

Shiksha

Sanskar

Swavalamban

Shiksha Sopan

An Initiative of IIT Community for social upliftment

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Newsletter February 2013

In the severe cold of Kanpur, with mercury dropping sub-zero, month of January was very active for Shiksha Sopan volunteers who showed their enthusiasm by doing a lot of activities. Apart from its own regular programmes, Shiksha Sopan took up the issue of crimes against women effectively and gave a platform where the rural community could also raise its voice. Here is a brief description of our work in January 2013.

Mass awakening programmes on crime against women

Due to socio-cultural degradation and ineffective implementation by law-enforcing institutions, crime against women has gone very high, both in number and in the brutality. With the 16th December incidence in Delhi where a physiotherapy student was gang raped by six criminals in a moving bus, the whole Nation got agitated and a strong voice was raised to take effective steps to stop such crimes. To give strength to this united voice and express the solidarity of the community in and around IITK campus, Shiksha Sopan took up a series of programmes. Normally the week containing 12th January is celebrated by Shiksha Sopan as its Annual function having lots of cultural activities, but with the tragic departure of Damini, the volunteers decided to convert the format to Mass Awakening Programmes for this year.

Candle March

To pay our homage to Damini, Sopan organized a Candle march on 5th January. The March started from the Lecture Hall complex and went to IIT Gate. About 300 people, including students, faculty and Sopan volunteers, participated in the march. By putting the candles on the ground, they formed the message "DAMINI, WE WILL KLEEP YOU ALIVE".



The audience was given a short address by Dr Sameer Khandekar expressing our commitment to work at our own level to see that no discrimination or atrocity is done to women. We then observed a one-minute silence to pay homage to "Damini" and dispersed.

Suggestions for Justice Verma Committee

As a result of Nation wide protest, Govt of India came up with some action plan and a committee headed by Justice J S Verma was constituted to give recommendation to the government for changes in the law and other steps to ensure the safety of women. Justice Verma called for suggestions from the

people, both individuals and groups. Dr Sameer Khandekar and Dr A K Sharma made a draft proposal from Shiksha Sopan to be sent to Justice Verma.

A meeting was called in L-7 on 5th January to discuss the proposal. Professor Leelavati Krishnan presided the meeting in which the draft proposal was displayed and discussed. The comments from the persons present were noted down and collated later by Shiksha Sopan team. The final suggestions were sent through email to Justice Verma on 5th January itself.



Most of the suggestions made by Shiksha Sopan are incorporated in the final recommendation by Justice Verma. The notable exception is our demand of reconsidering the juvenile age limit, and in the case of extreme crimes, the punishment being guided by the severity of crime and not by age.

Rally for women dignity

Shiksha Sopan took out a massive rally on 13th January on the issue of women dignity and safety. Rally started in 4 segments from 4 different locations, namely, Tpye-4 (IITK faculty, employees, and outhouse people), New SAC (students), Barasirohi, and Nankari at around 1.00 PM. The participants were carrying placards having slogans related to the women empowerment and were shouting these slogans. Each Rally went around in the respective locality and then all of them converged at Old SAC ground at around 2.45 PM.



At OLD SAC, the rally was converted into a massive meeting where the Director IITK, Professor Indranil Manna addressed the gathering. He deliberated at length on the contribution of women in the social set up and the steps that can be taken by the society itself to ensure that the women get their rights. Quoting Rabindra Nath Tagore, he said that men and women are complimentary and one should not think in terms of superior/inferior.

Dr A K Sharma put the social evils at the root of this grim situation and pointed out that we have ourselves accepted the inferior status of women. Even during negotiated marriages, parents look for grooms superior to the bride in terms of education, economic conditions etc.

Ms Achala Josan, Principal, Campus School told the girls to ensure that they are not exploited and any one becoming closer than a limit should not be allowed. She pointed out that Parents are the best friends and children must share any suspicious incidence with them.

Dr Sameer Khandekar conducted the meeting and gave his own observations on the speeches by the dignitaries and communicated to the audience the practical things that can be undertaken to ensure participation of women in the nation building.

Signature Campaign

To further involve the masses with the issue, Shiksha Sopan is driving a signature campaign on a petition demanding from Govt authorities strict actions against all criminals involved in crimes against women.



SASK

Sopan Anaupacharik Shikshan Kendra was closed for two weeks due to severe cold. Teachers used this time to discuss future plans and visit children's family.

Special learning

In Primary Junior classes lots of pencil sharpening goes on and the peeled off part is thrown in the dustbin. At SASK, children were trained to make attractive designs with these waste parts. They made fishes, huts, butterflies, flowers and many other items. The whole exercise was greatly enjoying and useful.



On 19th January, special classes were given, in a different format than regular one-way teaching. IITK students Ashish and Aakriti gave special classes on English Spellings, proper pronunciation and Mathematical equations.

Republic Day

Republic day was celebrated at SASK with great enthusiasm. The theme of the function was women security together with the identification of various other problems faced by the Nation. After Flag ceremony, children conducted a small programme related to the republic day and national commitment.

Anushka of class-6 presented "I love my India", Swati of class-4 presented "Mera Desh, Mera Mulk", but the lime light was captured by Madvi of class-1 who presented "Nanhaa Munna Rahi hoon". While Manju of class-8 talked about importance of Republic day, Shivam of class-8 told the Fundamental rights ensured by our constitution.



Dr Sameer Khandekar gave the Guest speech and explained the need of constitution and inspired the children to know about the laws under the constitution and follow them.

The whole programme was anchored by class-7 student Manno.

Evening Centers

Six IITK B Tech students, coordinated by Surjeet and Abhishek, are regularly coming to the SAC Evening center. They not only help in teaching the students, but also play active part in management of the center.

The present state of insecurity for girls has affected our centers as parents are scared sending girls to the center in the evening. Our senior volunteers visited a number of houses in this regard on 20th January after which the situation is somewhat improved but more efforts are needed.

Children and volunteers actively participated in all Sopan programmes of Mass awareness about women empowerment.

At Barasirohi center too the attendance was poor in the first half but by the end of the month it picked up. They are conducting story telling and game sessions apart from providing academic help.

Dr. V. N. Kulkarni Merit Scholarship

All 22 recipients of Dr V N Kulkarni Merit Scholarship together with their parents were called on 6th January for giving the second and last installment of 2012-13 scholarship. On this occasion their academic progress



was discussed and proper counseling and advice were given. Children were very happy to meet each other and Sopan volunteers.

The scholarship test for 2013 is scheduled on 3rd February. Wide contact was made in the locality by personally visiting more than 40 schools in the villages around IITK campus. The forms were to be collected by 15th January but because of cold, the schools were closed for a long time in January. By the end of January we have received more than 400 forms. Sh Anurag Pandey is coordinating all the activities.

When the scholarship was instituted in 2010, we had put a target of collecting Rs 10 lacs in the scholarship fund. With significant help from Sh Sudhir Mittal of Ghaziabad and other well wishers, we have reached close to this with Rs 9,00,000 collected and put in Fixed deposit. Though the current level of scholarship given can be managed with this target amount, with heavy price rise during recent times we will have to think to revise the target.

Interaction with Param Veer Chakra Awardee

Vivekanand Samiti IITK organized an inspirational talk by Param Veer Chakra awardee Sh Yogendra Singh Yadav on 28th January. It was very inspiring to know how our army persons save the borders. Even when one after the other 15 bullets pierced the body, Mr Yadav still kept his commitment to save the post and keep the fight on. Because of his heroic efforts Tiger Hill could be liberated in 1999 war. All volunteers of Sopan and Sopan children above class 6 attended the talk. On 29th January Mr Yadav interacted with Sopan President Dr H C Verma and other Sopan workers. He was very happy to know about the activities Sopan is doing for the rural and economically weaker sections in order to strengthen the Nation.



Other Informations

Web site : For more details please visit www.shiksha-sopan.org

How to donate: [Shiksha Sopan](#)

(a) You can pay through credit/debit card by going to www.godparents.in, clicking "support a child" from the left top panel, selecting Shiksha Sopan from the "caretaking NGO" list at the bottom left of the page and then selecting a child from the list. Click on "Be my Godparent" below the photograph.

(b) You can write cheques/draft for donations in the name of "Shiksha Sopan" payable at Kanpur and send to the address given below.

(c) Online transfer can be made in State Bank of India, IITKanpur branch. Account No. **10426002488**, Account name "Shiksha Sopan", IFSC code **SBIN0001161**

(d). People in US can use the link <http://indolink.com/iitk/> to donate through IIT Kanpur foundation using credit cards.

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