

'UPDATE'

Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

International Women's day celebration was organized in four different venues this year viz. Panthabari, Naxal Bari, Gulma and Sukna Tea Estate. More than 400 women participated in this event. Local authorities as well as NGO's were invited as guests and with the facilitation of DMWSC the women organized the show.



Women's day was celebrated for the first time in Naxal bari Tea Estate. DMWSC was invited to work in the Tea Estate by the owner Ms. Sonia Jabbar a past pupil of Loreto House, Kolkata, in July last year.

VOLUNTEERS

On 8th March we welcomed seventeen Canadian volunteers on adventure learning trip. They were high school students from different schools of the Toronto Catholic School Board.



They visited Loyal and Panighatta and interacted with the school children. As a part of their learning they also visited Darjeeling. They had a very good experience in all the places as stated in their feedback during evaluation on 14th March.

GOOD NEWS

Mrs. Maju Toppo, Supervisor of CV (Collective Voice) from Panighatta has successfully completed her grade twelve through distance education. She said " Only after I started working with DMWSC I got the inspiration to study further." She also plans to pursue higher studies and we wish her all the best.



HISTORIC VISIT

On the invitation of Sr. Sabrina, Member of Parliament Derek O'Brien visited Sukna and Gulma to meet and listen to the problems of the tea garden workers. A group of women and men labourers had assembled to meet him. The workers shared their problems related to food security, health facilities, sanitation as well as difficulty in getting tribal certificates for students. Mr. O'Brien has asked DMWSC to make a list of the grievances and hand it over to him. He visited the Sukna Tea Estate hospital and verified what report he was given by the workers. He also went to see the land which has become a bone of contention between the people and the tea garden management since 2012. Approximately 215 families have lost their jobs in the tea plantation as they refuse to vacate their ancestral land that they have been tilling for generations.



CRAFTS MELA 13th – 22nd March 2014

Two girls Bidhya and Pramila of EEIY (Ethical Enterprise Initiative for Youth) in collaboration with TRIFED (The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited) participated in the Crafts Mela held at Kanchanjunga Stadium, Siliguri. The Crafts Mela showcased some of the most exquisite handlooms and handicrafts of India. It was held primarily to promote the pool of skilled artisans, who use indigenous technology, but suffer due to cheap machine-made imitations. This was an earnest effort to provide a platform for crafts person and weavers to directly market their wares by eliminating the middlemen.



RESCUE

A team from DMWSC Ms. Margrate Horo and Ms. Priska Kandulna along with CHILDLINE representative rescued a girl aged 15 years. Soma (name changed) was forcefully married to a 30 year old man. Her younger sister too was handed over to him so that he could also marry her in the future. Soma was handed over to CHILDLINE for proper care and protection. With further counseling she lodged an FIR against the man she was forcefully married to. She also spoke about her mother who had supported this act. Her mother has also given her 9 year old son in child labour to work in a wayside eatery. The man has been arrested and the younger sister is rescued from his hands and put in the Child Shelter home for proper care and protection. Further follow up of the children will be continued. We are still trying to locate where the brother is working.



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