State Conference of Sex Workers at University Institute Hall, Kolkata on the 27th May, 2005.

I am extending my heartiest well wishes to find their programme a grand success.

Biswanath Chowdhury
(Biswanath Chowdhury)

Smt. Swapna Gayen
Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
12/5, Nilmoni Mitra Street
Kolkata - 700 006

MINISTER-IN-CHARGE
Government of West Bengal
Backward Classes Welfare Department
WRITERS' BUILDING
KOLKATA-700 001



ভারপ্রাপ্ত মন্ত্রী
পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার
অনগ্রসর সম্প্রদায় কল্যাণ বিভাগ
মহাকরণ
কলকাতা ৭০০ ০০১

ডি ও নং

D. O. No.

তারিখ

MESSAGE

I am very glad to know that Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee are going to organize the 3rd State Conference of Sex Workers on 27th of May, 2005 at the University Institute Hall, Kolkata.

On this occasion, I convey my heartfelt thanks to the organizers and the participants of the programme.

I wish every success of the programme.

Upen Kisku
25.05.05
(Upen Kisku)

Smt. Swapna Gayen
Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
Kolkata

হাফিজ আলম সাইরানী
ভারপ্রাপ্ত মন্ত্রী
দ্রাণ বিভাগ, মহাকরণ
পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার
কলকাতা ৭০০ ০০১
বাড়ীর ফোন ০৩৩-২২৮১-৭০৮৬
০৩৫২৫-২৫৮১৪৪
অফিস ফোন ২২১৪-৫৭০১ (টেলিফ্যাক্স)
২২১৪-১০০৯



HAFIZ ALAM SAIRANI
MINISTER-IN-CHARGE
DEPARTMENT OF RELIEF
GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
WRITERS' BUILDING
KOLKATA-700 001
Residence Ph : 033 2281-7086
03525 258144
Office Ph : 2214-5701 (Tel. Fax)
2214-1009

Date, the 26.05.2005

No.

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee are going to hold their 3rd State Conference on 27th May, 2005.

I wish the conference every success.

(HAFIZ ALAM SAIRANI)

Dated, Kolkata, the 26th May, 2005



ASOK M. CHAKRABARTI

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
LABOUR DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
WRITERS' BUILDING
KOLKATA-700 001
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Kolkata, the 17th June, 2005

To
Smt Swapna Gayen
Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
12/5 Nilmoni Mitra Street
Kolkata 700006
Fax No. 2643-7777

Madam,

Thank you for inviting me to the 3rd State Conference of Sex Workers organised by your Committee on 27.5.05. I was on leave in the last week of May, 2005, and therefore, could not participate in your State Conference.

Durbar has achieved significant success in promotion of health, educational and recreational facilities to the sex workers and their families during the course of last 13 years or so. The task of finding out alternative employment for sex workers has been addressed on priority basis. The experience of USHA is running successfully micro credit services has encouraged similarly placed sex workers residing elsewhere to embark upon ventures of this nature. Durbar, since its inception has fought relentlessly for the cause of dignity and security of sex workers. Sincere efforts made by Durbar have already started showing results. The dedicated workers of Durbar have achieved remarkable success in promoting awareness against AIDS and STDs and in improving upon living conditions of the children of sex workers. In recent years Durbar has adopted several programmes for networking with other organizations. I sincerely hope that these initiatives would make it possible for other similarly placed socially marginalised groups to address some of their structural difficulties successfully.

I wish the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee further success in their endeavours in the coming years.

Yours faithfully

(Asok M. Chakrabarti)
Principal Secretary

Professor Bharati Mukherjee
Vice-Chancellor



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Fax : 91-033-2556-8079, E-mail : rbreg@cal3.vsnl.net.in Resi Ph. 2455-1210

I am glad to know that Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee of Kolkata is going to organize its State Conference on 27 May, 2005 at the University Institute Hall, Kolkata.

I wish all success of their legitimate efforts for human salvation.

With best wishes.

Bharati Mukherjee
(Bharati Mukherjee)

Date : 26/5/2005

Professor Sibnarayan Ray

Former Chairman, Indian Studies, Melbourne University
Former Director, Rabindra Bhavan, Visvabharati University
Emeritus Fellow in Literature, Dept. of Culture, Govt. of India
Former Chairman, Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation
Founder Editor, Jijnasa, a Journal of Ideas and Inquiry
Senior Research Fellow, Indian Council of Historical Research

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Santiniketan - 731 235, India
Telephone : (953463) 253948

শুভেচ্ছাবার্তা

দশ বছর আগে যৌনকর্মীদের মানবিক অধিকার প্রতিষ্ঠার উদ্দেশ্যে দুর্বার মহিলা সমন্বয় কমিটি যে ন্যায়সঙ্গত প্রচেষ্টা শুরু করেছিল তার গভীর এবং ব্যাপক ঐতিহাসিক অর্থ ক্রমেই পরিস্ফুট হয়ে উঠছে। বিগত দশ বছর ধরে এই প্রচেষ্টাকে আমি সর্বান্তঃকরণে সমর্থন করে আসছি। আমার দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস এই প্রচেষ্টা যতই ব্যাপক এবং শক্তিশালী হয়ে উঠবে ততই আমাদের অসুস্থ এবং অসাম্যভিত্তিক সমাজ সুস্থতা এবং সাম্যের দিকে এগিয়ে যাবে। সমাজ যাদের সবদিক থেকে বঞ্চিত করে প্রত্যন্ত দেশে ঠেলে রেখেছে তারা যতদিন ব্যক্তি এবং কর্মী হিসেবে পূর্ণ মর্যাদা না লাভ করবে ততদিন সে সমাজের কোনো কল্যাণ সম্ভব নয়।

দুর্বার আরো সংগঠিত এবং শক্তিশালী হোক, নানাবিধ গঠনকার্যের ভিতর দিয়ে যৌনকর্মীরা আত্মপ্রত্যয় এবং সামাজিক প্রতিষ্ঠা অর্জন করুন, তাঁদের ভিতরে শিক্ষার এবং বিবিধ নিপুণতার প্রসার ঘটুক। তৃতীয় বার্ষিক সম্মেলন উপলক্ষ্যে দুর্বারকে আমার অভিনন্দন এবং আন্তরিক শুভেচ্ছা জানাই।

Sibnarayan Ray
শিবনারায়ণ রায়

तथागत राय

अध्यक्ष

भारतीय जनता पार्टी, पश्चिम बंगाल

Tathagata Roy

President

Bharatiya Janata Party, West Bengal



ভারতীয় জনতা পার্টি

পশ্চিমবঙ্গ

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2241-7086, 2241-7274
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E-mail : bjpwp@vsnl.net



S.N. Haque, IAS

Secretary
Department of Women & Child
Development and Social Welfare
Government of West Bengal
Writers' Buildings
Kolkata - 700 001

To
The Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
12/5, Nilmoni Mitra Street
Kolkata - 700 006

KIND ATTN : SMT. SWAPNA GAYEN

Madam,


I thank you for inviting me as one of the speaker in your State Conference on 27th May 2005.

Your letter was received in my office on 26th evening and was placed before me this morning only. As such it was not possible for me to accept your invitation.

The invitation should allow sufficient time for a person to respond.

With best wishes,

Yours truly



(Tathagata Roy)

Residence : P-70 Lake Road, Kolkata 700029 Tel : 91 33 2466 2893, 2466 2369, Fax : 91 33 2466 2893
Mobile : 98310 19236 E-mail : troy@vsnl.com

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee will organise their 3rd State Conference of Sex Workers at the University Institute Hall, Kolkata on 27th May, 2005. I am also happy to state that this organisation has been working for the all-round development and welfare of sex workers and their children all over West Bengal.

I wish the programme a grand success.


(S.N. Haque)
Secretary

Smt. Swapna Gayen
Secretary
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
12/5, Nilmoni Mitra Street
Kolkata - 700 006

দুর্বার বললে খুব সহজেই এতকাল ঋত্বিক ঘটকের একটা তথ্যচিত্রের কথা মনে আসত - দুর্বার গতি পদ্মা পূর্ববঙ্গ, সেই বঙ্গ থেকে উচ্ছিন্ন হয়ে আসা বাঙালি আর পদ্মা নদী প্রায় অবশেষের মতোই ছিল ঋত্বিকবাবুর ওঁর ভক্ত আমরা সে সময় ওঁর উল্লেখ করতাম দুর্বার গতি ঋত্বিক বলে। তবে ওই দুর্বার গতিতে সব কিছু ছেড়ে চলে যাবেন হঠাৎই এমনটা কিন্তু ভাবতাম না।

সেই দুর্বার আবার ফিরে এল জীবনে দুর্বার মহিলা সমন্বয় কমিটির নাম, রূপ আর হাত ধরে। দুর্বার নামের মধ্যে যে এক গতি, চাঞ্চল্য, শক্তি ও জীবন বোঝায় তা প্রতি মুহূর্তে এদের কাজ দেখে অনুভব করি। NGO কিংবা কিছু চিনি, তাদের কেউ কেউ চমৎকার কাজ করেও বলে খবর পাই, কিন্তু দুর্বার একেবারে এক ভিন্ন ঘরানা। ওঁর একটা Non-governmental organisation বললে যেন অর্ধসত্য উচ্চারণ করা হয়, ওরা প্রায় এক সমান্তরাল সরকার Parallel government কারণ যে মানুষদের নিয়ে ওরা কাজ করছে, ওদের মধ্যে যে অসুস্থবাসী মানুষজন কাজে সক্রিয় আছেন, তাঁরা তো বহুকাল ধরে নানা সরকারের দ্বারাই কমবেশি উপেক্ষিতই। শেষে এমন একটা সংগঠন করে যে বাঁচার ও স্বীকৃতির লড়াইয়ে ওদের নামতে হল তাতে ওঁদের পরিচিতি, পরিস্থিতি ও পরিবেশ নতুন অর্থ মাত্রা পেয়েছে। স্ত্রীশক্তির এক নবীন অস্ত্র এখন দুর্বার। আমরা যাদের প্রতি সহজে শুধু আকৃষ্টই হচ্ছি না, যাদের সঙ্গে থাকতে পেরে রীতিমত গর্ববোধ করছি।

দুর্বার আপন গতি ও শক্তিতে চলছে, চলবে। যদি কোনও ভাবেও ওদের সেই মিছিলের অন্তর্ভাগে চলতে পারি, ওদের কোনও কাজে কোনও ভাবে হাত মেলাতে পারি তো নিজেদের ধন্য মনে করব। আমার সব শুভাকাঙ্ক্ষীরাও ওদের জন্য।

দুর্বারের তৃতীয় রাজ্য সম্মেলনের প্রাক্কালে এই শুভেচ্ছা জানাচ্ছি। আসা করব সম্মেলন পূর্ণ সফল হোক।

শঙ্করলাল ভট্টাচার্য



Secretary's Address

Comrades, Friends and Distinguished Guests,

We are very happy to see you today here at the Third State Conference of Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee. You have come here today at a time when a new set of problems have arisen in front of the movements of the Sex Workers, Women and Labouring People of the entire World. These problems have their specificities at the Global, Indian and local levels, yet they are all connected by some common threads.

Today the United States of America is the most powerful state in the world. There was a time when the Americans spoke about the rights of the entire humanity. Now their government mercilessly attacks other countries. Sometime back their government has passed a bill that denies any support from the American Government to anyone who supports the human, civic and professional rights of the sex workers. Those who seek American support will have to give an undertaking indicating their opposition to the sex workers. Not all Americans are dancing to the tune of their government. The government of Brazil has refused to accept this new American diktat. They have returned forty million dollars of US aid earmarked for HIV/AIDS prevention and control in Brazil. However, some rich governments have joined the anti-sex-worker chorus led by the US government. They are spreading this canard that all sex workers are trafficked persons.

Only a small part of the total number of persons trafficked into the global labour market, enter the sex sector. In many societies, like our own, minors are given away in marriage. Some of them become sex workers, being unable to endure familial torture, upon leaving family or even staying within their families, for sheer economic reasons. A small part of those minor girls who are forced to provide sexual services as wives, do become minor sex workers. The governments of our own country, of the US or of many other countries do not like to listen to or understand these plain truths. They do not want to accept, that we the

sex workers and we alone have been able to almost stop the entry of minors into the market of sexual services in the areas where we live, through our Self-regulatory Boards. We have been able to do this as ordinary sex workers. Our organization Durbar has been able to do this in a proper manner because it is guided by a sense of social responsibility.

In any society, a few women fall through the net of familial bondage for various reasons and, provide sexual services as free wage labourers. The society punishes us for this freedom. The conditions in which we are forced to work are very bad. We work with loads of torture; stigma and abuse heaped upon us by the police, hooligans, labour contractors and sundry other people. However, we are fighting against all these injustices and, for gaining our rights as workers, because we are free human beings.

Today the whole world knows that the sex workers of Sonagachi, Kolkata and, West Bengal have established a model for fighting HIV/AIDS. It is true that the rich countries have provided financial support for this work, but the work has been done and is being done by us - the sex workers. We fight against forcing minors and unwilling adults into the sex sector. We fight for the betterment of the environment of the sexual services and for eradication of illiteracy in collaboration with the representatives of the rest of the society, through our Self-regulatory Boards. We build and operate student homes for our Children. Organise cultivation of the finer arts. Run newsheets and journals. We try to liberate sex workers from the vice grip of extortionist moneylenders, by organising micro-credit services through sex workers' cooperative society. We aim at making the sex sector healthy and just, because we work in this service sector.

The market of sexual services has not come up to serve the interest of sex workers. The demand for our services in that market has been created by the rest of the society - by its economy, familial norms, in the case of our country by the alarming sex ratio and many other factors. So long as these

grounds exist, the supply of sex workers to the market cannot be stopped. Under these circumstances what we need is the recognition and acceptance of our rights as sexual service providing workers, human beings and citizens. Our organization, the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, is fighting for attaining these rights for the last ten years. Many people in West Bengal and India support our demands. However, the governments of West Bengal and India are yet to accept our demands.

We shall go away from this conference with inspirations for our future struggle. Today we are giving a clarion call for a larger countrywide and worldwide struggle. If all the girls, women and citizens of India and the world become aware of their rights and, fight for attaining those rights, then and then only shall we be able to create a modern civil society. Durbar has realized that only by building a healthier and just society for the Bengalis, Indians and for the people of the whole world, will the sex workers get their due recognition as women, workers, human beings and citizen. Come! Join the struggle of Durbar! Step in! Advise us! Support this struggle! Speak for it! Write for it! Protest against all forms of injustice! Let our movement for obtaining the rights of the sex workers bring the high tide of a

movement for building a better human society!

People of the whole world must raise their voices against the anti-woman, anti-people, anti-all-worker, anti-sex-worker policies and activities of the present US administration. We must compel the governments of West Bengal and India to abide by the UN charters, declarations, Covenants and convention resolutions. The Government of India has signed these instruments, but in practice it does not abide by them or enforce them.

The Governments of West Bengal and India do not recognize us as workers. We are not allowed to organize trade unions. The dance bar girls were allowed to form their trade union in Maharashtra but now the government of that state of India is trying to abolish their profession by promulgating an illegal ordinance. Thanks to the notorious "Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act" of India our work is now quasi-illegal in this country. We demand repeal of this Act. We demand that our Self-Regulatory Boards be recognized by our government. We welcome all the members of society to join our struggle. Durbar gives its word of honour that it will stand by and support all the movements for establishing the rights of all common people.



Address by **Swapna Gayen**, Secretary, Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, at the Third State Conference of Sex Workers, University Institute Hall, Kolkata, 27th of May 2005.

Sonagachi Swastha o Unnayan Kendra (Sonagachi Health and Development Centre) – the Fulfilment of a Dream

Since 1997, our dream has been to establish a fully equipped centre with OPD, VCCTC and care for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) including treatment for OIs, tuberculosis and ART support, within the sex work site of Sonagachi. This facility will also house laboratories and a centre for research on development issues, STIs, HIV and communicable disease control. Our dream of building this centre was born from long and bitter experience of discrimination and stigma that we sex workers faced whenever we visited a government facility for care.

After years-long advocacy, the Calcutta Municipal Corporation donated a piece of land in Abinash Kabiraj Street within the Sonagachi sex work site, and we have commenced building the 4-story Centre there. We envision that over years, this Centre will develop into a centre of excellence for care and for communicable disease control and will function as a training centre for people working with marginalized populations. We also envision our Centre to provide healthcare to anyone without stigma and discrimination – a place that will be open to all!



We seek your generous contributions and support for our effort! Please donate freely towards fulfilling our dream of our own Centre: where sex workers and all people can access the best possible medical treatment without stigma and discrimination, without fear or favour at affordable costs!

Contributions will be accepted in Account Payee local (Kolkata) cheques, demand drafts and wire transfers only, as per details below:

1. Contributions from individuals / organisations in India should be made payable to:

Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee A/c SSUK
A/c No.: 01100050169
SWIFT CODE (For Wire Transfers): SBIN IN BB 106
Bank Name: State Bank of India (Jorasanko Branch)
Bank Address: 1/1A Nanda Mullick Lane, Kolkata 700 006

2. Contributions from individuals and organisations from outside India should be made payable to:

Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
A/c No.: SB 27051
Bank Name: Bank of India, (Vivekananda Road Branch)
Bank Address: 36/2 Vivekananda Road, Kolkata 700 007
SWIFT CODE (For Wire Transfers): BKIDINBBCOS

In Solidarity,
Roma Debnath and Swapna Gayen
Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee
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Email: dmssc@dataone.in, sonagachi@sify.com, Website: www.durbar.org



Of Bush and God and ABC and how the Right-wing thinks...

(The Sex Workers' Movement, HIV/AIDS Prevention and how the Rights-based Approach is being challenged by the "Right-wing Approach")

Anwara Ahmed, Mithu Sarkar, Amitrajit Saha

A spectre is looming over the world: the spectre of sex workers unifying and organising, running quality HIV/AIDS intervention programmes worldwide – throwing all 'known' paradigms to the wind, challenging patriarchy, challenging the bourgeois 'family', and dominant discourses on gender, class, sex and sexuality – and leading marginalised communities to assert their rights! Everyone – governments and scientists, bureaucrats and Big Pharma, epidemiologists and religious heads, middle-class feminist theorists and the Old Left are running helter-skelter: trying to put fetters to this new upsurge of people's initiative in nation after nation. Trying to retain control, save profits and maintain bottom-lines and trying, through religious dogma, through 'scientific research' and through 'state power' to keep the women, the transgendered, the gay people, the injecting drug users, the marginalised and the indigenous people 'in line' and away from the world of freedom, democracy, access to treatment and harm reduction and to what is rightfully theirs...

Sex workers of the World UNITE!

In the eighties, when HIV was first identified as a 'killer virus' and epidemiologists and scientists began to study the infection and the symptoms of AIDS, they called us "people with deviant behaviour". They said that it was a disease that affected people God cursed: gays, prostitutes and transgendered people. They called us the 'high-risk group'. When isolating us did not curb the epidemic curve; when vilifying us and 'playing ostrich' did not prevent the epidemic to spread across 'class', 'nation', 'family' and 'religious' barriers, they still called HIV/AIDS a 'gay curse' and the fruit of 'hedonistic life-styles' – and stigmatised all who became infected...

And then 'stars' began to die ...

Suddenly, HIV was *the* epidemic that needed to be stopped in its tracks: and who best to 'bear the

burden' of new interventions but sex workers – women, gay and transgendered, and people who visited them? We were, alongside long-haul truckers and injecting drug users, identified as 'vulnerable' people who required 'intervention' and 'behaviour change': condoms, syndromic management, STI management and VCTC services – all in a desperate bid to 'prevent' the 'larger society' from 'becoming infected'!

(What they didn't realise was that history has strange ways of turning 'interventions' designed to 'protect' the few from the 'masses' on their heads – witness the story of the Internet, designed initially to 'decentralised' nuclear 'command and control'!)

And then 'Sonagachi Project' happened...

Our Project proved conclusively that a 'vertical disease prevention' model centralised on 'individual behaviour change', would not work to prevent HIV from spreading. What was needed was a life-asserting rights-based model: a model that challenged current dogma and discourse, challenged old 'moralities' and challenged structures that kept people marginalised, stigmatised, underground and away from access and control over resources!

Uncomfortable doctors and administrators were forced to acknowledge that 'community mobilisation' and 'creating an enabling environment' needed to be replicated. That awareness was the need of the day, alongside scientific progress of testing methods, drug therapies and vaccine trials; that everyone from adults to adolescents needed information on sex and sexuality, on gender and power, and the importance of condom-protection; that HIV/AIDS was not merely a 'disease' but a social phenomenon that destroyed societies and its human resources; and that 'sex happens' so it is sensible to 'make it safe'.

We at Sonagachi however did not stop at mouthing 'community mobilisation' and other catch phrases. We, the sex worker activists, organised ourselves, formed a micro-credit cooperative to break shackles of brothel-owners and power-brokers, began literacy classes, demanded workers' rights, demanded changing/abrogation of laws discriminating sex work and sex workers, networked with civil society organisations, actively prevented trafficking of underage girls, began VCT and ART therapy on our own initiative, and through all our actions reiterated that what was urgently required to prevent the HIV epidemic was structural intervention based on universal values that was community-led, community-monitored and community-managed. Our success was too big to ignore and UNAIDS, the WHO and the Government of India all supported the programme and recognised that it was a 'best practice' model.

Parallel to the events at Sonagachi and West Bengal (India), sex workers' organisations were becoming active in other areas of the globe: Thailand, Brazil, Argentina, The Netherlands, Canada, Cambodia, Vietnam, etc. What arguably began at Sonagachi was fast becoming a global movement of sex workers; and this movement linked up with movements and networks of other groups marginalised but highlighted by the epidemic: PLWHA and injecting drug users! Most of these organisations were asserting their rights and were demanding access to harm reduction, preventive and curative services without stigma and discrimination. Networks of sex workers' groups like the Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) and Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSW) were active in uniting the voice of sex worker protest against discrimination, unethical research and this unified effort was challenging the discourse on development, access, harm-reduction, et al. A groundswell of opinion in favour of a 'rights-based' approach to development, health and HIV prevention – backed by lessons learnt from a number of successful interventions – was making itself heard globally.

Did we sex workers' organisations, then, never have detractors?

Of course we did. Sonagachi Project and similar sex worker-run/owned HIV intervention projects were never free of detractors, enemies and carping Cassandras predicting gloom-and-doom.

However, taken aback by the success of our interventions, they continued to snipe at our work and occasionally raised hysteric voices of how sex workers' rights would 'open the floodgates' that would challenge families and spread 'prostitution' far and wide; of how harm reduction strategies would not detract substance abuse, etc. In countries like India, this Cassandra-brigade screamed loudly and darkly of 'India becoming a sex tourism spot', etc., etc. Conflating illegal migration of scores of human beings worldwide with 'trafficking in women for sex work', a number of people and organisations screamed that 'rights of sex workers would increase trafficking of 'minor and innocents' [despite evidence showing that rights-based intervention at Sonagachi Project had actually increased the median age of sex workers significantly and also reduced the proportion significantly to nearly-zero levels]. To scream this was easier than acknowledging that rich countries kept their eyes closed to illegal migration to have access to 'cheap' human labour. Elsewhere, people looked at our programmes piecemeal, took out the 'easier bits', and tried to re-plant them out of context. The blame for failures of these projects was put squarely on the successful sex worker interventions. Religious right, upper-class feminists, unreconstructed old guard from leftwing and communist parties all joined hands together to restrain us, to put a stop to our kind of intervention. But successes from sex worker managed/run interventions worldwide usually put a stop to these ranting and raving or assigned these voices to the 'lunatic fringe'.

And then Bush-II stole the president-ship of US in 2001 piggybacking on the support of the military-industrial complex, oil billionaires, the religious right and compliant State machinery.

Inexorably the wheels began to turn... Buoyed by the victory of Bush-II, his backers put to motion a clutch of plans they had been nurturing for long based on religious bigotry, intolerance and the lust for more control ...

With great fanfare, the US Administration declared that HIV prevention efforts supported by them would highlight the "ABC Approach" where emphasis should be on Abstinence, Be Faithful (to a single sexual partner) and then finally on Condom use. In one fell swoop, backed by the millions of dollars of US Federal funding, the Administration ignored the epidemiological lessons learned globally from the preceding 20 years of living with the epidemic!

In 2003, the US House of Representatives passed the US HR2620 an Act that forbade US federal funding (i.e., USAID) to organisations that supported sex workers' rights or needle exchange programmes among injecting drug users!

Overnight research projects in Africa, in Russia and in South and East Asia highlighted 'results' that the HIV epidemic in these areas was driven by transmission from 'commercial sex workers' and injectable drug users – the underlying message this time was 'prostitutes' and 'drug users' drive the epidemic...

The industrial complex did its bit too – Big Pharma showing the way by blocking global use of cheap generic anti-AIDS drugs and, in the name of 'research' targeting sex worker groups in poorer countries... and the "10 billion dollars to fund ART" promised at Johannesburg remained just that: a fast-fading promise...

In short, at this present time, what were 'fringe' voices in the HIV-AIDS prevention, care and support are 'dominant' ...

The fall out...

- Successful sex worker run/managed programmes at risk of de-funding
- Many programmes that supported life-skills building of sex workers in their project areas have stopped doing so, fearing de-funding of their activities. (E.g., an organisation in Cambodia supported spoken-English classes for sex workers to enhance their chances of alternative employment. Since HR2620 was promulgated, they have stopped this support – the result sex workers who had an earlier opportunity to leave the profession, cannot do so anymore!)
- Instead of debate / discussion and / or replication of the Self-regulatory Board model developed by Sonagachi Project to prevent entry of underage girls into sex work, the current discourse is focussing on increasing state

power to curb 'trafficking' and in trying to do so, are preventing sex workers from working, driving them underground and thereby increasing their risks to unprotected sex and HIV infection...

- De-funding of programmes that refuse to 'sign' the dotted line agreeing either to 'eradicate prostitution' or promising 'not to support programmes that speak of sex workers' rights'
- Risk of de-funding harm-reduction and needle-exchange programmes for IDUs...

The New Struggle...

Friends, we are facing dreary days: reaction and backlash to our hard-won success is in the offing! It is time to stand firm, to stand up and be counted. All over the world sex worker, MSM, IDU and PLWHA groups are getting together, uniting in their struggle to challenge this hegemony. We are fighting for our rights, for what is rightfully ours! It is time to forge new alliances, to strengthen old ties and to stand firm together to challenge this monolith in all its fronts: through successful implementation of community-led programmes, through challenging the dominant discourse wherever possible, through sharing our concerns with all the world's citizens, and through demanding changing of discriminatory laws and statutes that keep us marginalised. Brazil has shown one way: by refusing US\$ 40 million aid for HIV intervention as that clashed with the country's declared policies on sex work and sex workers! We, the sex workers of Durbar, proud owners of the Sonagachi Project are also lending our voice to the groundswell of global protest! We are joined by our sisters and brothers in Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Canada, Argentina, the US and rest of the world! We call

on you all to join our struggle *against* stigma, discrimination, increased vulnerability and marginalisation and *for* a rights-based, equitable, decriminalised access to services and care that is rightfully ours! These are times of war, friends, and let us join together in love for a more just, tolerant and sharing world!



Self-regulatory Boards of Durbar

Kamala Singh, Sankari Das

DMSC addresses structural barriers that frame the everyday reality of sexworkers with the aim to change them. Explicit objectives of DMSC are gaining recognition of sexworkers as workers, a secure social existence for sexworkers and enhanced life-choices for their children. In response to the felt-needs of sexworkers, DMSC is active in reducing criminalisation of sex work sites. Trafficking in minor girls and unwilling women into sex trade is abhorrent to DMSC and the organisation is active in preventing trafficking of women into sex trade. To achieve this, we have innovated formation of Self-regulatory Boards (SRBs) in sex work sites since 1998 primarily to prevent trafficking of underage girls and women into sex trade.

Objectives of Self-regulatory Boards:

1. Preventing trafficking of women and under-age girls into sex work.
2. Decriminalising sex work.
3. Stopping all exploitative practices in sex trade.
4. Carrying out social welfare measures for sexworkers and their children.

Impacts:

1. Number of SRBs in operation: 27
2. Total number of underage girls and women rescued: 264
3. Break-up of women rescued by SRBs over the years (June 1996 to June 2005): **Total Rescued 331**

Year	Total	%
1996	03	0.91
1997	02	0.60
1998	02	0.60
1999	01	0.30
2000	01	0.30
2001	31	9.37
2002	40	12.08
2003	61	18.43
2004	143	43.20
2005	47	14.21

4.Characteristics of Rescued women / girls and Durbar's intervention (Data – from initiation of SRBs till June 2005)

Total girls/women rescued till date	331	%
Distribution of Rescued women/girls	No.	%
Underage girls (less than 18 years)	279	84.29
Unwilling adult women	52	15.71
Sent to an approved Home/Shelter	31	9.37
Repatriated to their own families	300	90.63

5. Declining proportion of underage sexworkers (DMSC surveys):
- | YEAR | 1992 | 1995 | 1998 | 2001 |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Sample size surveyed | 450 | 496 | 513 | 629 |
| Proportion of girls < 18 years old | 25.3 | 21.5 | 3.6 | 3.1 |

6. Increasing median age of sexworkers (DMSC surveys):
- | YEAR | 1992 | 1995 | 1998 | 2001 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| Median Age of Sexworkers Surveyed (in years) | 22 | 22 | 27 | 28 |

7. Literacy Programme:

- a. Adult centres: 15; Adults enrolled: 344
- b. Children's centres: 17; Children enrolled: 722
- c. Vocational Training: Total enrolled: 230; total trained: 141

Innovations:

1. Partnership with Deptts. Of Health, Labour and Social Welfare, Govt. of West Bengal.
2. Innovative public-private partnership: 40% members of SRBs are doctors, lawyers, local councillors, P functionaries, Social Welfare Officers, State Women's Commission members, etc.
3. Standardised guidelines, and history-taking and medical examination formats are used by SRBs for rescue, repatriation, rehabilitation and follow-up of women trafficked into sex trade.
4. Networking and partnership with police.
5. Maintenance of comprehensive documentation, including photographs of rescued persons by DMSC
6. Rehabilitation of rescued girls in state-approved shelters and maintaining contact with them to ensure overall development of rescued girls with the aim to improve their chances in life.

Preparation for the Parliamentary March

Kajal Bose, Gouri Roy

We, the sex workers of Kolkata established our own organisation Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee in 1995 to fight against all kinds of harassment and oppression and to fight for our rights. Today the organisation is more than 10 years old and has united sex workers throughout West Bengal. We have found the language of protest. We are now able to reduce harassment and oppression by *goondas*, *mastaans* (hoodlums and anti-socials) and pimps. We are also protesting against other social evils and lending support to other people in need like tribal people and fisher folk. We are now aware of health and diseases and are also making others aware about their health. We are discussing about our profession, work and problems related to our work with the general public and the government. In India, there is no recognition for sex work, so we, the sex workers of DMSC are demanding recognition of our profession. This right is the legal right of all sex workers. We the sex workers of DMSC have decided that all of us sex workers throughout India will proceed towards Delhi with our demands and march to the Parliament in the year 2006.

With the aim of acquiring support for the plan to 'March to Parliament', we have organised meetings, workshops and seminars in which this issue has been discussed and various resolutions taken. In preparation to the march, the first round of awareness campaigns were completed throughout West Bengal in February and March 2005. From March 2004 we started collecting signatures in support of our demand for workers' rights. In November 2004 a memorandum was sent on behalf of DMSC to the Lok Sabha (Indian Parliament) Secretariat stating the current situation of sex workers as unorganised labour, our lack of social security, demand for workers' rights and other demands. In this memorandum addressed to the Joint Secretary of the Lok Sabha Secretariat we have made the following demands:

1. That your office should recognise sex work as legitimate work. Sex workers do not break the law on account of their behaviour. We are unorganised labourers and want the right to form trade unions.
2. Those portions of the Prevention of Immoral Trafficking Act, which seek to regulate the behaviour of sex workers, need to be removed. These regulations misguide the society that considers sex workers as guilty and "fallen women". Instead of targeting traffickers, this unjust law targets us. The hunter and hunted are thus considered in the same light.
3. A separate labour law needs to be enacted for sex work. This law should not be offensive or punishable but should be attuned and responsive to the sex workers' social and professional needs.
4. Sex workers do not have social security, however they have certain professional needs – keeping this in mind the labour office should immediately take measures to improve the condition of sex workers.

As a result of this memorandum, Mr. R. S. Mishra, Joint Secretary of the Lok Sabha Secretariat came to Kolkata and met and discussed the demands of sex workers with representatives of DMSC. Mr. Mishra promised to discuss our demands with higher authorities. Within the next few months, we are planning a massive awareness campaign among the sex worker community in India including West Bengal. With the objective of marching to the Parliament and making this march successful, we are laying emphasis on networking with other sex worker organisations in India. Leaders of all political parties are being made aware about our 'March to Parliament' and efforts are being made to garner necessary help and support from them.

Issued by Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC), Kolkata (India)

Values for an Equal World : Equal Moral Worth

THE CALL OF THE PARLIAMENT MARCH

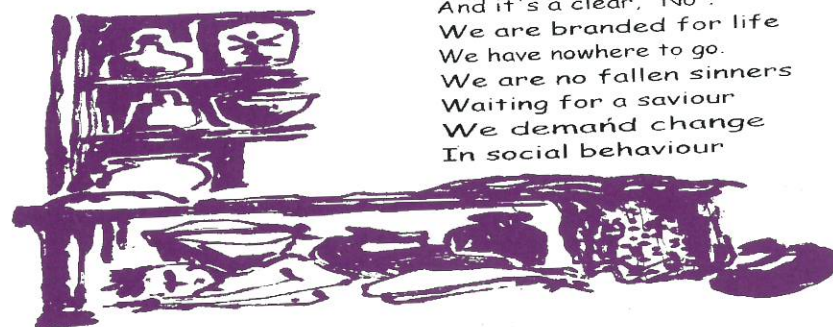
JOIN THE SEX WORKERS
IN A MARCH
TOWARDS
EQUALITY
LIBERTY
AND SEXUALITY

Which side are you on friend?
Which side are you on?
Are you all for stopping sex work
And r-e-h-a-b-i-l-i-t-a-t-i-o-n?
Sex work is real work
East, West, North and South.
Sex work is real work.
It feeds a million mouths.
Sex work is real work
Based on demand and supply
The same rules, the same rights
We believe should apply
Talking of coercion?
We share our fates
With miners and farmers
Our working class mates
Which worker anywhere
Has the pleasure to choose?
Don't we all sell our bodies?
Because there is too much to lose



We need no rehabilitation

And it's a clear, "No".
We are branded for life
We have nowhere to go.
We are no fallen sinners
Waiting for a saviour
We demand change
In social behaviour



Let's talk freely mate

Let's talk freely
We appreciate your concern
For protecting the family
But take a look at history friend
Take a look at history
You'll find an old story
And again the same old story
Men always have had wives
Kept behind the doors
While men can come and have fun
With us, the dirty whores
Wife and whore, mother and whore
Clearly defined borders
Help men and their institutions
Maintain male orders
You won't have to dig deep mate
Just scratch and scrape
You'll see many wounds
Of marital, parental rape



Let's ask questions friend,
Let's start a debate

Silence only helps the order
And leaves us to our fate
We live outside in dirty lanes
Shadows in the nights
Thousands of women and some men
Without voices. Without rights.



Some people we have heard are saying
Our movement is run by puppets

We are agents of evil forces
Feeding the global markets
They say we want to legitimize
Women becoming flesh
Is the story to simple friend?
Or is it a larger mesh?
When did you blame a worker's movement?
Because it may help the trade!
Are we confusing issues here?
Are mistakes being made?

Empower the whore, friend
Empower the slut
It's time to think afresh
To get out of the rut

Power to the sex worker

Hear the clock ticking
Power to the sex worker
To stop under age trafficking
Power to the sex worker
For safe sex rights
Power to the sex worker
To end the unending nights
Power to the sex worker
For the rights of humanity
For an end to discrimination
For love and for sanity



Rangan Chakravarty

Amlasole – New direction towards Tribal (Adivasi) development

Jyostna Basu (Ghosh), Dipak Baraponda

Litterateur Bibhuti Bhusan Bandhopadhyay invented a tragedy through the eyes of an Adivasi princess named Bhanumati. Bhanumati the Adivasi princess was asked –

“Do you know the name of the country in which you reside?”
Bhanumati answered, “We live in Gaya”.
Bhanumati was again questioned ‘Have you heard the name of India? She nodded her head to say that she had not. She had never gone out of her village Chakmakitola. She asked, “Where is India”? (Source: Aranyak, Bibhuti Bhusan Bandhopadhyay).

There is no difference between Bhanumati of 1939 and today’s Budhni Sabar, Gurubari Sabar, Khadi Sabar and Malati or Kokila Sabar of Amlasole. They may have gone out of Amlasole once or twice, but the “mainstream” people have never been able to embrace these marginalised Adivasis as their own. That is why even when the people of Amlasole die due to lack of food, Indra Sabar cannot garner the confidence to go to Kolkata for work. From the start of the British rule Adivasis have been living in their motherland like outsiders. However, things are changing now. Adivasis are becoming conscious. They are trying to establish and exercise their rights. Under the leadership of the people’s groups, efforts are being made to change the structure of the society.

In the year 2004 many Adivasis died of hunger and malnutrition in this border village of Western Midnapore. There was a big hue and cry about it. In the Central Coordination Committee of Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee it was decided that relief would be provided to this village. As per the decision, about 250 villagers were fed two square meals a day for ten consecutive days. In addition, clothes and medicines were also distributed. It was then realised that feeding people could not solve the problem of Amlasole. For real development to take place a well-planned intervention was essential.

That is why after the first visit, activities undertaken were:

a.) Assessment of the Village: This was done to find out the number and types of people living in Amlasole, their food habits, income etc. From this assessment a clearer picture of the village emerged.

The next step was

b.) Preparing a micro-plan: There are many problems in Amlasole. So we sat with some villagers to prioritise their problems from the most pressing to the least pressing. The most pressing ones were put on the top of the list while the least pressing ones were kept towards the bottom of the list to reflect which problems needed to be tackled first. The list of priorities that emerged is as follows –

- Ensuring income
- Health
- Education
- Housing for Sabars

For ensuring steady income, roads are needed and for farming, reservoirs and constructing a dam across the Mayurjharna is needed.

c. Formation of an organization: An organization named Birsa Munda Development Committee has been formed in the village after organizing the Adivasis. The organisation has been formed with the objective that the Adivasis will cater to their needs and problems themselves under their own leadership and initiative.

d. Workshop to increase efficiency: After the formation of the organisation, the organisation members and other Adivasis were given training on organisation related matters and issues to increase their responsibility towards the organisation. The sex worker activists mainly did this work. The story of empowerment of the downtrodden, backward sex workers was related to the backward Adivasis as an example. Hearing the story, the Adivasis were encouraged and they felt that they could progress like the sex workers.

Besides the training on organisation related matters, some vocational training was also provided to the tribals so that they could learn to make handicrafts.

e. Networking: For the development of Amlasole and other villages funding is needed. Maybe funds are available but what is lacking is proper communication and contact. Hence networking was started at various governmental as well as non-governmental levels to find out who could help and support and in what way.

f. Formation of self-help groups: Two self-help groups were formed among Adivasi women:
· *Kengora Mahila Sabar Unnayan Samiti* (Kengora Sabar Women Development Samiti) and
· *Geriapada Mahila Sabar Unnayan Samiti* (Geriapada Sabar Women Development Samiti)

These women are taking various trainings. For now it has been decided that they are going to make plates out of sal leaves and these plates will then be sold through self help groups.

g. Setting up of a primary health centre in Amlasole: A health centre has been set up for providing treatment to the Adivasis. This centre remains open from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. every day except Tuesdays. Some emergency medicines are also provided from this centre. Lakshmikanta Murai a local informal practitioner has taken over the – responsibility as an MBBS doctor who was willing to travel and work in this remote area, could not be found.

h. Setting up of a non-formal school after breaking barriers: A non-formal school has been set up for the tribals so that they can learn about their history and rights. Steps have also been taken to impart education to them required in everyday life.

All the above activities were based on 3 pillars of Respect, Reliance and Recognition.

Work has been undertaken earlier under the leadership of the community. Efforts have also been made to change the social structure of the society. But the Sonagachi Project is the first project which has attempted to change the structure of the society under the leadership of the community. Durbar workers in Amlasole have used this knowledge and experience. This according to Dr

Smarajit Jana, Chief Advisor of DMSC is Community-led Structural Intervention. (Source: Introducing Communityled Structural Intervention by Dr. S. Jana).

The 3 pillars based on which the community’s and Amlasole’s development will take place are:

- Ensuring the participation and involvement of the community in activities so that they become progressive and are able to establish (and fight for) their rights and entitlements.
- Ensuring that all the sub groups within the wider community can access and avail necessary services.
- Creating an environment such that all behaviours and practices that provide security and stability can be maintained and sustained.

Due to the efforts of Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee the changes that have been brought about are as follows:

Sl No.	June 2004 Activities	June 2005 Activities
1.	There was no provision for drinking water.	People drank spring water 3 tube-wells have been set up. People are now drinking water from the tube wells
2.	There were no roads	17 kilometres of road has been laid out from Odilachuna. Buses are plying in this road now.
3.	There were no water reservoirs for farming.	3 irrigation reservoirs have been made.
4.	There were no healthcare facilities	A primary health centre has been set up under the auspices of Durbar. Govt. doctors are coming for inspection
5.	The Sabars did not have houses	20 houses have been built for the Sabars
6.	The Sabars lacked the urge to work	Presently the Sabars themselves are getting involved in developmental work. They are digging wells, getting involved in constructing houses, laying down roads

Sl No.	June 2004 Activities	June 2005 Activities
7.	The villagers lacked day-to-day food security	Now they have food for work
8.	The villagers lacked self-confidence	Their confidence level is rising. They are getting motivation out of working with sal leaves and babui grass
9.	They did not have their own organisation	An organization named "Birsa Munda Development Committee" has been formed.
10.	The Adivasis did not have a school of their own.	"Breakingbarriers" a non-formal school has been set up
11.	The Sabars did not have any self-help groups	2 self-help groups have been formed
12.	There was no networking at either the government or the non government level	Networking has been initiated. At various levels the tribals are speaking for themselves and getting their problems solved
13.	There was no office to carry out the development work of the community	With the financial support of Durbar a house is being constructed which will serve as an office

The people who have been contacted for Amlasole's development are

Government Sector:

1. Upen Kisku, Minister, Tribal Welfare, Govt. of West Bengal
2. Dushyant Nariwala, District Magistrate, West Midnapore (district of West Bengal)
3. Ganesh Chowdhury, Sub Divisional Officer, Jhargram
4. Subhasish De, Social Welfare Officer, Binpur - 2
5. Sudhir Mandi, *Sabhapati* (President), Binpur-2 Panchayat Samiti
6. Kailash Muda, Bangshi Pahari Gram Panchayat

7. Sushim Kumar Sarkar, Backward Classed Welfare Officer, Jhargram
8. Jhargram Sebaytan Polytechnic College
9. Ajay Thakur, Sub Division Police Officer, Jhargram
10. T. N. Baske, Branch Manager, State Bank of India, Kusumdanga Branch
11. Sunil Chaturvedi, Additional Police Super (Operations), West Midnapore
12. Mahakash Choudhury, Officer In Charge, Belpahari Police Station
13. Asutosh Mahato, Member and *Adhyaksh*, West Midnapore Zilla Parishad
14. Madhab Murmu, *Saha Sabhapati* (Vice President), Binpur 2 No. Panchayat Samiti
15. Abhay Dutta, Tribal Welfare Inspector, Binpur 2 No. Block
16. Srikant Roy, Joint Block Development Officer, Binpur 2 No. Block
17. Haimanti Mandi, Education Extension Officer, Binpur 2 No. Block.
18. Pranab Malladev, Renge Officer

Non-Governmental Organisations

1. Bharat Sevashram Sangha
2. Seba Bharati Krishi Bigyan Kendra
3. Rotary Club, Dumdum
4. B. W. R

Individuals

1. Durgesh Malladeb, Opposition Leader of Jhargram Municipality
2. Chuni Hansda, President, Jharkhand Party, Binpur-2 Block, Ex-MLA
3. Tapas Maity, Secretary, Seba Bharati Krishi Bigyan Kendra
4. Joy Babu, Chilkigarh
5. Amal Sabar, Secretary, Sabar Kalyan Samity

Besides many others

The development work of Amlasole is continuing. The scenario of Amlasole has now changed. The Sabars now do not sit at home if they need anything. They go to the right place to get their needs addressed and fulfilled. That is why Budhni Sabar now travels 28 kilometres with her 6 months old baby in her lap to reach the Panchayat Samiti



office to demand a child education centre at Kengora while the Durbar *didis* (elder sisters) take care of her baby outside the Panchayat Samiti office. Budhni and her people have expressed their problem and they have been assured of a child education centre at Kengora. Budhni is now trying to ensure an education for her child from which she has been deprived.

Deriving inspiration from the sex workers Budhni

and her people are now weaving dreams. Indra Sabar has now been able to embrace outside people as his own. He is not scared to go to Kolkata now. Under the auspices of Durbar he has visited Kolkata once. Indra is now a member of the managing committee of the non-formal school of Adivasis. He protests to any irregularity in the school in the committee meetings because the school is their own.