

#LPRD# A Field Worker's Diary [#Part 39](#) # 21 August 2020

Our 23-member strong delegation stayed in Boston was from 29th July 23rd August 2017. We started from Washington in the early morning of 29th and reached Boston in the afternoon. Since it was a Saturday, we didn't have any official engagements the next day. They had provided us a guided city tour in Washington as it had been our first in America, but they had left us to see the places we wanted to see on our own in Boston. When we hear the word Boston, we remember the Boston tea Party that we had read about in our childhood textbooks; so, Sinthu and I thought of going there first. After checking in at the hotel and having lunch, we asked the hotel staff about it. They said that it was quite far from the hotel and advised us to take a cab to it. However, as we didn't have any work that day, we thought of walking to the place. I don't think there is any need for me to talk about Boston Tea Party as its history is quite well known to everyone; but that harbour's beauty had managed to make us forget our fatigue from a week's travel without a moment's leisure in a second. Since we had walked quite far to reach the harbour, we sat down on a bench beside the Boston Tea Party museum and chatted. Looking at old ships, we were struck with wonder at how those people had managed to pour out around 45 tons of tea from them. We sauntered along the museum for a while and walked back to the hotel by the time night had fallen. On Sunday morning, Sinthu, Subha and I planned to leave early to the Cambridge area and see Harvard University and leave for Revere Beach to look at the Atlantic Ocean.

After we got ready and came to the lobby in the early hours of the morning, our coordinator Voytek and Yousuf from Morocco were going somewhere too. It seemed that they were planning to go to the beach first and then go to Harvard. As we were planning to go to the same places, all five of us decided to go together. We got on the metro to go to the Cambridge area and went for sightseeing all across Harvard University.

I also thought of seeing Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), however, there was no time for it. So, we reached the Revere beach in the afternoon. Located south of downtown Boston, this beach is said to be the first public beach in America. Whenever I look at a sea, I sense a little unfamiliar sadness in myself. Because it becomes apparent to me how small humankind truly is when we stand in front of that seemingly infinite water. Probably, the sea pulls humans towards it with its enchanting beauty to make them realize how small they are in front of nature and the vast universe.

After reaching the Atlantic coast, we played in the water for a while and then wandered around looking at the sand sculptures that were located across the beach.

Voytek and Yousuf had planned ahead and came prepared to play badminton there. After seeing that beach we didn't feel like going anywhere else. We stayed there till evening and reached the hotel at dinner time.

From Monday, our official engagements began. First, we went to an organisation called Dress for Success. The organisation provides needed professional support to women looking for employment opportunities. Right from helping with writing the resume till the time the candidates go to the interview, women searching for jobs are given all kinds of support.

In addition to giving the women attending the interviews the skills, advice and suggestions needed to face the interview with courage, with the belief that the clothes we wear will also boost our self-confidence, they provide the candidates with the right clothes and accessories to wear to the interviews. Truth be spoken, apart from their meeting room, when I saw the rest of their office I was transported to the ladies' corner shop back in my town. It was a ladies fashion store, indeed, filled with clothes, handbags, sandals, fashion jewelery... Not only do they help job seekers, but they also help interested women to set up small businesses. All of us were gifted scarves and even provided a little training on how to wear them in different ways.

After lunch that day, our appointment was with Susan, Chief Executive Officer of the Center for Women and Enterprise. They also help women set up businesses. They stated that more than 52% of the businesses started by their clients are running successfully. Susan stated that in fact starting a business was really easy, the real challenge, however, was managing it, and that most of the businesses closed down a little while after they are started because of lack of business management skills. When we look at the whole of America, only 37 out of every hundred businesses started are running successfully. This organisation assists their clients in all areas such as making business plans, providing funding, and developing business management skills.

At the end of the day, we went to the Boston Glow Office. Behind every leader there is a strong community — was the company's motto. They select young women who are interested and have the power to make their voices heard clearly and strongly and facilitate their growth as strong leaders in the future. They work on giving scholarships to those who want to study, setting up appropriate networks and platforms for them to

share their views with each other, setting up mentorship programs with women who are already in leadership positions in various fields, etc.,

We also met some young women there who were taking leadership training while studying with the Boston Glow Scholarships. After seeing their energy and passion and hearing their thoughts, I was struck in wonder to see how these girls were growing up to be such powerful women just with a little support. No matter how much damage is done to girls and women by not giving them such opportunities, it is the systems that are undermining them that are actually losing out by not being able to utilize their energies.

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