

Roshni

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2016



ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



Magnificent venue of the International Womens Peace Group Summit, Seoul, South Korea



Ms Veena Kohli with Ms Nam Hee Kim, Chiarperson of the Summit



Half-Yearly Conference, Haridwar



Pathankot Kandi branch, celebrated Womens Day by distribution of wheel-chair , & felicitations to social workers



A scene from Aga Khan Palace where Mahatma Gandhi & others were jailed, was enacted by students of AIWC Vocational Institution on 3rd October, celebrating Gandhijis birthday and World Peace Day.



Ms Swati Maliwal, Chairperson, Delhi Womens Commission released SWEDWA Newsletter in August



Look & Learn- Independence Day outing for village children, Gr. Noida, organized by Human Touch Foundation



Grand celebration of Navaratri by AIWC Rajkot



First Prize Winner! Jyoti Pandey, Mata Sundari College, at the AICEIW Debating Competition, 30th September



Dr Claire Midgley, eminent feminist historian, tries her hand at Block-printing in AIWC Textile unit



Janaki Rajaram with Lifetime Achievement Award given by Gandhi Harijan Sewa Samaj, New Delhi



Launch of Jyotika Kalra's book
"Sex and Harassment", 11th July



AIWC Zonal Conference, Jaipur, June 2016



Patron Dr Aparna Basu at
Antyaja journal launch, 14th July



Save Girl Child campaign in Saharanpur,
24th August, 2016



AIWC Batala organised Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign
in village Dhupsari on August 28th



Delegates, AIWC half- yearly Conference, Haridwar

ROSHNI

Journal of the All India Women's Conference

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2016

Editor : **Ms. Mythily Jagannathan**
Assisted by : Ms. Ranjana Gupta
 : Ms. Sujata

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ROSHNI Editorial & Business Office

Central Office, AIWC
 6, Bhagwan Dass Road, New Delhi-110 001
 Phone : 23389680, 23381165 Fax : 23384092
 E-mail : aiwc.roshni@gmail.com
 Website : www.aiwc.org.in

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Permanent Representatives
 Ms. Sudha Acharya
 Ms. Seema Upleker
 (ECOSOC) (UNICEF)

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From the Editor's Pen

Dear Friends,

The season of celebration will soon be gone, leaving us with many memories that renew family bonds and friendship, bring us solace and joy.

Roshni July- September combines two aspects; thought for the girl child and family relationships. The gala launch of Wings to Fly campaign on 24th is described from the initial Concept note of Bulbul Das to reports and Comments from the Side-lines. Our congratulations to members of the AIWC family who launched the campaign in their respective branches with great energy and wonderful participation. These initiatives will sustain the campaign planned as a round the year event.

Among special articles on the vanishing family, Psychologist Dr Rama Srivastava continues her counselling series with advice on how family bonds have a crucial impact on adolescents. There is thought too for the role of fathers. Kuljit kaur peeps into old records and writes about the remarkable M.S.H. Jhabvala, President AIWC in 1964-68, it was her initiative that created homes like Bapnu Ghar where distressed/ abandoned women could find refuge. From her retreat in peaceful Chennai, Lalita Balakrishnan, former Advisor Rural Energy, keeps us informed about the latest Solar solutions, and technologies.

The Peace Summit at Seoul, South Korea, attended by Veena Kohli, brought together world- wide peace efforts in which womens initiatives have an important place. As usual, branch activities sent by you give a first-hand view of AIWC activity in different places.

The first Roshni was printed in February 1938, hence the 80th year of the journal starts early next year. We propose to highlights events and personalities in AIWC in different regions of the country, through interviews of old members, Patrons, selections from old records, and photographs. The first 80 years Special will be the October- December 2016 issue. We welcome your contributions in the form of articles, selections from old records, profiles of leading personalities from your area/ region, photographs etc.

Looking forward to your effort to retrieve gems from AIWCs past,

Mythily Jagannathan

Address by Smt Veena Kohli, President, AIWC

Half Yearly Meeting, Haridwar, July 21st, 2016



At the Half-Yearly meet, Haridwar, 21st July

Respected, Patrons, office bearers and members of the standing committee. Namaskar and a Very Good Afternoon. It is a great privilege for me to welcome you all today to our half yearly meeting on the banks of our sacred river Ganga, at this lovely resort Aalia. This has been possible because of our Patron Smt Kunti Paul who has graciously organized this meeting here with the cooperation of her grandson. We are grateful to her and also to Smt. Vidhushi Aggarwal and the Saharanpur Branch for hosting it. I also extend my thanks to the Dehradun, Sahaspur Rural Branch and the Haridwar Branch for organizing all the other facilities and giving us such a warm and caring welcome.

Indeed we are fortunate to be able to get together and work in this beautiful lush greenery and rich natural environment. I am sure that in these two days we will gainfully discuss, keep our minds open and reiterate on the focus of AIWCs work.

At Manesar, this year I had said that, the strength of women lie in their dignity and their womanhood! We women handle various roles today, moving from one to another seamlessly and gracefully. As a mother, a

wife, a daughter, while also being a pilot or a doctor or teacher or an astronaut. The greatest inspiration in our midst today is most certainly the power of the woman.

Today as we meet again, to honor that strength, the strength that has no tenure, and no territory. A collective strength to face challenges, to realize our potential, the strength to refuse to tolerate discrimination, the strength to refuse to tolerate lies and slanders, the strength to refuse to tolerate the arrogance of the powerful and absolutely and utterly refuse to tolerate violence in any form.

While continuing our struggle for peace and justice, this 87 years old organization has been working on various aspects of women's welfare and we offer a platform to our members who conduct these programs passionately and sincerely in the field of specific programs connected with education, health, law, climate change, sanitation, income generation, research and skill training, water, waste management, herbal gardening, climate change, renewable sources of energy, etc, have touched beneficiaries at grass root level and empowered them with knowledge and skills. Reports suggest that these interventions have made a visible impact on improving the lives of women and children from the weaker segments of society. Case studies also reveal how these women have realized their potential and are now questioning the rules laid down by society, taking decisions about their future, emerging as leaders, and fighting for the rights

Women who were dormant and were only a unit of the family have now become active participants in all walks of life, are becoming not only a significant unit of the society but also making choices and influencing the course of a social change in society.

At the country level, also we see that change is

coming. There is an increase in the literacy rate among women and work participation in all areas has improved, health and longevity of life has improved. However despite the progress made through our policies and programs for gender empowerment, the fact remains that women along with being achievers also must fulfill their roles as wives or mothers. There is need for identifying suitable arrangements within the family that help women to perform their dual responsibilities so that family life is not disturbed and children are not deprived of learning and imbibing the morals and ethics of the rich Indian culture.

For a suitable and sensible approach and to create a balance in our lives, a sustainable development method needs to be adopted. For this, a change of thinking is the need of the hour. The world over a clarion call for change has been given. Change in the way we think, perceive, and the way we manage our democracies, the way we consume the earth's resources, even the knowledge of what is real empowerment and the manner in which we calculate it.

Empowerment is not only through knowledge and opportunities in the field of education, health, legal and so on, but it is empowerment of the mind and thoughts combined with action. What we have to be careful of is to avoid the increase in the misuse of law, false allegations and manipulation of other instruments which are available for raising the status of women. The data suggests that because of lust for money and power, there is an increasing number of false sexual harassment cases, violence on women, rape cases etc.

In view of the above, the term empowerment needs to be redefined in its true sense and our efforts

should be geared towards bringing a change in the mindset of young generation especially adolescents, inculcate correct values, learn to choose the best way of life.

Economists, futurologists, historians, sociologists are asking us to re-examine our agendas. They are asking the question—are we working for the maximum gain and happiness for the maximum people? The term empowerment needs to be redefined.

Perhaps it is time AIWC too prepared itself for change of vision. Time we too re-examined our way of doing things. Of taking accountability for maximum results of our own resources. Asking ourselves are we ahead or are we lagging behind? It is a moment of intense self-examination for us. To ask what do we promote—Peace and Harmony; Elimination of Poverty; Dignity for All; Climate Change? And how effective are we as a national organization in doing so? What parameters have we set for ourselves? What is our position as a national NGO. How many women know about us?

Taking a cue from our Prime Minister we should find ways in which we can fulfill these goals. And if we find ourselves lacking do we need a mode correction too?

Towards this end, I would like to draw your attention to what I have been thinking of, which is, Desh mein mahila 50 percent hisse daar hain. So let's pledge to see that we get 50% share in opportunities and status to make India/Bharat the country we wish it to be. We can share and discuss our views in more details during the next two days. I wish you all a very happy and comfortable stay and hope that the deliberations of this meeting give us a positive and a progressive direction. Thank you for listening to me. Jaihind.

There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of woman is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing. - Swami Vivekananda

Women's Global Call for Climate Justice

- Dr. Karuna Sharma

A one day workshop was organised by Jagriti All India Women's Conference, Haridwar on 28th June 2016 in D. P. S., Ranipur, Haridwar. The workshop considered the issues related to climate change, impact on women, needs and opportunities and adaptation planning & practices to balance the environmental multiple levels. The program started with a welcome by Mrs. Uma Pandey, Vice President, Jagriti. Mrs. Sangeeta Joshi convened the program spoke about climate change causing the calamity in Kedarnath, in 2013.

Illuminating talks were held by distinguished speakers. Dr. N. G. Shrivastava (Retd. AGM, BHEL). He focussed on causes of global warming how human activities cause climate change and how green house gases can be controlled by our efforts at ground level. He also enlightened the group by showing a movie.

About the government action, every individual had the responsibility of saving the future generation. The second speaker was Professor P. C. Joshi, Head: Dept. of Environmental Sciences, Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar. He talked about how global warming affects the ecosystem. He told about the events which constitute the climate i.e. temperature, wind pattern and precipitation. He also informed us that Greenhouse gases are largely absorbed by the atmosphere. And the result is Global Warming. Forests, bio-diversity, water resources, agriculture, coastline and human health are getting affected. Configuration of forest ecosystems change significantly. He also discussed about UNFCCC and

Paris Agreement regarding climate change. The third speaker Dr. Namita Joshi, Professor in GKV and member of Jagriti AIWC shed light on how climate change is caused by global warming and how it is not gender neutral. It is a social issue. She talked about the impact of climate change on women. Dr. Joshi also showed PPT prepared by Ms. Usha Nair, Member-In-Charge (Climate Change), AIWC, New Delhi and also explained the facts given in the presentation. Another important information which she shared was that AIWC was approved as Observer Organisation at COP 19 in Warsaw in 2013 and is a member of Women & Gender Constituency. She further told the audience that COP 21 was a crucial conference, as it aimed to achieve a new international agreement on the climate, applicable to all countries, with the aim of keeping global warming below 20C. She highlighted on AIWC's Gender and Climate Change Initiatives like popularising solar energy, enhancing energy efficiency, repair/maintenance of solar appliances, traditional practices and women as water leaders. Dr. Joshi observed that women can play a very important role to keep the climate change in control. An educated woman can save water, electricity and other natural resources and thus can keep Nature balanced. Each and every woman should fulfill her duty. Mrs. Manjula Bhagat, Patron Jagriti AIWC, expressed her gratitude to Shri K. C. Pandey, Principal, DPS. The whole programme was co-ordinated by Mrs. Alka Sharma, President, and Dr. Karuna Sharma, Vice President, Jagriti.

Address by Smt Asha Gambhir, Secretary-General

Half- yearly Session, Haridwar, 21st July, 2016

It gives me immense pleasure in welcoming you all to this very sacred city 'Haridwar', as the name denotes, "Gates to the city of Gods". The holy Ganga makes it the most important pilgrimage, and adds to the sanctity of the city. We cannot but bow down our heads in reverence and seek blessings.

We are very thankful indeed to our Saharanpur branch for hosting the half yearly on the banks of the river Ganges, in this beautiful property of Aalia.

CSW meet in UN

Soon after the Annual conference at Manesar a team of 6 members left for New York to participate at the CSW meeting at UN Headquarters. We were joined by Ms. Seema Uplekar, our representative from Geneva and Mrs. Sudha Acharya, AIWC Representative at the UN. AIWC conducted two side events one on our own 'Empowering the Marginalized and Excluded' and the second event in collaboration with AIWEFA 'A World We Women Want'. I was invited by 'Women Graduates' and IAW as a panelist to speak on "Street Sexual Harassment of Girls and Young women in India" and "Women in Decision making-Role of AIWC".

At the session organized by Women Graduates the other two panelist were Ms. Ruchira Gupta, of Apne Aap fame (Un Awardee) and Ms. Nandita Shah of Akshara. I emphasized on the need for strict punishment for the rapist, for prevention of such crimes. This event got wide publicity in the local newspapers and was published in "India Abroad-News & Community" on 22nd April, 2016. At the IAW session I spoke of the AIWC village adoption program at Sadhrana and the success achieved. This has been put on their website.

Since the AIWC and AIWEFA events were simultaneous Mrs. Chandraprabha Pandey represented AIWC at the AIWEFA event and read her paper on "PEACE" Peace is not just absence of war

and conflict. It is a positive state in which there is all round development, progress, well being and happiness. It is freedom from all kinds of fear economic, political, social physical and institutional. The subject of our event was 'Empowering the Marginalized & Excluded'. One of our partners was Dr. Pam Rajput Chairperson, High Level Committee on the Status of Women. She spoke on the need to include the indigenous population of the country, their best practices which should be adopted. In our effort to change the society we should be working towards "Reaching the last girl".

Our other partner was from IISTA, Calcutta - Dr. Santosh Giri, a transgender. She spoke of her journey, and struggle in life. Even after having reached where she has, she is still viewed by the society not very kindly. Her journey had bitter experiences. It was her own determination which has made her the crusader for her community. She expressed deep gratitude for having been given this opportunity to be present at a UN forum, and her voice being heard. She also drew the attention of the plight of the transgender worldwide. She urged the authorities to make extra efforts to include them into the mainstream. At the same time she sent the message to the society to be more tolerant towards the less privileged giving them an opportunity to fulfill their dreams. The transgenders were very vulnerable to the atrocities committed on women, she added.

Recent AIWC Initiatives

As a pioneer organization we should not confine ourselves to merely imparting education and empowering young girls but we should concern ourselves for their safety.

We have a legacy of bringing about a change in the society in improving the status of women and have them live a life of dignity. Progress has been made,

no doubt, as far as women's status in the society is concerned; but we need to ask ourselves, 'Are our daughters still safe in their own homes or no matter where they are? Can they walk around fearlessly? Not a day goes by when a young woman, girl or even a child does not become a victim of rape and killed, one more life snuffed and what is our reaction? Discussion for a few minutes and the matter goes into the background, till another life is tormented or terminated.

What could be the reason? Have we ever given thought to this victim? Of the mental and physical trauma she suffers. How many more years are we going to let our girls suffer this indignity, just because they are born girls.

To my mind this seems very unfair. In our effort to combat this, we have taken one small initiative of sensitizing the boys by introducing a program 'Improving Life Skills of Adolescent Boys'. Innumerable young boys sit around aimlessly, school dropouts, clueless of any direction in life. Six or more members of a family crammed in one small room witnessing anger, lust, violence and love in its most crude form. They know of no better life except for the glamour they see on T.V. and in movies a world of make belief. Young energetic boys with no direction and very little values, take to crime, a route so easily available. Another AIWC initiative is opening of vocational college at the head office, with

the purpose of channelizing their energy, providing job opportunities.

But in a population as large as ours, this is merely a drop in the ocean. Our reach has to be wider and approach to the authorities. The intensity of the crime has to be translated, Nirbhay sent shivers down the spine, of the whole country forcing the judiciary to sit up and take a relook in modifying the laws. Though they have been changed, still a lot more needs to be done. If we look at the pattern, the offender has committed an offence more than once. Out on bail and within a short period of time he is back again to ruin another life, one more life snuffed. Our law is sympathetic towards the offender, on human rights but what of another innocent life, victim of somebody's lust.

Even before the U.N defined the SDG goals, for the development of the nation, AIWC had been implementing them since 1927. All of those who are present here are aware that Education and Health were the two primary motives for the setting up of this prestigious organization. Of the 17 SDGs goals defined by the U.N. 7 were already being implemented from the past so many years by all our branches.

(The Address was followed by presentation of Zone-wise 6 monthly reports, AIWC hq activities, proposals for national and international projects, and Members-in- Charge reports)

Book Review

You are what you eat

In the book A Taste of Well-Being, Sadhguru's insight is based on the inevitable connection between mind, body and soul by emphasising the need to be grateful towards the food we eat. Apart from talking about benefits of eating raw foods, It tells the reader how much water one should drink and why fasting is important. Being mindful of the positive and negative pranic (energy) substances and how they can work for our well-being. What to eat and what not to eat is answered as: "When it comes to food, don't ask anyone. Know your body and the food it's most happy with."

While some recipes are versions of old favourites such as chickpea chaat, others like ginger coriander coffee are innovative. A lot of recipes like curries, chutneys, and salads have been written in detail, and are easy to prepare. *(From Brunch Weekly)*

Why are Teenagers Heading Towards Self Destructive & Suicidal behaviour?

- Dr. Rama Srivastava

Adolescence is the period of “Blossoming Up”: it's ones Astitva for future life. Most people reflect teens as a period of stress and storm. But in my view it is the period where a bud blossoms into the flower that is bright, shining, colourful and fragrant. But, it is not a very simple process! Because, the teenagers needs are many and coupled with aggression, especially in today's circumstances.

Due to following trends of our society our teens are becoming very puzzled and passing through severe mental problems.

- » Media explosion: The free entrance of media into our lives is irrespective of caste, class and culture, which is available to them freely without any guidance or understanding of purpose.
- » Networking and free communication on social media, mobile phones etc
- » Blind emphasis on academic stereotypes
- » Both parents are working
- » Parents spending less quality time with teens and grooming them. Instead, they would rather focus on their professional and material visions
- » Family not imparting good value system to the children. Hence, teenagers only see weak role models in their family
- » Family hardly celebrate festivals, other functions ceremoniously in the house. It is always convenient to go out for having that celebration. This adversely affects the basic bonding within the family members
- » Traditional Indian family system had parents, siblings, spiritual support, grandparents, acting as an integral part of our emotional system. But now most of that is substituted, such as,
 - o parenting is out sourced to maids & drivers
 - o in person communication is replaced with texting
 - o expression of love is through branded gifts
 - o mother's hand made food is replaced by home delivery from restaurants
 - o father's guidance and love is replaced by searching on Google
 - o faith in the supreme power of god is substituted by the culture of me & myself
 - o family vacation is substituted by single/ couple vacation or travel
 - o family elders no more participate in resolving our conflicts, as we hardly have any trust in them. Instead, lawyers, courts, external party sometimes arbitrate in our crisis handling/ management situations.

All the above, makes a very bad effect into the teenage coping mechanism mental process. It leaves them lonely, depressed and puzzled.

It's important to understand the scientific fact that “the teenage” is the period where the physical body, academic, socio-emotional pressures are at their peak. Therefore, teenagers need a very stress free and interactive environment at home. But as stated and explained earlier, the family sometimes provides

contrary or insufficient conducive environment to their teenagers.

Hence, the teenagers develop negative traits and severe emotional disorders. Additionally, the negativity might even head towards negative self image and self destruction acts, like suicides

Watch out the following pointers to check, whether your teenager is heading towards depressions, self destructive behaviour, suicidal tendency, or poor mental health:

- » Low level of self confidence resulting into poor and negative self image
- » Weak trust in parental bonds resulting into excessive indulgence with peers, social networking and the outer world, or if there is a complete isolated and withdrawn behaviour
- » Poor academic performance, weak social interactions, generally irritability and depressed outlook
- » Cling to the past and saddened with that, confused in the present, and have an opaque or completely blurred vision for future.

All these lead to weak personalities. Also, if their stress bearing threshold level crosses, then that might lead to self destruction or suicidal behaviour. Now obviously, there is no single measure for the stress threshold in humans. Consider yourself lucky, if your teenager has a higher stress bearing threshold

Some basic rules for parents to follow for their teenagers:

- » Spend qualitative time with your teenagers
- » Understand their strengths and weakness
- » Help them develop a good peer and sibling bonding having some strength & longevity

- » Understand your teenager's dreams, their world & vision. Accordingly, re-structure your parenting efforts
- » Seek balance between your dreams and your teenager's dreams
- » Do not let your professional goals make your teenager neglected. Otherwise, they will search for support from the external world
- » Watch your teenagers for their inkling/ consumption for addictive substances like drugs, cigarettes, alcohol etc. It's medically established that such habits destroy brain functioning, trigger anti social behaviour, and in cases the suicidal tendency gets more pronounced
- » Help them learn healthy coping strategies in life
- » Put them on creative and progressive ways of channelizing their energies

Summing up :

Give your teenagers an emotionally secured home, from where they will blossom into beautiful flowers having a strong inner Astitva (identity). Give them a jewel box full of sweet memories with parents, siblings, friends and school. They should always remember their childhood as the most memorable part of their life. As we all know life is full of challenges and upsets, so groom them to become strong and perseverant.

You can prevent self destruction tendency in your teenager by following the advice provided by me.

(This article is in continuation of the counselling series. Please mail your queries to the Editor Roshini. They will be confidential and forwarded to Dr. Srivastava)

Why Fathers Need to be More Motherly

- S. Sampath



Fathers do the paid work outside. Mothers do the unpaid work inside home. Real gender equality is impossible so long as we have unequal distribution of care responsibilities.

Jaideep Bhatia, 41, a sports consultant, became a father ten months ago. "I converted my full time job into a part time one even though it meant a pay cut," says Mr. Bhatia, "because it's not possible to be employed full time and participate equally in the child's upbringing."

"My wife, who works in the insurance sector, turned down at least three promotions over a six year period in order to take care of our first child," says Philip Chacko, 51 a media professional and father of two. As a journalist, I worked late hours. My wife taking up those promotions would have meant more travel, and longer hours for her as well."

In the case of Vinay Bhan, 50, an editorial consultant, his wife quit her media job to look after their son who was frequently sick in his early years. Ask him why he didn't give up his job instead to care of the kid, and he says. "I was earning more. We would not have been able to manage on my wife's salary alone. So it was her career that took the hit."

As for Peter Jeyaprakash, 42, a lawyer and father of four, the gender lines of parenting are fairly clear - his wife and extended family shoulder most of the care work. His own responsibilities are largely confined to playing with the children, mentoring them, and so on. "Matters like giving the child a bath, combing hair, etc., I leave to my wife as she is naturally the best one for them." says Mr. Jeyaprakash.

If there is one common theme implicit in the experiences of these four fathers and one father-to-be, not to mention the millions of fathers around the world, it can be summed up thus : the father does the (paid) work outside the home and brings the income needed to raise a kid: the mother does the (unpaid) work inside the home needed to care for the child. This has been the paradigmatic division of labour in all patriarchal cultures around the world.

Such a lopsided division of care work has several adverse consequences. Highlighting them and advocating a more equitable division of care work is the avowed mandate of the State of the World's Father Report 2015, released earlier this year by MenCare, a global fatherhood campaign.

The advent of modernity, capitalism and globalisation has seen ever greater numbers of women leave the confines of domesticity and find paid employment. Today they comprise 40 percent of the global workforce. Despite this, the report points out that there was no compensatory increase in men's participation in the unpaid care work at home.

As a result, women bear a 'double burden' of paid work and unpaid care work. What do we mean by unpaid care work? Talking its cue from the UN, this report defines it as including 'domestic work (meal

preparation, cleaning, washing clothes, water and fuel collection) and direct care of persons (including children, older persons and persons with disabilities, as well as able-bodied adults) carried out in homes and communities, with no financial recompense."

The report points out that women do 2.5 times more unpaid care work than men. Indian women do 10 times more. One might argue that this shouldn't matter where men and women spend the same number of hours working - men in paid and women in unpaid work - if both contribute to the same household. But it does given the greater societal value assigned to paid work, and the reduced access to social contact, play, education and financial sources that girls and women experience a result of their care-giving roles."

Benefits of involved fatherhood include improvements in reproduction and mental health for both men and women, better relationship between the partners, and positive impact on the cognitive development of the child. Coming to the economy, the report calculates that "India's GDP would be \$1.7 trillion higher if women worked outside the home at the same rate as men do." Given such a strong case for involved fatherhood, why does this remain an exception rather than the rule? The report identifies three obstacles : social norms that reinforce the idea that care giving is women's work; economic and workplace realities that drive household decision making and maintain a traditional division of labour; and policies that reinforce the unequal distribution of care giving."

For instance, the report cites a study which found that 85 percent of Indian men agreed with the statement, "Changing diapers, giving kids a bath and feeding are the mother's responsibility." On the other hand, many women feels that "the home is

traditionally the one space where they exert some power and ... are reluctant to relinquish this." Given these entrenched social norms, the status quo cannot be changed overnight. But a beginning can be made, as this report does, by bringing men's role in care-giving to the centre of public and policy discourse.

Wadia, a child rights researcher and advocacy expert, believes that this report's first implication is "to have policies in work places that respond to men as parents just as they do to women." She calls specifically for three policy measures; paid paternity leave, maternal and child care training for fathers to be, and "monetising child care and housework, to be included in household accounting, all the way up to calculating the country's GDP."

Ms. Wadia may be on the right track here for it's presumably easier to change policies than mindsets. But that doesn't mean it would be easy. As Mr. Rao points out, "PR and HR are two domains where women dominate. But are women HR heads making a difference? Despite the fact that women benefit from paternity leave, women dominated sectors and women led organisations are yet to come up with paternity leave policies."Mr. Bhatia points to another problem. "Even if organisations change policies, they won't affect a vast majority of Indian's fathers, who work in the informal sector. Poverty forces them into economic migration away from their families for long periods. How do we help them become involved fathers?"

This leads to disparities at work place. But are children the responsibility of the biological parents' alone? Does society not have a stake in them, in reproducing itself? Public support for child care could be the most powerful means of restoring gender equity in care work.



Do we give Girls Wings to Fly?

- Rajesh Kumar

Every little girl whether living in a rural or urban area has her own dreams. How far can the dreams be realized? In our patriarchal society, there are different forms of discrimination against girls. Socialization of girls seems to follow a set pattern where she is trapped and moulded by a deep-rooted combination of patriarchy and hierarchy. In many rural areas, girls are not sent to schools and if at all they are, they drop out in a year or two. It is not only a matter of low enrollments, but also low attendance. A major part of a girl's life is spent in attending to domestic chores, and minding her siblings. This is one of the main reasons for the low literacy of women and under-investment in the education of women. Literacy data shows that the drop-out rate of girls rises with the level of education. The pattern of gender inequality in access to education also increases as we move from lower to higher education, from urban to rural areas and to disadvantaged groups.

Girls education- a critical factor

Education is the one single, variable which can transform the odds in favour of girls, specially in rural India. Hence the need for exclusive emphasis on girls education. This is a fundamental right required to exercise other fundamental rights. Education is a key factor for initiating a chain of advantages, and to restore environmental, ecological and socio-economic balance in society.

Constraints for education of girls

The most prominent constraint is the non-availability of infra-structure and schools. A second reason is the travel time to school, and a third is fear of crime and unknown risks. Hence some essential provisions for improving access to education are:

Public transport exclusively for girls to attend school
Enforcing laws against early marriage.

Awareness campaign focusing on role of nutrition, in girls' physical, mental growth.

Different systems like distance education, home schooling, part-time schools etc

Government measures

From the 3rd Five Year Plan onward, Government initiated the campaign of increasing primary education, to ¾ of the 7-10 age group by 2011, but even today, there are wide variations between states like Kerala 93 % and Bihar 63 % literacy. Several measures were taken to improve girls attendance including provision of mid-day meals, free books, and uniforms. This led to increase in primary education level of girls from 1951 to 1981. In 1986, the National Policy on Education restructured education according to the social framework and national goals. The new policy ushered social change through revised curricula, increased funding, and expansion of schools.

The aim of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan launched in 2009-10, a Centrally sponsored scheme, is to raise the minimum level of education to class 10, and provide universal access to secondary education with a focus on science, mathematics and English. Against a target of enrolling 3.2 million children, 2.4 additional students were enrolled in secondary schools during the 11th 5 Year Plan. Concerted efforts led to a rise in female literacy from 15.3 % in 1961 to 28.5% in 1981.

Though female literacy has risen steadily, it is still lower at 70 % girls to 76 % boys at primary level; at upper primary level only 40 % girls attend school. Added factors are poverty and continued hold of social and cultural beliefs discriminating against girls.

Govt emphasized primary education for children

ages 5-14 yrs. Child labor is banned so that children attend school. Also efforts are made to enhance quality of learning.

Change in female literacy was 65.46% in 2011 census, but proportion of girls attending school is still lower than boys.

Under the Sakshar Bharat Mission for female literacy, a major part was the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, launched in 2001, a flagship scheme for universal elementary education. The overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging gender, and social gaps especially for rural areas and weaker sections, and minorities.

Since Independence, provision of educational opportunities for girls has been part of a national

endeavour. The National Policy of Education 1986 stated that "The empowerment of women is possibly the most critical pre-condition for the participation of girls and women in the educational process."

A well-educated population equipped with relevant knowledge, attitude and skills is essential. Education is the most potent tool for some economic mobility and a key instrument for building an equitable society. A higher women's literacy rate improves the quality of life both of them by encouraging and promoting education of children, especially girls and reducing the mortality rate it acts as integrative force in society, imparting values, social cohesion, and national identity.

Health Corner

Oil in your diet

Mustard oil, coconut oil, ghee - Oils used by our grandma are the healthiest for Indian cooking, according to an article published in the latest issues of Indian Heart Journal.

Oils are subjected to very high temperatures for deep frying and stir frying, which are common processes for cooking curries and vegetables in our kitchens. "Hence, Indians need to cook in oils which are high in saturated fat content and are stable even at high temperatures and do not breakdown into harmful components like free radicals, trans fats, malondialdehyde (MDA), which not only put individuals at risk of heart diseases, but some of the components may potentially be carcinogenic," said Dr SC Manchanda, one of the authors of the paper and senior consultant in the Department of Cardiology at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

Refined oils, which are readily available in our neighbourhood grocery stores are a strict no-no, according to the paper. During the process of refining, mechanical and chemical processes are used to extract oil from the seeds.

They are then heated repeatedly at high temperatures of up to 270°C for deodorisation. "These high temperatures result in loss of anti-oxidants and produce all free radicals and trans fat, both of which are harmful for the body," said Dr Manchanda.

When buying oil, people need to keep four things in mind - it should have low saturated fat but be stable, have omega 3 fatty acid, be non-refined and have no trans fat. According to the experts, the best oils to buy are non-refined mustard oil, non-refined canola oil, ghee, a combination of canola and flax seed oil and soyabean oil.

"The important thing to remember is that repeated heating of the same oil must be avoided. It just exaggerates the harmful effects," said Dr. Manchanda (H.T.)

Saved By The Girl Child

- Chitra Sarkar

Wings To Fly



In the last week of August, our country witnessed a delirious celebration. Three young girls came home after proving just how high girls who are given wings can fly. All the way to Rio, almost to the top, and home with a medal each.

P.V. Sindhu won the Olympic silver medal for badminton, losing only to the World No. 1. Sakshi Malik won the Olympic bronze medal for wrestling. Her tenacity and assertiveness in the ring were a joy to watch. Dipa Karmakar, missed an Olympic medal by a heart-breakingly narrow margin, but still won a billion hearts with her death-defying Produnova. She was felicitated in equal measure by cheering fans and the Indian Government.

Who are these sweet-faced youngsters who reveal such grit and ferocity when the eyes of the world are on them? Where is the Indian female stereotype, of downcast eyes and covered head?

Sakshi Malik, our champion wrestler, is only 23 years old. Her father is a DTC bus conductor, and her mother is an anganwadi helper. But this humble couple defied patriarchal norms and nay-saying village bigots to help their daughter pursue her remarkable ambition. Their little daughter wanted to become a wrestler...!

She was often told, "It's not for girls! You'll get cauliflower ears! No one will marry you!" "Girls don't wear tight suits and show their bodies in public!"

Sakshi faced up to it all, and bravely threw it off like an undeserving opponent on the wrestling mat. But let us not forget the bravery of her mother, who fought every step of the way alongside her daughter. She did that in a society where female foeticide has reduced the sex ratio to an alarming 919 per thousand, where child marriages are rampant and brides are trafficked like beasts of burden.

P.V. Sindhu, India's badminton silver medalist, may have had a slightly smoother path towards her goal. Both her parents are professional volleyball players who understand the demands of a sport when it is played at the highest level. Sindhu's father, PV Ramana won an Arjun award in 2000 - the same year as her coach and mentor-to-be, Pullela Gopichand. Ramana was keen to have his talented daughter

follow in his own footsteps. But at eight years of age, little Sindhu fell under the spell of Gopichand's dream for her. "Play badminton, Sindhu," he told her. So she did –and how!

Her parents supported her all the way. She had to be on the courts every morning before sunrise. But because their home was in Secundrabad, the little girl had to travel 120 km every day to attend her twice-daily practice sessions. Realizing how much this drained her energy, the family moved their home closer to the coaching centre. In 2015, Ramana took special leave from the Railways to help Sindhu prepare for the Olympics. Even Gopichand's 11-year old son, Vishnu, joined her at 4:30 a.m. to help her practice. It paid rich dividends. The tall, graceful shuttler became the youngest Indian to ever stand on the Olympic podium, with a shining medal around her neck.

Dipa Karmakar's story was different. Despite her mastery over the "Vault of Death", the Produnova, she narrowly missed a medal. But the very fact that she even qualified, the only Indian woman to ever do so, made her a world-beater to our Indian eyes. We decided that fourth place was no less deserving of celebration, and treated her to a hero's homecoming. Perhaps she could have done even better if her physiotherapist had been allowed to accompany.

The athletes travelled economy class on the long and tiring flight between India and Rio. The bureaucrats flew business class. (They went on to embarrass us even further by drawing reprimands from the Olympic Committee for their behaviour.)

Sindhu, Sakshi and Dipa have shown India what a girl child is worth. Accolades, awards and gifts have been showered on them since their return. How much better it would have been if some of that support had been available while they were training, and most importantly, when they were actually competing against the pampered athletes of the First World?

Along with giving our girls "Wings to Fly" we have to ensure that we remove the millstones around their neck.

Smt. Amareswari Morla, Hon. Treasurer's Report Half-Yearly meeting, Haridwar

Introductory remarks before presenting the Balance Sheet :

The city of Haridwar is an ancient city of India, mentioned in several Upanishads and Puranas with different names such as Gangadwara, Mayapuri, Kapilastana. The city's name literally meaning the "Doorway of / to Gods equally important to both Shaivites (Shiva followers) Vaishnavites (Vishnu followers). Hence it is known as both Hardwar and Haridwar. This site is located in the foothills of Shivalik. The ancient pilgrimage city of Haridwar is also mentioned in many Puranas, Upanishads, Mahabharat and in the Vana Parva Chapter too. In the Satyayoga it is very popular legend that the king

Bhagiratha brought the Holy River Ganga to earth to purify the spirits of his sixty thousand relatives.

I am here today to present the Treasurer's Report. The most important part of the Treasurer's Report at the half yearly meeting of the Standing Committee is the presentation of the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous Financial Year. As a Treasurer of AIWC, I feel privileged to present you the Balance Sheet for the Financial Year 2015-16.

Dear members, we have made every effort to bring the actual financial position of the organization to your notice so as to enable you to understand the important role of finance in making the organization strong and financially sound.

Memory Grows with Memorizing

What can you recite by heart? Your times tables? Verb formations? The Lord's prayer? Salman Rushdie thinks it should be poetry. Speaking at a literary Festival, the novelist described memorising poems as a "lost art" that "enriches your relationship with language". But doesn't learning poetry by rote make children learn the words but lose the meaning?

Not necessarily, according to David Whiteley, a senior lecturer at Cambridge University currently researching poetry and memory. He says that, while some people remember with horror having to recite poems in front of an audience, for many, learning poetry by heart can be "life-enhancing". Whiteley, whose Poetry and Memory project surveyed almost 500 people, says: "Those who memorised poems have a more personal relationship [with the poem] - they loved it for the sound and meaning, but it also connected with their life currents - people they loved, or a time that was important to them.

"For people who memorise a poem, It becomes a living thing that they connect with - more so than when it is on a page. Learning by heart is often positioned as the opposite of analysis. But for many people who know a number of poems, their understanding grows over time and changes."

Psychotherapist Phillippa Perry agrees. She points out that memorising anything, from poems to music, means you always have it with you. "If you learn things by heart, you have something to read in your head." (*From Brunch Weekly*)



Wings To Fly–Celebrating The Girl Child

- Bulbul Das

AIWCs Campaign Launch, 24th August, 2016

In 1961, there were 976 girls for every 1,000 boys under the age of seven. As per the Census, 2011 the child sex ratio (0-6 years) has shown a decline from 927 females per thousand males in 2001 to 919 females per thousand males in 2011. This sharply declining sex ratio is the result of both female foeticide and infanticide. According to the Government's own analysis, some of the reasons for neglect of girl child and low child sex ratio are son preference and the belief that it is only the son who can perform the last rites, that lineage and inheritance runs through the male line, sons will look after parents in old age, men are the bread winners etc. Exorbitant dowry demand is another reason for female foeticide/infanticide. Small family norm coupled with easy availability of sex determination tests may be a catalyst in the declining child sex ratio, further facilitated by easy availability of Pre-conception sex selection facilities.

The girl child's discrimination begins before birth in the form of female foeticide and ends only with her death in the form of dowry death or suicide. Throughout her life cycle, she has to face and suffer in silence a gamut of abuse, degrees of violence and abuse and discrimination. Girl children are murdered shortly after being born when the family comes to know the sex of the child or killed slowly through neglect and abandonment.

In India, it is not just restricted to selective murder of the girl child in the womb but continues throughout her life cycle. If the girls are lucky to be born, they are not sent to school, are married early as minors, undergo sexual and marital rape by family members, married in return of dowry and suffer domestic violence when she goes to her matrimonial home. Dowry death still continues unabated. More than 100

million girl children between the ages of 5 and 17 are engaged in child labour, out of which over 50% are in hazardous industries. Other forms of GBV include child prostitution, trafficking, mutilation, honour killing and forced marriages. Recently, safety of women in her homes as well as in public spaces has been a big public concern and most families are apprehensive of their daughter's safety. Rape and child sexual abuses are a daily matter. Marriage is often still seen as securing the safety net of the girl child and passing the burden onto another family.

Seeing this situation, our Prime Minister has told citizens to save girl child and send them to school through the BBBP campaign. We all have a role to play in changing this situation: the common man on the road, the head of the family, human rights activist, citizens from all walks of life can and need to contribute to ensure that girls are treated as equals to boys and not discriminated against. The idea is not to be same as boys but to be equal in terms of access and opportunities. Such a mind-set revolution needs mobilization of action right from personal to governmental levels. Someone has rightly said that "Give girls the wings to fly, Not the pain to cry and die" The Seminar on 24th August, 2016 was the launch event of AIWC for a year long program with key stakeholders to change mind-sets and ensure the rights of girl child so that she is treated equally and not discriminated against.

The Seminar brought together 500 participants from branches of AIWC, all NGO and CSOs working on women and girl children, students and parents, and media.

Expected Outcomes

1. Recommendations from the seminar with close follow up

2. Documentation of best practices in India on valuing the GC
3. Causes of selective sex abortion is addressed deeply where communities internalise equality and challenge patriarchy.
4. Advocacy to demand stopping usage of prefix before names – no use of Ms/Mrs/Mr
5. Partnerships at various levels to carry forward the campaign on self sustainable mode: eg partnership with media houses, awards by AIWC for best GC program in India, essay/quiz/poster competition institutionalised between college and AIWC as partners
6. Studies and IEC materials
7. Facebook page and other social media spaces for the campaign
8. National demand for establishing counselling units in all health clinics for changing mindset of general population.

Community based initiative called “beti hue hai” where the birth of a girl child is celebrated with sweets and dances and initiated by NGO and community members. Ladli scheme, scholarships

and other efforts in this area need to be documented and showcased so that it can be established that the girl child is equal to the boy child in all areas, except some biological ones. Myths around gender that act as roadblocks will be highlighted and action ensured to change and break them.

Stock will be taken of positive examples and AIWC in the next 1 year will hold workshops with different stakeholders on the 24th of every month to further understand and explore how to promote best practices and scale up positive models on increasing the value of the girl child in India. The 24th of every month will be an action point for AIWC to consult with ministers, lawmakers, private sector leaders, civil society groups, CSR and other stakeholders across India and the world. Gender equality and women's empowerment are at the heart of AIWC's vision for a better and more just world and hence the 24th August, Seminar holds immense importance.

AIWC is serious to invest in the ability of girls to be self-reliant, safe, independent and empowerment. Gender equality and women's empowerment have been a top priority AIWC which is committed to making sure that it leads by example.

Bulbul Das, Member-in- Charge, Seminars

Brighten The Moon, Save Electricity

A Sweden based cosmetics company has proposed a bizarre new method to eliminate the need for streetlights - brighten the surface of the moon. The idea is to use materials already on the moon to lighten its surface. The goal is to reflect slightly more sunlight onto earth making the night sky brighter, according to the company's thinktank, Foreo Institute.

A brighter night sky would mean less need for streetlights, which could potentially translate into less electricity usage and thus fewer global warming carbon emissions. However scientists are sceptical about the idea. "Making the moon brighter is not something I've ever heard of in geoengineering literature," said Ben Kravitz, a scientist. "Only about 0.1% of the moon's surface would need to be transformed to reach 80% of the desired brightening effect", says Foreo Institute. Even if such a mission were successful, it could have side effects. Light at night can disrupt sleep and has been linked to increases in several types of cancer. Foreo says the brightening effect would happen over 30 years, allowing humans time to adjust.



Wings To Fly: Survey Report

AIWC conducted a 2 month survey of 200 persons across age- groups in South, West and East Delhi in June- July 2016, through questionnaires assessing knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding the girl child.

Brief Summary & Discussions

- * The overall trend in the domain of knowledge pertaining to girl child does indicate increasing levels of knowledge, looks good in terms of education, law, correct parenting styles but it is still weak. They are inclined towards male child. The education system, women security system, law being less sensitive towards females, weak health care facilities for women tends to reduce the motivation for upbringing of the girl child
- * The attitude change has started, the ray of hope has entered the walls of the home. Now with our strong determination and developing strong support systems the attitude change will get more strong
- * It comes out that the awareness of support provided by government through schemes is not very clear. The awareness and understanding is low. So the government needs to reach out to the homes, grass root levels and community. It should develop systems to reach out to people
- * The same holds good for the law and order systems. They are available and are known to

families. But they have to become more open and systematic for the common people

- * The security seems to be an issue for girls. Parents are not very confident. This is becoming an inhibitor for the growth of the girls. They are being restricted due to scare of rape and abuse. This should be handled well by the Law and Order systems
- * The practises followed for rearing up girl child are still not very sensitive to their needs. As we are living in Indian patriarchal society therefore obviously the male dominance is present. But with our efforts to towards sensitization of girl child needs, we will definitely start changing the mind set
- * We have to understand being a girl is a beautiful bliss, it's a blessing. We just have to give wings to our girls and let them fly. They just want your understanding, love and care. Through the system around they need sensitization and understanding only. They are all blessed with competence and courage. Let them fly

Based on the above survey, and its findings the AIWC plans to conduct a more comprehensive study through its branches all over India. (Questionnaire by Leena Prasad. Study assessed by **Dr. Rama Srivastava**, Psychologist)

True equality means holding everyone accountable in the same way, regardless of race, gender, faith, ethnicity - or political ideology.

Anonymous



Wings to Fly

Address by Smt. Veena Kohli on 24th August

I represent All India Women's Conference and since its inception in 1927 it has grown and spread to have 540 branches all over the country. We have been deeply concerned about the economic, social and legal needs of women and have played a major role in the enactment and modification of many legislative reforms such as the Sarda Act,, Hindu Code Bill, Devdasi Protection Act, Universal Adult Franchise, Factory and Mines Act, Maternity Benefits Act.

We have founded many institutions which are now functioning as autonomous apex bodies. Our welfare programs include schools, vocational colleges, literacy and skill training centers, working women's hostels, counseling centers, short stay homes, old age homes, libraries, research and publications, computer and literacy classes, training and awareness programs, organizing seminars on current issues, international summits, craft melas, socio economic projects, renewable energy, water management, and advocacy on climate change etc. At the international level we have Consultative status with United Nations, affiliations and alliances with other important international agencies.

The uniqueness of the organization is that its members are volunteer workers. They work at grass root levels under 9 zones spread across the country through 520 branches and constituent branches with a membership of 2 lakh women.

The main objective of the Conference was to bring about reform in education and to eradicate the various drawbacks and gender bias inherent in the system.

The AIWC has set itself a set of targets in order to promote gender equality and bring about women's empowerment. These include campaigning to get women reservation in the panchayats and the parliament so that they get a fair say in the decision making processes, promoting the rights of the girl

child and her education and campaigning to end female feticide.

With the efforts of our members and a magnificent 87 years history of dedicated women, some targets have been achieved. But these are not enough in view of the magnitude of the problem and need a serious supportive commitment to realize our goals. A commitment that comes in various forms, from the government, from society and from women themselves.

We believe that equal opportunities for women will not happen unless the mindset and values change and women's issues become societal issues, As you know that a lot of issues are related to age old customs and traditions and that the extent of gender differentiation in a country like ours is highly dependent on its culture.

Culture provides moral standards about how to behave in society and defines the roles and attitudes. It divides people according to tradition creating a way of life which brings discrimination among our society, and which is not favorable to women. It creates barriers, rituals, laws, religions, taboos, and all kinds of practices - which become the basis of our value system.

It is important to reverse this, question, these outdated customs and beliefs, change the mindset, and transform the thought process of the men and the way they perceive women.

With regard to the imbalance of numbers of girls to boys, sadly we have to face the harsh reality that in our country the national sex ratio is 914 girls to 1000 boys. In some states it is even lower. This is the 'shame of India' that we do not even allow girls to be born. While we say that we worship Maa Saraswati, Maa Durga, Maa Lakshmi, yet we are continuously destroying the precious gift of nature, the girl child. It is high time we got rid of our double standards.

This cruel practice of feticide and infanticide is a crime and must stop.

Today girls are competing with boys and making their name in every field and are excelling. We have recently been made proud by the achievements of P.V Sidhu, Sakshi Malik, and Dipa Karmarkar . And this Rio Olympics will go down in the annals of history for Indian women, who made their way forward in a country which still prefers its sons over daughters.

Inspite of achievements, education, professions, legal rights, gender discrimination is deeply entrenched in India and in many parts of the country, a girl child is still considered a burden and does not get the dignity and equality she deserves.....- the only feasible solution is the change of societal

mindset, the change of attitude of the men towards women. Till this is done, no amount of teaching, preaching or bargaining will help the girl child.

We are fortunate to have Manekaji with us, who is also working in the same direction and together we can multiply our efforts in this challenge to achieve equality and opportunity for all women in our country. We will take a pledge that we collectively want to end gender discrimination and instead we will celebrate the birth of a girl child.

And, Lastly, I would like to recite a few stanzas from the latest poem of Prasoon Joshi 'Sharam Aa rahi Hai Na , dedicated to our daughters.

Woman

- Qazi Nazrul Islam

*I sing the song of equality;
In my view gender difference
is essentially a triviality.
Everything that is great in the world,
all the works, beneficial and good,
half must be credited to women,
and to man half only we should.*

*All the vice or bad in the world,
and the pain or flowing tear,
for half, man should be blamed,
the other half only woman should bear.*

*Who belittles you as woman,
connecting you to Hell's flame?
Tell him that for the first ever sin
not woman, but man must carry the blame.
(Translated by - Kabir Choudhary)*

Remembering Gandhiji

- Raksha Shukla

Mahatma Gandhi's Birth Anniversary Celebrated as International Day of Peace and of Non Violence in AIWC on the 3rd of October

The program began with the rendition of Gandhiji's favorite Bhajan, "Vaishnav Jan to" by students of St. Stephen's College; Arvind (vocalist) and Abhinav Lal (on Tabla).

Mrs. Veena Kohli welcomed the guests. She said that Gandhiji proved what peace can do. She spoke about her recent visit to South Korea for world peace summit. She was so involved with the interest of the people to maintain peace in every sphere of human activity all over the world.

Mrs. Mythily Jagannathan's presentation of the poem, "Lead Kindly Light", in her lilting voice added to the sanctity of the occasion.

Dr. Aparna Basu shared about her experience of the previous day which she had spent interacting with the students of younger generation.

Mrs. Chandrabhabha Pandey introduced Dr. Kavita Sharma, a renowned academician and research scholar. Mrs. Pandey appreciated her spiritual angle as well as the novelty of her historical approach.

Dr. Kavita Sharma spoke mainly about the influence of Gandhi and Aurobindo on masses as well as classes of India during the freedom struggle and its aftermath. While speaking about these she had to touch upon the ideology of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Rabindra Nath Thakur too.

While comparing the concept of active resistance and passive resistance, especially in relation to the boycott of foreign goods, she referred to the idea of "Make In India" which is the Contemporary Mantra of The Modi Government. The original idea was that we have to make in India if we want to boycott the goods made in a foreign country.

One thing she pointed out was interesting to note as well as surprising about Gandhiji that he supported the British in World War II; to the extent that he went to Gujarat for recruitment of Indian men for British Army. As an outcome, he was isolated towards the end of his life and died a very disillusioned man. He conscious of his loss and complained that no one listened to him. On his first birthday after the Independence he was very sad. He prayed to go to God.

Mrs. Chandra Prabha articulated very rightly that it needs courage to criticize Gandhi, for which Kavita Sharma is to be appreciated, for a true historian has to present the facts as they are.

The students of our Community College presented a short play on some sad incidents of Gandhiji's life at Agha Khan Palace, where he was kept in confinement as a prisoner by the British.

Mrs. Asha Gambhir gave heartfelt thanks in her inimitable manner.

The program ended with everyone standing up to join in with the Arvind and Abhinav to sing Mahatma Gandhi's most favorite Bhajan, "Raghupati Raghav".

We are what our thoughts have made us; so take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far.

-- Swami Vivekanand

Smart Way to Solar Solutions

- Lalita Balakrishnan

Good news for Delhi-ites looking for solar solutions : The Delhi Government has put in place a centralized facility which will enable consumers to apply on line for installation of solar roof tops on their premises.

"We have provided for an online facility where consumers can apply for solar roof tops based on requirement and space available with them", a senior officer said. The consumers including individuals (residential), commercial, industries, or public institutions can apply online. Later the service providers will approach the government to provide services.

Given lack of clarity on how to go about installations of roof tops, many consumers have shown little interest. "In order to bridge the communication gap between the consumer and service providers the



centralized facility has been provided by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy."

The link is available on the website of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy : The Government has set an ambitious target of having 100 GW of solar power generation capacity by 2022, including 40 GW from solar roof tops.

India has a potential to install 124 GW of solar rooftop projects. The Centre has already approved Rs. 5000

crore subsidy for solar rooftops from the Clean Energy fund over the next five years. These projects size can vary between 25 kW and 500 kW.

(from a news item 30th May)

Alternative Energy solutions for the 21st century: Solar Technologies have evolved a lot since they first made their debut in 1960. While previously solar photovoltaics (PV) were seen a thing of the future, today technological breakthrough has positioned the industry for huge growth.

New development in solar PV technology also contributes to the industry's service.

(from news item 4th June)

Improving the cost- efficiency of solar cells : Researchers have long looked for ways to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of solar cells the life blood of solar P.V. System, a solar P.V. arrangement is comprised of hundreds sometimes thousands of solar cells that individually convert radiant sunlight into electric circuits. The average solar cell is approximately 15% efficient which means nearly 85% of the sunlight that hits them does not get converted into electricity. As such, scientists have constantly been experimenting with new technologies to boost this light capture and conversion.

Light Sensitive Nanoparticles : Recently a group of scientists at University of Toronto unveiled a new type of light sensitive nanoparticles called colloidal quantum dots, that many believe will offer a less expensive and more flexible material for solar cells, the new materials use n-type and p-type semiconducting but ones that can actually function outdoors. This is a unique discovery since previous, designs were not capable of functioning outdoors and therefore not practical applications for the solar market. University of Toronto researchers discovered that n-type materials bind to oxygen – the new colloidal quant does not bind to air and therefore can maintain their stability outside. This has

increased radiant light absorption. Panels using the new technology were said to be eight percent more efficient at converting sunlight.

Solar Street Lights : Gallium Arsenide – Researchers of Imperial College University of London believe they have discovered a new material gallium arsenide that could make solar PV systems nearly 3 times more efficient than existing products on the market. The solar cells are called “triple junction cells” and they are much more efficient, because they can be chemically altered in a manner that optimises sunlight capture. The model uses a sensor driven window blind that can trade sunlight

along with “Light pipes” that guide the light into the system.

Solar panel with built in battery: The Department of New and Renewable Energy, University Research recently developed battery that is 20% more efficient and 25% cheaper than anything on the market today. The secret of design is that the rechargeable battery is built in the Solar Panel itself, rather than operating as two standard systems. By conjoining the two into one system, scientists said they could lower costs by 25% compared to existing systems.

Lalita Balakrishnan was Former Head of The Renewable Energy Department of AIWC for Roshni readers)



*we can throw food
in a minute but it takes months
to grow what we eat.*

**Think before you
waste food..**

KALAI



Girl Child Campaign Launch - *From the Side-lines*

- Chandrabhabha Pandey

Agha Khan Hall was packed with an enthusiastic, disciplined crowd. Students - boys and girls from colleges and their teachers, NGO representatives, scholars, academics, and of course members staff and workers of AIWC. Extra chairs had to be brought to accommodate guests. A formidable audience in colorful clothes to suit the celebratory occasion.

- * The chief guest Maneka Gandhi, Minister for Woman & Child, preponed her arrival by an hour, yet everything went on smoothly, without any hitch, thanks to the audience, staff and members of AIWC as they all were there, looking after their diverse duties, help desk, registration tables, ushers, hall managers, supervisors, all were there, despite all odds. Kudos to all, especially the overwhelming support and work done by AIWC staff.
- * The Chief guest despite her very busy schedule came on time and after delivering her address, in which she listed the govt schemes in which NGOs like AIWC could participate. Truly committed to her work. She came, despite a cabinet meeting. Wow!
- * The packed lunch and tea were served to audience on their seats. A daunting task due to numbers, but managed so well and effortlessly. I heard even the accounts staff were helping in

packing lunch boxes. What a show of support. Simply amazing!

- * One will never come to know how the grand show was managed in the limited budget. Only the Executive Secretary and the insiders know how negotiations went on with tent wala for chairs, red carpet, etc to bring down prices, or even get them free. The core committee and mess committee knows what all calculations about Urad dal for vada vs potato for bonda were done, even how the lunch boxes could be bought, at what price, only food committee and Treasurer knows. Our members and staff demonstrated the power of Team work.
- * Q and A session - most questions were asked by young students with great curiosity. The resource persons rose to the occasion.
- * I will fail in my duty if I don't compliment the cultural performance. The dance was to the song Betiyan Thandhi Hawaen. Hain. The Odissi dancer volunteered to perform because the theme was close to her heart

Sideline comment : What makes people who exemplify the phrase "Kaam ke naam se bukhari aata hai", plunge into a team effort, work non-stop, and cheerfully? Anyone having a clue - please let me know.

The final farewell : Mahashweta devi, award winning author, social activist, and fighter for the downtrodden, breathed her last on 28th July, 2016 in Kolkata. She was born in Dhaka on 14th January 1926 to the eminent poet/ novelist Manish Ghatak. Called the woman who "walked with the broken and refused to sit with the great", she received affection and respect from both. Her powerful prose brought to life the poor and marginalized. Hailed as a voice for compassion, equality and justice. Her acclaimed books Hazar Chaurasir Maa, Aranyer Adhikar, and Choti Munda, reflect positivity balanced with activism.

Some facts about the WARP Summit at Seoul, attended by Veena Kohli, President AIWC, at the invitation of IWPG (International Women's Peace Group) 17th to 19th September 2016



#IWPG (International Women's Peace Group) is a non-governmental women's peace organization. It was established for the purpose of protecting precious lives with the loving heart of a mother and leaving a world of peace as a legacy for future generations.. The IWPG is officially associated with the UN Department of Public Information and registered in the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea. Headquartered in the Seoul, South Korea, the IWPG has branches in various cities of the world.

The IWPG creates, develops, and holds annual activities and events based on the core values: networking, education, volunteering, campaigns and culture and arts. It is headed by Chairwoman Nam Hee Kim. (for more details see their website)

WARP stands for World Alliance of Religions' Peace Summit. This was organized by HWPL (Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light) is committed to the cessation of war through the establishment of an enforceable law compatible with the *Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW) and **the World Alliance of Religions Peace (WARP) offices. Women and youth involved with HWPL's peace initiatives play a significant role in peace building and conflict resolution in their respective communities as active proponents of peace. HWPL shares this vision with global citizens through the International Women's Peace Group (IWPG) and International Peace Youth Group (IPYG). IWPG and IPYG work together as the two wings of HWPL for sustainable development of peace. They believe that when their task is fully achieved, wars will no longer have a place on our Earth and a culture of peace will finally spread to all corners of the globe.

#Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW), proclaimed on 14 March 2016, was drafted by the HWPL International Law Peace Committee. DPCW is unique in that it includes provisions aimed at resolving conflicts, especially those attributed to religious causes, through peaceful means and also invites youth, women, and all citizens to participate in the active promotion of a lasting culture of peace.



*You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual.
There is no other teacher but your own soul.
-- Swami Vivekanand*



*The world is the great gymnasium where we come to make ourselves strong.
-- Swami Vivekanand*

NAVARATRI-Festival of Nine Nights



Observance of Navratri, nine nights of prayer and meditation are described in the Devi Sukta and Esha Sukta, in Rig Veda as the most auspicious and unique sadhanas for achieving spiritual progress. In the Markandeya Purana, Brahma tells sage Markandeya about the spiritual force of meditation and religious practices during Navaratri. The 2 important Navaratris are the Chaitra Navaratri in the lunar month of Chaitra (April- May), and Sharad Navaratri, in the lunar month of Sharad.(October-November). The Vedic rishis considered a junction of solar and climatic changes, the most auspicious time for meditation, prayer, and spiritual progress.

The worship of Adi Shakti in 9 forms, throughout India, during Navaratri is part of our epics, legends, Shaktipith and Tantric rituals, and innumerable practices, down to small everyday rituals practiced in the humblest household. Each day of Navratri invokes one aspect of the goddess, emphasizing



certain attributes and qualities, through prayer and meditation.

During nine auspicious nights and ten days, the festival is celebrated in different ways. There is Durga puja, Jagrans or night long prayer meetings, group singing of devotional songs, ladies gatherings for giving haldi- kumkum and gifts, arrangement of dolls, called Bomma kolu, and all night Garba dances. Special offerings or prasad are made on each day. Religious fasting is popular. While some fast for a day or two, others fast for the entire nine days.. Some abstain from salt, others have only fruits. Restaurants vie with each other in preparing satvik food (without onion or garlic) . Guests look



forward to delicious menus like kutu ki roti, palak pakoda, paneer sabzi, sabudana khichdi, singhara kheer, paneer makhan, aaloo dahi and other delicacies.

The festival concludes on the 10th-victorious Vijayadashami day, marking the victory of the goddess over the demon Mahishasur. In tune with the times, Durga idol and pandal decorations now have a "green" look, non-degradable materials like metals, chemical paints and plastics are avoided, and the Goddess is given a non-polluting farewell.

- Mythily Jagannathan



Celebrating The Girl Child

- A Report & Photos by **Ananya Dasgupta**



All India Women's Conference conducted a National Seminar cum launch program 'Wings to fly-celebrating the girl child' on 24th August, 2016 at Aga Khan Hall from 10 am to 4pm. The program was a grand success with more than 500 audience. Participants were from media, feminist journalists, academicians, college students from Shyamlal college, Shradhanand college, Shaheed Bhagat Singh college, Miranda House and Lady Irwin college, NGO's from Delhi, NCR and other parts of India, AIWC branches, girls, youth, men and women, women development cells, families and networks.

Gender equality and women empowerment are at the root of AIWC's vision for a better and more just world and hence the 24th August seminar held immense importance. It was a launch event of AIWC for a year long program with key stakeholders to change the mindsets and ensure the rights of the girl child so that she is treated equally and not discriminated against.

Different posters on Girl child were put up in the Aga Khan Hall like "Daughters are angels sent from

Heaven to fill our heart with happiness", "Violence on women is a far more pain than the bruises and scars", "No girl, so no mother, ultimately no life", "Allow me to live to see this world", "Don't take dowry, don't give dowry", "Give me wings to fly. Don't kill girl child" etc.

The program compered by Mrs. Asha Sharma, Member in Charge Education started at 9:30 am with a prayer song 'Sarva Mangalamangalye' and Ma Durga Stuti followed by felicitation of the Chief Guest the Minister of Women and Child Welfare, followed by the Key note address of Mrs. Maneka Gandhi.

In her address she mentioned the following activities done by the Ministry:-

- Ø Started Beti Bachao Beti Padoo since February last year. In Haryana due to this the girl child ratio has gone up from 830 to 907 per 1000 boys. Out of 100 districts 56 have achieved the step. The non achieved states are being worked on.
- Ø In most of the families the grandmother decides the child birth. So programs are targeting the grandmothers.
- Ø Mahila – e hut – free service by making organic food, ladoos etc. WE should promote it by buying food from there.
- Ø There is one stop centre for women victims with female doctors, psychiatrists etc on duty
- Ø 33% reservation for women in police forces. The Ministry is keen to start mahila Police Volunteers.
- Ø Regulating matrimonial websites



- Ø Provision for maternity leave
- Ø National policy on women - a major Act against trafficking
- Ø 1098 is a number which children can call to report complaint against physical torture. All calls are monitored or tracked.
- Ø E box- 80 complaints of child molestation have come in a site called E-box. Cases are most vulnerable in slums. So school Principals need to help in slums as they cannot access E-box.
- Ø Khoya Paya site- if any woman or child goes missing, its being reported in this site. Several thousands have been identified and rescued by this process.
- Ø Anganwadi's should be better utilized NGO can help.
- Ø National policy is clear. It has details mainly education, health, political and cultural rights.
- Ø There is mismatch between ground reality and what and how it can be implemented and outcome thereof.
- Ø We make agencies, NCW, Ministry, National Mission of women empowerment who

separately look over the matter. But there should be a planned vision, a unified vision.

- Ø Women come from different caste, class, backgrounds. Women's movement in India is not of homogeneous category. Still women as a category are needed.
- Ø Women's work participation is going down. 10% women in Delhi are working women. All struggle for political right. Constitution begins by saying "We the people of India". We women are very much part of the people of India.

The next speaker in the panel was Mr. J.S. Kocher, Joint Secretary, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) NHRC is looking after the functioning of NGO's and the civil society. It has a combined force with the govt. to make policies. Mr. Kocher mentioned the following:-

- Ø NHRC spreads Human rights literacy and it takes the help of NGO's.
- Ø Local Thanas are the first place where rape victims come. So the Thanedars should be sensitized on women issues.
- Ø NGO's can utilize the forum of NHRC for gender sensitization.
- Ø Human rights declaration started in 1948.



Humans are all equal in dignity and rights. Hansa AIWC's Mehta in 1946-1948 was involved with the universal declaration of human rights. It is mentioned in the Preamble of the CEDAW (Convention of elimination of all forms of discrimination against women).

- Ø CEDAW Committee proposed legislations and observed that there is rampant violence against women.
- Ø Sometimes a girl is discouraged to report at the police station. So many cases of abduction and rape do not reach the police. Certainty of punishment is a greater deterrent than volume of punishment.
- Ø Human rights is all about dignity of women. It bridges on unequal power relations between men and women. It has to be a joint effort in this women's movement.

- Ø Special focus is required in tribal communities where the gender gap is greater.
- Ø NHRC would like to work with all the social organizations as also with Centres for Women Studies.

The last speaker in the panel was Dr. Vijay Laxmi Nanda, Associate Professor, Miranda House. She talked of:-

- Ø Criticality of data- child sex ratio is greatest.
- Ø Girl child rights and women's rights are not separate from each other.
- Ø We need to learn the language of women.
- Ø We call it a dowry murder and not dowry death.

After the panel discussion, pledge was conducted by Mrs. Bulbul Das that would work towards the transformation of the culture of our society and promote positive change in support of the girl child.

Early to Bed

Must get up early in the morning is perhaps, the most ignored advice. We, the owls, have some explanation for late rising "My body clock is like that; I am more alert and receptive working late at night; how does it matter if I sleep for the same number of hours late in the night or early in the morning?" However, even the strongest of these arguments has some basic flaws.

Missing the metro/bus/train or other schedules; feeling guilty in the morning and missing those enthusiastic good-morning-smiles and hugs in the family; missing the pleasure of a good breakfast; often running to the office and avoiding the seniors... We are forced to coin a neat excuse every other day: Traffic jam; vehicle breakdown; someone in the family not well; or worked late in the night. Whatever the justification, the feeling of guilt remains.

Rising early has some advantages. Better planning for the day; no running around at the last minute; According to Guru Nanak, dedication of the early morning time, Amrit Vela, to God is the best offering that one can make. (*Hindustan Times*)

MCM Book Club Meet The Author

- Dr. Ramesh Madan

The Club organized a talk on the book “Kargil Turning the Tide” by the author Lt. Gen. Mohinder Puri in the Aga Khan Audio-Video Conference room, on 4th August.

A brief introduction of Lt. Gen. Puri of the 5th battalion of Gorkha Rifles was given by Member-in-charge Ms. Yuthika Mishra, organizer of the Book Club. The author himself while giving the historical background i.e. partition 1948 crossing of Baramullah by Pak army; Peace on the J&K borders 1949; 1959 war and ceasefire followed by Tashkent Agreement ; 1971 war and liberation of Bangla Desh described the events recorded in the book. The 1999 Kargil war between India & Pakistan started when Jammu & Kashmir was in turmoil due to Pak infiltrators. Kargil was fought to capture the Tiger Hill. Several heroic anecdotes were recounted in this book. He gave first hand narrative of the operations of 8 Mountain Division, which was tasked to evict the infiltrators from Drass Mushkoh sector during operation Vijay, and capturing of arms and ammunition from Tiger Hill.

With the help of photos and maps, he showed how the Indian army restored the sanctity of the Line of Control by capturing Tololing and several battles fought without which the war account would have been incomplete. He mentioned about the MBRL or Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher and how Bofors gun proved successful.

Lt.Gen. Puri also vividly described the emotions of soldiers before they went into the battle and afterwards, difficulty of climbing snow-topped mountains, carrying heavy weights on their backs. With grief, he mentioned how India suffered very

high casualties in the successive battles that were fought during the war with 268 killed including Captain Thapa's son and 818 soldiers wounded especially soldiers of the Rajasthan Rifles on Tiger Hill, 10,000 feet above Drass. The photos shown by him brought to life the grim struggle at Kargil and joy of victory.

Lastly, he talked about how Raksha Mantri complimented the troops, who were honoured. Yogendra Yadav with Paramvir Chakra and many others with Mahavir Chakras and Vir Chakras. He especially emphasized the role of Doordarshan which showed the progress of the war and martyrs photographs. When Raksha Bandhan festival came soon after the war, thousands of Rakhis were received by our troops from grateful citizens. Now, the place of final battle popularly known as “Matayin” which is on Zojila Road, is a picnic spot.

In the question answer session, Mrs. Kalyani Raj commented that patriotism should start from school itself. Patriotic songs, heroic deeds of soldiers should be narrated from time to time. The Secretary General Mrs Gambhir hoped that the new generation was aware of all those who sacrificed their lives for the nation, are more patriotic, and see the Republic day parade every year. Mrs. Bina Jain shared her experiences of the historical Indo-Pak wars and Indo-China war and how the social workers and civilians performed their role during those times.

The Lt. Gen. questioned youth on their ideals and patriotism, to which they responded. Members recalled events during the Chinese invasion and later wars, when young and old joined the war effort, and houses were blacked out against air attacks.

The Last Girl

- Chitra Sarkar

On 14th July 2016 we welcomed one of India's foremost activists to AIWC MCM library. Ruchira Gupta, the founder of the NGO Apneap, she is an Emmy award-winning documentary film maker, a Clinton Foundation Global Citizen, a Times Amazing Indian and a member of the 11th and 12th Planning Commissions. She has advised the U.S. Senate, and has been honoured by the U.K. House of Lords. She has recently published a journal called Antyaja, a name she has coined herself, based on an amalgam of literary references, not the least being

"The Last Girl". Ruchira has made it her life's mission to reach out and protect the Last Girl. Antyaja, contains essays by prominent activists and economists who are experts in their field.

Ruchira spoke movingly of her first-hand interactions with The Last Girl. She asked us to visualize her plight, when a child of thirteen, is ensnared by unscrupulous predators who sell her into a life of prostitution and deprivation. When she is too old to continue in this profession, she is cast out into the street, and her daughter is forced to take her place.



अखिल भारतीय महिला कांफ्रेंस के आगा खां हॉल में उपस्थित हम सभी जन अपने समाज की बालिकाओं के प्रति नकारात्मक सांस्कृतिक विचार धारा को परिवर्तित करने एवं सकारात्मक विचार धारा उत्पन्न करने की शपथ उठाते हैं।

- हम शपथ लेते हैं — कन्या भ्रूण हत्या के विरुद्ध लड़ने की।
- हम शपथ लेते हैं — दहेज़ जैसी बुराई का विरोध करने की।
- हम शपथ लेते हैं — सदैव नारी सुरक्षा के लिए कार्य करेंगे विशेष रूप से घरेलू हिंसा व यौन शोषण के विरुद्ध।
- हम शपथ लेते हैं — बालिका को सामाजिक रीतियों में समान हिस्सेदारी दिलाने की।
- हम शपथ लेते हैं — महिलाएं कभी अपना संपत्ति का अधिकार नहीं छोड़ेंगी।
- हम शपथ लेते हैं — महिलाएं सदैव पंचायत, परिषद् एवं संसद के निर्णयों में बराबरी का अधिकार रखेंगी।
- हम शपथ लेते हैं — महिला एवं बच्चों के प्रति होने वाले दुराचरण के विरुद्ध लड़ने की।
- हम शपथ लेते हैं — 'एक बलात्कार मुक्त समाज की।' - क्या आप भी ?

ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



PLEDGES TAKEN AT THE AIWC PROGRAMME 'WINGS TO FLY' ON 24.08.2016

This gathering of people today at AIWC Aga Khan Hall, New Delhi pledges to work towards the transformation of the culture of our society and promote positive change in support of the GIRL CHILD.

- We pledge to fight against female feticide.
- We pledge to oppose the evil of DOWRY
- We pledge to work towards protection and safety of women especially against sexual and domestic violence.
- We pledge that the girl will be an equal partner in all rituals
- We pledge that women will not surrender their Right to Property.
- We pledge that women will be equal partners at all levels of decision making –Panchayat, Legislative Assembly and Parliament
- We pledge to fight against trafficking and exploitation of women and children

Visit by Dr. Claire Midgley

- Dr. Ramesh Madan, Principal, AIWC Vocational Institution



"Brahmo women, Transnational networks and the Emergence of Modern Feminisms", by Prof. Clare Midgley, Research Professor, Sheffield Hallam University London & President, International Federation for Research in Women's History is a valuable contribution to feminist literature.

The MCM Book Club met Dr. Claire Midgley on 26th August. At the outset Dr. Yuthika Mishra, Member-in-Charge, AIWC library & Convener of the meeting, said that the main agenda of Prof. Midgley was to survey women's studies libraries in India.

Prof. Aparna Basu, Patron, AIWC renowned historian, in her brief comment said "The Brahmo Movement" was started in 1928 in Bengal by Raja Ram Mohun Roy. The Bengali Renaissance movement, demanded social reform of outdated Hindu culture & religion. 'Religion' according to Roy should be based on 'Humanism' & 'Nationalism'. 'Sati' or burning of widow on the pyre of her dead husband was unacceptable. The Brahmo movement on the other hand, did not accept everything that came from the West.

But the movement was limited to high class & elite and according to critics, did not connect to the lower classes at all. Roy who was a scholar in Sanskrit & Persian is often criticized as being influenced by Christianity, which however, is not correct. He was

influenced by Unitarianism ideas and was against rituals & temple worship. Prof. Basu also recollected how her family especially her mother was influenced by 'Brahmo Samajis' of Tagore family especially Jitendra Nath Tagore.

In her talk Prof. Clare explored the positioning of 'Brahmo Women' in the historical context of both India & Great Britain, within a transnational network of religious and social movements. Her main focus was on understanding the 'Brahmo Women' in the context of modern feminism. In 19th century. Raja Ram Mohun Roy was member of Philosophical Society, established in 1820. At the same time, collaboration with British Women and due to efforts of missionaries, American Utilitarian ideas spread from 1820-1860, and led to intellectuals spreading the ideas of modernization and nationalism, while rejecting many aspects of Christianity. They stood for establishing schools for women & destitutes.

Brahmos rejected the custom of child marriage & favoured widow remarriage. Many went abroad to collect funds for women's education from 1853-1922. In 1853 the journal "Bamabodhini Patrika" was founded. It urged women to be educated and help their less fortunate sisters towards a better life. The first women's organization 'Sakhi Samiti' was founded by Rama Bai Pandita, whose visit to Calcutta opened doors to a better life for women. Brahmo women started writing articles on a wide range of topics like 'emancipation' of women, challenged patriarchy, and inspired women all over India & Britain. They devoted their lives to social reform & betterment of society.

In 1871 the journal 'Brahmo Hiteshi' was also founded, expressing Brahmo views on laws and reforms for women. However, till 1870 it was mainly men who fought or wrote for the cause of 'women's rights'. Universities opened their doors to women. Kadambiri Ganguly, Swarna Kumari Choudhury (

sister of Tagore), Anandiben & Chandramukhi Basu were some of the early educated Indian women who also went to America for studies. Both in India and United Kingdom many womens works were published. With the support of the British the 'Brahmo Marriage Act' was passed. All this led to formation of 'Bengali Ladies Association'. Another step towards reform was when the Hunter Education Commission 1878 gave its report for strengthening basic primary, secondary education, and an infrastructure for womens education.

When Brahmo Samaj was seeking a national/global identity, different feminist groups were being founded in both Great Britain & India. Swarnakumari worked hard for women's upliftment though she did not come into the limelight like her illustrious brother. She started Sakhi Samiti, where women could sell their handicrafts and earn a livelihood. A journal

called 'Bharati' started by the Tagore family reflected ideals of the Brahmo Samaj. These efforts led to the Indian elite changing their attitude towards women in terms of giving an English school education, but no freedom in terms of say, property rights, social norms remained almost unchanged.

Thereafter, started the question/answer session in which many interesting facts emerged. The role of Brahmos in the freedom struggle, spread of liberal ideas from Bengal to Gujarat and Maharashtra through the movement, impact of Pandita Rama bai's visit to Calcutta in 1878, and her passionate plea for breaking barriers for women. Concluding, writer Aruna Chakraborty, Professor Janki Devi Memorial College, who was a Special Invitee, said that with the advent of Swami Vivekananda, Hinduism returned with greater humanist and spiritual goals, into which the Brahmo movement merged.

शर्म आ रही है

शर्म आ रही है ना उस समाज को जिसने उसके जन्म पर खुल के जश्न नहीं मनाया
 शर्म आ रही है ना उस पिता को उसके होने पर जिसने एक दिया कम जलाया
 शर्म आ रही है ना उन रसमों को उन रिवाजों को उन बेड़ियों को उन दरवाजों को
 शर्म आ रही है ना उन बुजुर्गों को जिन्होंने उसके अस्तित्व को सिर्फ अंधेरों से जोड़ा
 शर्म आ रही है ना उन दुपट्टों को उन लिबासों को जिन्होंने उसे अंदर से तोड़ा
 शर्म आ रही है ना स्कूलों को दफ्तरों को रास्तों को मंजिलों को
 शर्म आ रही है ना उन शब्दों को उन गीतों को जिन्होंने उसे कभी शरीर से ज्यादा नहीं समझा
 शर्म आ रही है ना राजनीति को धरम को जहां बार-बार अपमानित हुए उसके स्वप्न
 शर्म आ रही है ना खबरों को मिशालों को भालों को
 शर्म आनी चाहिए हर ऐसे विचार को जिसने पंख काटे थे उसके
 शर्म आनी चाहिए ऐसे हर ख्याल को जिसने उसे रोका था आसमान की तरफ देखने से
 शर्म आनी चाहिए हम सबको क्योंकि जब मुट्ठी में सूरज लिए नन्ही सी बिटिया सामने
 खड़ी थी तब हम उसकी उंगलियों से छलकती रोशनी नहीं उसका लड़की होना देख रहे थे
 उसकी मुट्ठी में था आने वाला कल और सब देख रहे थे मटमैला आज पर सूरज को तो धूप
 खिलाना था बेटी को तो सवेरा लाना था और सुबह होकर रही
 - प्रसून जोशी

“Sex and Harassment”

by Jyotika Kalra and Dr. Charu WaliKhanna

- Chitra Sarkar



AIWC Member-in-charge, Legal Affairs, Ms. Jyotika Kalra was at the centre of a glittering function in Krishna Menon Bhawan, which saw the launch of her book, “Sex and Harassment”, by Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur. Celebrities in the distinguished audience were honoured with floral bouquets. They included Mr. Madan Mohan Kishan Wali, who was hand-picked as Delhi's Lt. Governor in 1984 in the wake of the Delhi riots; Mrs. Asha Singh, mother of Nirbhaya; Mrs. Bina Jain, Patron, AIWC and Mrs. Veena Kohli, President, AIWC.

The ceremony began with the lighting of the traditional lamp, and an invocation. Mr. Rajesh Gogna introduced the Guest of Honour, Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur, and Mr. M.N. Krishnamani, President, HRDI.

Both authors, Jyotika Kalra and Charu WaliKhanna spoke about their motivation in writing this landmark tome. It came as a result of their experience in advising women who had become victims of sexual harassment in the workplace. The plight of these women, and the difficulties faced by lay members of Complaints Committees convinced them that a detailed guide to the Act was essential.

Women who had been victims of sexual harassment shared their stories with the audience, while thanking the authors for their support in winning their cases. Charu Khurana, a female makeup artist, recently became the first woman to be inducted into the formerly all-male Cine Costume, Make-Up Artist & Hair Dressers' Association (CCMAA). Unbelievable as it sounds, until she won her long uphill legal battle, only men were allowed to make up even the heroines of Indian cinema.

Senior activist and Akhil Bharatiya Mahila Samanvaya Pramukh, Geeta Gunde, analysed the reasons for harassment and violence towards women, and the impact of the new legislation. An Assistant General Manager from a PSU felt that the new publication would greatly help in guiding officers like herself, in the field. K. Sneha Jyoti came onto the stage with her handicapped son. She had been removed from service for being “emotionally disturbed”. In order to retain her job, she had to apologise and take back her complaint, as she was her family's sole bread-winner.

Mr. Justice Madan B. Lokur, praised the book lavishly in his keynote speech. He pointed out that since it was written so clearly and simply, it would dispel the confusion surrounding the Act and its implementation. He urged the authors to consider writing a sequel, which would spell out a standard protocol to guide the Complaints Committees.

Vote of thanks by Mr. Gogna, was followed by high tea, and sale of the newly launched book. In less than half an hour, most copies were sold !



Wings To Fly Celebrating The Girl Child

AIWC National Seminar cum Launch, 24th August

- Dr. Sabina Pillai, Professor of English, Delhi University

All India Women's Conference organised a meaningful seminar titled, "Wings to Fly- Celebrating the Girl Child" in New Delhi on 24 August 2016 at the Aga Khan Hall from 9.30 am to 4 pm. Such was the response to the subject that we had a jam packed auditorium of more than 500 participants comprising of participants from government, branches of AIWC along with all NGO and CSOs working on women and girl children, media, students and teachers from Delhi University colleges and other educational institutions. Member-in-charge Ms Bulbul Das office bearers and members of AIWC put together a thought provoking event, leaving the audience inspired and motivated to continue spreading the message of gender equality in their own spheres of influence.

The Seminar was the launch event of AIWC for a year long program with key stakeholders to change mind-sets and ensure the rights of the girl child so that she is treated equally and not discriminated against. After the arrival of the Chief Guest, Smt Maneka Gandhi, Minister for Woman and Child Development, the programme began with a beautiful invocation to the girl child by a group of young women who walked up to the stage with lit lamps in their hands amidst tinkling bells and an invocatory song.

Showing her commitment to the cause of the girl child, the Minister who had to attend a Cabinet meeting, rescheduled her visit to AIWC, to inaugurate the campaign earlier than planned. She shared her vision and the mission of her Ministry with the eager audience. In her informative address, she

talked of the challenges of the prevalent situation with regard to female foeticide and infanticide in the country and the interventions that were taking place to counter that in the forthcoming National Policy for Women. Deconstructing the entire paradigm, she dwelt on the declining sex ratio (in 1961, there were 976 girls for every 1,000 boys under the age of seven. As per the Census, 2011 the child sex ratio (0-6 years) has shown a decline from 927 females per thousand males in 2001 to 919 females per thousand males in 2011), due to both female foeticide and infanticide.

She touched upon the reasons for prejudice against the girl child and the low child sex ratio being preference for sons due to the belief that men are the bread winners, only the sons can perform the last rites, that lineage and inheritance runs through the male line, sons would support parents in their old age etc. Rampant dowry demand is another reason for female foeticide/infanticide. Small family norms coupled with easy availability of sex determination tests may be a catalyst in the declining child sex ratio, further facilitated by easy availability of Pre-conception sex selection facilities. The Minister's thoughtful speech was full of information about the initiatives of the Ministry for the Girl Child, and aspects of the proposed National Policy for Women.

This was followed by a beautiful Odissi dance performance by Kavita Dbibedi, daughter of the renowned Odissi maestro, late Harekrushna Behara. She was accompanied by young dancers Priyanka Das and Kalyani. Soulful music by Suresh Sethi enhanced the portrayal of the struggle of the

girl child to find her wings, overcome barriers and finally find freedom.

In her welcome address, the President, AIWC, Mrs Veena Kohli focussed on how gender equality and women's empowerment have been a top priority for AIWC which is committed to making sure that it leads by example on this vital issue. Member-in-charge, Mrs Bulbul Das referred to the reason why the theme is so meaningful for contemporary India and the need to mobilise the younger generation to take the baton of change forward through a Pledge ceremony.

This was followed by an interesting talk by Shri Abhishek Dutt, Councillor, South Delhi on how he has always been inspired by his mother to bring about changes in his own life and environment. He invited NGOs like AIWC to help implement government schemes, monitor and encourage citizens groups initiate "Name and shame" of child molesters/abusers monitor in the neighbourhood, this would act as a warning to miscreants. Striking a positive note he said "Let us act on a small scale, in our own locality, slowly the movement will gather momentum".

The morning session concluded with the AIWC Secretary General Mrs Asha Gambhir delivering the Vote of thanks. Addressing the large number of students present, she asked a direct question "When you return home, whom do you first look for?" her focus was on youth imbibing the spirit of the Raksha Bandhan festival. "Do not blame others, but strengthen yourself, resolve to prevent injustice to girls like giving of dowry, child marriage etc. it is for you to usher a new just society", was her rousing call.

The pre lunch session began with a Panel discussion by three eminent speakers, Dr Indu Agnihotri, Director, CWDS, Mr J.S. Kochar, Joint Secretary, National Human Rights Commission and Dr Bijaya Lakshmi Nanda, Professor, Political Science, Delhi University. I was the Moderator. The

session took stock of the challenges to be overcome so that the girl child could fly high and free from the shackles of patriarchy and prejudice. Dr Agnihotri reflected on the proposed National Policy for Women which gives due weightage to women as being equal citizens of the country and the need to build interlinkages between the vision and its implementation. She emphasized on the need for systemic changes to overcome gender based oppression. Mr J.S. Kochar highlighted the role played by NHRC in the ongoing movement by referring to the seminal role played by AIWCs member Ms Hansa Mehta and CEDAW etc. Dr Nanda discussed successful strategies as a work in progress, the need to go beyond technicalities, and need for organically brought about changes, rather than depending on legal, judicial systems.

The Panel discussion was followed by a lively question answer session where eager members of the audience engaged with the three speakers on various aspects of their respective presentations. This also set the stage for the highlight of the session, the taking of the Pledge by the audience. The large number of students present in the Auditorium made sure that the meaningful Pledge read out in English and Hindi by Ms Bulbul Das echoed from all sides of the large auditorium.

Lunch was followed by the concluding part of the campaign launch- screening of the Hindi film "Jalpari", ably directed by the talented Sh Neelmadhav Panda. In pindrop silence, with rapt attention, the audience saw the movie in which an urban family comes for a vacation to Madhogarh village in Mahendragarh district of Haryana. There they see the worst of cruelty and violence to women through the eyes of a small girl. Natural settings, low-key drama, excellent acting by the child artiste and others marked the film, bringing the program to a fitting conclusion.

Ms M.S.H. Jhabwala, President AIWC, 1964-1968

- Kuljit Kaur, Vice- President, AIWC



Mrs. M.S.H Jhabwala was AIWC president for two terms from year 1964 to 1966 and 1966 to 1968. Born in Bombay Ms Jhabwala was the niece of renowned Phrozeshah.M.Mehta. While still a student at the University, she married Sh

S.H.Jhabwala, a labour leader of Bombay. From 1935 she was an active member of AIWC and was member Standing Committee for 31 years. All these years she actively participated in the activities of AIWC. She remained Honorary Treasurer for 12 years, Vice President for 6 years and President AIWC from 1964 to 1968. Her election for a second term was due to her willing co operation, the affection and confidence of members in her devotion to work.

The feather in her cap was the coming up of Distressed Womens Home named Bapnu Ghar, one of the most prestigious Project of AIWC. Ms Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya speaking at its inauguration congratulated the President and said that the coming up of Distressed Womens Home had become possible due to the personal efforts of Ms Jhabwala. A donation of Rs One Lakh was announced by the Lotus trust of Bombay for the relief and rehabilitation of distressed women. The President also announced that preference should be given to war widows. The construction of this home at 6, Bhagwan Das Road became possible because of the spontaneous public help and donations forthcoming due to the zeal, zest and labour put in by Ms Jhabwala, in implementing the plan in her unique way.

She was a President who inspired confidence in the public and the donations were tribute to the working of AIWC. It was due to her efforts that an additional Working Womens Hostel was also built at 6 Bhagwan Das Road during her tenure

After completion of one year she gave a message for the magazine Roshini.' A strong laxity seems to have crept into our National character and also in our moral values, which is responsible for the unscrupulous desire for easy money and easy profit which has vitiated our economy, political life and social life. We need men and women who are honest fearless and bold, who are ready to wage war against evil practices'

She appealed to the members of AIWC to be in the forefront, in the front line, and show the country that women are above malpractices

She supported family planning diligently and spoke at length about one of the most urgent problems. Addressing the members of AIWC branches, she said that the drive for family planning has to be provided by socially conscious women workers to make the scheme effective, all the members should understand the gravity of controlling the population, otherwise all efforts of National progress will be sadly hindered. This is the first duty of our women at present.

Ms Jhabwala focused on dealing with food shortage, housing, education and legal aid for women. She considered AIWC as place of worship. AIWC was a religion for her. It is believed that very few have the energy and dynamism as Ms Jhabwala had at her age. Her inspiration was AIWC and her dedication towards the organization.

During the four years of her service in AIWC as President, she was able to start two major projects Bapnu Ghar and Kamla Devi Hostel for working women which was a rare thing at that time.

At the Annual conference of AIWC at Balasore, Orissa in December 1965. Ms Jhabwala in her Presidential address said 'If we want to continue in our present democratic way of life, we must see to it that every person has enough to eat. Terrible is the lot of poor who have to struggle everyday for two meals. She asked the members to organize vigilance committees to check the evil activities of hoarders and profiteers.

Referring to students unrest she said 'we must take effective steps to open the eyes of the students to the destruction they are heading for, but handle them in a motherly way,

In addition to her association with AIWC, Ms Jhabwala was councilor of Bandra Municipality for 12 consecutive years and Member of Municipal Corporation for four years. She travelled all over the world and published articles on social reforms

Ms M.S.H.Jhabwala completed her life journey on October 9, 1970. We all members of AIWC bow our heads to this great personality in reverence for her thoughtful steps to help the distressed as well as working women of the country.

✍ Far and Near ✍

Thanjavur Branch : We are very happy to record that, with the able guidance of AIWC hq, we are doing our best for the welfare of women.

Our recent activities were:

- ✧ In association with the Indian Red Cross Society, we organised a blood donation camp on January 26th. Nearly 50 units of blood were collected and volunteers from various organisations such as Lions, Rotary club members participated.
- ✧ At Earippurakkurai, a small hamlet in the costal belt, we conducted a general health camp, in association with the local public health centre. Dr. Davidson, Block Medical Officer conducted the screening tests. Those who had minor health issues were given free medicines with the support of State Medical Centre, Thanjavur. Major health issues were referred to the Thanjavur Medical College Hospital and Raja Mirasdhara Hospital for women and children.
- ✧ In March there was a fire accident at Srinivasapuram, Thanjavur. Shri Thangappan who lost all his belongings was given a kitchen set, blankets etc. Philanthropist Haji N. Shaik Seraputheen also contributed cash.
- ✧ During May in another fire accident at Ganapathy Nagar, Shri Udhaya who suffered loss was provided with relief materials.
- ✧ In April 2016, tree plantation campaign was organised in which trees were planted on the premises of Indian Council of Child Welfare, near railway overbridge, Thanjavur. This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Rajagopal on the importance of growing and preserving the trees to ensure ecological balance.
- ✧ We celebrated Republic Day in a grand manner. National flag was hoisted by the Chairman, Indian Red Cross Society in front of our office in

the presence of Shri Raghuraman, Managing Director of National Press and Secretary of Indian Council of Child Welfare, Thanjavur. Inmates of ICCW participated.

- ✧ A first aid service centre was opened for three days during the Vailankanni Festival. Pilgrims from the various parts of neighbouring district visited the shrine Vailankanni basilica in Nagapattinam District. Free medicines were provided.

An orientation training was provided to the various self help groups under the aegis of AIWC, Thanjavur. Officials from District Industries Centre, Social Welfare Department, DRDA and Women's Welfare Dept. were invited to present the Govt. Welfare schemes to women and children. Nearly 40 women from various self help groups participated in the programme and got the benefits.

Kanyakumari Branch : Our branch conducted the workshop on "Women's Global Call for Climate Justice" on 25th June 2016. Our President Dr. Sumithra Raguvaran presided over the function.

Resource persons were - 1. Dr. Lal Mohan, Ph.D, Former Principal, Scientist, I.C.A.R. New Delhi. 2. Dr. K. S. Bharathi, Ph.D, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Nagercoil. 3. Dr. Swarna Priya, Ph.D, Principal, Institute of Horticulture, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, Pechiparai, Kanyakumari District. 4. Mrs. Anitha Natarajan, Committee Member, Kasturiba Mathar Sanghom.

Dr. Lal Mohan gave a very good speech with power point presentation on "International efforts to control global climate change". He told about the history of national efforts for climate change mitigation, Kyoto meeting in Japan, Germany meeting, Paris Agreement on climate change and its implementation, and UNFCCC. He gave a picture of

COP and green house gas also. His presentation paper was distributed to all participants. He distributed a book on Impact of Sea level rise on the Costal Heritage Buildings of South Tamil Nadu.

Dr.Bharathi, Pollution Control Officer gave some useful points to avoid pollution. She explained the impending danger of by products of carbon-di-oxide and how to reduce it. She gave some points about pollution control.

Dr.Swarna Priya, Principal Tamil Nadu Agriculture College, Pechiparai gave a speech on "Role of women on mitigation of climate change" with power point presentation.

☆ At last our member Mr.Anitha Natarajan spoke on 'Women's global call for climate Justice'. She explained AIWC's involvement with the climate negotiation and woman and gender constituency.

N.G.O Mrs. Sowmini and group sang a song on climate change. Mrs. Ramalekshmi President of Madurai AIWC branch came to the meeting.

☆ Greetings messages which came from Mrs. Rehana Begum, Vice president, AIWC and climate change Member-in-Charge Mrs.Usha Nair were read by Prof. Rama Nair, our committee member.

☆ 75 students from local colleges, N.G.Os, Create Trust, Human Rights Association, Indian National Trust for Arts & Cultural Heritage, (INTACT) Citizen Welfare Association, Guild of Service, Sureksha Community Centre, Mahalekshmi Mathar Sanghom, Doctors and our sanghom members were the participants. Participation certificates were given to students. They asked many questions. Resource persons replied to them.

Dehra Dun, main branch: Shri Krishna Janamasthmi and Independence day were celebrated with much fervor. President Aruna Chawla President said that the organization is working for the upliftment and welfare of

underprivileged women and children. Through cultural and national festivals, underprivileged and special children can show their talents. Secretary Prem Lata Bhrithari told about the activities of the organization like Health Camps, facilitation of the meritorious poor students, legal awareness, donating wheel chair s etc. and many competitions for making members self confident . Dr. Amarjeet Kaur convened and compered the programme effectively. **Aruna Chwla**

Human Touch Foundation, Gr. Noida: On 15th August, we hosted a program for Dhadha village children in the 5 star Hotel Radisson. After the flag hoisting ceremony, patriotic songs were sung, Dr Upasana Singh then spoke about the need for all to work for saving the environment. Children enjoyed a good lunch and were given books and school bags.

Anemia camp was held on 12th August in the Junior High School, Dhadha Village. Anemia medications were distributed. Large number of students, teachers and parents availed the tests. Arrangements were coordinated efficiently by the Principal Shri Yogendra Kumar Sharma and teachers of the school.

President Upasana Singh said that simple measures



can prevent the disease in children and adults. From time to time such camps raised awareness in society and sensitized students.

Upasana Singh, President

Pathankot Branch : ❀ In February, a free acupressure center was opened in Ram Mandir Char Marla . Mr Ashwini Sharma gave his esteemed services, and many people benefited.

❀ On the eve of Womens Day, Mrs Inderveer Kaur, ASI, womens cell was honored with a shawl and a framed certificate. She gave an educative lecture to 65 ladies who attended.

❀ On Navratra Ashtami Mrs Anita Alle our ex President did Poojan of fifty girls keeping in mind Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.



4. In the month of May, Mrs Raj Dogra donated 150 Allovera plants to Military Hospital Pathankot, and five decorative plants with pots.

Santosh Rana, President

Batala Branch : A seminar on “Beti Bachao Beti Padhao” was organized at Govt. Sen.Sec.School Vill.Dhupsari on 26.8.2016.

The seminar started at 10:30 am and continued till 2:00 pm. 102 Ladies and girls participated. Mrs. Paramjit Kaur an educationist and Satinder Kaur a social worker were Resource persons. Mrs. Paramjit Kaur said that in the past girl child was killed soon after birth. But these days, a girl child is killed before birth. Government has made strict rules to avoid female feticide but still it is going on. NGO's are playing important role by making aware the

masses. But more work needs to be done.

Resource Person Mrs. Satinder Kaur said that girls are doing very well in every field recently two girls upheld the name of India in Olympic Games. But still difference is made between boys and girls. Resource persons were honoured, Mrs. Parkash Kaur Naroo Chairperson A.I.W.C Batala gave a vote of thanks.

Neelam Mahajan, President

Hello Mom, Pochampur, Dwarka, New Delhi : Womens call for Climate Justice was the theme of the Seminar organized by Hello Moms, affiliated branch of SWEDWA, on 28th June.

The venue was the Balmiki Choupal, Pochampur , a semi- urban village, in Dwarka. The program was supported by WEDO (Womens Environment & Development Organization) as part of its global awareness campaign.

Residents of the village attended with the Pradhan and other local body officials.

In her lead presentation, Kalyani Raj spoke about the priority issues in the environment and climate change issues confronting the world. She urged women to reduce use of plastics, and segregate household waste to prevent pollution.

Ms Malini CMD, Microsoft Consultant and services , wanted women to systematically manage waste, generate energy for domestic needs, and prepare compost for fields. Dr Shyamala Mani, Insitute for Urban Development clarified how small efforts at individual level could have great benefits for the environment. She described the present urban scenario of collection and management of waste, which led to employment and income generation for many poor families.

Ms R. Swarnalata, Editor Research Advocacy on Environment Issues, and ex- Flt. Lt. Indian Air Force, said human greed has made the planet sick. Women must now make an effort to make the earth livable for children. The more plastics we use, the more we pollute our surroundings, water and air. Discarded

mobile phones add to pollution. She quoted from the Isha Upanishad

“Enjoy the things of the world without greed and selfishness. By producing more, consuming more, and wasting more, we will use up resources meant for future generations.”

Mr J. K. Mehta, Regional Manager, World Energy Council and Secretary- General, South Asia Forum for Energy Efficiency congratulated AIWC and Hello Moms for their good work. Due to the programs held in Dwarka, there had been a rise in the water table from 17 mtr (2014), to 19 mtrs in 2015. Government steps like Swach Bharat and others needed our support to be a success. After a short break, shops and customers had again started using plastic bags. Burning of dry leaves in winters continues despite a ban. He urged the entire community to implement environment friendly measures and stop pollution.

Ms Asha Gambhir, Secretary- General AIWC, congratulated women of Palam village and Dwarka for their good work. Putting into practice what she said, in view of adequate light in the hall, she had several lights switched off, and curtains opened to bring in light and fresh air. She promised support of AIWC to womens initiatives for garbage management.

Vote of thanks was given by Swapna, member from Palam branch.

SWEDWA Celebrates Worlds Consumer Rights Day : Consumer Rights & Disposal of E-waste were the focus of a SWEDWA Workshop held in AIWC premises on 7th July. The first speaker was Sh Shrey Tyagi, form ATTERO Waste management organisation. In his power-point presentation he showed how all kinds of electronic waste, old TV sets, laptops, electrical wiring, mobiles etc collected by ATTERO, scientifically manage, precious metals like gold and copper were recovered, and scientific disposal done. If not disposed responsibly, tons of

harmful electronic waste pollute the soil, water and our health.

The next speaker was Ms Sushma Yadav, Member, Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum who spoke of different levels of Consumer protection, and how housewives could avail of their rights. In case of delay in redressal of a problem, the consumer should go to the next level. Consumer courts had been set up to release congestion in civil courts, and take quick decisions. She replied to several questions of members, and offered solutions .

The highlight of the Seminar was the whole-hearted participation of the Chief Guest, Swati Maliwal (Aam Aadmi party), Chairperson Dehi Womens Commission. Taking up the priorities of work in the Commission, she said that womens safety had the most importance. More and more cases of violence and crimes against women were reported , a great number were from Delhi, a cause of anxiety for the Commission. This showed a failure of governance, and deterioration of social norms and values. The Commission was doing its best, proposing new and stricter laws, better compensation and rehabilitation of victims. NGOs like AIWC could spread awareness among people, motivate more parental supervision of sons, and act fast to prevent incidents of crime. They were also invaluable in offering rehabilitation to victims. She gave numerous examples of action taken by the Commission on all fronts for preventing attacks on women.

There were rounds of applause for Ms Maliwal. She then distributed Certificates to 20 students of Lady Irwin college who had completed a SWEDWA course on social work, and released the 1st and 2nd SWEDWA newsletter, congratulating Ms Rajaram for the excellent work.

Ms Mythily Jagannathan gave the vote of thanks, appreciating the participation of all the speakers , with special thanks to the Chairperson Delhi Womens Commission.

Janaki Rajaram

ROSHNI, Quarterly Journal of AIWC

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डोर रिश्तों की

— सुजाता, ए.आई.डब्ल्यू.सी. लाइब्रेरी

नये और चमक से भरे रिश्ते अक्सर समय के साथ अपनी चमक खो देते हैं जबकि दिल से बने प्रेम व अपने से रिश्ते कठिन समय में भी आपके साथ बने रहते हैं। इसलिए सच्चे रिश्ते तथा मन से जुड़े लोगों का मोल पहचानना बहुत जरूरी है।

हर रिश्ता कच्चे रेशम की डोर से बंधा होता है, अगर वह टूट जाता है तो आसानी से जुड़ता भी है लेकिन दिल में एक गांठ रह जाती है। हर रिश्ता अलग होता है और उसे बेहतर बनाने के तरीके भी।

अपनों के साथ रिश्ता : अपने से बड़ों का सम्मान करें, क्या मतलब रहे अगर वक्त गुजर जाने के बाद आपको अपनों की कीमत समझ में आये? इसलिए अपनों की इस अनमोल पूंजी को सहेजकर रखिए। वैसे भी आपके अपने आपसे सिर्फ प्रेम की आस रखते हैं और कुछ नहीं।

अपने खुद से रिश्ता : दूसरों के लिए सोचना उन्हें वक्त देना बहुत ही पाजिटिव कदम है, लेकिन कभी कभी खुद के लिए वक्त निकालना और अपने होने का एहसास करना बहुत सुकून देता है। समाज में हम बहुत से लोगों से रिश्ते बनाते हैं। लेकिन जिस तरह हम बाहरी रिश्ते बनाते हैं हमें स्वयं से भी अपना रिश्ता बनाना चाहिए। इस बात पर बराबर नजर रखनी चाहिए कि हमारे खुद से रिश्ते कैसे हैं। वर्तमान की भागदौड़ वाली जिन्दगी में हम इतने व्यस्त हो चुके हैं कि हमारे पास खुद के लिए समय ही नहीं है।

सरल और सकारात्मक बनें : आप जितनी सरल और खुश रहेंगी आपका रिश्ता उतना ही खुशहाल रहेगा और उस रिश्ते में आपसी झगड़े और मन मुटाव भी कम रहेंगे सभी खास रिश्तों को समझदारी से निभायें।

दोस्तों के साथ आपका रिश्ता : हम सभी के दोस्त होते हैं, जो हर सुख दुख के समय में हमारा साथ देते हैं। दोस्त अच्छे या बुरे हो सकते हैं। अच्छे दोस्त आपके जीवन को सार्थक बनाते हैं। सकारात्मक ऊर्जा के साथ वे आपको जीवन जीने का हौसला देते हैं, जरूरी नहीं कि आपका दोस्त आपकी हमउम्र ही हो। एक अलग उम्र का दोस्त आपको एक अलग नजरिया देता है। आफिस में आपकी सीट के पास बैठने वाला सहकर्मी भी आपका दोस्त हो सकता है। वॉक पर रोज मिलने वाले दादा जी, कोई भी आपका दोस्त हो सकता है।

मन को लगता है कि मेरा है, तो मेरा हो जाता है। मन कहता है कि मेरा नहीं है, तो पराया। व्यक्ति हो या वस्तु, मेरा से तेरा होते ही हमारे भाव बदलने लगते हैं। मन ही हंसता है, और मन ही रोता है। मन का ही सुख-दुःख है, और मन का ही संसार और “मन ही वो डोर है जो रिश्तों को सहेज कर रखता है”।



मिलावटें कैसी-कैसी

रासायनिक मिलावट

☛ पोषण रहित रसायन, जिन्हे भोजन में कम मात्रा में मिलाया जाता है ताकि उनकी दिखावट, फलेवर व बनावट को बेहतर बनाने के साथ लम्बे समय तक सुरक्षित रखा जा सके। इन्हें खाद्य अपमिश्रण कहते हैं।

☛ रसायन आधारित ऐसे कीटनाशक, जिन्हें फसलों को कीड़े व कीड़े से बचाने के लिए छिड़का जाता है।

मिलावटी तत्व

कैल्शियम कार्बाइड : आम व केले को पकाने के लिए इस्तेमाल किया जाता है।

कॉपर सल्फेट : इसे भी फलों को जल्दी पकाने के लिए इस्तेमाल किया जाता है।

ऑक्सीटॉसिन : कद्दू, तरबूज, सीताफल, बैंगन, तोरई, और खीरे के आकार को बढ़ाने के लिए इस्तेमाल करते हैं।

वैक्स : सेब व नाशपाती की चमक बढ़ाने में प्रयोग होता है।

सस्ते रंग : हरे रंग में कई हानिकारक रसायन जैसे मेटेलिक लेड का इस्तेमाल होता है, जिसे हरी और पत्तेदार सब्जियों को ताजा दिखाने में इस्तेमाल किया जाता है।

सेकरीन : तरबूज को मीठा बनाने में प्रयोग होती है।

लेड क्रोमोट : इसका इस्तेमाल आमतौर पर साबुत हल्दी में किया जाता है।

अन्य मिलावटें : फसल में कृत्रिम खाद, उर्वरक, पशु आहार व कंकड़ इत्यादि।

जांच के आसान तरीके

सेब : वैक्स की पॉलिश से सेब पर चमक आती है। ऐसे सेबों पर हल्की धारियां भी देख सकते हैं। छिलका उतारते समय उस पतली परत को महसूस कर सकते हैं।

केला व आम : आम तौर पर बहुत अधिक मात्रा में कैल्शियम कार्बाइड डालकर पकाये गए फल तने से हरा रंग लिए होते हैं। आम को कैल्शियम कार्बाइड से पकाकर आने पर आम पर जगह-जगह हरे चकत्ते देखे जा सकते हैं।

हींग : साबुन का चूरा मिट्टी के कण व राल मिलाई

जाती है। कई बार इसका असर दस्त के रूप में हो सकता है। शुद्ध हींग जलाने पर कपूर की तरह जलती है। अशुद्ध हींग पानी में घोलने पर बर्तन के तल में गन्दगी इकट्ठा मिलेगी।

शहद : (चीनी व सेकरीन) लम्बे समय तक इसे खाते रहने से ग्लूकोज लेवल बढ़ जाता है। इसकी जांच के लिए रुई की बत्ती बनाकर शहद में डुबोयें। अगर मिलावट हुई तो जलाने पर रुई जल जाएगी, अन्यथा रुई या तो जलेगी ही नहीं या उसमें से आवाज आएगी।

लाल मिर्च पाउडर : ईट का चूरा मिलाया जाता है। मिलावट जांचने के लिए पानी में लाल मिर्च डालें। चूरा नीचे बैठेगा व लाल मिर्च तैरती रहेगी।

दूध : डिटर्जेंट, सिन्थेटिक मिल्क व चॉक पाउडर। दूध में समान मात्रा में पानी मिलाने पर दूध में झाग बनता है तो यह डिटर्जेंट की मिलावट हो सकती है। सिन्थेटिक मिल्क का स्वाद हल्का कड़वा लगता है। गर्म करने पर पीला हो जाता है।

नारियल तेल : अन्य वनस्पति तेलों को मिलाया जाता है। जिससे कोलेस्ट्रॉल बढ़ जाता है। शुद्ध नारियल का तेल फ्रीजर में रखने पर जम जाता है।

क्या करें

☛ खाने से पहले गुनगुने पानी में फल व सब्जियों को धोयें। फल व सब्जियों को सही तापमान में स्टोर करें।

☛ गोभी व प्याज की बाहरी परत को उतारकर खायें।

☛ अधिक प्रोसेस्ड की हुई चीजों की जगह ताजे फल व सब्जियों को तरहीज दें।

☛ संभव है तो घर में किचन गार्डन बना सकते हैं।

☛ सामान खरीदते समय लेबल को ध्यान से पढ़ें। लेबल पर लिखे नामों के संबंध में अपनी समझ बढ़ायें। उदाहरण के लिए लेबल पर हाई फ्रक्टोज कार्न सिरप लिखा होता है, जिसका इस्तेमाल मिठास के लिए होता है। यह सामान्य चीनी से सस्ता भी होता है। जबकि इसे पचाने में समय अधिक लगता है। कृत्रिम मिठास वजन भी बढ़ाती है।

☛ अनाज फल व सब्जियों के प्राकृतिक रंग को महत्व दें। क्वालिटी से समझौता ना करें।

“(FSSI) फूड एण्ड सेफ्टी विभाग”

समाज सेविका — तारा बहैल

तारा बहन, आपका शुभ जन्म 01 जुलाई 1924 में बालौद, जिला दुर्ग, सी.पी. थाने आज के छत्तीसगढ़ में हुआ था और आपकी शिक्षा का प्रारम्भ चान्दा-चद्रपुर (महाराष्ट्र) से हुआ था। और आपको लिटिंग सर्टिफिकेट सेन्ट उरसुल्ला स्कूल नागपुर से ही मिला था। आपने पिताजी, माताजी की छत्रछाया में रहकर एम.ए., बी.एस.सी. और बी.टी. भी उत्तीर्ण की। आपके पिताजी के मित्र बाबालाल सिंह जी ने एक-एक पैसा इकट्ठा करके कन्याओं के लिए कपूरथला में एक स्कूल चलाया जिसका नाम "हिन्दू पुत्री पाठशाला" रखा गया था। वहां पर आपने मुख्य अध्यापिका का भार साढ़े आठ साल तक संभाला। जब आपने पढ़ाना शुरू किया तब स्कूल में सिर्फ 300 बच्चे थे और जब 1954 में छोड़ा तो उसमें संख्या 1100 की थी। आपने कस्तूरबा ग्राम इंदौर में डॉ० सुशीला बहनजी के मार्गदर्शन में प्रशिक्षण लिया। आपका लक्ष्य बच्चों की पढ़ाई, गांव की सफाई, और ग्राम विकास ये ही रहा है। भारत के बंटवारे के बाद सब बहनों के साथ आपने बहनों की इज्जत बचाने के लिए शहीद भगत सिंह की बहन के साथ वनीता आश्रम में काम किया तथा कपूरथला में बहुत सेवा कार्य किया। अलग अलग पढ़ो पर अनेक संस्थाओं के साथ जुड़कर पूरा जीवन समाज कार्य में

व्यतीत किया। जैसे कि चण्डीगढ़ विकास क्षेत्र ANP, UNDP आदि योजनायें UNICEF, FAO, FORD Foundation, WHO, UNDP आदि संस्थाओं के साथ इन सब योजनाओं को ग्राम विकास के संदर्भ में सुचारु रूप से कार्यान्वित किया। भारत सरकार ने प्रतिनिधि की भूमिका में आपको कीलिकियम, मनीला, फिलिपिन्स आदि अंतर्राष्ट्रीय परिषदों में भेजा था।

Deputy Commissioner Women's Development के पद से निवृत्त होकर 1984 में पंजाब हरियाणा की कस्तूरबा ट्रस्ट की प्रतिनिधि बनीं।

खेती के विकास में आपको बहुत दिलचस्पी है। कार्यकर्ताओं के परिवार और बच्चे आपकी छत्रछाया में पढ़ाई तथा चरित्रसंपन्न बन रहे हैं और समाज को एक आदर्श जीवन का नमूना पेश करते हैं यह आपकी बहुत बड़ी देन है। आपने हर जगह के कस्तूरबा ट्रस्ट के भवनों का पुनः निर्माण किया है। आप आंगनवाड़ी प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र के भी दो केन्द्र इंदौर में अच्छी तरह चला रही हैं। आपका यह सामाजिक सेवा का योगदान प्रेरणादायी है। आपका जीवन दुनिया को गांधी विचार का एक सुन्दर अविष्कार प्रदान करता रहा।

(तारा बहैल, प्रतिनिधि-कस्तूरबा गांधी राष्ट्रीय स्मारक ट्रस्ट)

छोटी सी एक गुड़िया हूं

छोटी सी एक गुड़िया हूं, नन्ही सी इक चिड़िया हूं।
जन्म दिया है जिसको तुमने, वो छोटी सी बिटिया हूं।
मैं तो आई हूं इस दुनिया में खुशियां देने, भैया के संग।
हंसने-खेलने, पर लगता है कुछ ऐसे जैसे आंख की मिट्टिया हूं।
रूठे हो तो कैसे मनाऊं, बाबा को कैसे हसाऊं।
मां मेरी तो यह इच्छा है, कि मैं तेरे संग हाथ बटाऊं।
बाबा तुम भी अब मान जाओ, अपने कांधे का बोझ हटाओ।
कुछ न मांगूंगी मैं तुमसे, बस थोड़ा मुस्कुराओ।

— अनमोल

शाखा गतिविधियाँ

हरिद्वार शाखा : 24 अगस्त 2016 को जाग्रति ऑल इण्डिया कांफ्रेंस, हरिद्वार द्वारा "बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ" विषय पर एक विशेष कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया।

कार्यक्रम का शुभारम्भ करते हुए संस्था की उपाध्यक्षा उमा पाण्डेय ने बताया कि स्त्री और पुरुष एक दूसरे के पूरक हैं। किसी एक के बिना यह सृष्टि आगे नहीं बढ़ सकती। इस तथ्य को जानने के बावजूद भ्रूण हत्या जैसे अपराध सामने आने लगे हैं। इसी के साथ साथ बेटी बेटे में भेदभाव, लड़कियों को शिक्षा ना दिलवाना जैसी समस्याएं भी हमारे समाज में तेजी से उभरने लगी हैं।

शकुन्तला शास्त्री स्मारक महिला इण्टर कालेज में संस्था की एक सदस्या शशि प्रभा वर्मा ने बताया कि बेटियां भी बेटों से कम नहीं होतीं। बस आवश्यकता है बेटियों को अवसर प्रदान करने की, शिक्षित करने की और इस प्रकार बेटियों को भी बेटों के ही समान उड़ान भरने की अनुमति देने की, अवसर प्रदान करने की। विद्यालय पर उक्त विषय पर स्लोगन

प्रतियोगिता व निबन्ध प्रतियोगिता का भी आयोजन किया गया।

— डॉ० करुणा शर्मा, अध्यक्ष

सहारनपुर शाखा : कार्यालय द्वारा निर्देशित "Celebration of the Girl Child" विषय पर एक दिवसीय जागरूकता रैली का आयोजन 24 अगस्त 2016 को किया गया।

सर्वप्रथम संरक्षिका श्रीमती कुन्ती पाल जी ने रैली का शुभारम्भ किया और निम्नलिखित नारे बोले गये।

बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ

बेटी को मत समझो भार, बेटी है जीवन का आधार।

और सबको शपथ दिलाई कि अपने आसपास के घरों के क्षेत्रों में बेटियों को सम्मानजनक जीवन दिलाएंगे।

इसी श्रृंखला में 15 अगस्त को ध्वजारोहण एवम् सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम प्रस्तुत किया और 25 अगस्त को जन्माष्टमी का कार्यक्रम भी आयोजित किया गया।

— श्रीमती चन्दा पोद्दार, अध्यक्ष

जिंदगी

तू जिन्दगी को जी
उसको समझने की कोशिश ना कर,
सुन्दर सपनों के ताने बाने बुन
उसमें उलझने की कोशिश ना कर,
चलते वक्त के साथ तू भी चल
उसमें सिमटने की कोशिश ना कर,
अपने हाथों को फैला, खुल कर सांस ले
अन्दर ही अन्दर घुटने की कोशिश ना कर,
मन में चल रहे युद्ध को विराम दे
खामखाह खुद से लड़ने की कोशिश ना कर,
कुछ बातें भगवान पर छोड़ दे
सबकुछ खुद सुलझाने की कोशिश ना कर,
जो मिल गया उसी में खुश रह
जो सुकून छीन ले वो पाने की कोशिश ना कर,
रास्ते की सुन्दरता का लुत्फ उठा
मंजिल पर जल्दी पहुंचने की कोशिश ना कर।
!!आनन्दम्!!

वे बुजुर्ग जिनके बच्चे अब परदेस में हैं

— गौरीशंकर राजहंस

उम्र की अपनी शारीरिक परेशानियां होती हैं, फिर इसमें वे परेशानियां जुड़ जाती हैं जो बड़ी उम्र की वजह से किसी को वह समाज देता है।

अमेरिका के और पश्चिम के कई देशों के वृद्धाश्रमों में भारतीय बुजुर्गों की संख्यालगातार बढ़ रही है। आम तौर पर जो भारतीय युवा वहां नौकरी के लिए जाते हैं और अपना परिवार बसा लेते हैं, वे कुछ समय बाद अपने माता पिता को भारत से बुला लेते हैं। आम तौर पर अमेरिका में बस जाने वाले युवा दम्पतियों में पति-पत्नी, दोनों ही काम करते हैं, इसलिए शुरू के वर्षों में उन्हें अपने माता पिता की जरूरत पड़ती है, जिनसे उन्हें बच्चों की देखभाल के लिए अच्छा सहारा मिल जाता है। अमेरिका की भाषा में जिसे 'बेबी सिटिंग' कहा जाता है। मगर जब बच्चे बड़े होकर स्कूल जाने लगते हैं, तो यही माता पिता अकेलेपन और उपेक्षा का शिकार होने लगते हैं। परदेस में अक्सर उन्हें वह समाज भी नहीं मिलता, जिससे वे जुड़ा महसूस कर सकें। यह स्थिति उन्हें वृद्धाश्रमों की तरफ धकेल देती है।

जो अपने बच्चों के पास विदेश नहीं जाते, उनकी स्थिति भी कोई बहुत अच्छी नहीं है। इतना जरूर है कि वे अपने समाज और अपने पुराने सोशल नेटवर्क के बीच रहते हैं, लेकिन उपेक्षा उन्हें भी सहनी पड़ती है। सबसे बड़ी बात यह है कि इस बड़ी उम्र में जब उन्हें भौतिक और मानसिक तौर पर अपने बच्चों की सबसे ज्यादा जरूरत होती है, बच्चे उनके पास नहीं होते। देश के तमाम शहरों में ऐसे कई माँ बाप हैं, जो बड़े-बड़े घरों में बैठे हुए अपने बच्चों की चिट्ठी या फोन का इंतजार करते रहते हैं, इनमें सभी की आर्थिक स्थिति इच्छी हो, ऐसा नहीं है। कई तो ऐसे हैं जो अपने बच्चों को विदेश भेजने के जुगाड़ में अपनी सारी सम्पत्ति बेच चुके होते हैं, उन्हें चिट्ठी और फोन के साथ 'मनीट्रांसफर' का भी इंतजार होता है।

ऐसे दौर में जब संयुक्त परिवारों तक में बुजुर्गों की उपेक्षा के उदाहरण हमें हर जगह दिखाई देते हैं, अपने बच्चों या समाज से अलग रहने वाले बुजुर्गों के कष्ट आसानी से समझे जा सकते हैं।

परिवार मानव की धरोहर

— डॉ० उषा अरुण चतुर्वेदी, अखिल हिन्दू महिला परिषद, अहमदाबाद

यह सत्य है परिवार मनुष्य की धरोहर है जिसको आज हमें बचाना है। बिन परिवार हम सब अकेले हैं। धीरे धीरे संयुक्त परिवार खत्म होते जा रहे हैं।

रामायण और महाभारत जैसे प्राचीन ग्रंथों में संयुक्त परिवार के सर्वाधिक उदाहरण मिलते हैं। उस समय से आज तक 3 या 4 पीढ़ियों का एक घर में साथ रहना, एक ही रसोईघर में बैठकर खाना खाना भारतवर्ष में सरल माना जाता है। परिवार में सदस्यों को परंपरागत संस्कार और धार्मिक मूल्य मिलते हैं। बच्चों और बुजुर्गों की सेवा सरलता से हो सकती है।

संयुक्त परिवार में दादा दादी, चाचा चाची सब पूर्ण सहयोग देते हैं। इससे परिवार के संस्कार और संस्कृति की धरोहर मजबूत होती है। किन्तु समय के साथ बदलाव आने लगा। बढ़ते हुए औद्योगीकरण के साथ युवा वर्ग पढ़ लिखकर नौकरी करने लगा। गृह उद्योग का महत्व कम होने लगा परिवार के सदस्यों की व्यक्तिगत आमदनी में विभिन्नता आने लगी। बढ़ती हुई शिक्षा के साथ साथ व्यक्तिगत विचारधाराएं भिन्न भिन्न होने लगी। सदस्यों को बुजुर्गों का एकाधिकार और कठिन अनुशासन खटकने लगा। घर से दूर शहर में या

अलग राज्य में या अलग देश में घर के सदस्य बसने लगे।

इसके उपरान्त संयुक्त परिवार पुरुष प्रधान रहा। महिलाएं पुरुषों से निम्न मानी जाती हैं। माता पिता की अपेक्षा बड़े बेटों का निर्णय योग्य माना गया। लड़कियों की परवरिश में अनुकूलन के पाठ सिखाये गए और लड़कों को अधिपत्य के पाठ सिखाये गए। नई पीढ़ी की महिलाओं को यह बात स्वीकार्य न रही। धीरे धीरे कानून भी महिलाओं के स्वतंत्र विचारधारा समान अधिकार के पक्ष में आने लगा।

विकास के लिए और सामाजिक स्थिरता के लिए परिवार अनिवार्य है। इसी तरह स्वीडन में भी परिवार का महत्व समझते हुए नई कानून व्यवस्था दाखिल की गई है। स्वीडन में जो परिवार में पति पत्नी अपने माता पिता को साथ रखते हैं उस परिवार को सरकार की ओर से विशेष आर्थिक सहायता दी जाती है। भारत में विभिन्न परिवारों में बुजुर्गों का महत्व समझाना है और संयुक्त परिवार में पीढ़ी का अंतर मिटाना है। ये सब महिलाएं ही कर सकती हैं। अगर महिलाओं को इस विषय में सुशिक्षित किया जाए तो परिवार का प्रेम और परस्पर जिम्मेदारी की भावना बरकरार रहेगी।