



## State Resource Centre Assam

### Visit to Sonitpur by N.M.Hussain

**M**r.N.M.Hussain, Commissioner Secretary, Education(S) Deptt., Govt. of Assam cum Member Secretary, State literacy Mission Authority(SLMA) visited Sonitpur district on 1-2<sup>nd</sup> May,2013. In his two days visit, he took part in different programmes. He was accompanied by H.K.Bora, CEO, Sonitpur, Dr. D.Saikia, OSD, SLMA, S.Brahma, Director SRC Assam along with his programme staff throughout the programme.

In his maiden visit to Model Adult Education Centre (MAEC),Tezpur on 1<sup>st</sup> May,2013, Mr Hussain appreciated the activities undertaken by SRC Assam through Model AECs in the urban areas. Encouraged by the Vocational classes running at a few locations under the technical support from Jan Sikshan Sangsthan (JSS),Kamrup, the Commissioner requested SRC Assam to extend the programme further to every ward of the town so that the Neo-literate would get a



good exposure to elevate their economic status. Certificates were distributed among the successful beneficiaries of the Vocational Courses by Sh. Munin Kakati, Director, JSS Kamrup.

Thereafter, the team visited an Adult Education Centre (AEC) & a learning Centre at of Gabharu Block. During the visit, Mr. Hussain was found to be interacting with the functionaries and learners under SBM and learnt about their achievement and problems.

The agenda for the Day-2(2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2013) started with the Meeting of stakeholders of SBM of Sonitpur dist. at the Conference hall of DRDA, Sonitpur. Range of issues starting from honorarium, lack of support from PRIs etc. was raised by the District and Block Coordinators in the



meeting. Mr Hussain consoled them saying that SLMA was trying their best to resolve all the outstanding issues. He emphasized on the intensification of the roles of NGOs to expedite the mission in tea garden and riverrine areas.

Another meeting was held on the same day at the Conference hall of Deputy Commissioner, Sonitpur. The participants were the D.C, Sonitpur, ADC, newly Elected Office bearers of ZLSS and BDO s of different blocks. S.Brahma, Director, SRC Assam reflected on the present status of Saakshar Bharat Mission through PPT. Sh. Tapan Ch.Sarma, DC, Sonitpur underlined the need of more emphasis to SBM like other developmental schemes. He requested all the stakeholders to take a proactive role in this regard.

Later, NM Hussain met the Media personals at a Press Conference and replied to various queries raised by the reporters/journalists. He was accompanied by H.K.Borah, CEO, ZP, Sonitpur and S.Brahma, Director, SRC Assam.



## Bank Accounts opening Mela at Goalpara:

The SBI Dispur (Nodal Branch for Saakshar Bharat Mission in Assam) organized a Bank Accounts Mela at Gandhi Bhawan, Goalpara in collaboration with Zilla Lok Siksha Samiti(ZLSS),Goalpara and SRC Assam. The basic objective of the drive was to open all the Bank accounts required under SBM at GP, BP levels.Sh.D.K.Dhar, Astt. Manager, S.K.Das, Astt. Managers, SBI Dispur along with the other local officials of SBIs from Goalpara were present on that programme. S.Brahma, Director, SRC Assam along with G.Saikia (programme Associate) and S.Goswami (Research Officer) from SRC were present. Moreover, officials from ZLSS and other senior Officials from District administration assisted in smooth functioning of the programme.



## Review Meetings

### State level review Meeting on SBM at Bongaigaon:

SRC Assam organized a Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2013 at Hotel Kanishka, Bongaigaon in collaboration with Bongaigaon Zilla Lok Siksha Samiti (ZLSS).The objective of the one day Meeting was to assess the progress of Saakshar Bharat Mission(SBM)in 8 districts of Assam.



The participants were CEO Bongaigaon, PD, DRDA Kokrajhar, DAEO Goalpara, Director along with the Programme staff from SRC Assam and the SBM District Coordinators & SRC district RPs of the concerned districts.

The technical session started with the Power point presentation by S.Brahma. He highlighted the interstate and intra state variability in the implementation of SBM and felt the need of urgent measures to eradicate the disparity in order to achieve the overall goal of SBM.

It was followed by the presentation on the progress achieved by districts in SBM.Each of the 8 SBM districts under SRC Assam highlighted the activities carried out by them and the problems encountered at various areas.Mention may be made of the brilliant initiative taken by P.K.Paul,CEO Bongaigaon,the issue of non-availability of district coordinators in Kokrajhar,mismatch between physical and financial plan of Darrang ,urgent need of VT training in Dhemaji ,slow progress in Account opening in Marigaon and slow

progress of Goalpara etc.The non availability of the names of VCDC and VEC in SBM web-portal had been an issue which needed utmost priority.

#### Resolutions :

- ♦ All the SBM districts would make a comparison between the uploaded data in SBM website and the Census data,2001 in order to ensure the reliability to mould the future plan
- ♦ Goalpara would accomplish their AC. opening process by the end of April,2013
- ♦ SRC Assam would extend resource support to Goalpara ZLSS to hold a reorientation for the stakeholders at different levels
- ♦ SRC Assam would convene a state level submission training Camp centrally for the districts which completed the data uploading process.
- ♦ All the districts except Sonitpur were found to be poor in uploading the GP profile. The districts were instructed to take urgent steps to upload the profile.
- ♦ Considering the poor progress of the districts in the uploading of the FAMS data, SRC Assam would take necessary steps to convene training on the said matter on an early date.
- ♦ All the districts were instructed to work out a detail action plan for the year 2013-14
- ♦ After consulting with the district representatives, the target for each SBM districts for the NIOS examination scheduled to be held on March, 2013 was set during the meeting.
- ♦ The District Coordinator will prepare a concept note on monitoring system in consultation with SRC District RP.
- ♦ The very occasion was marked by the targets adopted by the SBM districts for thr next NIOS Exam. on August,2013

### Review of Saakshar Bharat Mission at Guwahati:

State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA), Assam hold a discussion with the stakeholders of Saakshar Bharat Mission(SBM) on 30<sup>th</sup> May,

2013 at Don Bosco Institute (DBI),Guwahati. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the present status of SBM in the districts of

Assam. The meeting was chaired by N.M.Hussain, Commissioner/Secretary, Secondary Education Deptt, Govt. of Assam cum Member Secretary SLMA, Assam. He was assisted by Dr. D.Saikia, OSD, SLMA, Dr.B.N.Talikdar, P.D, SBM Assam and Mr. S.Rahman, FAO, SLMA Assam. Sh. S.Brahma, Director, State Resource Centre (SRC) Guwahati and Ms. G.Bhattacharya, Director i/c, SRC Dispur were present in the programme along with their supporting staff. The SBM districts were represented by the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) or the Project Directors (PD) of the concerned districts. Senior Bank Officials from SBI, Dispur (Nodal Branch for SBM) took part in the meeting.

The meeting bears great significance in connection to the ultimatum set by DG, NLMA to approve the detail physical plan of each SBM districts. The programme started with the welcome address by Dr. B.N.Talukdar, Director, Non Formal & Adult Education, Govt. of Assam cum SPD, SBM Assam.

It was followed by the presentation on "Present Scenario of SBM in Assam and the way forward" by S.Brahma, Director, SRC Assam. He focused on various aspects of SBM in physical and operational terms with special reference to Assam. Moreover, the goals to be achieved shortly in Assam were also highlighted.

In his opening remark, N.M.Hussain, Member Secretary, SLMA Assam emphasized on the early settlement of the financial transaction necessary for the sustainability of the programme. He held all the CEOs responsible to accomplish the very task as early as possible. Referring to the significant development of SBM in



to be more transparent and accountable in connection to the newly evolved stringent monitoring system under SBM.

In order to clarify range of queries often raised by the stakeholders regarding the process of online submission of Final Physical plan, N.C.Deka, Prog. Coordinator, SRC Guwahati presented through PPT.

One of the major problems encountered by the districts was the bank A/C. opening. In many instances, it was due to the ignorance of the bank officials about SBM that retarded the progress. Accepting that and considering the urgency of the Bank A/C., Mr.P.N.Das, Chief Manager, SBI Dispur assured to hold district specific meetings where all the outstanding bank related issues would be resolved with the support from the concerned district authority as had already been successfully done at Diphu, Karbi Anglong.

Another issue raised during the discussion was the renewal of the existing SBM accounts in tune of the constitution of New PRI bodies at all levels. Since the process was cumbersome, Bank Official assured the house to find out an amicable solution for that as early as possible and would be intimated to SLMA. S.Brahma hinted to adopt the "U.P model" where the magnitude of the problem was much larger but tactfully resolved by SBI. S.Rahman, FAO requested the entire SBM districts to prepare Bank Reconciliation report to supplement the U.C needed to be submitted by each of them.

On this occasion, N.M.Hussain distributed cheques amounting Rs.2,00,000/- (two lakhs only) each to the Member Secretaries of ZLSSs. This was an additional financial assistance by Govt. of Assam for the promotion and acceleration of SBM programme in the selected districts of Assam.

It was also decided to hold Review Meeting/s monthly/quarterly at the level of Nodal Officer, SLMA and Directors of SRCs of Assam.

The day long discussion came to end with the concluding remark from S.Brahma, Director, SRC Assam.



Sonitpur, the Commissioner congratulated both district administration and SRC Assam for their brilliant effort. He asked the Member Secretaries of ZLSSs to incorporate the District Adult Education Deptt. to gear up the programme. SRC Assam was requested to intensify the programme especially in the tea garden, riverine and forest areas. At the end, he cautioned the stakeholders

### District Review Meeting at Goalpara:

A review meeting was organized by ZLSS Goalpara on 22<sup>nd</sup> May at Conference Hall of DC Office. The objective of the discussion was to formulate strategy to accomplish the entry, uploading and submission of HH data on stipulated time. Sh. Pritam Saikia, IAS, DC

Goalpara, L.Rahman, ADC, Goalpara, CEO Goalpara, BDOs and Officials from DAEO took part in the discussion.

K.N.Das, Member Secretary, ZLSS, Goalpara presented the status of activities carried out by ZLSS, Goalpara in connection to SBM. It was

learnt that data entry around 6 lakhs is yet to be made. It would further need to be uploaded in SBM portal.

Considering the urgency of completion of the process within June, 2013, D.C, Goalpara instructed the BDOs from 8 Blocks to facilitate the data entry process in their offices. Moreover, he asked ZLSS to utilize even the District Computer Centre to overcome the shortage of computer for data entry and uploading. All efforts should be taken at institutional or at individual levels to accomplish the given task on time, he added.

On behalf of SRC Assam, G.Saikia,(Programme Associate) and N.C.Deka & A.Hoque (Both Prog. Coordinator) were present in the programme and put invaluable observations.



### District Review Meeting at Bongaigaon:

Bongaigaon Zilla Lok Siksha Samiti (ZLSS) organized a Review meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2013 at the Conference Hall of Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad (ZP).The Meeting was chaired by Ms.Lina Singha, Chairman, ZLSS Bongaigaon. She was assisted by Sh.P.K.Paul , CEO Bongaigaon. The other participants were the Block Development Officer (BDO)s from all 5 blocks with the newly elected President of Anchalik Panchayats. Moreover,the Block Coordinators and officials from District Adult Education Deptt. took part in the discussion.

The programme started with the Presentation by Sh. Paul on contemporary status of SBM in Bongaigaon. The house took the resolution to accomplish the data entry and uploading of 15 GPs that were either left out or found to be unreliable by 15<sup>th</sup> Jun,2013. The BDOs were requested to extend necessary logistic support for uploading and submission of detail physical plan. N.C.Deka, Programme Coordinator and G.Saikia, Programme Associate from SRC Assam were present in the meeting.

### Review Meeting at Morigaon:

ZLSS Marigaon called on the stakeholders of Saakshar Bharat Mission (SBM) on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2013 at the Conference Hall of Morigaon Zilla Parishad (ZP).The objective of the meeting was to discuss the present status of SBM in various blocks of Morigaon.

The meeting was presided over by Sh. Shyam Das, President Morigaon ZP. He was assisted by N.Islam, CEO, Morigaon ZP. Seven Blocks of Morigaon were represented by the Block Development Officer (BDO)s along with Block Coordinators of SBM. Sh. S.Brahma, Director, State Resource Centre Guwahati was present in the meeting along with his programme staff members(A.Hoque, S.Sahariah).Moreover the Officials from the District Adult Education Deptt. were present in the meeting.



President, ZP Marigaon welcome the gathering. The objective of the Meeting was explained by H.P.Saikia, District Coordinator, SBM Morigaon. Then Director, SRC Assam presented an overview of the SBM with special reference to Assam. It was learnt from the interaction with the BDOs that they were hardly aware about the Mission and its operationalisation in their concerned Blocks.

It was followed by a Presentation by S.Sahariah, Programme Associate, SRC Assam about the present status of SBM in Marigaon with reference to various components of SBM which is regarded as the criteria to measure the progress of a district. The outcome was that all the BDOs and other stakeholders got the actual picture of their areas in terms of implementation of SBM.

The meeting concluded with the closing remark from Sh.Shyam Das, President ZP cum Chairman ZLSS, Morigaon.

#### Outcome:

1. It generated the awareness about SBM among the BDOs and newly elected ZP President
2. The house realized the need of better integration and coordination between the Block Coordinators and BDOs
3. BDOs assured to extend all sort of support and assistance for the SBM in their areas.
4. CEO, Marigaon asked the Block Coordinators to strengthen their coordination with BDOs and inform them about the activities of SBM in their blocks
5. It was a good platform for SRC Assam to interact with BDOs that would help further to implement various programmes in those areas.

## Review Meeting at Darrang:

A meeting was organized by the CEO, Darrang Zilla Parishad on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at the conference hall of ZLSS Darrang. The BDOs of all the 6 Blocks were present in the meeting. Discussions were held about the present status and future activities to be done in Saakshar Bharat. The District and Block Coordinators attended the meeting. Dr. D. Saikia, OSD, SLMA Assam, Mr. N. C. Deka and Ms A. Baruah, Programme Officers of SRC Assam were present in the meeting. The CEO ordered the District and Block Coordinators to complete the uploading of survey data entry by 27<sup>th</sup> May 2013. He also requested the BDOs to certify the completion of uploading.

## EC meeting of MAEC

The MAEC, which was at Kharupetia till then was shifted to Mangaldoi. The first EC meeting was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2013. All the EC members were present in the meeting. Ms. A. Baruah and Mr. A. Hoque Prog. Officers of SRC attended the meeting.

The CEO, Darrang Zilla Parishad organized a meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2013 to verify the uploaded data and the census data of 2001. The meeting was held in the CEO's room. All the BDOs attended the meeting. The District Coordinators presented a comparison of uploaded data and census data. Ms. A. Baruah, Mr. N. C. Deka and Mr. A. Hoque, Programme Officers of SRC Assam attended the meeting. The date for Submission & Approval was fixed during the meeting.



## Meeting on immediate strategy:

Mr. L. Rahman, ADC (Education), Goalpara called on a meeting of all the stakeholders of SBM in Goalpara on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2013 at the Conference Hall of Deputy Commissioner, Goalpara.

It was attended by KN Das, DAEO, Goalpara along with the support staff. The other participants were the BDOs, District Coordinators of SBM and other officials from district Administration.

The Meeting was chaired by Latifur Rahman, ADC (Education), Goalpara. The following resolutions were taken in the meeting-

1. ZLSS would put maximum effort to accomplish the process of data uploading and submission

2. The Preroks and Block Coordinators would use their individual asset (Laptop/Desktop) wherever was available to accelerate the process.
3. The BDOs were requested to provide their office infrastructure (Desktops at Offices) to the Preraks and Block Coordinators to be utilized for data entry and even uploading provided the internet connectivity.
4. The Member Secretary, ZLSS was requested to submit a list of stations (GPs or other units) where they could do the activity at their level within the stipulated time.

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nature of patriarchy. Time to time new movements, laws and provisions have been initiated to uplift the status of women by empowering them as decision makers in their own status.

But any agenda of upliftment of women seems to get neglected in the present traumatic situation of female's existence. The reported rapes, assaults, abuses on the female cutting across age, education or status, compels one to believe that the social system is again turning back towards the ages of Plato, Aristotle or Descartes when she was hardly considered as anything more than a body. Even after acquiring a position in society by her own effort, she can not comfortably live her life her own way, as she is first grasped as being bodily in the male oriented society. She cannot go anywhere, anytime as the man can, as phenomenologically understood, she has to be conscious of herself as a body-seen-by-the-other. When her body is assaulted by a male body then it is she who suffers mentally, physically and most importantly socially, as her body becomes the

centre of concern. But it is not the body which she knows and lives from inside, rather this appropriated body is the body-for-the-Other in Jean Paul Sartre's language that gets focused. This form of the body is an alienated form for her, for which neither she is responsible, nor she accepts, but unfortunately gets identified with from outside. This is where the lacuna lays. In order to justify the position of the female embodied consciousness it is necessary to reflect on the two facets of the body, the "body-for-herself" and the "body-for-the-other".

Now the debate over women's having the capability of applying reason, or women having the power of making decision, social participation, education and power as a whole are all becoming a subsided issue confronting the fact of woman's being embodied. Going beyond all the debates the present debate may take a turn on the females' side for being considered as a body-seen-by-the-Other in the phenomenological sense. Hence it may demand a new set of debate from the phenomenological perspective.

## Training and Workshops

### Web Portal Training at Dhubri

A one day Saakshar Bharat Web Portal training was organised by Dhubri Zilla Lok Shiksha Samiti in collaboration with State Resource Centre Dispur at Conference Hall, Dhubri ZP on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.

The objective of the programme was explained by Sh.Suddhab Dutta, Asstt. Project Officer, Dhubri ZLSS, Dhubri. The participants in the training were the District and Block Coordinators. Ms. Ranu Deka, Programme Associate, SRC Assam explained about the system of uploading in SBM Web Portal with reference to the problems and difficulties faced by the coordinator and preraks on Household survey data entry, uploading and submission in the Saakshar Bharat web portal.

It was followed by the practical session on house hold survey data uploading in web portal. Each of the participants practiced how to upload data in web portal. The session were jointly conducted by Ms. Ranu Deka and Sh. Paresh Kakati, After that Dr. Naba Nath & Mrs Bobby



Nath (both Programme Coordinator) , State Resource Centre Dispur, discussed about the future activity plan in Saakshar Bharat Mission.

### Web portal Training in Goalpara:

A one day Saakshar Bharat Web Portal training was organized by Goalpara Zilla Lok Shiksha Samiti in collaboration with State Resource Centre Assam at District Adult Education Office, Goalpara on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2013.

The programme started with the welcome address given by Sh. K. N. Das, District Officer, District Adult Education Office, Goalpara. It was followed by the self introduction of all the participants who were District and Block coordinators and selected Preroks. Ms. Ranu Deka, Programme Associate, SRC Assam explained the system of

uploading in SBM Web Portal in connection to the problems and difficulties frequently encountered by the coordinator and preraks during submission in the Saakshar Bharat web portal.

The practical session on uploading data in web portal was conducted was by Mrs Ranu Deka and Sh. Paresh Kakati, Office Astt., SRC Assam. It was followed by the discussion on future activity plan in Saakshar Bharat Mission in Goalpra which was initiated by Sh. K. N. Das. the Programme concluded with the vote of thanks by Sh.Das.

### Training on Physical Plan submission at Morigaon:

In order to facilitate the process of Submission of physical plan in SBM website, a one day training prog was organized by ZLSS Morigaon on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2013 at Training Hall of ZP Morigaon.

The District and Block Coordinators and the SRC RP participated in the training. On behalf of SRC Assam, N.C.Deka(Programme Coordinator), Ms.R.Deka and S.Sahariah(Both Prog. Associate) took part as RP in the Programme. The technical session was conducted by with visual aids. Emphasis was paid on clarifying the confusion among participants about online data submission. The total participants were 15.



### EC Meeting of SRC Assam:

The Executive Committee Meeting of SRC Assam was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2013 at it's Conference Hall. It was the 9<sup>th</sup> EC meeting of SRC Assam which was attended by Dr. B. K. Sarma, Chairman, SRC Assam , Sh. Khudiram Hazarika, Astt. Director, NF& AE, Govt. of Assam (Nominee, State DAE) and Sh. S.Brahma, Director, SRC Assam cum Member Secretary, EC.

The agenda like confirmation of minutes of last EC, confirmation of report of action taken on the resolution of last meeting, consider annual

action plan (2013-14) of SRC Assam etc. were discussed in detail.

Moreover, the revision of honorarium and other benefits for the staff members were also discussed during the meeting. Director informed the house that a three members committee has already been constituted to develop concrete service rules for SRC Assam. The members of the committee are- Sh. Khudiram Hazarika, Dr. Dipanka Saikia, OSD, SLMA and S.Brahma

## Capacity Building Workshop

Day-1:

A two days workshop was jointly organized by State Resource Centre (SRC) Guwahati and SRC Dispur on 7-8<sup>th</sup> June, 2013 at Don Bosco Institute Guwahati. The workshop aimed at Capacity Building of the District Coordinators of Saakshar Bharat Mission (SBM) and District and Block Resource Persons (RP) of SRC Guwahati from all 12(twelve)SBM districts of Assam.

In his welcome address, Dr. B.K.Sarma, Chairman, SRC Assam spoke about the significance of such workshops. The objective of the programme was explained by A.Hoque, Programme Coordinator, SRC Assam followed by self introduction of the participants. Altogether 30 persons took part in the workshop.

The technical session of the workshop was inaugurated by Mr. N.M.Hussain, Commissioner/Secretary, Education(S) Deptt., Govt. of Assam cum Member Secretary, State Literacy Mission Authority(SLMA), Assam. Mr. Hussain held the District Coordinators responsible for the delay in activities under SBM that hampered the mission. They needed to enhance their quality to bring more efficiency in their work for which such workshop could play a vital role-he added.



Ms. G.R.Bhattacharaya, Director, SRC Dispur welcome and wished all the participants to be proactive throughout the sessions.

The technical session started by S.Brahma. He spoke on the "Approach and Content need for SBM". He highlighted on the development of personality of the SBM workers in order to implement the programme more efficiently for the mass people.

The post lunch session was initiated by N.C.Deka, Programme Coordinator, SRC Assam. The process of online submission of Physical Plan at GP, BP and district levels and tentative problems that might arise during the course-these were the basic issues discussed by him in his presentation. He reflected on the comparative status of different districts in terms of aforesaid parameters.

"Communication skill played an important role in capacity building. Effective communication skill coupled with intertwined body language was an inevitable component of personality development of



an individual or group"-Sh. N.K.Dutta, Sub.Tacher, Dhekial High School made this observation while he was speaking on the "role of communication skill in capacity Building and personality development".

Sh. A. Dutta, Sr. faculty, State institute of Rural Development (SIRD) Assam emphasized how the Preraks and VTs could be involved in some activities by which they could receive modest financial gain. In that context, he underlined the scope available under National rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) for some gainful employment for the GP level stakeholders-VTs, Preroks etc. Moreover SIRD would be happy to engage the SRC RPs and District Coordinators as their RPs for disseminating the SBM information to the GP level. He also spoke on the constitution of Self Help Group (SHG) among the learners to reap range of benefits offered under NRLM or SIRD under various state sponsored projects that might play a crucial role for transforming their lifestyle.

Day-2

The activity for the 2<sup>nd</sup> day started early in the morning around 9 A.M with the training on Physical Plan Submission conducted by N.C.Deka. The district Coordinators and the RPs participated.

The RP for the next technical session was Sh.S.Kakati, Director, Third Eye Group of Collges. He spoke on "Personality Development and Managerial skill".

It was followed by the presentation of Sh. P.Deuri, Director, SRC Naharlagun, A.P. The way, approach, content, time management while conducting the training were the focal themes came out through the discussion. Sh.K. Maral, Sr. Faculty, Don Bosco Institute, Guwahati focused his discussion on how to mobilize a community with effective time management.

Final session of the day was the "Role of Information and Communication Technology(ICT) in Community Mobilization" conducted by Dr. K.Sarma, Associate Prof., Deptt. of Electronics, Gauhati University. He claimed the ICT to be most potent medium to bring people (community) together. Being endowed with tremendous potentiality in coming years, he advised all the participants to be well versed with this system.

## Evolving Strategy for Extension and strengthening AECs at Guwahati:

SRC Assam holds a consultation on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2013 at Hotel Monsoon Palace, Guwahati. The meeting aimed at evolving strategy and ideas to strengthen the Adult Education Centres (AECs) in each GPs.

The programme was chaired by Dr.B.K.Sarma, Chairman, SRC Assam. The participants were the faculty members of various Academic Institutions and well experienced literacy activist.

The technical session started with the Power point presentation(PPT) by S.Brahma. Referring to the state of Adult literacy in US and China, he stressed on revitalizing the entire framework of Adult Education. While speaking on focal theme of the discussion-AEC, he highlighted "what AEC was and what it should be or ought to be." The basic objective of the AECs was to cater the need of the rural poor, if it overcomes this challenge then only people would take the ownership, he added.

The next was the presentation of Dr. M.K.Srivastava, Adjunct Faculty, National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) North East. He spoke on the strategy for strengthening the delivery mechanism of different Rural Development Schemes. He focused mainly on MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) NRLM (National Rural Livelihood Mission). He advised that the VTs could be provided Job Cards under MGNREGA so that they could get modest financial assistance since the existing SBM structure does not have any scope for this. Further, those VTs might be engaged as facilitator or volunteers for MGNREGA. D.Saikia, OSD, SLMA acknowledged and told that the very issue would be raised in the forthcoming meeting.

The technical session continued with the presentation of Anupam Dutta, Sr Faculty, State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD). He spoke on Convergence of different Rural Development Schemes. The convergence may be of 3 kinds- Institutional, schematic, human.

Being a Training Agency, SIRD had been constantly trying to orient PRI institutions about the CSS (Centrally Sponsored Schemes) and SSS (State Sponsored Schemes). Both face to face or audio Visual Media (31 Satellite Centres at Various localities of Assam) could be adopted for this purpose. Since they lack in manpower in terms of SBM, the SRC RPs and SBM District Coordinators could take part as **RP** in various ongoing and proposed trainings for the PRI functionaries being undertaken by SIRD.

Mr.Dutta observed that both of these programmes were woman centric that aimed at promoting the socio-economic status of the vital section of the society. NRLM offers adequate flexibility under which the Preraks or even VTs may be engaged (As book keeper of SHGs, RPs) to earn a humble amount to supplement their income. Constituting the SHGs among the woman learners might be very fruitful to converge both the plans. Similarly, the targeted learners or the stakeholders at different levels of SBM might be benefitted



through "Chief Ministers Jiban Jyoti Scheme" under which emphasis was basically paid on employment generation for the rural youths.

The house made consensus on the following issues out of the discussion-

1. Creating provision of incentives for stakeholders of SBM at GP level through MGNREGA & NRLM
2. Develop organisational linkage among various schemes of rural Development
3. Engagement of District and Block Coordinators and SRC RPs as the trainers for various training sessions organized by SIRD where they need to orient the PRI functionaries about SBM
4. Develop AEC as the hub of all information related to various Centrally Sponsored schemes (CSS) or schemes of State govt.
5. Capacity Building of stakeholders by SIRD and NIRD
6. Taking initiative for printing of information brochure preferably at local or regional languages.
7. Promoting formation of SHGs among learners and joint liability groups (JLG)

The post lunch session was the time for Group Discussion. Two groups - Group A & B and discussed the issues like how to make AEC attractive, how to develop AEC as complete Information centre, how to develop comprehensive planning, management of AEC etc. Both the groups presented their summary of discussion from which valuable inputs were drawn for subsequent action.

In tune of the discussion, a number of training groups had been constituted. They would be imparting training on the followings- different Govt. schemes, RTE, SHG, Agriculture, Health & sanitation, Art, Culture & Game. The discussion came to end with the concluding remark from S.Brahma, Director, SRC Assam



## World Environment Day:

The World Environment Day was observed globally on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2013. The theme of the Day for the year 2013 was "think. Eat. Save : Reduce Your Foodprint". In tune, SRC Assam organized number of programmes at different venues in the adopted areas- Dangtal in Bongaigaon, Baida in Goalpara, Hazarikapara in Darrang, Moirabari in Morigaon, Sootea in Sonitpur, Hatigarh in Dhemaji etc. Throughout



the programmes, Gyan Vigyan Samiti Assam (GVSA) and Local administration extended their support and assistance to ensure smooth functioning of the Programmes., Extempore speech, Drawing Competition, discussions etc. were held in connection with the day to arouse the consciousness about environment among various sections of the people.



## Students visit to SRC Assam:

A group of eight students along with teachers from Don Bosco School, Guwahati, one of the pioneer in N.E. India visited SRC Assam. The objective of their visit was to gather information about the adult literacy in India and Assam in particular. It was a part of their class project that drove them to SRC Assam after surfing the website of SRC on internet. Director, SRC Assam S. Brahma along with S. Sahariah, Prog. Associate and A. Hoque, Prog. Coordinator interacted with the students about various aspects of adult literacy with special reference to SBM. They were provided brochure about SBM and soft copy of other related materials.



## WOMEN EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Sukmaya Lama,

Research & Teaching Astt., KKHSOU

Women all over the world have been pigeonholed under certain categories as the disadvantaged/vulnerable group in the society. Such categorization of women as a disadvantaged group of people needs to be thwarted.

Some of the definitions of empowerment are given below:

The World Bank identified empowerment as "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives". According to Oxfam, "Empowerment involves challenging oppression which compels millions of people to play a part in their society on terms which are inequitable, or in ways which deny them their human rights".

The need for empowerment of this vulnerable group stems from their inability to fulfil their dreams and reach their greatest potentials due to the socio-cultural barriers. It is the manifestation of inequality, segregation or marginalization of this group of people. The reason behind this exclusion is the fact that issues related to women are mostly ignored and very often than not looked upon differently whether in matters of social relations or any economic activities which have resulted in the lack of participation of women despite several attempts.

In this context, the Government of India adopted the National Policy for the Empowerment of women in 2001. The aim of this policy was to increase the participation of women in all spheres of activities and

Cont...

eliminate all forms of discriminations. The Five Year Plans have also stressed on this issue.

Women are significant contributors to the growing economy of the nation and its future. Almost 50% of our population comprises of women while 42% is under the age of 18. For growth to be truly inclusive, we have to ensure their protection, wellbeing, development, empowerment and participation. Women education can enable not just empowerment, but fight poverty and bring development in the economic sphere.

The debate over women education in Assam has persisted ever since modern education was first introduced by the British. Education for women was restricted owing to their social roles of a domestic goddess. And though education was provided, it was "plain" and limiting itself to activities like weaving, knitting which were considered important for the women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Women's education was an idea rather than a reality. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women education was articulated as a means to create a lady skilful in the art of household chores and play the perfect 'Bharatiya Nari' loyal to the causes of the national movement.

Education is instrumental for the empowerment of any group of people. Only an effective education system can guarantee freedom from the state of subservience. Problems of illiteracy still persist among the women in this state. There is another problem of drop-outs of the female learners from schools and colleges. Empowerment of women in the society can only happen with the access of the women and girls to quality education. The time has come when the issue of women empowerment should be taken 'beyond mere rhetorics'. The recent focus on women education has become more crucial due to the contemporary trend that has set in, termed, "globalization". With changing economic structure the society too is undergoing a transitional phase.

The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) of 1978 has definitely taken up the cause for the education of women by prioritizing the need for a wholesome education of women. Distance Education system has equally opened new opportunities for women education. Non formal mode of education has been lately been in vogue in the matter of widening access to education especially for the disadvantaged section of the people.

## Conscious Corporate Social Responsibility

**Samhita Baruah**

Assistant Professor, TISS Guwahati

We are living in a world of possibilities. People are busy turning challenges into opportunities. Somehow human endeavor towards contentment rises with every new step which is taken. The craving for a little more is evident in every sphere of life. Every person living within or without social structures is striving to ensure a life of dignity. In a democratic society like India, rights, equality, justice and liberty are never-ending struggles which can never be ensured without collective and consistent efforts from

all sectors. The Indian Constitution has set the theoretical framework for this purpose and all the agencies of practice are bound by law to ensure these entitlements to the citizens of this country. But mostly there are shortcomings in this process of rights fulfillment keeping in mind all factors in place.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be an important platform for organizations in the voluntary and non-profit sector to fulfill the rights of people. CSR is a mixed bag of opportunities and challenges. It has been perceived to be a domain relevant to the private bodies. There is an element of patronizing which prevails amongst the corporate agencies which is involuntarily imposed into people living within rural and urban communities in lieu of employment, education or monetary benefit. When CSR efforts are attached to vested interests and sole objective is to be the provider and protector of a village, community, locality or group of individuals then there is a danger of stifling people's opinions and choices.

Many voluntary, non-profit, civil society organizations and peoples' movements are averse to any kind of collaboration with corporate bodies. They have ample justifications and ideological dilemmas to grapple with. The concept of voluntary is in fact very tricky. In every effort which is voluntary there is the prevalence of social exchange. If not for money and resources people do voluntary work for fame, social recognition, for tax exemptions and also for future opportunities.

There is a huge dilemma for the social work profession as well about whether to do selfless service or get paid for the services rendered to clients in a social work setting. In recent times, the emergence of the third sector exclusively is an important move towards social development. The third sector is different from the public and the private sectors. It is established on the innovation, aspiration and bond of trust on issues of justice, equality, liberty and peace which lays the foundation for a solidarity economy. This sector has been able to establish a niche in human service, development, welfare and human rights paradigms. So far the state and social conscious private, individuals and even religious bodies have been supporting the efforts of this sector. Consistent efforts on public, private partnerships models have been successfully implemented in many remote localities across the country on issues of health, education, sanitation and rural development. In these efforts the third sector and people in this context needs to be engaged in a more proactive way. Somehow the private sector which comprises of the corporate bodies have not partnered with the third sector.

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## Editorial.....

Saakshar Bharat Mission (SBM) has definitely taken the right direction of achieving their goal of cent percent literacy. In the last quarterly SRC Newsletter, the DG of National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA) came to Assam and North east to Assam to encourage the states, to speed up the progress and point out the lacunas still present. When the leaders of this huge task personally take an interest, it helps to motivate the people work under him.

The more the leaders visit and call on the people who are working at the grass root level, the more speed the programme picks up. In this issue, the readers will observe that the leaders of SBM of Assam Mr.N.M.Hussain, Commissioner Secretary, Secondary Education, Govt. of Assam himself visited Sonitpur district. He took a deep interest and encouraged everyone to work hard to achieve their goal. He enquired of their problems and promised to resolve the issues which were posing as difficulties. This positive attitude will take Mission much faster towards into goal.

The same may be said of our Director Mr.S.Brahma. He is like a stalwart soldier and a true captain leading the SB campaign with a lot of in depth thought and vision. He is supporting this programme with all his knowledge and experience. The review meetings are very helpful and should continue. These meetings make each district realize where they are lagging behind.

If I may be allowed to suggest, some representatives of district functionaries should pay visit to the other districts. This will help each other to broaden their vision, and they will begin to help each other. Congratulations to the torch bearers of SBM. A lot of the success rests on their shoulders.



Director, SRC Assam with DG, NLMA

## BEING WOMEN: A PHILOSOPHICAL CRITIQUE

Pallavi Sharma

Research Scholar

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*"There is a good principle which created Order, light and man, and an evil principle which created chaos, darkness and women"*

—Pythagoras

Genevieve Lloyd in "The Man of Reason" aptly remarks that the past philosophical reflections help us to form our present thought structure. The privilege of masculinity in spite of all attempts to confine it seems to remain unaltered mostly because of such above stated prejudices shaped by the masculine sentiment. The root of this tendency goes back to the Greek founding fathers like Plato, Aristotle and many others preceding or following them who are till date referred to in any serious discussion regarding social system.

According to Aristotle, a female is a female pertaining to certain incapacity; incapacity of applying reason to the standard of man and hence she is somehow "lesser man". Man is the subject to whom woman is always subordinate, the 'Other'. Humanity is thus suggested to be male or masculine and woman is defined not in herself but in relation to man. Not only in regard to the mental ability but also in her physical construction woman is given a degraded status. Where the body of a man is considered to be meaningful in itself, the woman's body is always considered to be devoid of meaning without reference to man.

The seventeenth century Western philosophy overpowered by the mind body dualism of Rene Descartes rather strengthens this ancient degraded attribution to woman by associating her only to the bodily matters devoid of having the capacity of knowledge which is considered to be acquired by the mind belonging solely to man. The tendency is always to relate mind and rationality to man and body and irrationality to woman. Where men are said to have represented God's image, women are meant to provide men comfort, entertainment and solace, remaining confined in the realm of emotion, imagination and sensuousness.

Though the position of women is found relatively advance in the western countries today, the base of their tradition as found in the available arguments does not allow them this liberal space. The emergence of the feminist movement in the west is also the result of these rigid stands against women. Whereas, India, which is now experiencing unbearable atrocities on female as a whole cutting across all limits, exercised a balanced and liberal ideal concerning women in the ancient days. The division of reason and emotion as a division between man and woman has never been approved in early Indian society. Rather, in the Rig Vedic period man and women equally took participation in religious and social activities along with freedom to take decision regarding marriage and partner. However the privileged position started deteriorating from the later Rig Vedic period with the changing

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Consumerism is a glaring reality in our lives and societies. It's a corollary effect of the corporate sector. When employees join the corporate sector, they are entitled to incentives which in turn run the market driven economy. But this economy affects the third sector as well. Most of the voluntary efforts cannot sustain under the pressures of the consumerist lifestyles. Volunteers cannot live in isolation without getting engaged in the market forces. The voluntary sector has a lot of support from every sphere for the work which needs to be done at times of disaster, deprivation, destitution, disease and destruction. But they do not get enough resources to compensate the financial, health, livelihood needs of the volunteers who execute and implement these services.

It is but strange that many aid agencies from outside the country value voluntary efforts of individuals and groups and compensate them for their time and experience. But somehow in our country we assume that in selfless service and altruistic efforts there is no room for any compensation. Teachers engaged in remote districts of our

country on adult literacy missions, community based health workers, community mobilisers who volunteer to champion various social justice causes are hardly compensated with any insurance, pension or incentives. In today's times Rs. 1000 as an honorarium for a month for such people who run their households and families is actually disrespecting their dignity of effort. We put a tag on these people being volunteers and their efforts being voluntary but actually their lives depend on this honorarium. Just wonder if corporate social responsibilities can rise to the need and provide for these people through their programmes and support them to sustain in the market economy through solidarity it might relieve the third sector from many pressures of sustaining efforts. It is actually a gain-gain situation for all. CSR efforts can benefit the companies by making their brand more socially conscious and equitable and community workers and volunteers get secured salaries to sustain themselves and their communities. While the voluntary organizations and non-profit sector can engage in all socially conscious initiatives without much pressure on their actual mission and vision.

### Snapshots from the fields



Newsletter is the house magazine of the SRC Assam, National Literacy Mission Authority, Ministry of H. R. D., Govt. of India

The views expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect the official views of SRC Assam

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Readers are requested to write or send e-mail to the editor expressing their views about Newsletter

Printed and published by S. Brahma, Director, State Resource Centre Assam, 1-CD, Mandovi Apartments, GNB Road, Ambari, Guwahati-7810001 printed at saraighat offset press, Guwahati-21

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