



WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY 2026

Report on the Celebration Programme

Organizedby:

Department of Social Welfare(MSW)

Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management(IISWBM),Kolkata

Date:18thMarch 2026

Time:11:00AM-2PM

Theme:

“Co-building Hope & Harmony : A Harambee Call to Unitea Divided Society”

The Department of Social Welfare at IISWBM, Kolkata, successfully organized a meaningful and engaging programme on the occasion of **World Social Work Day 2026** on 18th March 2026. The event was held from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and brought together students, faculty members and distinguished guests to celebrate and reflect upon the vital role of social work in contemporary society.

World Social Work Day is observed globally to recognize the contributions of social workers and to promote the values, principles and objectives of the profession. This year's theme, "*Co-building Hope & Harmony: A Harambee Call to Unite a Divided Society*," emphasized the importance of collective action, unity, and shared responsibility in addressing the growing divisions in society. The concept of *Harambee*, meaning "all pull together," served as a powerful reminder of the need for collaboration in creating a more inclusive and equitable world.

The programme commenced with a warm and insightful Welcome Address delivered by Prof. Dr. Sudeepa Banerjee, Head of the MSW Department. In her address, she highlighted the significance of social work as a profession rooted in empathy, justice and service. She encouraged students to uphold the core values of social work and to actively engage in addressing social issues with sensitivity and commitment. Her words set a thoughtful and inspiring tone for the event. Following the Welcome Address, she felicitated the esteemed guests as a gesture of respect and appreciation. The speakers were welcomed with tokens of gratitude, marking the formal inauguration of the programme and setting a tone of warmth and recognition for their valuable presence.



Prof. Dr. Sudeepa Banerjee delivering the Welcome Address



Prof. Dr. Sudeepa Banerjee and Dr. Gita Khawas felicitating the guests

Following the welcome address, Dr. Gita Khawas from the MSW Department introduced the theme of the programme and the esteemed speakers. She elaborated on the relevance of the theme in today's context, where societal divisions based on class, gender, caste, and other factors continue to persist. She emphasized the role of social workers as facilitators of change who can bridge these divides through collective efforts and community engagement.



Dr. Gita Khawas introducing the theme and the distinguished speakers.

The highlight of the programme was the speakers session, which featured eminent personalities from diverse fields of social work and development practice. Their insights provided valuable perspectives and enriched the understanding of students and attendees.

The first speaker, **Mrs. Anuradha Talwar**, an eminent social activist, shared her extensive experience of working with rural labourers and unorganised sector workers. She spoke about her association with the Paschim Banga Khet Majoor Samity and her work with tea plantation workers and women through Shramajibee Mahila Samity. Drawing from her years of grassroots activism, she emphasized that people must always be placed at the centre of social work practice. She highlighted the importance of listening to marginalized voices and ensuring their participation in decision-making processes. Her address was both enlightening and thought-provoking, inspiring students to engage deeply with the realities on the ground.

The second speaker, **Ms. Snigdha Shah**, a consultant in various social sectors, brought a contemporary perspective to the discussion. She spoke about the role of organisations, networks, and strategic interventions in creating sustainable social impact. She emphasized that social workers today need to combine empathy with professional skills, knowledge, and strategic thinking. Her address encouraged students to view social work not only as a field of service but also as a profession that requires innovation, collaboration, and adaptability in an evolving social landscape.

The third speaker, **Ms. Akriti Das**, representing the Chhanv Foundation, shed light on the critical issue of acid attacks and the rehabilitation of survivors. She spoke about the foundation's work in providing medical, legal, educational, and employment support to survivors. She also highlighted the importance of advocacy and awareness in preventing such incidents and ensuring justice for survivors. Her presentation offered a powerful perspective on resilience, dignity, and empowerment.



Ms. Anuradha Talwara addressing the audience and sharing her experiences in grassroots activism.



Ms. Snigdha Shah discussing the role of strategic interventions in social work.

A particularly moving moment of the programme was the sharing of personal experiences by **Rinku Das**, an acid attack survivor. Her story of survival, courage, and resilience left a deep impact on the audience. Through her narrative, she not only highlighted the challenges faced by survivors but also demonstrated immense strength and determination. Her presence and expression served as a powerful reminder of the human spirit's ability to overcome adversity and inspired all present to reflect on the importance of empathy and support in social work practice.



Ms. Akriti Das highlighted the work of the Chhavy Foundation and the issues faced by acid attack survivors, while Rinku Das, an acid attack survivor, shared her powerful story of resilience and courage.

The programme also provided an opportunity for students to engage with real-life experiences and connect theoretical knowledge with practical insights. It created a space for dialogue, reflection, and learning, encouraging students to think critically about their roles and responsibilities as future social workers.

The event was seamlessly conducted and anchored, ensuring smooth transitions between sessions and maintaining the engagement of the audience throughout. The coordination and efforts of the organizing team contributed significantly to the success of the programme.

The session concluded with a **Vote of Thanks** delivered by **Dr. Ushnish Guha**, who expressed gratitude to the speakers for sharing their valuable insights and to the faculty members and students for their active participation. He also appreciated the efforts of the organizing team in successfully conducting the programme.

The celebration of World Social Work Day 2026 at IISWBM was not just an academic event but a meaningful experience that reinforced the values and purpose of social work. It highlighted the importance of collective action, empathy, and professional commitment in addressing social challenges. The programme served as a reminder that social work is not merely a profession but a responsibility towards society.

In conclusion, the event successfully achieved its objectives by creating awareness, encouraging dialogue, and inspiring students to engage more deeply with social issues. It strengthened the commitment of aspiring social workers to contribute positively to society and to work towards building a more inclusive and harmonious world. The Department of Social Welfare at IISWBM continues to play a vital role in fostering such platforms for learning and growth, shaping socially conscious and responsible professionals for the future.



Moubani Chakraborty (student) Anchoring the World Social Work Day 2026 programme



Audience engaging in the World Social Work Day 2026.