



MOITRISANJOG SOCIETY



MOITRISANJOG SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY:

For over a decade, Moitrisanjog has been unwavering in its mission to uphold the rights, dignity, and humanity of individuals from marginalized gender and sexual identities, particularly those from the transgender, kothi, intersex, and queer communities. In a society still heavily shaped by patriarchy, rigid gender norms, and heteronormative structures, many of our community members continue to face systemic exclusion, discrimination, and violence.

Moitrisanjog stands as a collective voice against these injustices. Our work goes far beyond advocacy—it is rooted in care, resilience, and the belief that everyone deserves to live a life of dignity, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, class, caste, religion, or belief system. We are proud to support both religious and non-religious individuals in our community, affirming that spiritual belief—or the absence of it—should never be a barrier to acceptance or rights.

In 2024–2025, our focus remains on creating transformative change through education, mental health support, and sustainable livelihood programs, especially for transgender individuals who face unique challenges such as bullying, rejection, social isolation, lack of access to healthcare, and legal invisibility. We are expanding our mental health services to reach those who are most vulnerable, including those navigating trauma from familial and institutional violence.

Our livelihood initiatives continue to promote economic independence by building vocational skills and facilitating job placements. These programs are essential in challenging the economic marginalization that so often defines the lives of transgender and gender-diverse people.

At Moitrisanjog, we also recognize the importance of advocating for civil and legal rights—including the right to self-identify, access healthcare, education, housing, and employment free from discrimination. We remain committed to dismantling interlocking systems of oppression that operate along the lines of gender, caste, class, religion, legal status, and age.

As we look toward the future, our vision is clear: to build a society where no one is excluded, erased, or silenced for being who they are. We imagine a world where transgender, intersex, and gender non-conforming individuals—regardless of their beliefs or backgrounds—are seen, heard, respected, and protected.

Moitrisanjog will continue to be a safe space, an advocate, and a force for justice. We invite allies, communities, and institutions to stand with us in building a more inclusive and equitable world.

Arindam Das (Sumi)



Background

In a society still deeply entrenched in patriarchal norms, those who do not conform to traditional gender binaries or heteronormative expectations—such as transgender individuals, gender-nonconforming people, and marginalized women—continue to face severe discrimination and violence. Growing up with dignity, equal rights, and opportunities remains a formidable challenge for those who identify outside the conventional gender spectrum or have diverse sexual orientations. Often, they are rejected by their families and communities, leading to social alienation and economic vulnerability. Many are forced into begging or sex work for survival, while others succumb to despair, with suicide becoming a tragic escape for some. The situation is even more dire in rural areas, where social stigma is harsher and resources are scarcer.

Given that back in 2011, a few transgender / gender variant persons based at Cooch Behar, North Bengal used to regularly meet and share their own stories of struggle and painful lives in order to vent out their pain and find solidarity in each other. Gradually more people were added to the informal group. Their ideas and thoughts started taking shape, they got enough strength from each other to collectively fight against the discrimination and violence inflicted on them. This solidarity group eventually turned out to be a community based organization (CBO) back in 2011.

The CBO was named Moitrisanjog, meaning “a network to connect friends”. Thus, the Moitrisanjog Society got officially registered under Society Act as a NGO in the year 2011. The society is committed to protest the violence against the queer community. The main objective of our society is to provide a supportive network to ensure that everyone from the queer community gets equal opportunity, rights and entitlements to grow as a human being with dignity and respect. Our society strives to provide financial security to the community through establishing alternative livelihoods such as the craftsmanship program. We offer community members essential support services, including healthcare, counseling, and legal aid. Additionally, we advocate for equal access to education and employment opportunities. Beyond direct support, we actively organize awareness programs to challenge discrimination and combat violence in society.



Vision

Moitrisanjog Society stands at the forefront of intersectional activism, recognizing the deep and layered struggles faced by queer individuals—where discrimination is not just about gender or sexuality but also intersects with caste, class, and race. As the first organization in West Bengal's LGBT community to champion intersectional politics, Moitrisanjog is committed to amplifying the voices of the most marginalized and reaching those often left unheard.

In a landscape where feminist movements in West Bengal largely center cisgender women—often overlooking or inadequately supporting trans individuals—Moitrisanjog strives to bridge this gap. The organization is dedicated to fostering an inclusive dialogue on trans feminism, ensuring that the experiences and rights of trans and non-binary individuals are not just acknowledged but actively defended.

At its heart, Moitrisanjog is more than just an organization; it is a safe haven, a movement, and a family that stands in solidarity with those who have been pushed to the margins. It envisions a world where every queer and trans person can exist with dignity, free from oppression, and embraced in all their complexity and humanity.

Mission

The mission of the organization is to reach out to people in Cooch Behar who are transgender or gender variant and mobilize them to protest against socio-domestic violence. The mission also includes developing solidarity networks in society to sensitize them to issues faced by these marginalized communities and advocate for social protections such as access to healthcare and employment.

Contact Information:

Registered Office: Balarampur Road, Near Das Bekary, PO: Dinhata,

District - Cooch Behar, WB - 736135, India

Present Project Office: Gangaler kuthi (near boshar hat bazar) post,

Gheghirhat pin. 736134 Dist. Coochbehar west Bengal, India

Website: www.moitrisanjog.org

Contact: +91 7063418696

Email - moitrisanjog2011@gmail.com

Acknowledging Our Sources of Support

The continued growth and impact of Moitrisanjog Society would not be possible without the steadfast support from a diverse range of partners and well-wishers. We deeply acknowledge and appreciate the various sources of funding and collaboration that help sustain our vital work.

Funding and Support

- Mariwala Health Initiative: We are grateful for the consistent partnership with the Mariwala Health Initiative, whose generous support strengthens our health and wellness programs aimed at transgender and queer communities.
- Avaazein Foundation: Our heartfelt thanks to the Avaazein Foundation for standing with us in our mission to create inclusive and empowered spaces.
- Individual Supporters & Members: We are profoundly thankful to the individuals whose personal contributions—through donations and membership subscriptions—demonstrate faith in our work and fuel our everyday activities. Their encouragement reminds us that compassion and solidarity still thrive.

Collaborative Partnerships

The progress we've made is also rooted in strong collaborations with key institutions and local bodies. We acknowledge with gratitude:

- District Legal Services Authority for their legal guidance and support,
- District Transgender Cell for standing beside us in advocacy and welfare,
- District Social Welfare Department (DSW) and the Additional District Magistrate (ADM) for their institutional cooperation,
- Other NGOs and grassroots organizations who work with us in solidarity,
- Local Panchayats and Block-level Authorities whose on-ground presence supports smooth implementation of our programs,
- And above all, community support members whose resilience, leadership, and involvement are the true driving forces behind our efforts.

Conclusion

Moitrisanjog Society remains deeply committed to empowering transgender and queer individuals through education, skill-building, shelter, and the nurturing of a strong, supportive community. By working together to raise awareness, challenge stigma, and uplift community voices into leadership, we aim to build a future grounded in dignity, equality, and justice for all. Our journey is a collective one, and the change we strive for would not be possible without the unwavering support of each individual, organization, and institution that walks beside us. We are honored to be part of this shared mission—and together, we move forward.





Governing Board List

1. Mr. Souvik Ghosal – President
2. Mr. Nabin Roy – Vice-President
3. Mr. Arindam Das – Secretary
4. Mr. Pintu Sutradhar – Assistant Secretary
5. Mr. Jayanta Mondal – Treasurer
6. Mr. Sanjib Dey – Member
7. Mr. Raja Das – Member
8. Mr. Bikram Mahato – Member





Moitrisanjog Society of Cooch Behar

Working committe list

Sl no	Name	Address	Post Name
1	Arindam Das	Cooch Behar	Head Programme lead
2	Niladri Bhowmick	Cooch Behar	Programme coordinator
3	Subha Das	Cooch Behar	Community councillor
4	Koushik Saha	Cooch Behar	Accountant
5	Riya Dey	Cooch Behar	Asst. Accountant
6	Iswar Chanda	Cooch Behar	Senior Field Worker
7	Aprojit Mandal	Cooch Behar	Field Worker
8	Biplab Bhowmick	Cooch Behar	Field Worker
10	Tamanna Dey	Cooch Behar	Field Worker
11	Raja Dutta	Ailipur Duar	Field Worker
12	Binod Mahato	Ailipur Duar	Field Worker
13	Zakir Hossain	Cooch Behar	Field Worker
14	Avijit Bagchi	Cooch Behar	Field Worker

Number of peoples impacted this Years:

no	Innervatio n	Total no of innervatio n	Total no of peoples Impacte d	Wome n	Yout h	Regiona l minorit y	LGBTQ +	Disabilit y
1	Drop-in Centre		1029	167	180	109	534	39
2	drop-in centre counselling service		756				756	
3	Over Telephone Counselling Service		1568				1568	
4	community support group meeting	12	455	54	77		324	
5	police Sensitizatio n workshop	2	99	35	32		32	
6	Govt Hospital Meeting	1	82	32	40		10	
7	Street Drama	6	1769					
8	Pride Event	2	1155					
9	Emergency Relief Drive (Health Related)	1	55					

10. LGBT film Festival attending 145

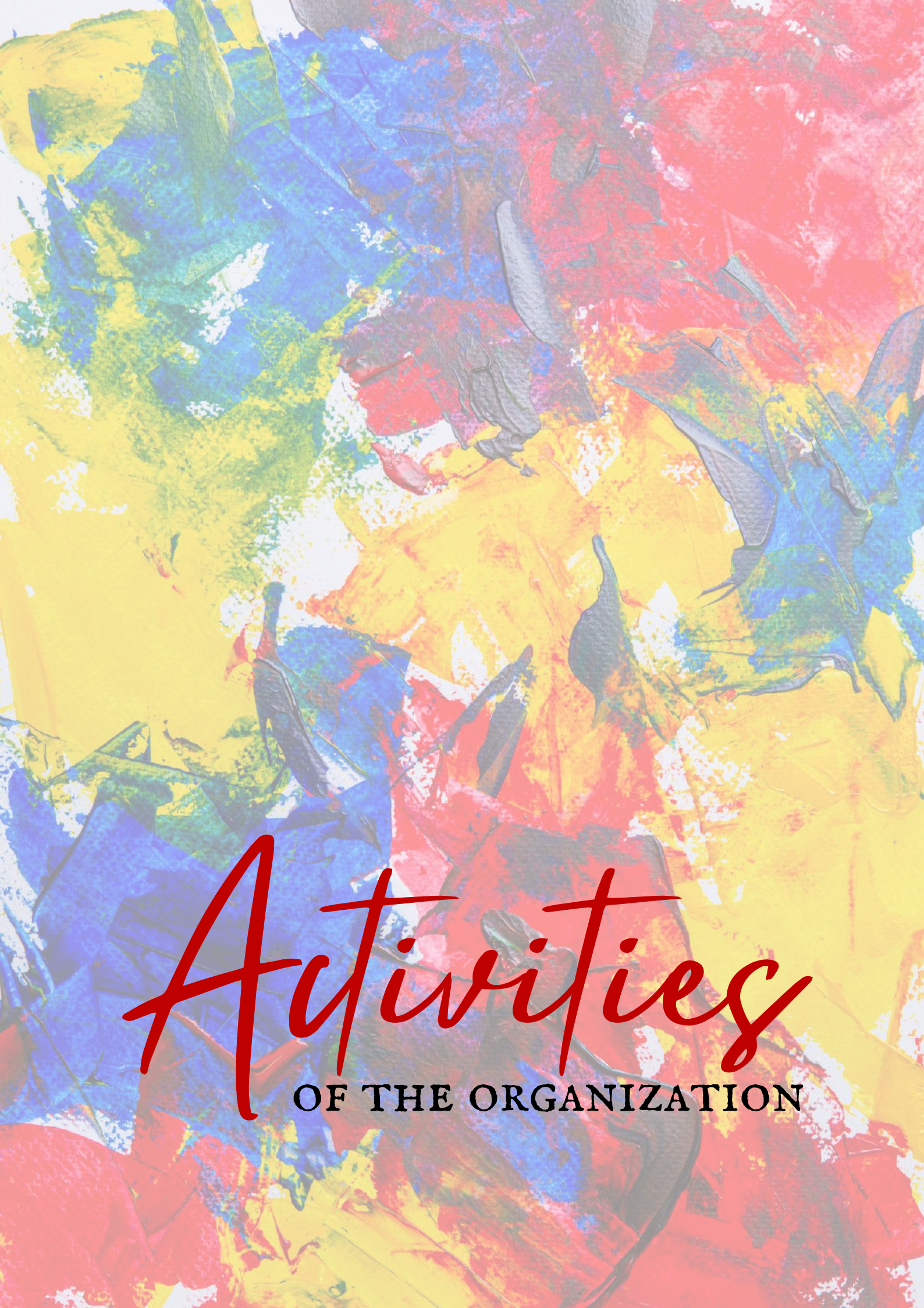
11. Govt. officials meeting and block level total meeting 5, Attending 145





Number of Community peoples impacted this Years:

Sl no	Innervation	Total no of peoples Impacted	LGBTQ+
1	Bank account	22	22
2	Pan card	9	9
3	Sastho Sathi card (Govt. health Insurance)	55	55
4	Khaddo Sathi card (Ration card)	14	14
5	Transgender Id card	43	43
6	How many people stayed overnight in our shelter home	76	76



Activities

OF THE ORGANIZATION

ESO KOTHA BOLI:

A Movement for Transgender Voices, Healing, and Strength

"Eso Kotha Boli" isn't just a movement—it's a lifeline, a home, and a family for those who have been unheard for too long. In a world that too often silences and sidelines transgender individuals, we stand as a beacon of hope, resilience, and unity. Here, every transgender person has the right to speak, to be heard, and to be understood—without fear, without judgment, and without shame.

Too many transgender individuals battle discrimination, isolation, and emotional turmoil on a daily basis. Society tells them to stay quiet, to fit in, to be something they are not. But we say, no more. We believe that change begins when we speak up—when we share our pain, our struggles, and our dreams. "Eso Kotha Boli" is a space where transgender individuals can come together, support one another, heal together, and fight for a future where their voices are no longer ignored.

Because Mental Health Matters

Beyond the visible battles—discrimination in workplaces, rejection from families, and the struggle for basic rights—there's an invisible war that many transgender individuals fight alone: the battle for mental and emotional well-being. Anxiety, depression, trauma, and loneliness take a heavy toll, yet these struggles are often overlooked.

At "Eso Kotha Boli," we recognize that mental health is just as important as physical safety. Every transgender person deserves a space to breathe, to cry, to be vulnerable, and most importantly—to heal. No one should feel like they have to fight their battles alone. Here, we create a community of support, love, and empowerment, where no one is left behind, and no struggle is too small to be acknowledged.

Together, We Rise

Our mission is simple but powerful: to create a world where being transgender is not a fight, but a celebration. Through open conversations, collective strength, and relentless support, we are building a future where transgender individuals don't just survive—they thrive.

You are seen. You are valued. You are not alone. This is your space. This is your voice. Let's speak. Let's heal. Let's rise—together.



ESO KOTHA BOLI





SANJOG SAHAYATA KENDRA O APATKALINA ASTANA:

A Lifeline for the LGBTQ+ Community

For many LGBTQ+ individuals abandoned by families or facing crisis, Sanjog Sahayata Kendra o Apatkalina Astana, run by Moitrisanjog since 2014, is more than just a shelter—it's a sanctuary. This emergency center offers free accommodation and meals for up to seven days, providing immediate relief for those in distress due to abuse, abandonment, or threats.

But its role extends beyond temporary refuge. During this time, Moitrisanjog offers legal aid, counseling, and attempts family mediation. When returning home isn't possible, they assist with employment, long-term housing, and community reintegration—ensuring individuals can rebuild their lives with dignity.

Designed exclusively for LGBTQ+ persons, the shelter fills a critical gap often overlooked by mainstream facilities. A thorough yet inclusive verification process ensures both safety and accessibility.

For many, especially transgender individuals, home can be a place of violence and rejection. Shelters like this are essential—they offer not just physical safety, but also emotional healing and the chance to reclaim autonomy. Moitrisanjog's shelter is a powerful step toward an inclusive society where everyone, regardless of identity, has the right to safety, respect, and belonging.



A MURAL OF RESISTANCE, LOVE, AND LIBERATION

Inside a Moitrisanjog community shelter, a vibrant mural stands as a powerful symbol of resistance, pride, and solidarity. At its heart, three figures embrace—bold, defiant, and united—embodying the strength and resilience of the transgender and queer community. The message “Protect Trans Lives” echoes their call for justice and dignity.

A rainbow-colored foot bound in chains reflects the systemic oppression queer individuals face, yet the bright colors remain—a symbol of enduring hope and liberation. Nearby, a figure immersed in a book represents the transformative power of knowledge and reclaiming silenced histories. Another scene shows two individuals connecting through reflection, celebrating queer love and self-acceptance.

This mural is more than art—it is protest, prayer, and promise. It declares that in Moitrisanjog’s shelter, there is not just safety, but a home, a movement, and an enduring commitment to justice and visibility for all trans and queer lives.





Moitrisanjog Gurukul Child Care Centre

Background

Moitrisanjog Society was founded in 2009 with the primary aim of advocating for the rights of the transgender community. Due to widespread societal discrimination, transgender individuals often face bullying and are denied employment opportunities simply because of their identity. To address these injustices, Moitrisanjog Society was formally registered in 2011, and since then, it has been fully dedicated to improving the lives of transgender individuals and promoting their inclusion in society.

Many transgender people have been denied access to education—either never having the opportunity to attend school or being forced to drop out due to bullying. These experiences highlighted the deep inequality within the educational system and broader society. In response, Moitrisanjog Society, in collaboration with members of the transgender community, launched an educational initiative: a child care centre known as Gurukul.

This centre supports children who have faced bullying at school or whose families cannot afford formal education. Since transgender individuals cannot become biological mothers, they see the Gurukul as a way to nurture and shape young lives, providing them with care, education, and hope for a brighter future, while also challenging the narrow mindset of society.

Gurukul Activities

Moitrisanjog Society operates 24/7 to support transgender individuals and other underprivileged communities. Gurukul specifically is open Monday to Friday from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM and on Sundays from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Most of the children at Gurukul attend nearby government schools, but due to the lack of an educational environment at home and limited parental education, they rely on Gurukul for academic support and a nurturing atmosphere.

Gurukul also provides two meals a day, computer education, and extracurricular activities. Currently, 24 children attend the centre. These children come from highly disadvantaged backgrounds, and many were even removed from government school rosters. Thanks to the encouragement and continuous support of Moitrisanjog Society, they are now re-enrolled and actively studying, all at no cost to their families.

When these children first joined Gurukul three years ago, they were in different grades—some in Class 2, others in Class 6. Gurukul has committed to supporting them until they complete their education up to the 10th standard under the state board curriculum.

As the centre is mainly run by members of the transgender community, they bring their full commitment and care to nurturing the children—fulfilling, in a unique way, the role of parenthood they are often denied by society.

Gurukul was launched during the COVID-19 lockdown and was initially sustained through local donations for the first two years. However, with normalcy returning and people returning to work, donations have decreased significantly. This financial challenge now threatens the future of Gurukul. We are therefore seeking your support in the form of donations to help us continue running the centre. An estimated budget for the coming year, covering 24 children, is attached for your consideration.





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Moitrisanjog Society Coochbehar

Community Support Group Meeting Report

ORGANIZED BY: MOITRISANJOG SOCIETY IN COLLABORATION WITH

DATE: 17 NOVEMBER 2024

LOCATION: BHETAGURI VILLAGE, DINHATA BLOCK 2, COOCH BEHAR

MEETING

Background and Purpose

Moitrisanjog Society has been actively engaged with the communities of Cooch Behar for over 15 years, facilitating discussions that address both their challenges and strengths. In partnership with Mariwala Health Initiative (), this ongoing program aims to promote mental well-being and provide crucial, accurate information through a community-based framework called VVID (Voices, Visibility, Inclusion & Dignity).

This month's session focused on a sensitive but highly important topic: access to safe, ethical, and informed sex reassignment procedures. The session aimed to raise awareness within the transgender community about the risks of unregulated surgeries and the need for mental health readiness before undergoing such life-changing interventions.



Key Focus: Informed Awareness on Gender Affirming Surgeries Identified Community Concerns:

Transgender individuals are often misled by unverified agents promising low-cost sex reassignment surgeries.

Several cases were reported where community members were taken to other states for unsafe and unregulated procedures, leading to physical and emotional trauma, and in some tragic cases, even death.

There is a significant lack of accurate, accessible information, which makes the community vulnerable to exploitation.

Expert Insights

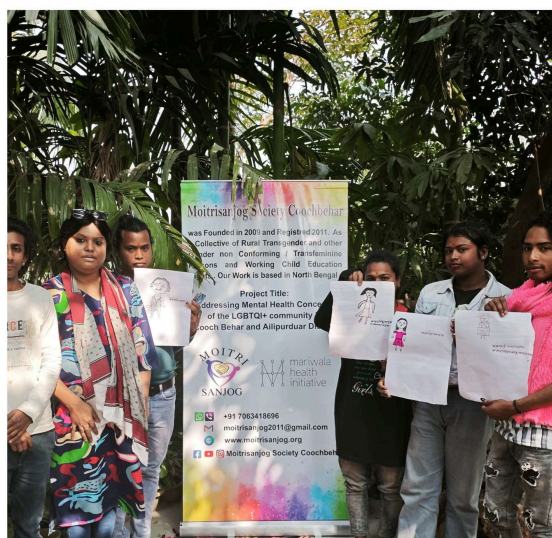
Dr. Shila Roy, a noted medical professional, joined the session online and addressed the complexities of gender-affirming surgeries. Her key points included:

Pre-existing Health Conditions:

Individuals with chronic illnesses such as diabetes may face heightened risks during or after surgery. Proper medical assessment is crucial.

Mental Health Preparation:

Temporary enthusiasm or social pressure can often lead to premature decisions. Dr. Roy emphasized that comprehensive mental health counseling must be a prerequisite. Post-surgery regret and anxiety are common without proper psychological readiness.





Community Experiences Shared

Participants shared real-life experiences highlighting both challenges and lessons learned:

Exploitation in Other States:

Some individuals were taken to Delhi by brokers who charged exorbitant fees for procedures of questionable quality.

Safer Alternatives in West Bengal:

A few others reported undergoing procedures in Kolkata at significantly lower costs and with more accountability.

These stories underline the urgent need for localized, safe, and ethically guided healthcare pathways for gender-affirming treatments.

Community Feedback and Positive Outcomes

Participants unanimously appreciated Moitrisanjog's initiative, acknowledging that: Such sessions are long overdue. Many within the community had never before received accurate, medical, and mental health-related information regarding sex reassignment.

The discussion empowered them with knowledge and helped them understand the emotional, physical, and financial implications of these procedures.



Commitment from Moitrisanjog Society

Sumi Das and Shubhajit Dey, representing Moitrisanjog Society, reaffirmed their dedication to the cause: Monthly awareness sessions—both online and offline—will be organized to ensure no community member is left in the dark or undergoes incomplete or unsafe treatments. Emphasis will be placed on informed decision-making, mental preparedness, and access to verified healthcare options within the state or nearby regions.



Looking Ahead

This meeting marks a crucial step in building a safe, informed, and empowered community. Moitrisanjog Society remains committed to:

Bridging knowledge gaps

Reducing vulnerability to misinformation

Promoting physical and mental well-being within the transgender and gender-diverse population of rural Bengal.

With continued community engagement and collaborative support, we envision a future where all individuals can make decisions about their bodies with dignity, safety, and full information.



MOITRISANJOG SOCIETY

REPORT ON SENSITIZATION THROUGH STREET DRAMA

THEME:

**WAGE DISPARITY FACED BY THE
LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY, WITH
EMPHASIS ON TRANSGENDER
INDIVIDUALS**

1. Introduction

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Moitrisanjog Society organized a powerful and socially engaging street drama in [location], West Bengal. The event aimed to raise awareness about a critical and often neglected issue—the economic and social discrimination faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community, particularly transgender persons, in the workforce.

This initiative was part of Moitrisanjog's ongoing commitment to foster inclusivity, equity, and dignity for all, especially those at the intersections of gender identity and marginalization.

2. Objective of the Program

The primary goal of this activity was to:

Highlight wage disparities experienced by LGBTQ+ individuals, especially those who are visibly queer or trans.

Emphasize the right to dignified employment as a fundamental human right.

Spark public dialogue and community reflection through an accessible medium—street theatre.

3. Overview of the Drama and Key Messages

The street play, titled [Insert Drama Title], delivered a compelling narrative based on real-life experiences of queer individuals in the workplace. It balanced entertainment with strong messaging, making it both accessible and thought-provoking for a diverse audience.

Key Issues Portrayed:

- **Unequal Pay and Limited Job Opportunities:**

Despite performing the same labor as their cisgender counterparts, trans individuals and effeminate gay men (often referred to locally as Kothi) are often paid less and relegated to specific job sectors like garment or cosmetic retail.

- **Discrimination and Harassment:**

The play depicted everyday workplace challenges, including verbal abuse, mockery, exploitation, and emotional neglect, which often go unaddressed due to the lack of supportive grievance mechanisms.

- **Mental Health Impacts:**

Repeated acts of exclusion and humiliation were shown to affect the mental and emotional well-being of LGBTQ+ workers, creating an additional burden alongside financial instability.

- **Lack of Recourse:**

The play shed light on how many queer individuals are assigned more responsibilities without adequate support or redress, deepening the cycle of marginalization.

5. Community Engagement and Outcome

Staging the drama in a busy marketplace proved to be highly effective in reaching a wide and diverse audience. The setting allowed for organic interaction with local community members, shoppers, and stakeholders.

Positive Outcomes Included:

- **Increased Visibility:**

The performance attracted significant attention, enabling us to sensitize the public within a short timeframe.

- **Stakeholder Involvement:**

Members of the Bazar Committee, local vendors, and suppliers expressed appreciation for the initiative and acknowledged the presence of such discrimination in everyday life.

- **Emotional Resonance:**

The play evoked empathy, reflection, and dialogue among spectators, sparking conversations that extended beyond the performance itself.

6. Conclusion and Way Forward

This street drama successfully served as a catalyst for awareness, demonstrating the power of creative expression in driving social change. By centering the lived experiences of transgender and queer individuals, the event helped bridge the gap between marginalized voices and the wider community.

Moitrisanjog Society remains committed to:

- Continuing such grassroots-level sensitization programs in public and semi-urban spaces.
- Advocating for equal employment opportunities for all, irrespective of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Promoting mental health, safety, and dignity in the workplace.

With each such effort, we move one step closer to a society where equality is not just an ideal but a lived reality for all.



4. Significance of International Women's Day

While International Women's Day traditionally highlights the struggles of women, including the wage gap and sexual harassment at the workplace, this event served as a reminder that trans women and queer individuals also face parallel injustices. Their voices often remain unheard in mainstream conversations on gender equality. Through this performance, Moitrisanjog sought to expand the inclusivity of Women's Day, acknowledging the diversity of womanhood and reinforcing solidarity across gender identities.



PRIDE MONTH CELEBRATION

Transgender Empowerment Mela

Organized by :



Supported by :



Date : 15th June, 2024 Saturday

Place : Uttaranchal, Near Rambhola High School, Cooch Behar

Contact No. : 7063418696

Transgender Empowerment Mela

EVENT DATE: JUNE 15, 2024

LOCATION: UTTARANCHAL HALL, COOCH BEHAR, WEST BENGAL

Introduction:

On June 15, 2024, Moitrisanjog Society proudly organized the Transgender Empowerment Mela at Uttaranchal Hall in Cooch Behar. The event was an extraordinary celebration of the transgender community, aimed at fostering empowerment, inclusion, and social integration. The Mela created a vibrant space for transgender individuals to engage in workshops, cultural performances, and networking opportunities, while also offering a platform to showcase products and services by transgender entrepreneurs. The event successfully brought together more than 300 participants, highlighting the unity, strength, and diverse talents of the transgender community.

Throughout the day, a range of activities, including insightful workshops, training sessions, and thought-provoking keynote addresses, worked towards raising awareness about transgender rights, creating opportunities for skill development, and advocating for social justice. This event was a powerful reminder of the importance of inclusivity, acceptance, and creating supportive spaces for marginalized groups.

Objectives:

The primary objectives of the Transgender Empowerment Mela were to:

1. Promote Awareness and Acceptance:
2. Raise public awareness of the challenges faced by the transgender community, and encourage acceptance through educational sessions and cultural exchange.
3. Provide Skill Development Opportunities:
4. Offer workshops and training that enhanced the skills and employability of transgender individuals, while providing resources for career development and entrepreneurship.
5. Foster Community and Networking:
6. Create a safe, welcoming environment for transgender individuals to connect with one another, allies, mentors, and potential employers.
7. Showcase Talents and Achievements:
8. Celebrate and promote the artistic, entrepreneurial, and professional talents of transgender individuals, allowing them to share their stories, products, and services with the wider public.
9. Advocate for Rights and Inclusion:
10. Raise the profile of transgender rights and encourage policy changes to ensure equal opportunities in education, healthcare, employment, and other aspects of life.





Notable Speakers and Guests:

- Arpita Malik – Women's Rights Protection Officer, Cooch Behar Welfare Department
- Arpita Malik, a dedicated advocate for women's and transgender rights, delivered an inspiring speech emphasizing the need for dedicated support systems for the transgender community. Her talk highlighted the establishment of specialized cells within the Cooch Behar Welfare Department, designed to address the unique challenges faced by transgender individuals. She also stressed the importance of aligning transgender rights with women's rights to create a more equitable and inclusive support system for all marginalized genders.
- Professor Riki Chakraborty – ABN Seal College
- Professor Chakraborty offered valuable insights into the challenges faced by transgender students in educational institutions. She discussed issues such as discrimination and the lack of support, which hinder academic progress and mental well-being, and proposed solutions to create more inclusive educational environments for transgender individuals.
- Mr. Provat Roy – Retired LIC Officer
- Mr. Roy's speech focused on the landmark inclusion of the third gender category in Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) policies. He shared how this policy change has made it easier for transgender individuals to access financial and health services, helping to ensure they are not excluded from important protective services like Jeevan Bima.
- Mr. Anupam Maity – Psychologist, Mind Zone Counselling Centre
- Mr. Maity's session addressed the critical issue of mental health within the transgender community. He highlighted the mental health challenges transgender individuals face, such as depression and anxiety, which are often exacerbated by discrimination. His talk underscored the importance of societal support and mental health services tailored to the unique needs of transgender individuals.
- Mr. Asim Chakraborty – Social Worker
- Asim Chakraborty shared his experiences working with the transgender community as a social worker. His talk shed light on the challenges of providing support in an environment often resistant to change, as well as the emotional and practical challenges faced by social workers advocating for marginalized groups.



Summary of Event Achievements:

The Transgender Empowerment Mela achieved significant milestones, both in terms of engagement and impact. Some of the key outcomes include:

- **Increased Awareness and Acceptance:**
 - The event successfully raised awareness about the issues facing transgender individuals and encouraged a broader societal acceptance. The speeches and discussions by notable speakers like Arpita Malik, Riki Chakraborty, and others provided critical perspectives on transgender inclusion in various areas of life.
- **Skill Development and Economic Empowerment:**
 - The Mela served as an important platform for transgender entrepreneurs, with stalls showcasing a wide range of products crafted by transgender individuals. This exposure not only promoted their businesses but also fostered a sense of pride and achievement.
- **Cultural Celebration:**
 - Cultural performances by the Azahar Folk Band, Subha Das, and Joya Hussain added an element of celebration, showcasing the artistic talent and cultural contributions of the transgender community. These performances created an engaging and joyful atmosphere, emphasizing the importance of cultural diversity and inclusion.
- **Policy and Advocacy:**
 - Through discussions and presentations, the event reinforced the need for inclusive policies and highlighted the intersectionality between transgender rights and broader social justice efforts. Attendees were encouraged to advocate for policies that ensure equal rights and opportunities for transgender individuals.
- **Mental Health Support:**
 - Mr. Anupam Maity's session on mental health was a highlight, offering crucial insights into the mental health challenges faced by transgender individuals. His session equipped attendees with strategies for overcoming these challenges and emphasized the importance of mental wellness within the transgender community.



Future Plans:

Building on the success of the Transgender Empowerment Mela, Moitrisanjog Society has outlined several exciting plans for the future.

- **Support Networks and Peer Groups:**
 - We aim to establish permanent support networks and peer groups to offer continuous emotional and psychological support, creating safe spaces for community members to share experiences and offer mutual aid.
- **Workshops and Training:**
 - Future events will feature comprehensive workshops focused on career counseling, skill development, and entrepreneurship. These sessions will continue to provide learning opportunities that enhance the employability and economic independence of transgender individuals.
- **Advocacy and Policy Change:**
 - We will continue to advocate for policies that protect transgender rights, working closely with policymakers, institutions, and other stakeholders to push for legislative changes that ensure equal access to education, healthcare, and employment.
- **Mental Health Programs:**
 - In response to the insights shared by Mr. Anupam Maity, we plan to develop specialized mental health programs that provide access to trained professionals and organize regular counseling sessions for the transgender community.
- **Economic Empowerment Initiatives:**
 - We are also launching microfinance schemes, business incubation programs, and partnerships with local businesses to provide transgender individuals with financial resources and mentorship to start and sustain small enterprises.
- **Annual Event:**
 - The Transgender Empowerment Mela will be held annually, with plans to expand the scope and reach of the event each year, incorporating new activities and collaborations to further support the transgender community.

Through these initiatives, Moitrisanjog Society aims to continue creating a positive and inclusive impact, empowering transgender individuals and promoting their integration into society. We are committed to ensuring that the transgender community has the support, resources, and opportunities necessary to thrive in all areas of life.



Siliguri Pride Walk 2024: Embracing Diversity, Empowering Voices





This December, Siliguri became a beacon of hope and solidarity as it hosted its vibrant Pride Walk, a powerful celebration of the LGBTQ+ community. At the heart of this event was Moitrisanjog Society, a passionate LGBTQ+ NGO, whose commitment to inclusivity and advocacy played a pivotal role in shaping the event's success.

Creating Safe Spaces for Connection

The Pride Walk was more than just a parade—it was a heartfelt gathering where LGBTQ+ individuals came together to share their stories, forge new connections, and foster a sense of belonging. Moitrisanjog Society ensured that the space was welcoming and supportive, empowering every participant to embrace their true selves. In a world where LGBTQ+ individuals often face isolation, the Pride Walk provided a moment of unity and solidarity, reminding everyone that they are not alone in their journey.

Advocacy for Equal Rights and Social Change

Though challenges and discrimination still persist, the Pride Walk amplified powerful messages of equality, love, and justice. Moitrisanjog's involvement was instrumental in highlighting the need for comprehensive anti-discrimination laws and equal rights for the LGBTQ+ community. By standing alongside allies, advocates, and supporters, Moitrisanjog reinforced its dedication to creating a society where everyone is free to live without fear of judgment or exclusion.

Moreover, the Pride Walk served as a source of inspiration, particularly for LGBTQ+ youth. Seeing visible role models, engaging with allies, and being part of such a bold, loving community provided a sense of hope and strength. These moments were more than symbolic—they were transformative, showing young people that they, too, can live authentically and be proud of who they are.

Celebrating Diversity, Advancing Advocacy, Inspiring Hope

Siliguri's Pride Walk was a testament to the incredible resilience and spirit of the LGBTQ+ community. It wasn't just about celebration—it was a call to action for a more inclusive world, a world where diversity is embraced and every person can live their truth without fear. With Moitrisanjog's dedicated participation, the event reinforced the urgent need for societal change while inspiring a future filled with equality, respect, and acceptance for all.

As we reflect on this year's Pride Walk, Moitrisanjog Society is more committed than ever to creating safe spaces, amplifying LGBTQ+ voices, and advocating for a world where everyone is free to love, live, and thrive. Together, we'll continue pushing for progress, celebrating every step toward a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow.



LGBTQ+ Gender Sensitization Program with Youth Students

Cooch Behar, 9th October 2024

On 9th October 2024, Moitrisanjog Society had the privilege of conducting a transformative gender sensitization program at Ram Bhola High School in Cooch Behar, a school that proudly secured first place in last year's Madhyamik examination. Known primarily as a boys' school, the institution provided an ideal platform to engage with young minds on the topic of gender awareness.

The 4-hour session brought together 230 enthusiastic students from classes 9 and 10. Our discussion started with understanding the physical differences between boys and girls, gradually transitioning to a more inclusive conversation about the third gender. We explored the diverse ways society views individuals based on gender and the challenges faced by those who do not conform to traditional gender roles.

Breaking Stereotypes and Building Understanding

We delved into the topic of feminine boys and masculine girls, and the struggles they often face in school settings. Students shared powerful and heartfelt stories, some pointing out examples from their own neighborhoods, while others spoke of peers within the school who had been subjected to societal expectations or bullying. The conversation quickly became lively and deeply engaged, with students showing curiosity and empathy towards the struggles of those who break societal molds.

To give further context to the discussion, we screened two poignant films that highlighted the stories of transgender individuals who had faced bullying, discrimination, and exclusion in school. These films depicted the harsh reality of students being forced to drop out of college or being unable to continue their education due to the trauma of being ostracized for their gender identity. The films sparked numerous questions from the students, who were eager to understand the complexities of gender discrimination and its far-reaching effects.

The Role of Technology and Mental Health

As the conversation shifted to the impact of internet usage on mental health, the students were keen to explore how online platforms can sometimes amplify negative behavior, making it harder for vulnerable individuals—especially those from marginalized gender identities—to find support. This provided an opportunity for the students to reflect on the growing influence of technology in their lives and how they can use it more responsibly to foster positive change.

Support from School Authorities

We were honored to have the presence of the headmaster, six assistant teachers, and a member of the school management committee, all of whom actively participated in the discussion. Their presence and encouragement underscored the importance of inclusivity in the educational environment. The school authorities emphasized the need to respect human differences in our society, particularly as technology continues to shape our daily lives.

Looking Ahead: A Commitment to Continued Dialogue

At the conclusion of the session, Moitrisanjog Society expressed our desire to maintain the momentum of this conversation by proposing a follow-up discussion in six months. The school authorities fully supported this initiative, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration to promote a more inclusive and accepting environment for all students.

This program marked an important step in fostering understanding, breaking down stereotypes, and encouraging empathy among the next generation. Moitrisanjog Society remains committed to spreading awareness and advocating for the rights of all individuals, regardless of their gender identity or expression. Together, we can build a more inclusive and accepting society—one conversation at a time.

PARENTS SENSITIZATION MEETING – 8TH DECEMBER 2024 AT AILIPUR DUAR IN COLLABORATION WITH MOITRISANJOG SOCIETY AND

On 8th December 2024, Moitrisanjog Society, in collaboration with , hosted a gender sensitization meeting with community parents in Ailipur Duar. The primary goal of this session was to open up a safe, non-judgmental space where parents could discuss their concerns about gender identity and sexual orientation, particularly in relation to their children.

Key Objectives and Discussion Points

The session aimed to address two main issues:

1. **Breaking the Silence:** Often, during community meetings, parents feel unable to openly discuss sensitive topics. Many of their thoughts remain unspoken, creating a barrier to understanding and support.
2. **Challenging Misconceptions:** A significant number of parents still perceive homosexuality as a "disease", believing it can be "cured" through medical intervention. The meeting sought to dismantle this harmful misconception and help parents see the importance of accepting their children's true identities.

Speakers and Insights

The meeting featured two esteemed speakers:

- Parama De, a mental health worker
- Dr. Chiranjib Roy, a psychiatrist

Both speakers shared valuable insights, explaining that sexual orientation is not a disease or disorder, but a natural part of human diversity. They emphasized that medical science has long recognized this, and it is not something that can be "treated" or "fixed." Dr. Roy highlighted the importance of empathy and communication in parent-child relationships, advising parents to be loving and supportive friends to their children. He explained that many LGBTQ+ youth feel isolated, thinking they are the only ones experiencing such feelings, and a supportive conversation can make a world of difference.

Personal Experiences and Empowerment

Sumi Das, a member of Moitrisanjog Society, encouraged parents to actively engage with the organization's online resources, including magazines and awareness videos, to better understand LGBTQ+ issues. She emphasized that knowledge is key to overcoming stigma and fostering a more inclusive environment at home.

Isowr Chanda, another member of the organization, shared her personal journey. She spoke about the pressure she faced from her family to conform to traditional expectations, including getting married. However, Isowr courageously opened up to her parents about her true feelings and identity, and, over time, her family came to understand and support her. Her story resonated deeply with the parents in attendance and provided a powerful example of how communication and honesty can heal and build stronger family bonds.

Interactive Q&A Session

The meeting concluded with an interactive Q&A session, where parents asked questions, shared their concerns, and sought advice on how to approach their children's gender identity and sexual orientation with love and respect. This open dialogue helped address many misconceptions and fears, offering clarity and guidance on how to create more supportive, inclusive family environments.

Looking Forward

Sumi Das wrapped up the meeting by expressing Moitrisanjog's commitment to regular follow-up sessions like this, where parents can continue to share experiences, ask questions, and gain deeper insights into gender and sexual diversity. She emphasized the importance of creating a safe and nurturing environment at home, where everyone, regardless of their identity, feels loved and accepted.

This meeting was a small but significant step toward breaking down the barriers of ignorance and fostering a more inclusive, understanding community. Moitrisanjog Society looks forward to continuing this important dialogue and providing ongoing support to families across the region. Together, we can create stronger, more compassionate communities where all individuals, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation, are accepted and celebrated.

Monthly Meeting with Block Level Club Authorities

Date: 28th February 2025

Location: Bosarhat Renesas Club, Cooch Behar

Participants: 17

Purpose of the Meeting:

On 28th February 2025, Moitrisanjog Society convened an engaging and impactful session with the authorities of the Bosarhat Renesas Club. The primary goal was to spark open dialogue and raise awareness about the social and legal progress regarding the LGBTQ+ community. We aimed to challenge outdated misconceptions, celebrate recent advances, and discuss the importance of inclusion, dignity, and respect for all identities. The discussion covered a wide range of critical themes, including:

- The historical misrepresentation and pathologization of LGBTQ+ identities, which have contributed to deep-rooted stigma.
- Recent positive developments, such as the declassification of LGBTQ+ identities as mental illnesses by medical science, and the repeal of discriminatory laws.
- Government initiatives, such as the establishment of the Transgender Welfare Board and support cells aimed at uplifting the transgender and broader LGBTQ+ community.

Key Discussion Highlights:

The meeting saw active participation from the Renaissance Club members, including the President, Secretary, and youth representatives, as well as individuals from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, including Hindu and Muslim communities. A major focus of the discussion was the historical injustices faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. Speakers reflected on how medical science and religious teachings have historically framed LGBTQ+ people as “abnormal” or “deviant,” contributing to harmful stereotypes that continue to affect societal attitudes today—especially in more conservative spaces.

Though the discussion acknowledged that certain parts of the Islamic community remain resistant to accepting LGBTQ+ identities, it was heartening to explore how inclusive policy reforms and community engagement are slowly but steadily changing these perceptions. Advocates emphasized that sustained dialogue and ongoing advocacy are creating space for empathy and understanding, which are essential for breaking down long-held prejudices.

Meeting Outcomes:

This event marked a significant achievement for Moitrisanjog Society in its ongoing mission to engage communities and educate them about gender identity, social justice, and human rights. It was a proud moment for us to witness the shift in engagement as the session unfolded.

Initially, the atmosphere was one of hesitation—some attendees seemed indifferent or distracted, possibly due to the unfamiliar nature of the topic or ingrained discomfort with LGBTQ+ discussions. However, as the session progressed and the conversation became more inclusive and compassionate, the mood in the room began to change. Participants began asking thoughtful questions, sharing personal reflections, and listening intently, demonstrating an increasing openness to learning.

By the end of the meeting, we had successfully transformed what started as a room of uncertainty into a space of understanding, curiosity, and genuine engagement. This shift was not only encouraging but also profoundly moving. It was a powerful reminder that with patience, empathy, and respectful dialogue, even the most difficult conversations can lead to meaningful change.

Challenges Faced:

At the beginning of the meeting, there were some understandable challenges. Several members of the club leadership expressed initial hesitations about hosting a discussion centered on LGBTQ+ issues, reflecting a common social sensitivity and a lack of exposure to such topics. Additionally, some attendees seemed unsure about the conversation, possibly due to their limited familiarity with LGBTQ+ issues or internalized discomfort.

However, as the discussion continued, the atmosphere shifted dramatically. What began as a quiet, somewhat tense room gradually transformed into a vibrant space for open dialogue. Attendees began to ask questions, share thoughts, and engage with the material in a way that reflected their growing empathy and understanding.

Conclusion and Moving Forward:

The success of this meeting shows the power of dialogue and community engagement in breaking down barriers. As Moitrisanjog Society, we remain committed to hosting such conversations and creating spaces for learning and connection across communities.

By continuing to approach these sensitive issues with compassion, respect, and patience, we can foster a more inclusive environment where understanding and solidarity thrive. The progress we made in this session was only the beginning, and we look forward to continuing these conversations in future gatherings. Together, we are paving the way for a more inclusive and empathetic society where every individual is respected, no matter their identity.



Community Friends Violence Case Study:

The Life and Struggles of

MOLLY CHAKI

Introduction

Molly Chaki, known as Sushanta (Mali), is a 35-year-old resilient individual whose life has been shaped by immense challenges, but also remarkable courage and perseverance. Her journey reflects the profound hardships faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community, navigating societal prejudice, systemic inequalities, and personal struggles. Through it all, Molly has emerged as a beacon of strength, and her story is a testament to the transformative power of acceptance, support, and community.

Background

Molly's roots lie in Pundibari, a small town in West Bengal, where she faced adversity long before she became an integral part of Moitrisanjog Society. Early in her career, she worked as a legal assistant at the Cooch Behar Court, where she initially sought to build a stable future for herself. However, societal biases regarding her appearance and identity as a transgender woman created significant barriers. She was subjected to discrimination, rejection, and isolation, forcing her to leave a career she had worked hard to pursue.

Challenges Faced

Undeterred by this setback, Molly turned to the hijra (transgender) community in search of belonging and understanding. In an effort to align with her true identity, she made the deeply personal and life-changing decision to undergo medical interventions and castration, which is a traditional practice within the hijra community. Though these experiences were critical in affirming her identity, they were also fraught with profound physical, emotional, and social struggles.

Molly's journey was not just about personal transformation, but also about navigating a society that viewed her with prejudice and disdain. The rejection she faced was not just from her workplace but extended to her broader community, further deepening her sense of alienation and loss.



Moitrisanjog's Role in Molly's Transformation

It was in the midst of this turmoil that Moitrisanjog Society became a turning point in Molly's life. In search of a safe space where she could reclaim her dignity and rebuild her life, Molly found refuge within the walls of Moitrisanjog. The organization offered her more than just shelter—it provided acceptance, emotional support, and the tools needed to navigate her new path forward.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Molly became an active member of Moitrisanjog's initiatives, embodying the spirit of resilience and solidarity that the organization stands for. Despite the difficulties she had endured, she gave back to the community that had embraced her, showing remarkable dedication and strength. Her contributions were a testament to her indomitable spirit and desire to make a difference, not just for herself, but for others who faced similar struggles.

Current Status: A New Beginning

Today, Molly continues to reside with Moitrisanjog, where she has been able to rebuild her life with the resources, guidance, and love she deserves. With the support of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE), she now has access to essential services and opportunities to grow personally and professionally. For the first time in many years, Molly is beginning to feel the hope of a future filled with potential, where she can live freely and authentically.

Sectoral Discrimination and Social Prejudice

Molly's journey serves as a powerful reflection of the harsh realities faced by transgender individuals in India, particularly in rural and conservative areas. Despite her impressive skills and unwavering work ethic, she faced unrelenting rejection simply because of her gender identity. Molly's story underscores a painful truth: that for many in the LGBTQ+ community, acceptance in professional and social spheres remains an elusive goal. Yet, her resilience and her eventual support from Moitrisanjog prove that, with empowerment and acceptance, transgender individuals can break through the barriers of discrimination and create new paths for themselves.

Conclusion: A Triumph of Strength and Solidarity

Molly Chaki's story is one of perseverance, hope, and healing. It's a powerful reminder that the struggles faced by transgender individuals are not merely personal battles—they are deeply ingrained societal challenges that demand attention, compassion, and change. Through the support of Moitrisanjog Society, Molly has found not only refuge but also a sense of purpose and belonging.

Her journey exemplifies the incredible strength that lies within marginalized communities when given the chance to thrive. Moitrisanjog is proud to have played a part in her transformation, offering her the tools to reclaim her life and, ultimately, her dignity. Today, Molly stands as a success story—having undergone vocational training and now actively involved with Moitrisanjog Society in various roles. She continues to contribute meaningfully to the community that once supported her, using her experiences to uplift others and champion the cause of inclusion and empowerment. Her story is a powerful testament to the possibilities that emerge when individuals are embraced with dignity, respect, and opportunity.



Introduction

Shubha Das, affectionately known as Nituni, is a 22-year-old survivor of extreme exploitation and violence. Her life is a remarkable story of resilience, strength, and the profound impact of compassionate support. Shubha has been part of Moitrisanjog since 2018, and her journey highlights the critical role that organizations like Moitrisanjog play in helping individuals reclaim their dignity and rebuild their lives after enduring severe socio-economic exploitation and sectorial discrimination.

Background

Shubha was born into a marginalized community, where the weight of socio-economic hardships compounded her vulnerability. In 2018, her dreams of a better future were cruelly shattered when she was deceived by a group of Bihari traffickers. They lured her with false promises of a career in dance, preying on her hopes and aspirations. This deception was the beginning of a nightmare that would change her life forever.

Experiences of Violence and Exploitation

Once taken away from her home, Shubha's life became a harrowing tale of physical and psychological abuse. She was subjected to brutal violence, coercion, and a complete loss of agency. The traffickers held her captive, exploiting her in unimaginable ways, and she endured days of suffering. Her ordeal paints a painful picture of how gender-based violence intersects with socio-economic exploitation, a widespread tragedy affecting many vulnerable individuals in marginalized communities.

Escape and Shelter at Moitrisanjog

Summoning unimaginable courage, Shubha managed to escape the clutches of her captors, seeking refuge at Moitrisanjog. The organization welcomed her with open arms, providing her not just physical safety but also the emotional support she desperately needed. This intervention marked a pivotal turning point in her life, offering her the hope and care required to begin healing from her trauma.

Current Status

Today, Shubha thrives in a safe, nurturing environment at Moitrisanjog, where she has found not only shelter but also an opportunity to rebuild her life. The support she has received through counseling, vocational training, and emotional healing has been crucial in helping her regain control of her future. Moitrisanjog has empowered her to heal and move forward with dignity, hope, and renewed purpose.

Sectorial Discrimination and Systemic Challenges

Shubha's experience reflects a tragic cycle where poverty, gender, and socio-economic status intersect to leave individuals vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Her story sheds light on the harsh realities of sectorial discrimination, where people from marginalized communities are often treated as disposable, their hopes and dreams exploited by those who prey on their vulnerabilities. Shubha's trauma is not an isolated incident—it is a painful reminder of the systemic issues that perpetuate such exploitation in society.

Conclusion

Shubha's story stands as a powerful reminder of the urgent need to confront sectorial discrimination and violence. It calls on society to acknowledge and address the systemic injustices endured by marginalized communities, especially women and individuals from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

Organizations like Moitrisanjog continue to play a transformative role in this fight—offering protection, rehabilitation, and a path toward empowerment. Today, Shubha is a shining example of this impact. Having completed vocational training and gained valuable skills, she is now actively engaged with Moitrisanjog Society in various capacities. Her journey from survivor to changemaker reflects the strength of the human spirit when supported by a compassionate and inclusive community. Shubha is not only rebuilding her own life—she is now helping others do the same, proving that with the right support, healing and transformation are truly possible.

Report on Stockholder Sensitization Program: Street Drama Performance

PLACE: GHUGHUMARI VILLAGE, BLOCK 1, COOCH BEHAR

OVERVIEW

Moitrisanjog Society, organized a powerful street drama performance in Ghughumari Village, Block 1, Cooch Behar. This event is part of an ongoing initiative aimed at raising awareness and challenging social stigma, particularly surrounding issues of mental health and the transgender community. Since last year, Moitrisanjog has been presenting these street plays in various busy village areas, markets, and weekly gatherings (hats), making sure that the performances are concise (lasting 15-20 minutes), followed by a community discussion that highlights both the social advantages and disadvantages surrounding these crucial topics.

Focus of the Street Play

This performance centered on the struggles of a transgender individual dealing with mental illness and the profound discrimination they often face from both society and medical professionals. The story depicted the emotional journey of a transgender person who feels isolated and misunderstood, showing how they can only turn to a small circle of trusted friends for support. The play also illustrated the importance of having a support network that can help individuals navigate their challenges, particularly during difficult times.



Community Engagement and Feedback

The event sparked a powerful conversation within the community. Notable attendees shared their thoughts and personal experiences, deepening the impact of the play:

1. Local Gram Panchayat Representative:

- Acknowledged that there is still a lack of understanding about mental health in many areas.
- Expressed full support for Moitrisanjog's important work in raising awareness and fostering inclusion.

2. Mental Health Representative:

- Recognized the significance of the performance in breaking down barriers.
- Suggested expanding the reach of these small theatrical performances to increase awareness even further.

3. Community Members:

- Many shared personal stories, shedding light on the challenges faced by marginalized individuals, particularly those who identify as LGBTQ+.
- One individual shared how a doctor once suggested using electric shock therapy to "cure" their homosexuality.
- Another person opened up about how their parents resorted to sedating them with medication to prevent them from being visible in public, highlighting the extent of societal rejection faced by LGBTQ+ individuals.



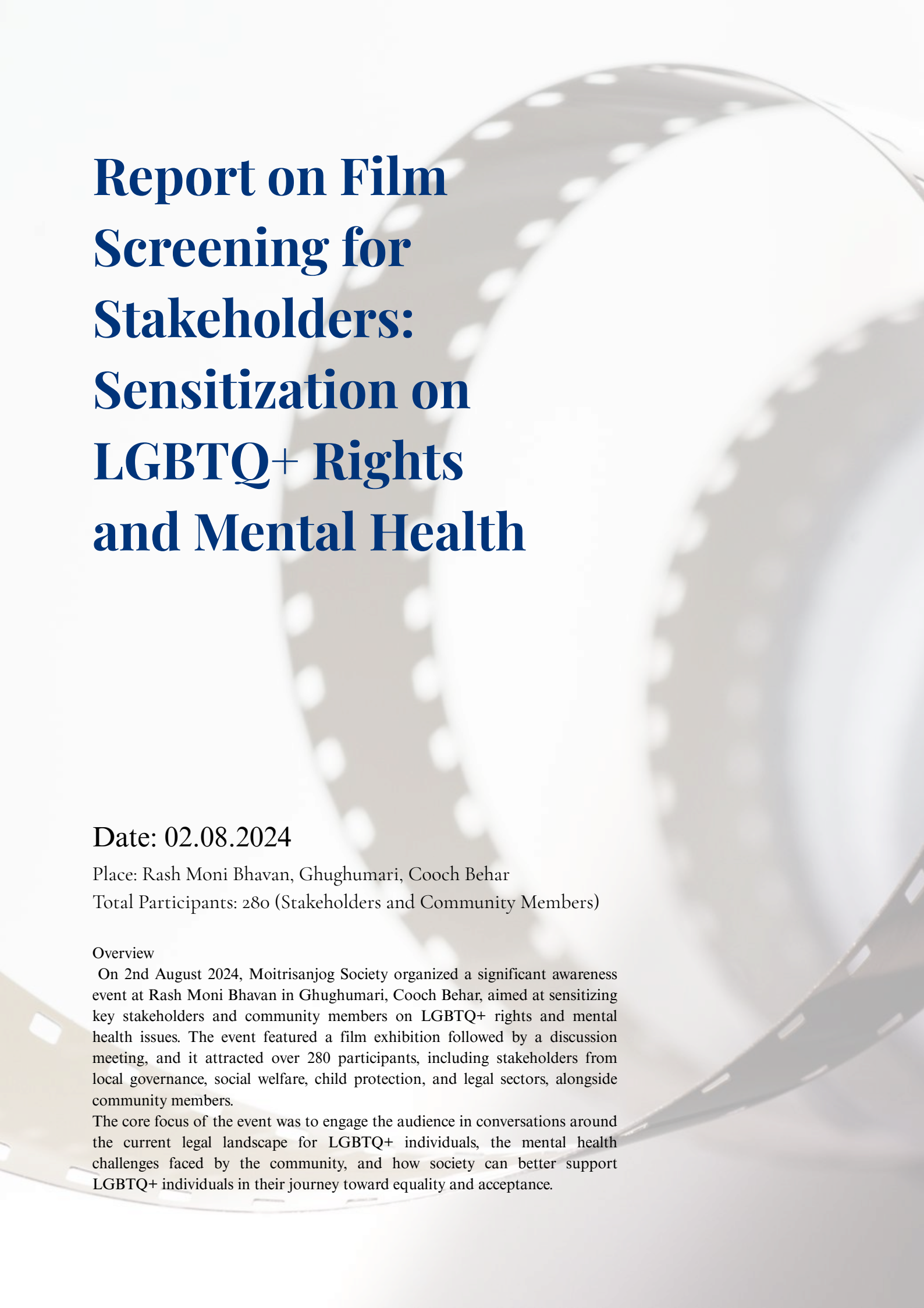
Sumi Das' Closing Remarks

At the conclusion of the event, Sumi Das, a key member of Moitrisanjog, made an impactful statement:

"We've been working on community mental health for quite some time now, but the reality is, when someone speaks up about their mental health challenges, they're often labeled as 'crazy'. This stigma becomes even more intense when a transgender person is affected. Sadly, many government hospitals either neglect their needs or treat them as a joke when it comes to mental health care. However, we are committed to changing this narrative and providing real support. These small but impactful initiatives are just the beginning, and we hope to continue receiving your support as we move forward."

Conclusion

The street drama performance at Ghughumari Village not only raised awareness about the challenges faced by the transgender community but also ignited a critical conversation about mental health, discrimination, and the importance of community support. Moitrisanjog Society's efforts, through these interactive and thought-provoking performances, continue to break barriers, foster empathy, and create spaces where marginalized voices can be heard. With the support of community members, local leaders, and mental health advocates, these initiatives are paving the way for a more inclusive and compassionate future.



Report on Film Screening for Stakeholders: Sensitization on LGBTQ+ Rights and Mental Health

Date: 02.08.2024

Place: Rash Moni Bhavan, Ghughumari, Cooch Behar

Total Participants: 280 (Stakeholders and Community Members)

Overview

On 2nd August 2024, Moitrisanjog Society organized a significant awareness event at Rash Moni Bhavan in Ghughumari, Cooch Behar, aimed at sensitizing key stakeholders and community members on LGBTQ+ rights and mental health issues. The event featured a film exhibition followed by a discussion meeting, and it attracted over 280 participants, including stakeholders from local governance, social welfare, child protection, and legal sectors, alongside community members.

The core focus of the event was to engage the audience in conversations around the current legal landscape for LGBTQ+ individuals, the mental health challenges faced by the community, and how society can better support LGBTQ+ individuals in their journey toward equality and acceptance.

Key Highlights of the Event

1. Opening Remarks by the Editor of :
2. The event kicked off with a thoughtful opening address from the editor of , who emphasized the importance of mental well-being and the growing need to protect marginalized communities from harm. His remarks underscored the increasing prevalence of harmful attitudes in society and the role each one of us can play in creating safer, more inclusive spaces for everyone.
3. Address by Gram Panchayat Chief, Aparajita Mandal:
4. Aparajita Mandal, the Gram Panchayat Chief, also graced the event with her presence. In her speech, she expressed how vital the film screening was, stressing that even though society claims to be modern, there are still significant barriers to accepting individuals whose sexuality and gender identity are different. She reaffirmed the support of the Gram Panchayat for Moitrisanjog's ongoing initiatives, highlighting their shared commitment to combating discrimination.
5. Screening of Short Films:
6. Three short films were shown, each focusing on the lives, survival, and challenges of LGBTQ+ individuals. These films provided an insightful and emotional portrayal of the obstacles faced by the community, sparking empathy and further discussion on how societal attitudes can be changed.
7. Address by Social Welfare Officer:
8. The Social Welfare Officer took the floor next, commending Moitrisanjog's tireless work in supporting LGBTQ+ rights. He shared how Moitrisanjog had been included as an honorary member of the Transgender Protection Cell formed under the District Magistrate's initiative. He highlighted various collaborative projects undertaken by the local government and Moitrisanjog, such as establishing "others" toilets in public places, conducting gender sensitivity workshops at police stations and hospitals, and planning further initiatives to continue creating inclusive spaces.
9. Speech by Child Protection Officer Snehasish Babu:
10. Snehasish Babu, the Child Protection Officer, spoke about the evolution of public understanding regarding the transgender community. He recalled how the term "hijra" was once used in isolation, without much understanding of the larger transgender population. He lauded the efforts of various NGOs, including Moitrisanjog, in spreading awareness and helping society recognize and embrace these issues. He reassured the audience of the District Child Protection Committee's continued support for the LGBTQ+ community.
11. Insights from DLSA Representative, Tarun Babu:
12. Tarun Babu, a representative from the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), also spoke at the event, emphasizing the ongoing efforts at the district level to support transgender people. He recalled the collaboration with Moitrisanjog when the editor of the organization was appointed as a judge in the 2018 Lok Adalat, underscoring their commitment to addressing legal challenges faced by marginalized groups.

Community Questions and Answers:

Following the speeches, a community-driven discussion took place where participants raised various questions and concerns. One of the key topics revolved around bullying in schools and colleges and how to effectively address it. Community members shared personal experiences, highlighting the discrimination they or their loved ones had faced, particularly in educational settings.

Closing Remarks by Moitrisanjog Representatives:

To conclude the event, Sumi Das and President Isowr Chanda of Moitrisanjog expressed their heartfelt gratitude to all attendees. They thanked the stakeholders, community members, and special guests for their valuable contributions and continued support for LGBTQ+ rights. Both emphasized the importance of these ongoing discussions and reiterated their commitment to promoting awareness, acceptance, and mental well-being for all.

Conclusion

The film screening and sensitization event was a pivotal moment in raising awareness about LGBTQ+ issues, particularly in relation to mental health and discrimination. The collective voices of community members, local leaders, and stakeholders highlighted the growing importance of inclusive, supportive environments for LGBTQ+ individuals. Moitrisanjog Society is proud to continue facilitating such initiatives, aiming to foster greater understanding, empathy, and action in building a society where everyone can thrive, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.



Report on Advocacy Meeting with Government Officials-

Cooch Behar Block 1 Panchayat Office

Date: February 2025

Location: Block Panchayat Office, Kadamtola, Cooch Behar

Collaborating Organizations: Moitrisanjog Society

Overview

On February 2025, Moitrisanjog Society, organized a crucial advocacy meeting at the Block Panchayat Office, Kadamtola, Cooch Behar. The meeting brought together key stakeholders, including the Block Chief, representatives from the Co-Block 1, and the 4th Zone's Gram Panchayat. The primary goal was to address the issues faced by community members involved in local industries, such as mat-making and traveling performances, in accessing government benefits.

The conversation took a significant turn when the focus shifted to the challenges faced by transgender individuals in accessing government benefits, largely due to issues around gender identity. This discussion highlighted the deep-seated barriers that prevent the transgender community from receiving the official documentation they need to secure their rights.

Key Discussions & Outcomes

1. Challenges in Accessing Government Benefits:
2. A major point of discussion was the difficulty faced by transgender community members in obtaining government documentation and benefits. The community has long struggled with bureaucratic hurdles, often unable to access services due to non-recognition of their gender identity.
3. Local Gram Panchayat representatives emphasized the need for proactive measures. They proposed that Moitrisanjog formally communicate with the Block Development Officer (BDO) to ensure that transgender individuals and other marginalized groups can secure the necessary government cards and benefits.
4. Inclusive Development and Support for Artisans:
5. The local Panchayat representatives expressed their eagerness to support community artisans, especially those engaged in mat-making and traveling performances. They requested a detailed list from Moitrisanjog of artisans in the area who would qualify for artisan cards. This initiative aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or gender identity, can benefit from government support.
6. District Transgender Cell Initiatives:
7. Moitrisanjog provided an update on the District Transgender Cell, which was established six months ago. The organization shared the progress made in helping transgender individuals obtain transgender certificates and access appropriate opportunities for personal and professional growth. This cell plays a crucial role in advocating for the rights of transgender individuals and facilitating their access to government resources.
8. Commitment to Social Inclusion:
9. The meeting concluded on a hopeful and positive note, with all representatives agreeing on the need for more inclusive social support systems. There was a shared commitment to ensuring that marginalized community members, including transgender individuals and local artisans, receive the necessary recognition and support they deserve.
10. Follow-up and Ongoing Initiatives:
11. Moitrisanjog also presented an overview of their monthly initiatives, highlighting the progress made and the continued efforts to tackle social and economic challenges faced by marginalized groups. There was a strong sense of determination among all participants to continue working together to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all community members.



Conclusion

This advocacy meeting marked an important step towards fostering inclusive development in Cooch Behar. Through collaboration with local authorities, Moitrisanjog Society continues to work toward social justice, ensuring that transgender individuals and marginalized communities are recognized and supported in accessing government benefits and opportunities. The meeting's discussions emphasized the importance of unity and commitment in building a society where everyone, regardless of gender identity or socio-economic background, can thrive.

by Moitrisanjog Society

Date: November, 2024

Location: Moitrisanjog Gururkul

The Moitrisanjog Society organized a heartwarming Winter Sweater Distribution Drive for community children, aimed at providing warmth and care during the harsh winter months. The event was held in a colorful, engaging setting and brought together volunteers and children from the local community.

The primary beneficiaries of this initiative were underprivileged community children, who received new sweaters and warm clothing with great joy. The distribution was carried out with love and attention, as volunteers personally handed over the winter essentials to the children, ensuring each one felt special and valued.

The room was decorated with handmade drawings and creative posters, many of which were made by the children themselves. These artworks not only added a vibrant atmosphere but also reflected the enthusiasm and imagination of the young minds present.

Group photos captured the smiles, laughter, and genuine gratitude shared between the children and the volunteers. The presence of happy faces and the spirit of togetherness made the event truly meaningful.

This noble effort by Moitrisanjog Society highlights the importance of community care and social responsibility. By reaching out to those in need—especially children—during winter, the organization has made a lasting impact on the lives of many.

Such initiatives not only meet physical needs but also help build a stronger, more compassionate community.

Winter Sweater Distribution



Transgender Holi Celebration Initiative 2025

Organized by: Moitrisanjog Society

Date: 14th March 2025

Location: Coochbehar

Moitrisanjog Society proudly organized a Holi celebration initiative for the transgender community as part of its ongoing mission to foster inclusion, equality, and dignity for all. The event was held with great enthusiasm and vibrancy, showcasing the true spirit of Holi — a festival that symbolizes love, unity, and the triumph of good over evil.

The transgender community, often marginalized and overlooked during such social and religious festivities, was at the heart of this celebration. Dressed in bright traditional attire, they came together to celebrate with music, dance, and colorful exchanges, creating an atmosphere filled with joy, acceptance, and togetherness.

This initiative was not only a celebration but also a social message — to break the barriers of discrimination, gender bias, and religious exclusion. It highlighted the importance of treating every individual with respect and celebrating them for who they are. Moitrisanjog Society believes that festivals should not be limited by social norms but should be opportunities to bridge gaps between communities.

The local community's participation was encouraging, with many people joining hands in solidarity, applying colors, sharing warm embraces, and offering support to their transgender brothers and sisters. This powerful gesture reaffirmed our shared humanity and the dream of a discrimination-free and inclusive society.

Through this initiative, Moitrisanjog Society reinforces its commitment to building a harmonious and compassionate world, where everyone has the right to celebrate, to belong, and to be treated with love and dignity.



LGBTQ+ Awareness Program in School

Organized by: Moitrisanjog Society

Venue: "Coochbehar Rambhola High School"

Date: June, 2024

As part of its ongoing mission to build a more inclusive and understanding society, Moitrisanjog Society organized an interactive awareness session on LGBTQ+ issues with school students at Coochbehar Rambhola High School. The initiative aimed to foster empathy, respect, and knowledge among the youth regarding gender diversity and the LGBTQ+ community.

The session was attended by a large number of students, all in uniform, who participated with curiosity and enthusiasm. A facilitator from Moitrisanjog Society conducted the session, encouraging an open dialogue on topics often considered taboo in mainstream discussions. The atmosphere in the classroom was one of attentive listening, active questioning, and genuine interest.

During the session, students were introduced to key concepts like gender identity, sexual orientation, and the importance of acceptance and inclusion. Several students bravely stood up to ask questions, voice their opinions, and engage in meaningful conversation—showcasing a clear interest in learning and understanding more about the LGBTQ+ community.

This awareness drive is a part of Moitrisanjog Society's broader goal to eliminate stigma, reduce bullying, and promote mental well-being among students who may identify as LGBTQ+ or who may know someone who does. By starting these conversations early in educational institutions, the organization hopes to build a future rooted in equality and empathy.

Moitrisanjog Society strongly believes that such awareness initiatives are vital in shaping a more compassionate and discrimination-free society, where every individual—regardless of gender or orientation—feels seen, heard, and valued.



Skill Development Initiative by Moitrisanjog Society for community members and local backward class women

Moitrisanjog Society has undertaken a significant skill development initiative in Cooch Behar, aimed at empowering LGBTQ+ community members through training in the traditional art of Sital Pati (cool mat) making. This initiative serves as a platform to provide alternative, dignified livelihoods for LGBTQ+ individuals who often face exclusion from mainstream economic opportunities.

By reviving the eco-friendly and culturally rich practice of Sital Pati weaving, the program not only preserves a valuable heritage craft but also fosters economic independence, self-expression, and social inclusion. The initiative includes skill training, access to materials, and linkage to local markets, ensuring that participants can sustain themselves with dignity and pride.

Through this effort, Moitrisanjog Society is actively working to build a more inclusive, respectful, and equitable community, where LGBTQ+ individuals can thrive socially and economically. It stands as a model for how traditional skills can be transformed into tools for empowerment, visibility, and acceptance. Local female members were also included and their participation made the initiative more inclusive towards a better society.





Winter Relief Initiative by Moitrisanjog Society for LGBTQ+ Community Members

Date: November, 2024

As part of its commitment to the well-being and dignity of the LGBTQ+ community, Moitrisanjog Society organized a winter relief distribution drive in Cooch Behar, where comforters and warm kombols (blankets) were provided to LGBTQ+ individuals facing socio-economic hardships.

This initiative recognizes the marginalization and neglect that many LGBTQ+ people face, especially during harsh weather conditions, and aims to provide not just physical warmth, but also a message of care, solidarity, and inclusion. The distribution was carried out with respect, community engagement, and a focus on ensuring that no one is left behind in times of need.

Moitrisanjog Society continues to stand by the LGBTQ+ community, supporting both their immediate needs and long-term empowerment, while fostering a more compassionate and inclusive society.

Community Dialogue on LGBTQ+ Issues

Organized by Moitrisanjog Society

Location: Cooch Behar

As part of its ongoing efforts to promote inclusion, awareness, and community engagement, members of Moitrisanjog Society conducted a field visit in Cooch Behar, engaging directly with LGBTQ+ individuals, allies, and local residents in an open dialogue on issues affecting the community.

The visit aimed to create a safe and participatory space for discussing real-life challenges faced by LGBTQ+ people, ranging from social stigma, discrimination, and lack of employment opportunities, to issues around mental health, identity affirmation, and access to basic services. Participants shared personal stories, local realities, and their aspirations for a more just and inclusive society.

Key discussion points included:

- **Stigma and Misconceptions:** Many LGBTQ+ members highlighted the continuing struggle against social prejudice, misinformation, and the lack of awareness in rural and semi-urban settings.
- **Economic Marginalization:** Several participants spoke about being excluded from job opportunities, facing housing discrimination, and lacking sustainable livelihood options.
- **Mental Health and Emotional Support:** The need for accessible mental health services and safe spaces for emotional expression was strongly emphasized.
- **Legal Rights and Awareness:** There was a collective call for better awareness of rights, government schemes, and legal protections available to LGBTQ+ individuals.
- **Community Solidarity:** Participants appreciated the initiative and expressed a strong desire for continued interaction, support networks, and collective action.

Moitrisanjog Society's members facilitated the dialogue with empathy and openness, ensuring that all voices were heard. The team also collected suggestions and feedback for future interventions, including skill development workshops, sensitization programs, and livelihood support.

This field visit reaffirmed the Society's belief that dialogue is a powerful tool for change, and that community-led engagement is essential for building inclusive, resilient, and rights-based communities. The Society remains committed to amplifying LGBTQ+ voices and working toward a future where equality, respect, and dignity are realities for all.



**LGBTQ+
Documentary
Project
by
Moitrisanjog
Society**

Shedding Light on Lives Beyond Labels



THE VIDEO DOCUMENTARY TITLED "SWPNO KA GHAR (A SAFE COMMUNITY PLACE)" HAS BEEN CREATED BY MOITRISANJOG AND AS A JOINT VENTURE.

In 2024, Moitrisanjog made a significant stride in supporting the LGBTQ+ community by launching "Sanjog Sahayota Kendra" (Connection Support Centre), a shelter dedicated to offering safety, care, and dignity to those in need. Recognizing the urgent need for emergency housing, Moitrisanjog also set up a crisis shelter for those facing immediate danger or displacement due to their gender identity or sexual orientation.

As the initiative grew, we saw another critical challenge—isolation and loneliness within the community. To address this, we expanded our efforts by opening a drop-in centre, a space where LGBTQ+ individuals could find companionship, express themselves freely, and heal from the emotional toll of societal rejection. In many areas, especially beyond metro cities, people are still forced to hide their true selves, living in silence and battling depression. Our shelter and drop-in centre strive to bring joy, connection, and a sense of belonging to those who need it the most.

The Heart of Our Documentary

Through this documentary, we want to bring to life the emotions, resilience, and spirit of those who have found safety in these spaces. It captures moments of joy and liberation—community members dancing, singing, dressing up, and sharing their stories without fear. It is a glimpse into what it truly means to feel safe, to belong, and to be accepted.

But this story is not just about those who sought refuge; it is also about the allies in our journey. The documentary highlights voices from villagers who have supported us from the beginning, standing by the LGBTQ+ community with kindness and understanding. Their words remind us that a society built on acceptance and coexistence is possible.

Unfortunately, many still face harsh realities—we have witnessed instances where individuals were thrown out of their homes in the middle of the night, simply because of who they are. In these moments of crisis, we step in, rescuing them, offering shelter, and working together to find long-term solutions. No one should have to face such cruelty alone, and we are here to ensure they never do.

This documentary is now available on Moitrisanjog's official YouTube channel, open for everyone to watch. We invite you to view it, share your valuable feedback, and, most importantly, stand with us in creating a world where no one has to hide or suffer in silence.

We believe this documentary has the power to reach those who need it the most, especially in rural areas where many still struggle with self-acceptance and fear. If even one person finds the courage to embrace their true self after watching it, we will have taken a step forward toward a more inclusive and loving world.

Everyone deserves the right to live freely, without fear, as their authentic selves. Let's make that a reality—together.

Children's Holi Celebration Initiative



Organized by: Moitrisanjog Society

Date: 14th March, 2025

Location: Coochbehar

Moitrisanjog Society joyfully organized a Holi celebration specially dedicated to children, as part of its ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity, happiness, and equal joy for all members of society, regardless of their background or circumstances. The event embraced the lively spirit of Holi — a festival that celebrates color, unity, and the victory of good over negativity.

Children from different communities, including those from underprivileged and marginalized backgrounds, were invited to be the heart of the event. Dressed in cheerful outfits and radiant smiles, they took part in the festivities with enthusiasm — enjoying music, dance, games, and, of course, a joyful play of colors.

This celebration was not only an expression of festive fun but also carried a meaningful message — that every child deserves love, attention, and a chance to experience the joy of togetherness. Moitrisanjog Society believes that festivals like Holi should be moments that bring children together, regardless of their economic or social status, fostering values of kindness, equality, and friendship.

The event saw active involvement from the local community, with many volunteers, families, and well-wishers joining the celebrations. People played with colors, shared sweets, and created beautiful memories with the children, reinforcing the idea that small acts of joy can create a big impact.

Through this initiative, Moitrisanjog Society continues to work toward a world where every child is celebrated, included, and given the chance to shine, especially on days as special as Holi.



Cake Making Event

Organized by: Moitrisanjog Society

Date: 25th December 2024

Location: Coochbehar

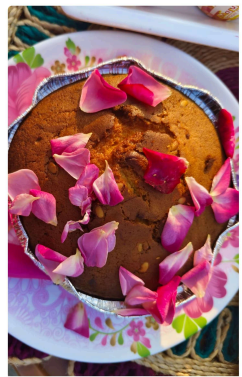
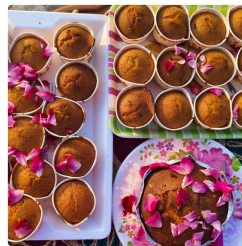
To mark the festive spirit of Christmas, Moitrisanjog Society organized a joyful and interactive Cake Making Event on 25th December 2024, bringing together community members from diverse backgrounds for a day of togetherness, creativity, and celebration.

The event served as a unique opportunity for people — especially women, youth, and LGBTQ+ community members — to come together, learn a new skill, and enjoy the warmth of the holiday season in a safe and inclusive space. Participants enthusiastically took part in the hands-on cake-making session, guided by local home bakers and volunteers. Various techniques for baking, decorating, and presenting cakes were taught, with a special focus on budget-friendly, homemade recipes.

The event was filled with laughter, learning, and the delightful aroma of freshly baked cakes. For many attendees, this was not only a festive gathering but also a chance to explore cake making as a potential livelihood opportunity. Moitrisanjog Society emphasized the value of skill-building for empowerment, especially for individuals who are often excluded from mainstream economic and social spaces.

The celebration concluded with everyone sharing the cakes they had made, exchanging greetings, and enjoying a community meal. Small gift hampers and certificates of participation were distributed to encourage and appreciate the efforts of all who took part.

This initiative reflected the Society's core belief in community engagement, skill development, and joyful inclusion. Moitrisanjog Society continues to use creative and meaningful events like this to build bonds, uplift marginalized voices, and promote collective growth and happiness.



Future Plans – Moitrisanjog Society

1. Expansion of Vocational Training Programs
2. Introduce more vocational courses tailored to the transgender community, with direct market linkages to trade fairs, cottage industries, and local businesses to promote economic independence.
3. Reducing Dropout Rates
4. Strengthen academic support through Gurukul to minimize school dropouts among marginalized children, addressing low academic performance as a barrier to future employment.
5. Development of a Shelter Home
6. Establish a fully-equipped shelter home for transgender individuals, especially the elderly and homeless, offering residential care, emotional support, and rehabilitation services.
7. Youth Engagement & Awareness Programs
8. Organize mass awareness campaigns and community events, encouraging young men and boys to become allies and advocates for transgender rights, fostering long-term social change.
9. Promoting Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Communities
10. Work towards building a bias-free social environment where every gender identity is accepted and respected, both within the district and beyond.
11. Leadership Development Initiatives
12. Conduct workshops, training sessions, and group discussions to empower transgender individuals as community leaders and peer advocates.
13. Digital Empowerment Program
14. Provide digital literacy training, including computer skills, online safety, and e-commerce tools to help community members explore modern income-generating opportunities.
15. Mental Health Support Services
16. Launch regular mental health workshops, counseling services, and emotional wellness programs to support community well-being.
17. Accessibility Awareness for Community Members
18. Promote awareness about the importance of physical and digital accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring that all community spaces and services are barrier-free and welcoming.
19. Annual Trans Community Fair
20. Organize an annual showcase event where transgender individuals can present their talents, products, and services—boosting income and public visibility.
21. Scholarship and Sponsorship Program
22. Initiate a scholarship fund to support transgender youth and underprivileged children in pursuing higher education or vocational training.
23. Local Business Partnerships for Employment
24. Collaborate with local enterprises to create employment, apprenticeship, and internship opportunities for trained transgender individuals.

