



PARIVARTAN

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Prayas JAC Society

Where the head is held high and the mind is without fear

Prayas stands for its ideals of a transparent society without prejudice and fear as its core values. It's small steps taken 27 years ago to create this world have turned into giant strides with its collaboration with international organizations which stand for the same values. The workshop organized by Prayas in Rajasthan last month will set the agenda on how India will tackle one of its most tough challenges- human trafficking in close collaboration with Geneva Global. Prayas also celebrated India's Independence Day last month with gusto. Read on!

FREEDOM TO SING, DANCE WITH GAY ABANDON AND LAUGH



That was the Spirit of Independence Day at Prayas this year. All the colours and variety in the rainbow descended at Prayas, Tughlakabad as we celebrated the day in style.

The children of the Girls Shelter Home seemed to be enjoying every moment of the freedom they got to perform according to their heart's content to the tune of patriotic songs.

As has been the tradition at Prayas, the flag-hoisting on the Independence Day was done by the smallest children of Prayas helped by the General Secretary Mr. Amod Kanth and the other guests who were content to be happy onlookers for once.

A PATH-BREAKING CONFERENCE

An interstate Conference to check cross- border trafficking organised by Prayas involving all stakeholders including officials from the Home Ministry, Railways, Departments of labour, Child Welfare Departments, various police organisations and NGOs involved in checking trafficking was a highly successful experiment.

The conference assumes huge significance in the war against trafficking because as of now various state governments were fighting their own separate battles because law and order happens to be a state subject. The role of the Centre, under the present dispensation, is only in an advisory capacity.

Another significance of this path-breaking conference was that it was an attempt to bring

together the law-enforcing agencies of the three states Delhi, Bihar and Rajasthan on a common platform to sort out their problems and some skirmishes and resolve the conflicts in the larger interest of the victims. Yet another achievement of the conference, whose results would be visible in days to come, was that the various departments discussed their Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and this would ultimately lead to a common SOP that would be applicable to all stakeholders.



PRAYAS PAYS HOMAGE TO Mr. ABDUL KALAM

The passing away of former President APJ Abdul Kalam while doing what he liked best- teaching students, is a loss to humanity that can never be filled up. The children and staff of Prayas, for whom he held a special place due to his ordinary background, being born in an ordinary middle-class family of Rameshwaram, who sold newspapers as a hawker once, to rise to the highest office of the country, paid Homage to the memory of the human dynamo of energy.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Amod Kanth, General Secretary Prayas said that it was only in a democratic country like India that a person with humble beginnings could become the President of the country. But, as he said, Kalam had made other invaluable contributions to the country especially as a gifted scientist whose contribution in the launching of the missiles Prithvi and Agni got him the title of the missile man.

He recalled that the former President had also been associated with Prayas when at a programme of Railway Women's Association in 2011 he had given away a prize of two lakhs to Prayas for its outstanding work.

An extremely popular speaker wherever he went Prof. Kalam was always in touch with the people as he was way ahead of his peers in using the social media. His last Tweet before he met his end was, "Going to Shillong...to take course on Livable Planet Earth at IIM". In a sense he was a true Karmyogi like Lord Krishna doing everything that his duty required without getting attached to the perks and comforts that came with it.

WOMEN IN INDIA AND USA HAVE COMMON PROBLEMS- Ms. VIVIAN HUELGO



Even though USA is regarded as the most powerful country in the world it has done pretty little to change the fate of the female gender in the country. Coming from Ms. Vivian Huelgo, Chief Counsel to the Task Force on Human Trafficking and Commission on Domestic and Sexual violence of the American Bar Association, this is a very serious comment. Vivian Huelgo was speaking to a group of counselors and the staff of Prayas JAC at Tughlakabad after a hectic tour of the building that houses a home for about 50 girls who have gone through the worse trauma that life can offer. Having travelled to several parts of India during her short tour and meeting lawyers and women activists, one of the most well-known faces of the new generation of America, Vivian made a strong pitch for a continuous push for women's fight for equality and human dignity.

'Having been a counsel for over 20 years I can tell you from my personal experience that it is not easy for women to lodge police complaints on issues of domestic violence because everyone suggests that these are exaggerated just like in India,' she said.

She made a telling comment by saying that the police in her country was very open to register cases of thefts, purse snatchings etc but if women wanted to register cases against men for domestic violence they were looked at suspiciously. Her comment was a response to a statement by Mr. Amod Kanth, General Secretary of Prayas who had in his welcome speech demonstrated that even though many laws had changed in the country to make India safer for women many in India were scared of Section 498 A of the IPC that suggested very strong action against domestic violence for dowry and other offences by the husband his relatives.

However he added "personally I am in favour of this law as it has stood the test of time and has helped women in distress.' Vivian Huelgo, who was on her first visit to India said that after interacting with various sections of society, including lawyers, women's groups and NGOs like Prayas she had realized that the economic advancement of a country had nothing to do with the improvement in the status of women.

She also came out very strongly against the policing in the US and said that they were very casual and patchy in their approach and not making use of facilities like the Evidence Collection Kit which is provided free by the State Police to collect forensic evidence. Vivian commended some of the laws relating to violence against women in India and said that by comparison the US did not have very specific laws in these matters.

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