

Mukti Visit Experience

14th & 15th Aug, 2021

Partha | [AID](#)



I paid a very short visit to Mukti with Sankar da for a couple of days only from 14th to 15th August, 2021. The main purpose of the visit was to attend the village level Independence Day program organised by Mukti's women's group and farmers and also participating and sharing my thoughts in a public discussion on "climate resilient river embankment, agriculture and housing" organised by Mukti where local administration including Panchayat members, MLA, teachers, villagers and all were gathered and shared their thoughts on the topic.



It has always been a learning experience to be able to meet and have a dialogue with the community in their own place. This visit was no exception no matter how short it was. I got an opportunity to participate in the Mukti team meetings where they shared not only the program updates but also the strategies and planning in terms of implementing the programs.



I would like to share my experience of the Independence Day morning first. The morning started as I expected with the patriotic songs, setting up tricolor bunting and flag, decoration with flowers and all but the lack of unwanted glamour and glitters had made this program different from what we usually saw in cities. And the program started with flag hosting, national anthem, paying homage to the freedom fighters and sharing a few words about freedom. The most amazing and learning experience was to see the way village women shared their thoughts as to how do they see freedom or in other words the

meaning of freedom to them –

Madhabi di (Mukti SHG member) says - "I have spent my entire life inside the four walls, in the house chores, now I am free to work outside the home. I can earn money too" – This is my freedom!



Dipali di (Mukti mangrove plantation supervisor) says - "I knew that 15th August was to be celebrated by my men in the village. But today I am glad to participate in the program and share my thoughts with you." – This is my freedom!

AID has been supporting the Mukti Voice women empowerment and gender justice program since last year. I think people like Madhabi di, Dipali di, Amuna di are the women who can be a good potential leader and can work on the gender justice issue in the villages.



I also got a chance to get inside the deep mangrove forest of Burg island with the people involved in Mukti's mangrove plantation program. That was also an amazing experience. I could identify 10 to 15 different varieties of mangrove within a short trip inside the jungle. Although I didn't know the names of all the varieties. Yashin da has been working as Mukti's mangrove expert who told me the local name and use of each different variety. Since AID is part of this massive mangrove plantation program I was thinking about making a mangrove database with the local knowledge from people like Yashin da. My takeaway from this short boat

trip is that mangroves are not only protecting the islands against cyclones and water surges but also it's giving life to other flora and fauna and providing livelihood to the islanders. Our plantation program should take into account all the aspects.