

# OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER “XV” EDITION

# UDGAM

MAY  
2024

## Women’s Day celebration: Awareness Session and Health Checkup



We celebrated International Women’s Day on March 8 by organizing an awareness session and health checkup for the women street vendors of the Hatigaon area. For this program, we collaborated with the Indian Medical Association (IMA). About 60 women street vendors attended the program.

Dr Arunima Goswami, president of the IMA Assam state branch, and Dr Sikha Sarma took the session on breast cancer and cervical cancer. Dr Bijuli Goswami (chairperson, Women's Doctor’s Wing, IMA Assam state branch) shared information on eye care. During the session, the community people enquired about different health issues. To which the concerned doctors of IMA gave their suggestions.



The main objective of this program is to aware the community about the importance of regular screening and self-exam for early detection of breast and Cervical cancer. And to encourage a healthy lifestyle through proper nutrition, and regular exercise among the community

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## Capacity Building Workshop for the Ward Councillors on 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act, 1992



FST recently organized a capacity-building workshop for the Ward Councillors of Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) on the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992. About 30 GMC ward councillors participated in the workshop. Advocate Angan Kumar Baruah from Guwahati High Court facilitated the workshop. The main objective of this workshop is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act, focusing on its significance in empowering local governance structures.

The workshop started with the resource person informing the participants about the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act and its importance for the ward councillors to function. The ward councillors shared their doubts and questions about the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act. Throughout the discussion, numerous inquiries arose, all effectively addressed by the resource person. Queries such as, how to inform the public about the GMC Act, whether it can be changed or not, what kind of work done by ward councillors concerning citizens is considered unconstitutional, etc came out during the session. Additionally, the Mayor expressed gratitude to the FST team and proposed further workshops in collaboration with GMC shortly.

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## Session on Urban Governance for the Senior Citizens



In March, we conducted an interactive session for the senior citizens on engagement in matters related to urban governance. About 10 senior citizens participated in the session and shared their experiences and insights related to their ward. The objective of this session was to create consciousness among the citizens regarding their duties and responsibilities as an active citizen of society.

The session started with an introduction of the 74th Amendment Act and how it is important for the citizens. The session shifted to an interactive discussion where the participants shared their issues related to Ward 32, which needs to be taken in the ears of Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC).

During the session, many issues came out such as one of the citizens sharing about fuse street light issues, the degraded condition of the footpath, garbage, water, sanitation, etc. The session was concluded by sharing examples of other wards collectively solving the problems related to their wards. The session inspired the participants to follow their duties and responsibilities as active citizens of society.

This initiative is part of our project Niroopan, which focuses on the engagement and exchange of dialogue between the citizens and Urban Local Bodies (ULB) on matters related to the ward.

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## Workshop on Building Tools to Engage with Boys

We conducted a workshop for the 15 young women leaders from Barpeta on how to engage young boys on gender issues.

Nilanju Dutta, a gender rights specialist from North East Network was the resource person. The session shed light on gender, patriarchy, and gender-based restrictions that exist in society. This session is a part of our Ankuran project which focuses on girl's education and empowerment.

Discussions revolve around societal obstacles and limitations faced by both girls and boys, with a focus on empowering young girls through education and fostering an awareness of gender dynamics present in society. During the session, Nilanju introduced tools to help the girl leaders engage with boys. Tools such as body mapping were discussed in detail as to how they need to be executed in the field among young girls and boys to initiate conversation around gender.



Girl leaders were able to understand how gender is a social construct, and what leads to differences between girls and boys which are the contribution of how a society teaches girls to think of themselves as lesser than boys. Through this workshop, they understand the prejudices they hold when it comes to gender. Which they said would be helpful for them to reconstruct the ideas of patriarchy built in them through life experiences.

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## Empowering Story of a Single Mother



Ritalis Phira is a mushroom cultivator and also a single mother from Nongmensong, Shillong. She is a mother of seven children. Her husband deserted her. She did not get any help from her family either. She worked as a domestic worker before mushroom cultivation was introduced to her.

During the peak of COVID-19, she started her mushroom cultivation on a very small scale and sold them in the nearby market. But now that people from in and around her locality know about her, she has a proper network to market her mushrooms.

Ritalis actively participated in the various meetings and workshops organized by FST, aiming to gather valuable insights and business strategies. These workshops and trainings provided her with invaluable insights, empowering her to refine her cultivation techniques and optimize her business operations.

With newfound confidence and expertise, she dreamed of upgrading her mushroom cultivation setup, envisioning a proper facility equipped with all the necessary resources to scale her business to new heights.