

Skilling with Dignity: Domestic Workers Sector Skill Council **Workshop organised by Paschim Bangla Society for Skill** **Development.**

“How many of you will allow your domestic workers to eat at the same table at yours?”- The audience at the workshop were astounded by the thought, something which has barely ever made it to public domain. Mr Amod K Kanth, Chairman of DWSSC and a social service visionary asked this to the 250 plus training partners who had gathered for this session on December 29, 2017 at the Kolkata Karigori Bhawan. His pointed remark ensued his enthralling intervention regarding the need for addressing the labour laws along with skilling of domestic workers to ensure that a holistic approach towards their upliftment can be envisioned. The dignitaries present on the dais were Mr Amod K Kanth, Chairman, DWSSC, Honourable Minister of Skill Development, Mr Purnendu Basu, Principal Secretary, Ms Roshni Sen, Maj Gen Manik Sabharwal, CEO, DWSSC, Project Director S, Pramanick, Deputy Director Surojit Roy, Brigadier Sanyal and NSDC



State Engagement Officer, Bikram Das. The Principal Secretary moderated the session.

Given Mr Kanth’s expertise and experience, the Honourable Minister, Mr Purnendu Basu and Principal Secretary, Ms. Roshni Sen of Skill Development urged him to deliver the keynote address. Highlighting the key concerns of this sector, from its extremely unorganised nature to the lack of dignity, Mr Kanth gave a strident speech on the above issues. The Minister and the Principal Secretary took keen note of the same and assured Mr Kanth that they will pursue the labour department for legislative changes regarding

wages and take up the mandate of skilling for domestic workers with full force. Ms. Roshni Sen in her brief speech took cognizance of the trafficking which is often enmeshed in this domain and the presence of unscrupulous placement agencies who indulge in the same. Mr Kanth mentioned about the noteworthy work of Prayas in this regard and how DWSSC as the only government recognised body for domestic workers could make a solemn intercession in the aforementioned matter.

Maj Gen Manik Sabharwal followed this discussion with a presentation on Domestic Workers Sector Skill Council and the varied job roles on which trainings are done. The classroom and trainer specifications together with the upcoming job roles. He assured the Training Partners about placement support from the Industry Partners of DWSSC. After the session, the Minister, Mr. Purnendu Basu gave a speech about reaching out to the lowest rungs of society and connecting with the domestic workers on a personal note to understand their travails. Skilling, he mentioned would be a huge step forward in undertaking the mammoth task of organising and providing their much deserved respect.



The event ended with an enthusiastic Q&A session of the Training Partners where they also filled out forms putting forth more question that they have regarding this sector. The event ended with Bikram Das, State Engagement Officer of NSDC giving the vote of thanks.



Paving the way forward, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between DWSSC and PBSSD represented by Mr. Amod K Kanth and Mr. Purnendu Basu respectively to undertake the skilling programme for domestic workers across West Bengal. In strengthening the efforts of skill training for one of the most vulnerable sections of the population, hidden in the dark crevices of the glitzy city, DWSSC and PBSSD pledged to work together and make every effort possible to address the issues and concerns of these people.