

Report by Mr. Surajit Dey, Registrar (Law), NHRC for visit to Old Age Women's Home run by All Bengal Women's Union on 28.06.2019

The undersigned had visited the All Bengal Women's Union (ABWU), a Non-Governmental Organisation working in various fields and operating an Old Age Women's Home at Elliot Road, Kolkata since 1987. Initially, this Home catered some old women who, while child, were earlier lived in the home and came back there to spend their twilight years in peace. They also accommodated some Burma refugees and victims of Bengal Partition. Presently, 30 old age women are residents of this Home for whom 19 social workers are working as office bearers/managing committee. Apart from these social workers, the Home has one Superintendent, one doctor (part time), one nurse (part time), one Counsellor (part Time), three MTS working as cleaner, helper and chowkidar, one Yoga Therapist (part time) and one cook. They are being provided with new clothes on the occasion of festivals and New Year. Various festivals are also being celebrated in the Home, as per the faiths of respective residents.

These women are also taken to various places for sightseeing. The residents of the Home also make greeting cards, files, colourful paper weights, writing pads, imitation jewellery, food items amongst various other vocational training programmes. Students of various schools are also invited to celebrate Grandparent's Day with the elderly ladies.

The Home is running on the donations and grants-in-aid by the State Government on Government of India. However, it is to be noted that the Senior Citizens Division of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has not provided any aid to the Home since 2016-2017, when lastly a sum of Rs.1,73,550/- was provided to the Home on 29.06.2017. The Home caters 25 senior citizens who are above 70 years of age and facing difficulties to meet their day to day food, medical and other expenses.

Documents received from the Home are attached as annexure for ready reference.

National Human Rights Commission
[PRP&P Division, JD(R) Unit]

Subject : Visit Report of Mr. Surajit Dey, Registrar (Law), NHRC to
ABWU Old Age Home

Mr. Surajit Dey, Registrar (Law), NHRC had visited a non-profit organization called All Bengal Women's Union (ABWU), situated at 89 Eliot Road, Kolkata 700016 on 28.06.2019.

The important observations/recommendations emanating from the visit report are given below :

1. OBSERVATIONS

- 1.1. The ABWU's Old Age Home at Kolkata started with 3 residents and also accommodated some Burma refugees and victims of Bengal Partition. The Home now caters to 20 elderly women who are above the age of 70 years.
- 1.2. Apart from social workers, the Home has one Superintendent, one Doctor (part time), one Counsellor (part time), three MTS working as a cleaner, helper and chowkidar, one Yoga Therapist (part time), and one cook.
- 1.3. They are taken out on short sight-seeing tours in the city.
- 1.4. The residents are provided with new clothes on festivals and New Year. Various festivals are also celebrated inside the premises of the Home.
- 1.5. They conduct various vocational trainings and engage the residents in different kinds of activities like making greeting cards, files, colourful paper weights, writing pads, imitation jewellery, etc.
- 1.6. Students of various schools are also invited by the authorities to spend time with the residents to celebrate Grandparents' Day.
- 1.7. The Home is running on donations and grants-in-aid by the Government of West Bengal and Government of India.

- 1.8. The Senior Citizens Division of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has provided only a part of grant [sum of ₹1,73,550/- (Rupees One Lakh Seventy-three Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty-three only)] under An Integrated Program for Older Persons (IPOP) Scheme for the financial 2016-17 on 11 December 2017 after which no further grants have been received by the Home.
- 1.9. The Home has exhausted their financial resources and is barely making ends meet to provide food, medicines and other necessary facilities to the old women.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. It is suggested that the arrear grant under Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP) Scheme may be released from 2017-18 onwards towards efficient functioning of the old age home.