



INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES KOLKATA

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SALT LAKE CAMPUS • DD 27/D, SECTOR 1, SALT LAKE, KOLKATA 700 064

Seminar

Professor Sugata Ray, School of Material Sciences, Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science & Silicosis Akranto Sangrami Shramik Committee (SASSC) will speak on

Victims of Silicosis in West Bengal: Findings from a Survey

Date: May 17, 2019 Friday

Time: 3:15 pm

Venue: IDSK Seminar Room, 5th Floor, Salt Lake

(All are welcome to participate in the seminar)

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Abstract

Silicosis is a lung disease caused by breathing in tiny bits of silica, a mineral that is part of sand, rock, and mineral ores such as quartz. It mostly affects workers exposed to silica dust in occupations such as stone quarries and crushers, quartz mining, foundries, sand blasting, ceramics industries, gem cutting and polishing, slate/pencil industries, construction, all mining industries and glass manufacturing industries. The Joint ILO/WHO Committee on Occupational Health in 1995 identified elimination of silicosis as a priority area for action in occupational health, and the affected countries were urged to form National Programs for the Elimination of Silicosis (NPES) immediately. India has not yet formed its NPES. A recent survey carried out by Silicosis Akranto Sangrami Shramik Committee (SASSC) in North and South 24 parganas reveals that there are more than 600 people in 9 blocks of the two districts who had been significantly exposed to silica, and 46 of them already died. An organised movement is going on in West Bengal as well as in the rest of the country to ensure the rights of workers to protect themselves from silicosis. We begin with a discussion of the history of silicosis in the World and in India, and then highlight the finding from our survey in West Bengal. We end with some observations on the movement and the prospect of taking it forward.