

ACTIVISM FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH AND ACTION

ANNUAL REPORT

8TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

14th September 2025, Boi-Chitra Sabhagriha, Kolkata

The 8th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Activism Foundation for Social Research and Action, being held on September 14 2025 marks another significant milestone in our organization's journey. Over the past nine years Activism Foundation has remained committed to bridging the gap between academic research and societal challenges. This AGM serves as an occasion to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, review our ongoing efforts, and chart the way forward in our mission to apply social science to address real-world problems. The Foundation's endeavours over the last year have been focused on emancipating individuals, enhancing research, and promoting public awareness through innovative approaches and community engagement.

While it marks our eighth AGM, this year also signifies almost a decade of our relentless pursuit in making social sciences relevant in everyday life. The Foundation's journey is characterized by its unwavering commitment to address real-life issues through research-based solutions. Whether addressing functional or dysfunctional societal challenges tied to misconceptions, superstition, or emotional fallacies, Activism has consistently played a pivotal role. Our mission has been to emancipate individuals by freeing them from these stigmas and guiding them toward transcending limitations through knowledge-driven awakening.

Foundation Day

The prestigious 10th Foundation Day of Activism was celebrated on April 13, 2025, at ICMARD Auditorium in Kolkata. The event was mainly conducted by Ms. Tias Roy, our esteemed Finance Officer and Honorable Chairman Dr. Sourish Jha. In this program Keynote Address was given by Bula Bhadra, PhD (McMaster), Professor Emeritus & Director, Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies and Research, Chairperson, Women Development Cell, Sister Nivedita University & Retd Prof of Sociology, University of Calcutta on the topic of 'Colonized Knowledge or a Parrot's Tale? Rabindranath on Colonized Knowledge Production'. In her lecture she had beautifully portrayed the Comparative discussion on Colonized Knowledge and Rabindranath Tagore's points of view.

Foundation Day Lecture was delivered by Professor Sourav Bhattacharya, IIM Joka, Kolkata on the topic of The Changing Nature of Student Learning in India. In his lecture he said that, in about the last decade, there has been a massive change in the way students learn. Students tend to choose their own sources, typically audio-visual. There is a market catering to such needs, providing

content for capsule-form learning. He had focused on four particular points. First, students have a very different sense of historical time. Second, assured availability of information literally at their fingertips means that students carry or retain very little information. Third, students tend to be very transactional in their choice of what to learn, and always use short



term objectives in making that decision. This is driven not only by the extreme competitiveness in exams aided by corporatized coaching, but also more generally by the increased social emphasis on commercial success. Fourth, with knowledge-on-tap available on the internet and ready-made solutions through AI, the social respect and economic value of learned individuals is dwindling – and students too aspire less to be learned men or women. All this, while the instrumental value of information is growing exponentially. This presents a serious challenge for liberal education. Traditional modes of teaching have to adapt to this new reality.

These two lectures were followed by the Summing up Commentary by the honourable Chairman of Activism Foundation, Dr. Sourish Jha. And then he delivered the Chairman's Speech by depicting the vivid picture of Activism's various endeavors based on the knowledge of social science and how we are trying to establish practicality of social science to handle the mundane reality of our everyday life. How to increase human (agency) functionality by developing critical awakening in thyself. In this context he refers Paule Freire's eminent book 'Pedagogy of Oppressed' and also mentioned the contribution of another great thinker Chris Argiris.

Units and Activities

Activism functions through two complementary wings: Activism Social Science Club and Activism Scholars Forum. These units collaboratively undertake research projects that bridge academic practices and real-life social issues. In this context it is noteworthy to mention that Activism Foundation for Social Research & Action started its journey from 2016 with the birth of Activism Social Science Club. The Social Science Club focuses on both individual and



aggregate research and case studies, while the Scholars Forum, debuted in 2021, takes on broader, aggregate-level challenges. Together, these units contribute to a holistic understanding and application of social sciences in everyday life.

Research on Rejection, Non-Recognition and Adolescent Depression: A Socio-Functional Study of School Experience and Family Support.

A recent initiative taken for school going teenagers, to know how this experiences contribute to emotional withdrawal and depression. This study also emphasizes on non-clinical, dialogue-based process with the students, teachers and guardians absolutely free of cost. Recently we visited Habra Kamal Kamini Vidyalaya for this



purpose and the school authorities whole heartedly welcoming our efforts and we able to collect 193 responses from the students of standard VIII & IX.

Research on Domestic Violence & Intolerance

On January 19, 2025, the Activism Scholars' Forum, in collaboration with the Activism Social Science Club, successfully organized a Public Conversation as the final phase of their research project on Domestic Violence and Intolerance. The event took place at the Harinath Dey Road Baroari Pujo Mondap in Maniktala, engaging residents from Maniktala 1 No. & 2 No. Basty slum areas in a thought-provoking discussion. The gathering was graced by the honourable members of the Trustee Board, executives from Activism Scholars' Forum and Activism Social Science Club, as well as Life Members of the Activism Foundation. Around 40 local residents, including both men and women, actively participated in the conversation, making it a truly community-driven initiative.

- Proceedings of the Event: The session began with a brief introduction by Ms. Soma Bhattacharya, CEO of the Activism Foundation, followed by a Welcome Address from Dr. Prantosh Sen, Professor & President of Activism Scholars' Forum. The discussion was then moderated by Dr. Sourish Jha, Associate Professor & Chairman of the Activism Foundation, who steered the conversation on domestic violence and intolerance. Ms. Soma Bhattacharya set the stage by presenting key research findings derived from data collected from the slum community. She was followed by Ms. Tias Roy, Research Coordinator, ASSC, who shed light on how domestic violence is normalized in everyday life and how this normalization weakens efforts to resist the problem. Next, Mr. Subhranil Ghosh, Assistant Professor & Research Executive, Activism Scholars' Forum, argued that poverty alone is not a sufficient cause of domestic violence, while Mr. Manabendra Saha, Assistant Professor & Research Executive, Activism Scholars'

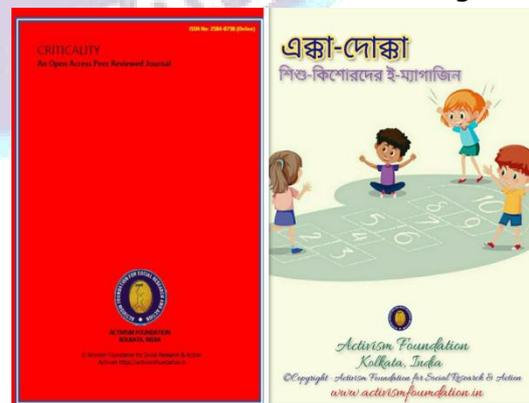
Forum, explained why illicit relationships and child-related issues should not be considered sole causes of domestic violence. This was followed by Mr. Surajit Roy, Research Executive, Activism Social Science Club, who challenged the perception that alcoholism is the primary cause of domestic violence. Dr. Sumana Goswami, Associate Professor & Project Coordinator Activism Scholars' Forum, then introduced essential concepts and methods to effectively combat domestic violence and intolerance, illustrating the Forward-Looking Model of Responsibility with relevant examples. Finally, Ms. Poulami Ghosh, Research Executive, ASSC, presented specific gender-neutral strategies and interventions tailored to the social and familial context for combating domestic violence and intolerance.



Dr. Sourish Jha, Chairman concluded the discussion with his closing remarks, emphasizing the importance of community-driven action in addressing domestic violence. Following the conversation, students from the Department of Drama, Rabindra Bharati University, under the guidance of Prof. Subhasis Halder and Prof. Subhasish Gangopadhyay, performed a powerful play titled "Grihajudhha," bringing the themes of the discussion to life. The program concluded with a Vote of Thanks delivered by Mr. Indranil Paul, Honourable Member of the Board of Trustees, who expressed gratitude to all participants, speakers, and organizers for their contributions in making this initiative a success. This Public Conversation marked an important step in bridging academic research with real-life community experiences, encouraging dialogue, awareness, and actionable strategies to combat domestic violence and intolerance.

Magazine & Journal

There are two colourful feathers in Activism's crown. One is the e-magazine 'Ekka-Dokka' for the teenagers and the e-Journal 'Criticality' for students-scholars-researchers. With the untiring efforts of the members of Activism the sixth and seventh issue of the magazine had been published in the month of March & September 2025. The response from the school going teenagers to the e-magazine is truly admirable and literally indicating a bright prospect for the future.



Response for the e-journal 'Criticality' is also inspiring too. We have got several articles based on different contemporary burning issues, written by many eminent scholars- which is a treasure for our future. With the diligent efforts of the entire team of e-journal we able to publish the Volume 2, Issue 2 and Volume 3, Issue 1 after the last AGM in 2024 and the next issue is also under progress. The Open Access of Criticality further spread its academic value on a global scale.

Social media & Out-reach Program:

Our Outreach Program is a critical initiative to disseminate Activism's thoughts and research through social media. Using platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, we engage with the public by raising awareness on everyday issues rooted in commonsense misconceptions. This program teaches participants how to challenge any form of irrationality and how to better understand and use social science knowledge to their daily lives in order to deal with stressful situations.

The program has received encouraging responses, with members contributing write-ups and scripts for video content, further driving our movement forward. We believe that in order to advance the cause in the future, the Out-Reach Program will be crucial in using Facebook Pages, YouTube Channels, X handles, and other platforms in a way that is more structured, engaging, and dynamic. In continuation our recent endeavour with podcast videos; one on "Common Sense & Everyday Misconceptions" and the other on "Tackling Domestic Violence: An Experiment with Maniktala Slum, Kolkata" marked a substantial reach to a large number of people with a serious note.

Life-Members Meeting

Life members are the backbone of Activism Foundation, serving as both an extended family and a driving force behind its mission. Their active involvement is key to sustaining the movement and successfully implementing various projects and programs throughout the year. To enhance communication and maintain momentum, several initiatives are undertaken annually. Over the past year, we organized at least eight lectures, where students, scholars, and professors—primarily Life Members of Activism—presented their thoughtful lectures on various contemporary issues.

In conclusion, as we look back at the past year, we take immense pride in our accomplishments and remain committed to our mission of uniting theory and practice in the social sciences. The unwavering dedication of our members and supporters continues to fuel our journey toward addressing societal challenges with informed, research-based solutions. Let us forge ahead together in our quest for knowledge and social justice to seek ways to live best everyday.