

## **Report of the Ninth Krishna Memorial Lecture and Awards (April 8, 2022, Kolkata)**

The Ninth Krishna Memorial Lecture and Awards Ceremony [2022] was organised by the Krishna Trust in association with the Calcutta Research Group on 8 April 2022, at Hotel Sojourn, Kolkata. The ceremony started with Ranabir Samaddar (Chief Managing Trustee) speaking briefly on Krishna Trust, the aims and objectives that it seeks to achieve. Apart from this year's awardees, awardees of previous years were also present. Amina Khatoon (Priya Manna Bustee), Sujeda Khatun, Anil Mistri, Shahina Javed, Naznin Mallick (educationist), Shantilata Tudu (ASHA worker from Murshidabad) and Jinat Rehana Islam (educationist from Murshidabad) all of whom had received the award in the previous years, were present to share their experiences in their respective fields. In the online meeting, held on January 29, 2022, it was decided by members present to build up a network that would facilitate collective action whenever possible. Keeping this in mind, special emphasis was given on awardees of previous years and a special slot was allotted for knowing about their work or activities in recent times.

Amina Khatoon shared how along with teaching children of the bustee, she is actively working towards creating medical awareness among local women in her area. The audience also got to know that Sujeda Khatun is involved in helping young women create a career in Murshidabad, while Anil Mistri continues to sensitise locals about the need to protect tigers and maintain ecology for a sustainable and better future. While Shahina Javed still makes it possible for young Muslim girls to play football, Naznin Mallick and Jinat Rehana Islam, shared how they try to stand by students fighting addiction, poverty, depression and family problems. Shantilata Tudu shared her experience as an ASHA worker, who worked as the first point of contact during the pandemic.

Krishna Trust in collaboration with Calcutta Research Group has been engaged almost for a decade in giving recognition to women educationists, health activists, and caregivers working for the health and education of girl children and women. Krishna Memorial Awards have been instituted with this aim. The Calcutta Research Group and Krishna Trust are engaged in dialogues with social activists, educational institutions situated at the grass-root level, and caregivers working for the marginalised section of the society, particularly women. It was also after a series of meetings and consultations with other activists, people associated with 'care' in different ways, researchers and others that the list of this year's awardees was finalised.

The recipients of the Ninth Krishna Memorial Awards for Women Educationists, Students & Caregivers [2022] were Dr. Subrata Goswami [Deputy Director (Medical), ESI MB Scheme, and Founder Endowed Chair (Pain Medicine), ESI Institute of Pain Management, Department of Labour, Government of West Bengal], and Biswajit Mitra [Social Activist and Health Worker, Avijit Mitra Memorial & Charitable Society]. Dr. Goswami shared his experience of working at ESI Institute of Pain Management. He empathetically spoke of the patients in his institute, how pain, and pain related problems are perceived by employers, family members and society at large. He also spoke of the nexus between chronic pain and depression. He emphasised on care rather than surgery while dealing with various sorts of pain. The very idea of 'care' had reached a new dimension during the COVID19 pandemic and it was considered necessary to recognise the unsung warriors, who went beyond all expectations to stand by people, offer medical relief, when the state medical infrastructure and society as a whole were struggling to provide care to the ones

in need. Biswajit Mitra is one such person who stood by his society at the time of medical emergency, disregarding any threat to his health. The Awards were presented by Mahalaya Chatterjee [Educationist, Economist & Member, Calcutta Research Group].

The conferral ceremony was followed by the Ninth Krishna Memorial Lecture, which was delivered by Dr. Sunandan Basu [renowned Neuro Surgeon, Medica Super Speciality Hospital, Kolkata]. Dr. Basu spoke on the condition of women's health in the country as well as in the state of West Bengal. He shared anecdotes, based on his visits to rural areas for the purpose of organising health camps, depicting the health scenario in rural West Bengal. While speaking on various health parameters, he highlighted that there is a huge chasm when it comes to men's and women's health. He also emphasised the need to have more medical awareness, in order to build a healthier tomorrow.

Sabir Ahamed's Krishna memorial lecture "Ashar Katha: Swasthya, Atimari, O Ashakarmi" given on the occasion of the Trust's annual programme in the previous year (2021) was published by the Trust on this occasion. It was a result of his research in 2020-21 and the work was facilitated by Calcutta Research Group and Krishna Trust.

The session was chaired by Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty [Eminent Historian, and Retd. Prof. Presidency University and Senior Member Calcutta Research Group] and the formal vote of thanks was delivered by Madhurilata Basu. The ceremony concluded with high tea.