

## **Story of conquering the world by two girls**

The Night Shelter at Baruipur red light area in Puratan Bazar was earlier run with support from other donor agencies. After running for three years the shelter was closed due to dearth of funds. Later, with the help of Abhyuday (Asha Atlanta/Athens Volunteer) Nishtha received financial support from Asha for Education and the centre was reopened. Today it is nearly ten years that Night Shelter is providing shelters and all help to the boarders, most unfortunate children of the society.

Alo Nayik and Akansha Barik are among those who are staying in the Night shelter since the first year, i.e. they are here nearly for the last ten years. They are very close friend of each other.

This year, both Akansha and Alo have passed the Class XII (Higher Secondary level) and have taken admission in College. Akansha has taken Bengali as her Honours subject and Alo has taken Philosophy as her Honours Subject. This has been the first time that two girls of Baruipur red light area have passed the Class XII standard and taken admission in College.

NISHTHA has never thought or imagined that one day one of these girls of night shelter, daughter of a sex worker will someday complete her schooling and go to college. It is like a 'dream come true' to NISHTHA.

Generally 100% girl children of red light areas do not go out and adopt the profession of their mothers. This is mainly because, the outside society do not accept them in the so called civilized society, the girls being from a red light area the outside world is terrifying to the girls of red light areas, and their own society forces them to become sex workers. Very rare we can hear one girl of sex worker live a normal life.

NISHTHA had admitted Alo and Akansha to a primary school, and after completing Class V standard NISHTHA had sent them to a Government run Home at Hooghly district where they studied from Class VI and completed Class XII. Whenever they used to come to Baruipur during summer or Puja vacations or occasional holidays, they used to stay at the Night Shelter. Owing to the environment there it was not possible for them to stay with their mother. Moreover they could not stay in the near by areas too because every moment in the locality is full of risks and danger, as any moment they would be molested or even kidnapped and gang raped. During the day time Alo goes to see her mother for some time and returns back to the Night Shelter. But Akansha is so unlucky that she cannot even go to her mother as she is always completely drunk round the clock, thus she cannot have a gossip with her mother. Now as they are now in Baruipur, they stay in Night Shelter. They say that Night Shelter is their home.

Two young daughters of sex workers, staying in a red light area, but not engaged in that profession is simply unbelievable and unimaginable. There is no law and order in this red light area. Twenty four hours people are engaged in consuming liquors and different types of drugs, openly prices of girls are bargained as we see in an animal market. A person with money in his pocket can do anything with a girl and within moment the life of that girl is finished. Nobody comes to a girls rescue as every body is engaged in 'enjoyment'.

Despite best efforts from the mothers, the girls themselves, and NISHTHA, we have doubt as to whether these girls will succeed in their battle of life. The main enemy of the girls is our society. Because if any of their classmates' comes to know that they are from a red light area, it will not be possible for anybody to save these girls. A disaster will land in their life and If not physically tortured, they will be so insulted and humiliated that they will have to leave college and move towards an uncertain future.