

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION AGAINST WITCH-HUNTING: AN ACCOUNT OF ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

A movement has began in Assam, a state in the eastern part of India to bring back smiles to thousands of victims of the evil-practice of 'witch-hunting' in the state. The journey basically started by a septuagenarian lady with only primary education named Birubala Rabha. She started her personal drive based on her own experience to make her villagers understand about this menace defying threat to her life. 'Asom Mahila Samata Society' (AMSS), an NGO head quartered at Goalpara gave her a broad platform to fight the menace. Birubala has been able to save at least 35 lives who were given death sentences suspecting 'witch' by the locals. Her own NGO 'Mission Birubala' now has started to fight exclusively the menace in the state. SI Foundation for Media & Social Welfare, Asom (SIFMSWA) i.e the first organization in the entire north-east to recognize her cause and other organizations are also co-operating her crusade to improve the scenario. The Gauhati High Court had recently ordered the Assam government to enact separate law soon in the state to curb the menace. No doubt, this is a new ray of hope for Birubala and others hoping to eradicate this shame for 21st century's society.

KEYWORDS: Witch, Witch-Hunting, Evil-Practice, Birubala Rabha, AMSS, SIFMSWA