

Roshni

October - December, 2019

Shilpkala Utsav



ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



AIWC delegates, IAW Conference, Geneva



Swachhta fortnight, rally by residents, Bapnu Ghar, AIWC



Training of Trainers, Thiruvananthapuram



Remembering Smt Lakshmi Menon, AIWC



AIWC's Climate Change Initiatives-COP 25, Madrid



Water conservation programme, GGMM, Kadipur village

ROSHNI

Journal of the All India Women's Conference
October - December 2019

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Contents

* From the Editors Pen	2
* IAW International Conference, Geneva	3
* Shilp Kala Utsav-2019 - Sumi Chopra	6
* Mahatma Gandhi's Art of Living - Dr A. Annamalai	8
* CSW 64/ Beijing +25- A Curtain Raiser - Chandraprabha Pandey	13
* Reminiscences of Beijing 1995 - Kalpakam Yechury	15
* COP 25, Meeting, Madrid, Spain - Usha Nair	18
* A Tribute to Aparna Basu - Devaki Jain & Shivangi Gupta	20
* National Education Policy Consultation Trivandrum, 19th June, 2019 - A Report	22
* National Education Policy Recommendations	24
* Remembering Smt Lakshmi N. Menon	26
* Commemorative Function, Thiruvananthapuram	27
* Success Stories from ECC branch, Kolkata Shikha Mitra	29
* AIWC's Digital Library and Archives Ranjana Gupta	31
* Buzz n' Bustle	35
* Far & Near	38
* Hindi article, poem, branch reports	42

From the Editor's Pen



Dear Sisters,

With this issue we bid farewell to 2019, and prepare to welcome the New Year with its mixed bag of joys, surprises, triumphs and setbacks.

What is happiness? Bringing philosophy into everyday living, the UN Happiness Index 2019, places India at the 140th place in 156 countries of the world. The 6 key markers for assessment of happiness are: freedom, income, trust, life expectancy, social support and generosity. The purpose of the study is to give guidelines for countries to work towards the goals.

Are guidelines mostly for European countries relevant for us. Or should there be goals like clean air and water, food for all, more jobs, and security of women and children, for raising our happiness level? Finally, whatever the guidelines, any national assessment of happiness will depend less on statistics, and more on the joy reflected from happy faces.

Mahatma Gandhi's 150 birth anniversary was the occasion for world-wide celebrations, with films, plays, public welfare events, renaming of roads, commemoration stamps, dan utsav, and so on. Dr Annamalai, Director of the National Gandhi Musum, helps us to look at the art of living as practiced by the Mahatma. He reveals for us the picture of a shrewd, perceptive person, who was at the same time fun-loving and full of mischievous humour. On Dr Aparna Basu's first death anniversary, falling on 3rd December, Dr Devaki Jain recollects many shared experiences.

AIWC's Shilp Kala Utsav, has gathered strength over the years. The 2019 event is described by Sumi Chopra, Convenor of the Utsav. An interesting account of the first International conference for Women is given by Kalpakam Yechury, with a curtain raiser for the forthcoming Conference by Chandraprabha Pandey.

We take you on tour of branches through your reports, and information about recent International conferences attended by AIWC.

Mythily Jagannathan

IAW International Conference, Geneva



The Annual International Alliance Women meeting held in the month of October, 25th – 29th, 2019 at Geneva, in Switzerland, was attended by Dr Manju Kak in her capacity as Board Member & Regional Vice President of IAW, Dr. K.G. Vijayalekshmi, Board Member & Trustee, (Old Age Trust of AIWC), Ms. Radhika, AIWC Member from Kerala, Dr. Roshanara, Member

from Kashmir, and Ms. Meenakashi Kumar, Member from Delhi. The AIWC delegation, which made impressive and well-informed presentations. They added energy, enthusiasm, and passion to discussions which included the agenda for Beijing + 25, internal structuring of the IAW, Project on Sanitary pads and menstrual hygiene, and a Peace Proposal from Congo and working of ECOSOC and other UN agencies. Dr. K.G. Vijayalekshmi spoke about the 'Country Report', Mrs. Roshanara on Women in 'Power and Decision Making', Ms. Meenakshi on 'Women and Economy'.

Dr. Manju Kak moderated the session held on 26th October, 2019. On the 28th October she attended the Beijing+25 along with IAW delegation hosted by Women Major Group & supported by UNECE, where discussions were held on the main development themes. Dr Manju Kak made a presentation on Sustainable Development Goals- India and Asia Region in which she reviewed the progress made by countries of South Asia in implementing Sustainable Development targets, and also pointed to the way forward for achieving the Goals.

Presentation by Dr. Manju Kak

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, comprising 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is especially relevant for South Asia countries which, despite their economic dynamism and remarkable Millennium Development Goal (MDG) achievements, account for 37% of the world's poor, nearly half of the world's malnourished children, and suffer from a number of development and infrastructure gaps. With one fifth of the world's population, South Asia has a critical role in the global achievement of the SDGs. For addressing the key development challenges faced by South Asian countries as highlighted by the leaders, the unfinished agenda needs synergies between 17 SDGs and 169 targets.

India has played an important role in shaping the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). Therefore, it is not surprising that the country's national development goals are mirrored in the SDG's. For implementing the SDG agenda, the Government of India has launched several ambitious programmes. State governments are also engaged in developing roadmaps for achieving the SDGs with several of them having already published their plans. The main messages for India's Voluntary National Review of SDG implementation encapsulates the progress made with respect to Goals 1,2,3,5,14 and 17 (Goal 1-End poverty in all forms everywhere, Goal-2 End hunger, achieved food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, Goal-3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well

being for all at all ages, Goal-5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls , Goal 9- Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive sustainable industrialization and foster innovation, Goal 14- Conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources, Goal17- Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development).

In 2019, approach of India for SDGs development, was based on the vision of 'Wada Na Todo' and 'Leaving No One Behind'. The platform of 'Wada Na Todo' has been created in 2004 particularly looking at the issues on social exclusion and poverty elimination. Indian government's primary aim is to fulfill global commitment of MDGs and SDGs. In 2019 National Conclave the major concern was on the real time data tracking and to partner with this movement. India is fully committed to the 2030 agenda for SGD's, with the agenda of 'Sabka Sath,Sabka Vikas' or 'Collective Efforts, Inclusive Growth' and looking forward towards National Developments Goals.



Goals to be achieved and way ahead

The way ahead : South Asia region has been in the forefront of progress to ensure that WASH services including those in schools, pay attention to the needs of menstruating girls and women.

It is essential to review progress, identify successful approaches, and innovations that can be scaled up, and to ensure that voices of women and girls are heard, so that solutions effectively address their needs and promote their rights. Health is a major concern for women and children. This single step towards health awareness would be to make the change at grass-roots level.

SDG 15: Life on land, Solid waste management

The way ahead: Solid waste management is already a significant concern for municipal governments, across South Asia. It constitutes one of their largest costs and the problem is growing year on year. To extend support to local resources was to start some new approaches like door-to-door collection of waste, composting, private sector participation.

Goal 16: Peace and justice, strong institutions: Communal harmony and national integration

The way ahead: Violence is perhaps the most significant and destructive challenge to development., growth, wellbeing, and the very

survival of countries round the world. Fatalities resulting from armed conflicts are rising in some parts of the world causing mass displacement within countries and across borders, resulting in massive humanitarian crises that adversely impact every aspect of our developmental efforts. Other forms of violence, crime, sexual and gender based

violence also remain a global challenge. South Asia is affected with mass displacement such as the Rohingya crisis(Myanmar), political disturbances in Jakarta (Indonesia), Taliban in Afghanistan etc. Recently aroused terror violence in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, create intolerance in the region. It is really difficult to grasp the direction of change. However an attempt can still be made to note how these broader trends can shape the future scenario. The impact at local levels in the Asia region can cause change in the systems.

SDG 4 : Quality Education

The way ahead::The related goals are critical priorities in the South Asia context, given the remaining gaps, and in view of its latent potential to emerge as the global hub, given its youth population. South Asian governments are adopting right-based approaches to provide universal education, but need to pay attention to the quality of education and training.

SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and empower all women and girls

The way ahead: Despite achieving gender parity in education, South Asia lags behind in economic and political empowerment of women as well as other dimensions of gender equality. Estimates suggest that gender equality could add upto \$4.5 trillion to South Asian countries' GDP by 2025.

With the adoption of 2030 agenda for SDGs, Asia Region pleaded for “leaving no one behind” and “to endeavour to reach the furthest behind the first”.

(With inputs from Ms Ritu, and Ms Pratibha, AIWC Program Officers)

Shilp Kala Utsav-2019



Ever since the inception of women's crafts bazar at Aga Khan Hall in the year 2001, All India Women's Conference has been organizing the yearly event as Shilpkala Utsav, just few days before Diwali, from the year 2012 onwards in Delhi, to promote the skilled women artisans of India. This year's Shilpkala Utsav held from 9th to 11th October in Aga Khan Hall, was a unique confluence of art, craft and culture.

The Mela brought together the products of women artisans of 21 states, displayed at over 100 stalls. Enthralling cultural events were held by some renowned groups in the open ground outside the Hall.

The Mela was inaugurated by Ms Meenakshi Lekhi, M.P., on 9th October. This was followed by a cultural programme presented by differently abled school children and girls from AVI and Bapnu Ghar.

Diversity of crafts on display

Genuine artisans from rural areas had an opportunity to showcase and sell their products. These included lac bangles from Rajasthan, hand-made shoes from Manpara Machedi village, blue pottery of Narbada gaon, Hand Embroidery

Sumi Chopra, Convenor, Shilpkala Utsav



& applique work from Arambada, near Jamnagar, Shibori art work by Ram Pyaari, and many others which attracted customers by their craftsmanship.

For the first time there were designers of Bagh print from Madhya Pradesh, Sumedha KalamKari



from Pedana, Andhra Pradesh. A National Awardee from Patiala brought her fine phulkari work. Kantha work from Jharkhand and West Bengal, Chanderi silks from Madhya Pradesh, Muga silks from Guwahati, Sibori, Batik print from Bolpur, West Bengal, Maheswari sarees, Varanasi silk suits and sarees, tribal textiles, Bhagalpuri dress materials and sarees were other popular items.

Besides these were paintings, pickles, hand made toys, home decoration items, eco-friendly products like the bamboo toothbrushes and products, neemwood comb, jewellery leather bags, home furnishings, metal crafts, and diyas.

Opportunity was also given to a number of entrepreneurs, NGO's and self-help groups.



Most of the artisans participated for the first time at the Crafts Mela. The footfall of visitors was quite high this year as visitors did shopping along with watching cultural programmes. Nukkad Natak by Sukhmanch Theatre was greatly appreciated.

No mela can be complete without an array of tempting food, visitors savoured the food while watching Kalbelia dancers accompanied by the dholak. Puppet shows to the rhythm of the Dholak created a vibrant mood in the Utsav.

The purpose of organizing the Mela was fulfilled by the excellent response from customers, resulting in unprecedented sales of products from over 100



stalls. AIWC not only gave them an opportunity of a platform to sell their products without any mediators, but also encouraged and empowered them to tap a wide market for their products.

The reason for the popularity of Shilpkala Utsav was manifold. Attractively decorated stalls and vibrant environment, wide range of products, selection of good artisans and diversity was well received by the customers who could make purchases at reasonable prices. In fact, it is well said that the AIWC provides the backbone for women's artisans livelihood. The combination of a spectacular ambience, variety of crafts, and cultural programmes helped to make a simple gathering of artisans transform to a grand SHILPKALA UTSAV 2019.

The happy faces of artisans amply rewarded us for all the hard work, planning, and organizing done by the Shilpkala Utsav Team under the AIWC umbrella.



Mahatma Gandhi's Art of Living

Dr A. Annamalai, Director, National Gandhi Museum

The Beauty of Friendship

Gandhi strongly believed that this world is held together by bonds of friendship and love. Our history does not record the day-to-day incidents of love and service. It only records incidents of conflict and wars. Gandhi observed that the acts of love and service are much more common in this world than conflicts and quarrels. We find innumerable villages and towns flourishing in the world. If the world were always full of quarrel and discord, they could not possibly exist.

When the whole world had accepted indentured labour as a social system, Gandhi opposed it. When the whole world accepted that the might is right, Gandhi proved that Right is Might. When the whole world waged violent destructive wars, he waged a nonviolent constructive war. He has changed the narrative and the course of history from violence to nonviolence. Hitherto violence was the ultimate weapon to resolve the political conflicts but after his contribution through non-violent resistance i.e. satyagraha, nonviolence has occupied the centre stage of the recent political struggles all over the world. Gandhi achieved, for the first time in history, the independence of a great country from a great empire without waging a violent war for independence. Up to his day, colonies in the world had won independence from the colonizing powers in Europe, but never without a war. But he achieved independence through peaceful means. This was a landmark in the history of mankind. This is precisely Gandhi's



vital contribution to the history of the human race - Freedom without violence. As Gandhi said, "A Nonviolent rebellion is not a programme of seizure of power. It is a programme of transformation of relationship...."

For Gandhi, human relationship was more important than anything else. He said, "I have known distinction between relatives and strangers, countrymen and foreigners, white and coloured, Hindus and Indians of other faiths, whether Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians or Jews. I may say that my heart has been incapable of making any such distinctions. When Gandhi went to attend the Round Table Conference in London, the British Government deputed two of their most experienced detectives to guard Gandhi. They were among the chosen few who were generally deputed to shadow members of the Royal Family. They were tall imposing men who towered over most of the people who were around Gandhi. To them Gandhi was "the little man" whom they were privileged to guard and look after. Both of them became very fond of Gandhi. They were willing to do anything to be of service to the "little man".

Even when there was too much work to do looking after guests and interviewers, and the people of the press, they readily helped the members of the Gandhi clan.

Gandhi was the busiest man in London during this period. But he found some time to visit the homes of the detectives and spent some time with their families. The detectives said, “We are working for our English Government and we are specifically posted to spy Gandhi. Neither our higher official nor the Prime Minister ever thought of visiting our houses. But Gandhi visited our houses and engaged with our family members. In a way we also became members of his family.” This was Gandhi. Gandhi refused to suspect the human nature. He said, “It will, is bound to, respond to any noble and friendly action.” Soon after Gandhi reached India, Gandhi asked Mahadevbhai to purchase two watches that too made in England. The two detectives received two watches sent by Gandhi from India with the inscription “With love from M. K. Gandhi”.

Gandhi categorically said, “My goal is friendship with the world and I can combine the greatest love with the greatest opposition to wrong.... I have that implicit faith in my mission that, if it succeeds – as it will succeed, it is bound to succeed – history will record it as a movement designed to knit all people in the world together, not as hostile to one another but as parts of one whole.”

The Beauty of Compromise

Life is full of conflict and compromise. Our development depends on how we deal with conflict in our day today life, and ultimately settle it to reach our own goal. Gandhi has given us some guidelines through his own example.

Gandhi went to South Africa for helping in the case of a big Gujarati company owned by Dada Abdulla. His job was to assist the English lawyer understand the accounts written in Gujarati. An intelligent lawyer, Gandhi understood and knew he could win the case for recovery of money from another businessman, Mr Tyebji. But he soon found that both parties were related, and from the same region in Gujarat. So he convinced both to go for an arbitration. The solution given by him at the arbitration, was that small repayments should be made over a long period of time. Both agreed, and the case was settled peacefully.

If Dada Abdulla had insisted on recovering the entire amount at once, Tyebji would have become bankrupt, and there would have been more enmity between the two parties. By amicably settling the case, both parties rose in public estimation. Gandhi says in his Autobiography, “My joy was boundless. I had learnt the true practice of law. I had learnt to find out the better side of human nature and to enter men's hearts. I realized that the true function of a lawyer was to unite parties riven asunder. The lesson was so indelibly burnt into me that a large part of my time during the twenty years of my practice as a lawyer was occupied in bringing about private compromises of hundreds of cases. I lost nothing there by—not even money, certainly not my soul.”

On the second or third day of Gandhi's arrival, Dada Abdulla took him to the Durban court. There he introduced Gandhi to several people and asked him to sit next to his attorney. The Magistrate kept staring at Gandhi and finally asked him to take off his turban. But Gandhi refused to do so and left the court. This was his first act of disobedience in South Africa.

Later on Gandhi applied for admission as an advocate of the Supreme Court. The Law Society surprised everybody by serving him with a notice opposing his application for admission. Gandhi went to Court, against the Law Society. The Judge observed that the objection of Gandhi not attaching an the original certificate had no substance. If he had made a false affidavit, he could be prosecuted, and his name struck off the roll, if proved guilty. But the law makes no distinction between white and coloured people, and hence the Court cannot prevent Mr. Gandhi's enrollment as an advocate. He said 'Mr. Gandhi, you can now take the oath.'

He stood up to take the oath before the Registrar. As soon as he stood up, the Chief Justice, addressing him, said: 'You must now take off your turban, Mr. Gandhi. You must submit to the rules of the Court with regard to the dress to be worn by practicing barristers.' Gandhi obeyed the order, he wanted to reserve his strength for fighting bigger battles. He did not want to exhaust his skill as a fighter in insisting on retaining his turban.'

He understood the applicability of the principle of looking at a thing from a different standpoint in different circumstances. Gandhi said in his Autobiography, "But all my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of Satyagraha".

Simple Living and High Thinking

The challenges before us are advanced and complex. High end technology is now available at our door step. Mobile and entertainment media have entered our bedrooms. The market provides a variety of goods and services, to trap us. The

greatest challenge is how insulate people from this onslaught of technological invention which consumes valuable time and energy.

Simple living does not mean living in poverty. Gandhi advocated simplicity because whatever resources and facilities are available with us should take care of the voiceless and the downtrodden on priority.

We strongly believe that money will do everything and will bring happiness in our life. In the process of earning the money, normally the first casualty is our Happiness. We must understand that the happiness is a state of mind and more and more money cannot bring peace of mind, in fact it destroys inner peace, and produces more and more anxiety.

According to Gandhi, man's happiness really lies in contentment. He who is discontented, however much he possesses, becomes a slave to his desires. Herein lies the ethics of resource use, need but not greed; comfort but not luxury because our natural resources are very limited. With the limited resources, unlimited growth is not at all possible. If you go on disturbing the natural balance of the Earth, then Earth will react.

When there has been deep erosion of moral values in our private and public life, and when ethical principles have all but disappeared, it is good to remember that Gandhian values appear to be an effective alternative to the present crisis of the world. He provided not only the political leadership to achieve freedom, but also moral leadership, which is of greater need today.

Public opinion has to be created to make people understand that which constitutes basic society.

Quality has to be the centre than the Quantity. Content is more important than the container. Simple living and high thinking is the need of the hour. Today the man with a motor car thinks himself superior to the man with a bicycle, though it is the opposite when we look at it from the point of environmental degradation. When we calculate the cost of production, we never calculate how much this technology is environment friendly and how much it damages the environment. As observed by the celebrated author of 'Deschooling Society' by Ivan Illich, Gandhi's simple hut in his ashram at Sevagram "Demonstrates to the world how the dignity of the common man can be brought up. It is also a symbol of the happiness that we can derive from practising the principles of simplicity, service and truthfulness."

Gandhi said, "Civilization, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary restriction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment, and increases the capacity for service."

The modern consumerist culture will lead us to destroy our own earth through global warming and pollution. Gandhi's concept of simple living, will not take us backward, instead with the recent understanding of Ecology and environmental studies, takes us to a peaceful and happy world.

Gandhi and Children

Gandhi loved children and children loved Gandhi. Gandhi was always accompanied by many children whether he was in Ashram or during the tour. Gandhi had a great faith in the innocent love of the children and its impact on others. During his Noakhali pilgrimage, he encountered many



untoward incidents. Gradually, children joined him in chanting Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram. With each passing day the number of children would increase. The atmosphere of tension, fear, mutual hatred gradually started dispelling. Ultimately the parents also responded to the call of love of Gandhi and joined in the chanting of "Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram". Gandhi remarked "Today, I got the light in darkness. This is the result of faith on innocent children."

When he was in South Africa, he started teaching children. Gandhi said, "In my scheme of things the hand will handle tools before it draws or traces writing. The eyes will read the pictures of letters and words as they will know other things in life, the ears will catch the names and meanings of things and sentences. The whole training will be natural, responsive and, therefore, the quickest and the cheapest in the world... Manual work will have to be at the very centre to the whole thing...."

He encouraged children to take part in all common activities of the Ashram, made them responsible by allotting various tasks to them, made them trustworthy by putting trust in them. Gandhi

worked with them in the open fields, and in whatever task they were doing.

Once Kamalnayan Bajaj, son of Gandhi's close associate Jamnalal Bajaj, and his sister went to get Gandhi's blessings when he was in Wardha in 1920. Gandhi smiled and asked them whether they liked their dress or his dress (He then used to wear a dhoti, a shirt and a white cap). They remained silent. But when Gandhi repeated the question. Kamalnayan replied with childish pride that he liked his own dress better. Gandhi took Kamalnayan Bajaj's cap in one hand and placed a white khadi cap in his head and told him that the white cap was simple and beautiful. What appealed to the boy was that it could be washed and kept clean unlike his cap. Another point made by Gandhi was that only a rich man like Jamnalalji could buy a cap for his child, that there were many children in the country who could not get such a cap, and it was not right for us to wear what other children could not have. Children's clothes, he added, should be simple, beautiful, cheap and

yet washable. **"Your clothes seem bright and beautiful, but in fact, colour hides the dirt, and brightness is only a show."**

Gandhi always wanted to connect with the people. He also wanted to connect with the children, writing to children, encouraging them to write to him. If you go through his letters you will find the love for children. Once, when he was in jail, a child wrote and asked him why he gave short, one line replies to questions "When Arjun asked simple questions to Lord Krishna, he gave a lengthy answers which became the Bhagavad Gita" Gandhi replied, "My dear little child, Lord Krishna had only one Arjuna, but I have thousands of Arjunas who are constantly asking questions. What can I do? That is why I am giving short replies." We should also learn the art of interacting with the children without lecturing to them, but in a positive, meaningful way. On his 150th birth anniversary, we should learn the Art of Living from the life of the Mahatma.



Mrs Rakesh Dhawan, and Mrs Kuljit Kaur attending the H.R.D. Parliamentary Commttee meeting on Preventing Violence against Women, December, 2019

CSW 64/ Beijing +25- A Curtain Raiser

Chandraprabha Pandey

The Beijing Declaration and platform for action (4-15 September 1995), was developed at the 4th world conference on women in Beijing China (1995) it was the largest gathering of gender advocates and activists in history. The Beijing declaration was adopted by 189 countries on 12 key critical areas that affected women all over the world. They committed to taking action on 12 key critical areas that affected women all over the world.

1. The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women
2. Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training
3. Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services
4. Violence against women
5. The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation
6. Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources
7. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels
8. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women
9. Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women



10. Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media
11. Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment
12. Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child

The Beijing +25 review process begins in 2019 and will culminate in a global review at 64th session of commission of the status women (CSW 64) in March 2020 in New York from 9-20 March. The global review will highlight the achievement and barriers in the implementation of the Beijing declaration and platform for action (1995)

Process of review

64th session of CSW comprises of the following .
5 regions and their members. Each region chaired by a Chairperson or Vice-chairperson

1. Eastern European states group



2. Asia pacific states group (India is in this group)
3. western European and other states group
4. African states group
5. Latin American and Carribean states group

Each regional group has Steering committees to review the implementation of key areas for Asia pacific states groups. The steering committees consist of the following.

The ten Members of the Beijing+25 Civil Society Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific are:

1. Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)
2. Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW)
3. Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW)
4. Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)

5. Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM)
6. Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW)
7. Gramya Resource Centre for Women
8. International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
9. International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP Asia Pacific)
10. Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre

Each region and its members will do-

- 1 National reviews: comprehensive national level reviews of the programs implemented and challenges faced
- 2 Regional 25 year review processes- the regional commissions of the four nations will convene regional into governmental meeting these will be introduced into the 64th session of the Commission
- 3 Expert group meetings

The main focus of the session will be on the review, appraisal and assessment of the implementation of Beijing declaration and platform of action and the out come.

The review will include an assessment of gender equality and empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realisation of 2030 agenda for sustainable development goals.

Reminiscences of Beijing 1995

Kalpakam Yechury



International Womens Conference, Beijing

The advancement of women is a long process; Beijing was one of its milestones. Three main goals of the International year of women “Equality, Development and Peace”, constitution of a plan of action was on all their activities.

Coming to the Beijing layout, there was no subject concerning women which was not on the agenda. It was a remarkable conference, It was remarkable because NGOs were recognized and a platform was created to discuss the decisions taken at the official U.N forum. The wide number of topics discussed were on poverty, education, health, violence, conflict, economy, human rights, media, environment, decision making etc. I must say it was really a Women’s Movement. Women from all walks of life used the platform to discuss and debate.

There were two sections of groups that went to Beijing, one dealing with UN & State Government, The 2nd was the NGO Forum and an exhibition attached to it.

It was at Beijing where “gender discrimination” as an important topic was discussed for the first time, in fact I can say that the seeds were sown for the first time, and even till date we are fighting for the same. Action platform was divided into 12 critical core areas. They not only identified the concerns but recorded the action plan for each item. We should be proud that this conference was not only a huge affair, but a long lasting gift to women. It was a proud moment when AIWC became a founder member.

At the NGO forum, 4000 workshops were offered in 10 days. This was an evolution of NGO forum

from being a noble camp outside the UN grounds to a legislative partner in the UN hall. Women's priorities changed from information lobbying, to get points across in the decade of empowerment of women, decision making, implementing, monitoring.

Officers from the Government of India, and all organisations working in the Energy field attended, Energia, a pioneer organization, headed by Sheela Oproacha was inaugurated, and AIWC is associated with them ever since.

Aparnaji in her book, History of AIWC has recorded our office bearers writings about the Beijing Conference and the conclusions. Hence I must highlight my personal experience at Beijing. Office Bearers, President, Secretary General, Patrons-Smt. Shobhana Ranade and Late-Dr. Aparna Basu were in the team. It was a thrilling experience for me to go to Beijing for the World Conference on Women 1995. I was at Kakinada, when the late Mrs Lalita Balakrishnan asked me to join the team to help in our Energy exhibition. entrusted me to look after the exhibition work, and the practical demonstration of solar appliances Mrs Balakrishnan had to return to India for an important conference. Mrs. Varadappan was in charge of the whole Environment program.

We reached Beijing in pouring rain, and were accommodated in a 3 bedroom flat. Mrs. Sarojini Vardappan, Mrs. Tripathi in one room, Mrs. Kunti Paul in a smaller single room and Lalita Balakrishnan and I sharing a room. We used to get up early morning. Mrs. Sarojini Varadappan needed a good strong glass of coffee, I used to drink coffee



Indian delegate Mata Nirmala Devi at Beijing

with her, Mrs. Tripathi used to drink tea along with Mrs. Paul. Lalita did not have either coffee or tea. After getting ready we had some (upma) breakfast. Mrs. Varadappan carried some lunch. I should say I was lucky to enjoy the proximity of the veterans, and learn about various subjects and their experiences, I feel proud and lucky.

It must be really appreciated that at the exhibition, there were food stalls for vegetarians, good different vegetables, boiled, steamed etc. This stall was completely away from the non-vegetarian stall. There were also noodles and other Chinese basic preparations. Arrangements for food was excellent. Even sanitary arrangements were comfortable.

Everyday after reaching the venue, I was entrusted with the exhibition work. Every day, after reaching the venue, our duty was to arrange the solar cooker in sunlight, put in rice and vegetables, for khichdi or pongal demonstration. Somehow everyone who visited enjoyed the food and were excited about how it was cooked in the sunlight. There were different types of solar cookers from

Africa, mainly paper folding ones by Africans, from Italy the Solar Cookers were like boxes.

We also had non conventional energy devices like smokeless chulhas, biogas models and other non-conventional energy devices. They were beautiful. There was a good sharing of knowledge between the participants, trying to understand each others' exhibits. exchanging ideas and experiences. I enjoyed being in Beijing and also I learnt a lot.

I must mention the fabulous feeling we used to get, when we came back exhausted from the days work, the volunteers used to massage the feet of elders with warm water and salt. It was a superb gesture of service done by the girls with happiness and cheer!!

There used to be lot of shows, demonstrations, entertainment throughout the day, related to NGO problems from different countries. We saw as many programmes as we could and participate too. There were many stalls selling items from China itself, peanuts were the star attraction, silks and all coloured pearls were very nice. Cane work paintings used to be made on the spot, while we were standing there. One day we went to the Beijing meeting and another day we climbed the Great Wall of China and spoke to our families from there! We enjoyed showing people, explaining things and knowing from others.

The last lap was made memorable by Mrs. Janaki Rajaram, managing all the packing without the real packing material!!! To make it more adventurous it started raining, and it was with difficulty we managed to get a vehicle to reach the airport.

In conclusion, I feel that from 1994, till today, women have made great headway by having been accepted, elected and appointed to high posts, where they play important role in national & international policies. We are proud of the increasing number of women who have reached their goal, and aiming higher still, but also setting examples for other women to follow.

Since 1995 we are constant in our efforts towards empowerment of women, attending all CSW meetings, acting according to the 12 critical areas and also making a place in the meetings. We have gained in the fields of the status of women, empowerment of women, child welfare, and of course climate change mitigation programmes covering all aspects have been taken up all over the country by our Branches in a vigorous way.

With all the on going efforts by each and everyone, in spite of the differences between the developed and developing Nations, I really wish and hope that our Planet will be saved from various climate disasters.

COP 25 Meeting, Madrid, Spain

A Resume



The annual Conference of Parties (COP) organised by UNFCCC was held in Madrid, Spain in the first two weeks of December 2019. There was unprecedented confusion and anxiety preceding this. Brazil was the first choice for hosting COP 25. However, with a change in political leadership in the country, they backed out. Chile was then chosen as the host for the event. However, with hardly one month left for the event, Chile abruptly withdrew from this responsibility owing to widespread civil unrest in the country. They offered to host the event in an alternate venue and Spain stepped in by offering Madrid as a possible location. Incredible as it may sound, arrangements were in place in the very short time available and COP 25 kicked off on schedule on December 2 with Chile as the host and President of the COP.

With the Paris Agreement set to come into effect from 2021, the last three COPs had concentrated on formulating a Rule Book for implementation. Though countries had agreed on certain issues, the most contentious issues of climate finance and compensation for loss and damage were left to be tackled at COP 25. Several scientific bodies

Usha Nair, Vice President

including IPCC had come out with reports that pointed out that the voluntary commitments made by countries to reduce carbon emissions (NDCs) were not sufficient to arrest 'global warming to 2 degrees, striving further to bring it down further to 1.5 degrees', as required by the Paris Agreement. Hence, there was growing demand that countries must revise their commitments upwards at the review scheduled for 2020. Announcement by the US that they would back out from the Paris Agreement had been an early dampener. Reluctance or even outright refusal by some countries to commit to larger voluntary climate targets in emissions in 2020 was a setback. Developed countries who were required to contribute to a climate fund were showing slow progress and reluctance. Hence putting pressure on these countries to meet their obligations towards funds for tackling climate change was an urgent priority at this COP. Unfortunately, there was little progress and there were no concrete finance commitments. Rich countries showed more interest in utilising carbon credits (trading of credits awarded on the basis of emission reduction activities undertaken in other countries) for meeting their obligations. On the other hand, developing countries like India and top emitter China held to their stand that they can make higher commitments to reduce emissions only if the developed countries met their obligations in terms of providing funds.

On support for loss and damage from climate change, little progress was made. No compensation was agreed from industrialized countries, who are historically responsible for climate change, to those in the developing countries that are

worst affected by climate-change related extreme events.

At the opening of COP 25, UN Secretary-General António Guterres had observed grimly, “The point of no return is no longer on the horizon. It is in sight and hurtling towards us”. But few countries seemed to have taken this seriously in spite of the fact that scientific evidence is piling up day by day on the disaster awaiting the world if action is not taken on an emergency footing.

It was marked as the COP where youth from all over the world captured attention through relentless voicing of their fears, challenges and demands. Just before COP 25, in September 2019, there was an unprecedented global political mobilization about climate change. Activists such as the young Swedish girl Greta Thunberg, drew attention worldwide through their uncompromising tough views and demands, boosting public support for aggressive climate action. They urged countries to sign a declaration and commit to making their NDCs inclusive of children and also have measures to enhance youth participation in decision-making.

Indian presence was marked by 8-year-old Licypriya Kangujam from Manipur, India who delivered a feisty speech urging political leaders and policy-makers to act on the climate crisis, “I’m fighting for my future. Losing my future is not like losing an election or losing a few points on the stock market. I’m here to speak for my generation and all the generations to come.”

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) were active in their role as Observers. But, COP 25 was marked by expulsion of 300 activists from the conference for staging a protest. As the Women and Gender Constituency summed up, “Civil society watched as Parties attempted to water down commitments

to action and ambition in the Paris Agreement, thrust responsibility for loss and damage onto those countries suffering first and worst, and tried to push through market mechanisms with bad rules -- rules that would violate human rights and fail to protect environmental sustainability.”

However, there were some silver linings too. One of the strongest outcomes of COP25 was the adoption of the 5-year Gender Action Plan. The GAP “recognizes that the full, meaningful and equal participation and leadership of women in all aspects of the UNFCCC process, and in national- and local-level climate policy and action, is vital for achieving long-term climate goals.” It goes on to acknowledge “that coherence with relevant United Nations processes, in particular the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as applicable, and within national implementation, will contribute to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of efforts to integrate gender considerations into climate action.”

The next round of climate talks (COP 26) is set to be held in Glasgow, Scotland, in November 2020. With so little agreed at this year’s conference, the stakes will now be even higher for the Glasgow talks.

Kalyani Raj, Secretary General and Manju Kak, Treasurer attended COP 25 representing AIWC. Though I could not attend the conference, I was a member of the Jury and Editorial Team for the Gender Just Climate Solutions Award and Publication. This year also, one project from AIWC featured in the Publication- the Seed Ball Project of Sanju Women’s Welfare Association, a Constituent branch of WIA, Chennai. It is indeed a matter of pride that every year since the Award and Publication commenced in 2015, projects of AIWC branches have been selected for publication.

A Tribute to Aparna Basu

Devaki Jain & Shivangi Gupta



Aparna Basu was different from all of us in more ways than one. And who do I mean by us? I mean people who are supposed to be academicians, scholars who also take part in social movements, like myself, for example.

Aparna was different in the sense that although she was one of the most well educated academic scholars,- in the sense that she got her Ph.D. in Cambridge University in the UK, she engaged with grounded activism. She came from a family and a period in that family's history, which deeply engaged in the public space. Her father, G.L. Mehta was a well known public figure during the independence struggle and afterwards. He occupied many positions. He became President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce in 1942. He was a member of the Constituent assembly G.L. Mehta was also a writer both in Gujarati and English and published several books. He is best remembered for his humorous and witty articles.

Another feature of Aparna's upbringing or background is the Gujarati flavor. Gujarat is

inundated with the spirit of social welfare and social organizations abound, - in my view even more than in other states. I remember, during my early visits to Gujarat when I was trying to learn about one of Gujarat's most well known organizations SEWA, and the environment in which it works, I was taken to the whole series of women's groups dotted across Ahmedabad. They were what we would call in today's jargon, self help groups but not official Self help groups. They are groups of women who were either rolling out special food items, special to Gujarati's taste Bakhri, etc etc.

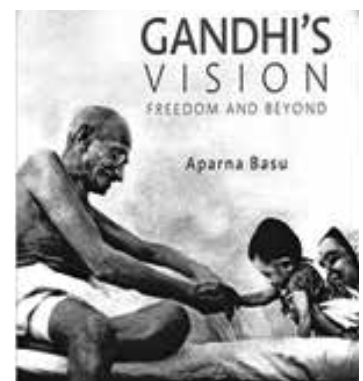
So this was the kind of background from which Aparna emerged and then there was of course the big presence of Cambridge University of the UK. The fall out of being a Cambridge scholar, is that there are social groups of what are called networks of those who have come back from Oxford or Cambridge, to work in India. There are official groups called the Oxbridge society but there are also the unofficial friendship groups of those we meet in Cambridge or Oxford during our period there. These persons tend to be our close friends and we continue to live and work with them. Thus Aparna was a dear friend of Amartya Sen, and I myself recall how during Amartya's visits to India he would also always reach out to Aparna, and she would be there. Aparna also had this other feature in that she married a Bengali,- Prahlad Basu, someone she had met in Cambridge. I could never figure out how it happened that she could speak Bengali extremely well, and whether it was



the marriage to Prahlad or something more? So when we talk of Aparna Basu we are talking of a very special mix of many threads which made her what she was- her parents, her education, Gujarat, and then of course the universities in which she taught. Dr Aparna Basu at the South Asian conference, Delhi, March 1992. We admired her for the way she would keep one foot in social organizations and educational institutions and another in scholarship. Very few scholars who come back from Oxbridge would like to distract themselves from the academic achievement space into supporting social organizations and enabling educational institutions. She was on the board of many of the schools and colleges in Delhi. Thus it did not surprise me when Aparna was elected the president of the All-India Women's Conference. I do not think any of us, who could be called from the pure academic field, ever thought of becoming and engaged with AIWC or other such organizations, and then undertaking an administrative role in that structure. And she brought to AIWC a spirit and a leadership that enhanced its presence, in Delhi at least. So for me Aparna represented that unusual combination of intellectual activist and a deeply engaged in the public space person. Since she was familiar with the Sarabhai family having come from the same Gujarat stock, it is also not surprising that she got engaged with Gandhi. Thus we see that she writes about people who are also

engaged with Gandhi both directly and indirectly such as the Sarabhais and then the institutions. I thought the Gandhi museum was extremely lucky when they were able to invite her to be their chairperson and she enlivened that Gandhi museum dramatically. I had not even heard about it till she started having events there which enhanced the museum's reputation. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay exhibition in IIC, Delhi. She was also someone who was willing to lend her scholarly skills to, not necessarily scholarly events, but others in the public space.

For example, when I requested her to lead an idea that we had developed at the India International Centre, of having a very specific and detailed presentation of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay as someone more than the chairperson of the handicraft board, she led the research required for creating that exhibition, not only as a handicraft supporter but in her travels in the USA in the '30s canvassing support for India's independence. Thanks to support by Nandan and Rohini Nilekenis, we set up an exhibition at IIC which gave the other dimensions of Kamala devi's life, entirely designed, architected, supervised and implemented by Aparna. When she passed away suddenly on 3rd December, 2019, it was a great loss to us. She was not expecting to go - we had many plans and she had many books that were still on her table. So for many of us her death was not only a shock but a great deprivation for what still needs to be done in all the spaces that she occupied.



National Education Policy Consultation Trivandrum, 19th June, 2019 - A Report

The New Education Policy

To ensure quality education across the country over a span of 20 years from 2020 – 2040, it focuses on five guiding pillars of education namely, Access, Equity, Quality, Accountability and Affordability. The proposed Policy is aligned to the global Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 4 which is aimed to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030.

One of the proposals is to rename the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) as the Department of Education to ‘bring the focus back on education and learning’.

Another significant recommendation is to extend the scope of the Right to Education Act 2009 to the age group 3 years – 18 years. Reduction in the content load of school curriculum, doing away with segregation of subjects as curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular, and deeming of arts, crafts, music, sports, yoga etc. as curricular subjects, are some other changes proposed.

For the overall development of children, the Committee has proposed a new pedagogical approach of 5+3+3+4 structure based on the cognitive and socio-emotional development stages of children.

Smt. Usha Nair, Vice President, AIWC briefly gave the background and purpose of the program. A hand out was given to all participants with the background and details of the Draft National Education Policy 2019.

Dr. Reghu, a well-known educationist, former Director Adult and Continuing Education,

University of Kerala, and the key speaker made a presentation that captured all the significant details of the Policy starting with the background of the Commissions and National Education Policies since the early 1950’s up to the present Draft 2019. While earlier policies were concerned about reach and accessibility, now it is time to focus on quality.

Foundational Literacy & Higher Education plan

The Draft Policy has suggested wide ranging changes to ensure foundational literacy and numeracy i.e. the ability to read and write, and to perform basic operations with numbers, which is a necessary foundation and indispensable prerequisite for all future school and lifelong learning. One important recommendation is to co-locate Anganwadis with Primary Schools to improve the level of education imparted in such centres.

It is recommended that in ten years (by 2030), the necessary qualification for all teacher roles be made a four-year integrated B.Ed. programme. Salary-and-promotion structure should also be made equivalent across all stages.

At University level, it recommends institutional restructuring and consolidation to create vibrant multidisciplinary institutions of high quality that increase capacity of higher education in India and ensure equitable access. Universities will be multidisciplinary institutions of higher learning that offer undergraduate and graduate programmes, with high quality teaching, research, and service. Higher education institutions will be of Types 1, 2, and 3: research universities, teaching universities, and colleges.

Capacity building in Research

For promoting research culture and building research capacity across higher education, an apex body named National Research Foundation will be formed. UGC will transform to Higher Education Grants Commission (HEGC). Professional standard bodies will be set up to look into each area of professional education.

There will be flexibility in the three-language formula and learning of Indian classical languages as well as foreign languages will be encouraged.

Private and public institutions will be treated equally with the aim to treat education as a 'not for profit' activity.

A new apex body called Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog will be formed to integrate all education initiatives (both at state and central levels).

Appropriate integration of technology into all levels of education will support teacher preparation and development; improve teaching, learning and evaluation processes; enhance educational access to disadvantaged groups; and streamline educational planning, administration and management.

There are other significant recommendations dealing with education of the differently abled, non-formal education, distance education etc. Thus the proposed Draft National Education Policy aims to bring about an educational revolution to build a robust world class educational system in India.

Main points raised during discussion were –

- Funding for research projects must be free from restrictions/regulations, as this would hamper research.
- Girls should be empowered by access to digital services, and help-line/ grievance redressal.
- Industry oriented research, promotion of entrepreneurship should be done through schools and colleges
- Anganwadis must be developed to help children realise creative talents.
- Pending schemes related to economically backward students need to be implemented. 50% of education cess must be returned by the Central Government to the State.
- Parents should have a voice in formulating education policies relevant to the region.
- Informal and home education methods must not compromise on quality.
- Guidelines of Article 51 A (h), of the Constitution, for scientific temper, humanism, and spirit of inquiry must be followed.
- Freedom for schools to try innovative methods
- Need to have large cadre of high quality trainers of teachers
- Distance education will be a boon if there is course content in the local language
- Views presented by representatives from ICDS (Anganwadi workers) were:
- Anganwadis in the state were well equipped with trained teachers, reading room etc. They are accessible, as there is one for every 1000 population. However, there is need to relieve anganwadi workers from assisting in numerous other government schemes
- Co-location of anganwadis with primary schools would affect their efficacy, and also restrict their numbers, as primary schools are much less in number.
- Uniform wages and service conditions, and upgrading of pay would draw talented young people teaching at primary level
- Sensitising officials, and rooting out corruption were other points made.

National Education Policy Recommendations



School Education

Early Childhood Education: Original duties of the post of Anaganwadi workers must be restored. At present they oversee implementation of around 50 states and central schemes, leaving little time for attention to childcare.

Parents must be sensitised on the scope, necessity and extent of the changes proposed, especially creative and experiential learning, for having their co-operation.

The present rigid and restricting pre-school curriculum must be replaced with stimulating and challenging environment to give scope for creativity and self-learning. In comparison to regular schools, anganwadis offer greater scope for this.

To attract qualified, competent pre-school level teachers, pay and service conditions must be upgraded.

Educational supplies and infra-structure for teaching 4-6 year olds in anganwadis needs drastic upgrading and improvement. This will also help in retaining children in anganwadi centres, after 4 years.

Establishment of Creative Learning Centres, with after school hours for learning arts, crafts, performing arts, skills like cooking or tailoring etc., of the child's choice; supplemented by a good library .

Upgrading remuneration of teachers and other workers at the Early Childhood Education level, for getting qualified dedicated teachers, at a crucial stage in childrens education.

Girls Education



In addition to the focus on girls education, ensure school safety, and security, and gender sensitisation of all stakeholders.

In working out viability of having girls schools within school complexes, number of girl students must be considered, any change in the status of the school could adversely affect girls' access to education, resulting in girls dropping out. This will cancel out the progress made in enrolments of girls, especially in backward states and rural areas.

Allotment of funds, or percentage of total funds for girl's education.

Other priority areas are:

- a. A proportion of the total budget for enhancing use, repair, maintenance of digital gadgets by girls.
- b. Facilitate access to services and helplines ensuring girls safety, and security.
- c. Special projects attracting girls to entrepreneurship based on their aptitude, skills and potential.
- d. Curriculum to include- *Study of the Constitution in the curriculum of appropriate classes.* Legal education to build awareness about relevant laws to be included at different stages.* Comprehensive coverage of life skills, enabling the student to deal adequately with different life situations.*Entrepreneur skills and capacity for innovative thinking must be integrated into the syllabus, along with opportunities for starting projects at incubation centres.



Adult Education

While enhancing access and opportunities for life-long learning, provision must be included for offering content through regional languages, in addition to English and Hindi. This will improve access and attract more learners.

Transforming Education



General suggestions:

Based on benchmark surveys, categorisation of states should be made with differentiated recommendations for different categories. Otherwise, there is danger of pulling down the states with excellent benchmarks to mediocre levels in the effort to pull up states with poor ratings to higher levels.

A definite percentage of the Education Cess collected from states must be given back for effective implementation of the proposed Policy.

#Throughout all phases of education, strong linkages must be maintained between the local community and the educational institutions. Hence, community work must be integrated into the curriculum at all levels.

#The draft deals mostly with formal education. Non-formal education needs to be included in the policy or a separate detailed policy must be formulated.

Severe restrictions/ penalties are suggested to prevent politicisation of educational institutions.

Athira A. P. and Nikhitha Vijayan



Remembering Smt Lakshmi N. Menon

Meeting in MCM Library, AIWC

The 25th Lakshmi Menon memorial day was celebrated by the AIWC on 29th November 2019 in the MCM Library with the usual fervor as has been marked for over the years.

The programme was flagged off by Ms Yuthika Mishra, MIC Library. She shared that Ms Lakshmi N. Menon was born on March 1899, at Trivandrum to the famous reformer, educationalist - Rama Varma Thampan and Madhavikutty Amma. Ms Menon was a teacher, lawyer, politician and activist. Ms Kalyani Raj, Secretary General further added that Ms Lakshmi Menon was a woman of superlative talent and ability. She joined AIWC, and in 1955 became its President. Dr Varsha Das, renowned scholar and eminent author, delivered the memorial lecture on the occasion. She quoted Dr S. Radhakrishnan, Vice President of India in 1955, that if value education is not imparted along with literacy then it leads to creating monsters. Education should not be confined to imparting only literacy; rather it should aim at enhancing the human values and traits that distinguish humans from animals. She quoted Albert Einstein who said that education is not only learning facts; it should make one capable of thinking. She explained an important quote by Mahatma Gandhi where he explains how education leads to humility and to character building. Education also lends us ability to earn money and with that money we can fulfill all our duties, and fulfillment of duties gives us happiness. She also mentioned the publication

by Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO, Tokyo, for neo literates, it was done keeping in mind the needs of Indian women. Its first issue was translated into Hindi in the year 1994 by National Book Trust, titled 'Mahila padh likh le to'. She also narrated a beautiful Japanese story highlighting the importance of unity and how community feeling leads to the benefit of every individual. Later, the members recounted anecdotes about their association with Ms Menon. All the anecdotes about her stated that meetings and hobnobbing with world leaders and dignitaries never affected her ego, she always chose to let her work do the talking. The gathering of members and student participants dissipated after a the vote of thanks by the Treasurer Dr Manju Kak.

Meenakshi Kumar





Commemorative Function, Thiruvananthapuram



To mark the 25th death anniversary of Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, AIWC Thiruvananthapuram Branch, along with Alcohol & Drug Information Centre (ADIC)-India, jointly organized a Commemorative Function and Memorial Lecture at the Press Club Conference Hall, on Saturday, 30 November 2019. More than a hundred people participated in the function. Members of AIWC and ADIC, representatives of Mithraniketan, Ramakrishna-Sarada Mission, University Women's Association and various other organisations were part of this function.

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon (1899- 1994), the pride of Kerala, had made significant contributions to the political and social arena of our country. She was elected as the Rajya Sabha Member three times- 1952, 1954, 1960. She had served

as Deputy Minister / Minister of State for External Affairs and was also nominated to the Committee on Status of Women (CSW) at the United Nations. She was Head of the Indian Delegation to the UN General Assembly. She was President of AIWC, Chairperson of Kasturba Gandhi Trust, First President of Kerala Prohibition Council, Founder President of ADIC-India, and Chairperson of All India Committee for Eradication of Illiteracy among Women (AICEIW).

Mrs. Menon received several recognitions for her selfless service, including "Padma Bhushan" from the Government of India. Her contribution for social causes that include Empowerment of Women, Eradication of Illiteracy, Emancipation of Society from Social Evils such as alcohol & substance use, dowry system and corruption, will

always be remembered. She was married to Dr. V. K. Nandan Menon. She was a very down to earth person and led a simple life.

The programme started with Mrs. Menon's favourite song Vande Mataram, sung by Ms. Parvathy Pillai & Ms. Radhika Rani. Welcome address was delivered by Smt. Usha Nair, Vice President, AIWC, New Delhi. She summarised the legacy and role of AIWC in a few words before extending a warm welcome to all present. Smt. Indira Ramakrishna Pillai, President, AIWC, Thiruvananthapuram Branch shared her experiences with Mrs Lakshmi N. Menon and spoke about the exemplary qualities of the great lady such as humility, hard work and meticulous attention to every detail. The function was officially inaugurated by Her Highness Pooyam Thirunal Gowri Parvathi Bayi from the Travancore royal family. Dr. Shashi Tharoor M.P., Former UN Under-Secretary General & Minister of State, Government of India, addressed the audience, sharing his experiences as MOS External Affairs and what he had learnt about Mrs. Menon's legacy.

He mentioned that when he took over as MOS in the Ministry, he was proud to recall that the very first occupant of the chair after independence was another Malayalee, none other than Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon.

The Memorial Address was delivered by Sri. V. M. Sudheeran, Former Speaker, Health Minister, MP & KPCC President. He spoke at length about the challenges faced by society today on account of alcoholism and drug addiction. He pointed out that even very young children are not spared and are being lured by the drug mafia. There is urgent need for organisations like AIWC to take up this issue and strive their best to counter such menace in society. Sri. Johnson J. Edayaranmula, Director, ADIC- India, shared his precious memories of Mrs. Menon whom he consider like his mother. Vote of Thanks was delivered by Sri. S. Vijayan, Former AIG of Police & Vice President ADIC-India.

*Athira A. P. and Nikhitha Vijayan
Government College for Women,
Thiruvananthapuram.*

Saksham Eco Mart

On Gandhi Jayanti 2019, New Delhi Municipal Corporation launched Saksham Ecomarts for products like cloth and jute bags, plates, bowls, boxes made of eco friendly materials to be sold at low prices. The marts will also collect old clothes in return for stitched bags and other items. Orders can also be placed for supply of items. Women trained at NDMC craft centres, Womens Training Institute and by NGOs, are employed in the teams. Temporary stalls are set up for sale to crowds visiting popular places like India Gate. An official said "We hope to carry forward the legacy of the Mahatma, who introduced the charkha, not only as part of the swadeshi movement, but also a means of livelihood for women".



Success Stories from ECC branch, Kolkata

Shikha Mitra, Vice President, AIWC



Name: Ruma Majhi, Age 20 years

Ruma, a girl of 20 years, found a new ray of hope after joining the beautician course at Mahisadal Literacy, Education and Skill Development Programme, as her life got back to track. Ruma does not come from a wellto do family. Her father, a home-guard, is the sole earning member of the family of four. With minimum income in the family it became impossible for Ruma to continue with her studies after higher secondary. Ruma

loved studying and always had high aspirations from life. She had to take a compulsory break in her education and she was beginning to slip into depression. Ruma lost all hopes from life and her future was bleak. It was a time when our field workers were surveying the area to find women interested in a beautician course, advised by one of her friends, she came across the LE center and joined the beautician course. She regularly attended the classes and by the end of one year she had evolved as a beautician. After that, she is now earning about Rs 3000/month which she uses not only to complete her degree course but also to support her family financially. Like Ruma all the trainees of the LE center have some stories to share – stories of despair which changed to confidence, self respect and financial independence.

(Success story from AIWC Literacy, Education and Skill Development Project)

Name : Paskol Oraon, Age 75 years

“I had given up on life, with no work or savings, all I wanted was to end this dreadful life. But after joining this center, these three years experience , has made me greedy for life. I feel alive once again”, said Paskol Oraon.

Paskol Oraon, a 75 year old field labourer, faced an immense challenge



in life when while working in the field he fell down and broke his hip bone. Life turned into struggle for him, as he could no longer continue with physical hard work. But he had 2 mouths to feed, one his bed ridden wife's, and his own. His four children, two sons and two daughters, are away and do not care for their parents.

So, with no other sources of income he had to beg for food. It became very difficult for him to meet the day to day expenses. There were days when they had nothing to eat, and they would get some food only if the villagers were kind enough to provide them with a meal. He was totally frustrated with life and was depressed.

During an initial survey of our adopted village Jalsukha in the year 2016, our field workers came across him and enrolled him in Barasat Day Care

Center. Initially he remained aloof and didn't mingle with anyone. He found it difficult to adjust and with his physical setbacks he could not do much. But after regularly coming to the center, having proper meals and also with proper medical guidance he is now much better. He is now very active in the center, as he engages in the kitchen garden and making paper bags, he also is friendly with all the other beneficiaries. We are glad that he is recovering both physically and mentally through our regular counseling and medical checkups.

"I had given up on life, with no work and saving, all I wanted was to end this dreadful life. But after joining this center and these three years experience, has made me greedy for life. I feel alive once again", says Paskol Oraon

(Success story from AIWC Center for Senior Citizens)

Being or not being?

Hone na hone ka kram
Isee tarah chalta rahega
Hum hain, hum rahenge
Yeh bharam bhi sada palta rahega

This cycle of being and not being
Shall continue as ever.
"We are and shall remain",
This illusion too, will be
Nurtured forever



(From the poem Yaksha Prashna, by Sh Atal Bihari Vajpayee)

AIWC's Digital Library and Archives

Ranjana Gupta, Librarian



The Margaret Cousins Memorial Library of AIWC has a rich collection of rare books, letters, manuscripts, reports, and magazines etc., dating back to year 1875. MCM Library has created a digital archive and library. In 2012 the MCM Library started library automation and digitization for exhaustive and expeditious retrieval of old records and dissemination of information. The Library catalogue provides quick information retrieval. The advantages of digital library are to easily and rapidly access books, archives and images. The user is able to use any search term like keyword, phrase, title, name, and subject to search the entire collection. Digital libraries can provide very user-friendly interfaces, giving access to its resources in a click. Database of MCM Library holdings like books, Periodicals, research works and archival documents are available on OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue (currently on LAN) for searches by author, title, and keywords

etc.). Bar code technology is also used in the library for circulation of documents.

AIWC's Archives

AIWC's archive has a collection of historical records of the All India Women's Conference since 1917. Firstly, it would be useful to know the definition of an archive. An archive is "a place in which public records or historical documents of an organization are preserved". Archival records are normally unpublished and almost always unique, unlike books or magazines for which many identical copies exist. Physical archives differ from physical libraries in several ways. Containing primary sources of information (typically letters and papers directly produced by an individual or organization) rather than the secondary sources found in a library like books, periodicals, magazines etc. This means that archives are quite distinct from libraries with regard to their

functions, although archival collections are mostly found within library buildings. Archival records can be in any format including paper documents, photographs, maps, films, sound records, electronic records etc. Archives sometimes contain extensive and "hard-to-find" secondary source collections. Digital archives are usually created with a goal of preserving historical objects and making them available to researchers.

Digitization is not a long-term preservation solution for physical collections, but does succeed in providing access to copies for materials that would otherwise fall into degradation from repeated use. It provides multiple accesses and the same resources can be used at the same time by a number of researcher and patrons.

Archives are often available to any researcher; however, there are usually strict guidelines about exactly how collections may be accessed and used. Archives are generally arranged in a systematic order so that only an archivist or librarian can actually retrieve materials.

Traditional libraries are limited by storage space; digital libraries have the potential to store much more information, simply because digital information requires very little physical space to contain it. A physical library must spend large sums of money on book maintenance, paying for staff, building rent, and additional books. Digital libraries may reduce these expenses.

Guidelines for research scholars

In the MCM library, researchers may require 10 requisition slips in one working day. Researchers may reserve records in designated tables in the Research Room only for a period of 7-10 working days, after which they must be returned to the repositories. Researchers are requested to be mindful of this time period to ensure maximum circulation and access of archival documents.

Library and Research Room of AIWC can be contacted on any working day (Monday - Saturday) from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM (except 2nd and 4th Saturdays/Sundays and Gazetted Holidays) for access to resources.



Startup nation: Indian startup founders reveal important new trends



Even in the fast-paced disruptive world of startups, a few things are hard to change. Gender bias, is for one. India's startups remain a man's world. They might be flush with funds and buzzing with bright ideas and disruptive technologies, but traditional gender biases and challenges remain in play here. The online survey was done in August and received valid responses from 299 entrepreneurs. Women comprised just

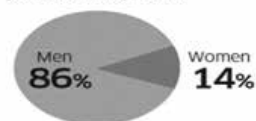
14% of total respondents. It is a good time to pause and understand Indian entrepreneurs

Once on the fringes, starting up has become mainstream. Entrepreneurs are the new heroes of India's middle class. After two decades of boom-bust cycles, the ecosystem is both deep and rich, with 1,400 new startups created in 2018, (from a high of 3,560 new startups in 2016, it dipped in 2018, due to the onset of a funding squeeze). The funding landscape too has substantially matured with most global VC firms including those from the East (like China, Japan and Korea) setting up shop in India. In 2018, according to Venture Intelligence, VCs in India invested \$8.5 billion in Indian startups.

Also, amid all-round pessimism in the Indian economy, startups and their founders are a beacon of hope. Amid dreary headlines of bankruptcies, credit defaults and incarcerated promoters, new entrepreneurs, their surging ambitions and funding boom offer a much-needed respite.

Gender Divide

Men continue to dominate the startup landscape, with women entrepreneurs at just 14% of the respondents



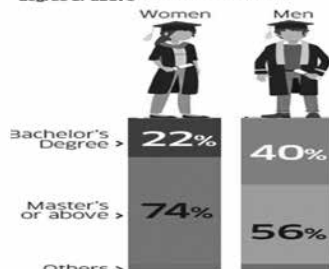
Men tend to start up much earlier, at around 29 years, than women who seem to be more cautious and start up late, at about 36 years

Median Age of Founders



Academic Background

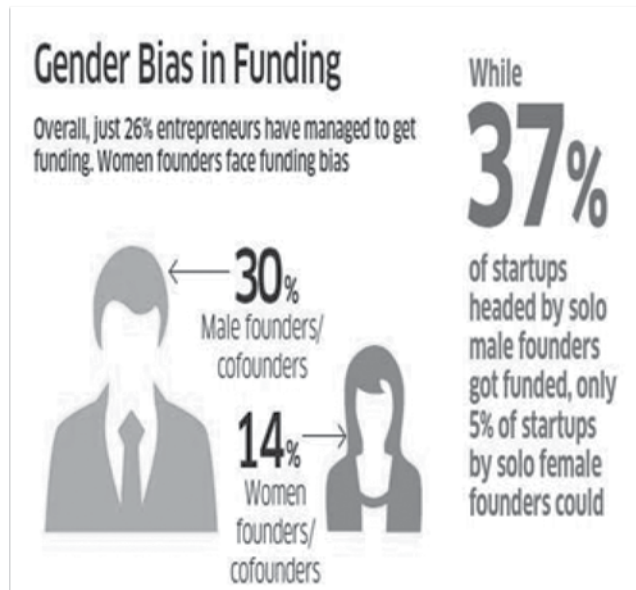
58% of all respondents have a master's degree or above



The notion of entrepreneurs being college dropouts doesn't add up. Also, female founders are better educated than male founders

Gender bias in the startup world is disappointing.

It may have something to do with having few women in the investor world. Not only are there fewer women founders (14%) but they also face significant odds and must prepare better. According to the survey, female founders are older (median age 37 years as against men's 35 years) and better qualified (74% of female founders have a master's degree as against 56% among male founders). To



understand gender bias, two other survey data points are important to note. Funding probability of women-led startups halves (at 14%) as against those led by men (30%).

It gets worse if the startup is led by a solo founder—just 5% of startups led by solo female founder get funded as against 31% of startups run by solo male founder.

“Women’s mobility is constrained. With the shifting focus to Bharat, the experts have a very strong feeling the women’s numbers will rise. Perhaps the startup world will then manage to disrupt this age-old imbalance in the corporate world.



These devices trap mosquitoes, help in curbing dengue

The devices will identify and classify whether mosquitoes, which cause dengue, zika, encephalitis (brain fever), chikungunya, malaria and filariasis, are present in the locality

HYDERABAD: To fight dengue and other vector-borne diseases, three mosquito surveillance



devices, procured from a US-based company, will be set up in high risk areas on pilot basis. “The mosquito attractor in the device is German-made,” said GHMC commissioner DS Lokesh Kumar.

A source in the GHMC said that these devices are being set up as regular measures like fogging and anti-larval operations failed to provide the desired results. The devices will identify and classify whether mosquitoes, which cause dengue, zika, encephalitis (brain fever), chikungunya, malaria and filariasis, are present in the locality. “Based on the results, an action plan will be rolled out to fight the vector-borne diseases,” said Kumar.

The device will attract mosquitoes, which will fall into a box. The mosquitoes collected in the box will be studied by the experts and will update details such as gender, density and type of mosquito in their database. “The device can attract mosquitoes from 500 meters radius. It will be installed in three high risk areas and based on the results, the civic body is planning to extend it to other areas also,” said GHMC chief entomologist. The details will also be shared with the municipal corporation. “With the help of the data collected, an action plan will be rolled out,” said Kumar. The GHMC chief urged people to regularly wash the containers in

which water is stored. “Just throwing the water will not serve the purpose as the larva does not die and might become active when it again gets in contact of water,” added Kumar.



Steps taken to end Saudi ‘guardianship’ system for women, ‘encouraging’ start



Women attending an event organized by Saudi Arabia at the UN in Rome, Italy. (2019)

Allowing Saudi women to apply for passports and travel without their guardians’ permission is “an encouraging move” towards the “complete abolition of the ‘guardianship’ system,” said independent United Nations rights experts , but more action is needed to fully dismantle these restrictions.

Saudi Arabia loosened some social restrictions on women in 2017. And now, by Royal decree, Saudi women will be able to apply for passports. Those over 21 will be allowed to travel independently – without permission from their so-called guardians. According to news reports, while human rights advocates have welcomed the move, they have also noted that women still require the permission of a male relative to marry, or leave women’s shelters, and some rights activists remain on trial

or in detention for campaigning to change the system. “We should not forget that these positive developments are the result of years of relentless advocacy and effort of many human rights and women’s rights defenders in Saudi Arabia”, underscored the independent UN experts, calling “for their immediate release”.

Men thwarting progress

Women “continue to face numerous restrictions” under a guardianship system that “negates their fundamental human rights and their dignity as autonomous human beings”, according to the experts. Giving men arbitrary authority over their female relatives results in discrimination against women. “It severely impairs women’s equal participation and decision-making in political, economic and social affairs and the enjoyment of their human rights including the rights to freedom of movement, education, work, access to justice, privacy and family life,” they stressed. The Special Rapporteur on Privacy, Joseph Cannataci, expressed his grave concern over the technological tools and apps that extend male guardians’ control over women through the digital sphere. “I am particularly concerned about the use of the Absher mobile phone app that allows male ‘guardians’ to monitor, restrict and control women’s whereabouts and freedom of movement in ways that are incompatible with their human right to privacy,” he said. “I expect that this type of functionality will be immediately abolished in order to be compliant with both the spirit and the letter of the new law.” While acknowledging this welcoming initiative, the experts urged the government to fulfill, without any further delay, its pledge to fully abolish the male ‘guardianship’ system as promised at the UN Human Rights Council in March 2019.

Far & Near

AIWC Pathankot:

A one day medical check-up and health awareness camp was held in Arya Senior Secondary school. Mrs Bimla Dogra, Chairperson, described AIWC's role in improving the health and physical fitness of girls, which would have long-term benefits. Dr Beena Misra, President informed girls about the topics to be covered in the camp, and asked them to be frank and respond to queries made by doctors.

Resource persons, Dr Beena Misra, Dr Soneya, Dr Sonal, spoke to the group, and invited questions. The girls were hesitant but later came out with their problems, and were advised one by one by the doctors. Gynae problems were found to be the most common. Check-up was done and medicines, calcium, and vitamins were distributed. About 200 girls were benefited. They found the camp very useful and requested holding of more such camps.

Dr. Beena Misra, President

Mirik Constituent Branch, Darjeeling:

A one day Awareness program on violence against women was conducted. Mrs Kumari Moktan presided over the program which was conducted by Ms Phulmati Chhetri. Mrs Paramita Paul, Ist class Magistrate, and Mr Suraj Tamang, Advocate spoke to the group. A point made was that the mobile phone had become a key factor In Increasing Violence Against Women. Also discussed were laws relating to divorce, neglect of parents by children, and penalties like fines and imprisonment in cases of violence against women. The cases of child trafficking were different because poor parents sold their children, who



were then taken to far away places and resold. In such cases, social action was required to help poor families. Both students and their parents found the program helpful.

Phoolmati Chhetri, Secretary



Southwest Delhi Womens Association:

SWEDWA, organized a one day National Integration & Communal Harmony workshop on 22ND November, in the A.V.hall, Aga Khan Hall premises. There was a large participation by youth including college students, members of AIWC/ SWEDWA, guests and invitees. An innovative start to the program was given by Padma Bhushan Saroja Vaidyanathan's Natyalaya, who depicted eternal values of unity and harmony from the Vedas and Puranas through dance.

Swami Bhuswarupananda from the Ramakrishna Mission described religious harmony as the glue that bound the nation together. This had been stressed by all great masters. Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's motto "There as as many to God, religious identity, and work for the freedom of Mother India. The next speaker Father Ajit, in an eloquent speech, raised the questions What is Bharat? What is the identity of each one of us? Responding with poetic verses, he said that mutual harmony was the best prayer one should make for



the progress of the nation. Brahmakumari Puja, cautioned against losing track of positive goals in life, by being led astray by the wayward mind. Meditation and introspection were necessary for directing the mind into positive channels.

Sh B.M.Verma, Chairman, Uttarakhand Electricity Board(Retd), gave an interesting account of how even prosaic Electricity projects could create life-long harmony and friendship among employees and families through community unity. Each one of us should strive to create harmony in our social circle, which will lead to unity and harmony in a wider sphere, was his message. Points raised by participants were clarified by the speakers. Among the highlights were an effective Nukkad Natak presentation on the workshop theme, a dance by students of SWEDWA Daycare centre, and a Fashion Show by Dwarka branch illustrating traditional costumes of the country. Over 150 youth, college students, AIWC members, and guests participated in the program

Janaki Rajaram, Founder-Chairperson

AIWC Batala:

A one day seminar on Legal Rights of Women was held in October. Mrs Bindu, Advocate explained provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. The Act applies to people of all religions, it prevents giving or taking of dowry in the form of property, goods or money, by one party in a marriage to the second party. Advocate Mrs Raj Sharma clarified the difference in the Protection of Women from

Domestic Violence Act, and Section 498 of the Indian Penal Code. The main difference being that it gives a much wider definition of violence. The primary purpose is to protect the wife or female live in partner from violence by the husband, or male live-in partner, or their relatives. A third speaker Sh Paramjit Singh described the changes that took

place in the social status of women, from time to time. Compared to earlier times, women now had much more freedom to deal with problems, and seek remedies from society and the law. Women must know about all the laws protecting them, so as to have security for themselves and their children.



Mrs Narinder Kaur President

AIWC Palakkad:

An awareness program to safe-guard the health of rural women and their families was organized in Vadavanur, Palakkad, in the district Government school. The school Manager Sh P. Ramachandran inaugurated the program. In her welcome speech, Smt Raji Vasudevan, AIWC member, explained the objective of the program. Dr Subin, PGC, Vadavanur, took a session on health care of both children and older persons, for a disease free, healthy life.



A unique feature was that Sh Unnikrishnan, a leading Ottamthullal artiste enacted a skit showing steps to eradicate leprosy, and gave tips on cleanliness and hygiene. The group of village folk enjoyed the lively depiction. In conclusion, Sh Srikumar conducted a session on removal and disposal of waste. A large group of over 200 persons took keen interest and benefited from the program.

Usha R. Menon, President

Mahila Vikas Sangam, const branch, Ujjawal:

An innovative program for motivating reading habit in children was organized in a government school. A bout 70 children from class 5 upwards attended. A motivational talk was given by Sh Rana. He informed students that Dr Abdul Kalam started studies in a small local school, and by his hard work and focus, rose to become a top rocket scientist. His will power and moral values also made him a great human being. Regular reading developed one's knowledge of people, places and events and also one's personality. Senior volunteer VMS, Ms Sugandha referred to the nearby Hardayal Library and said that it offered children a great opportunity for regular reading. Secretary, Ms Sapna Acharya suggested reading aloud to improve one's memory, and gain confidence. Ms Anju Rana said that gaining confidence along with



positive thinking could make a great personality change. Hospitality was sponsored by Mrs Shanti Nath, a senior Volunteer of VMS.

Sapna Acharya, Secretary

AIWC Bihar, Patna:

We had a very successful awareness program at Khaira, Naubatpur, Patna two Doctors and their team saw over 200 patients including students and teachers, gave treatment and distributed free medicines.

We are grateful to Mr Christopher, Principal of St Louis Academy for providing a venue .

Kumkum Narain, Secretary



Daycare Centre for Senior Women, Sennur village, Vellore- A Profile

Teaching broom making, comes easy to elders in the Vandavannur Homes

The Centre was inaugurated on June 1st, 2019. Mrs Vanaja Krishnamoorthy, AIWC Trustee, was the Chief Guest. Our Guests of Honour were Sh Panchatcharam, Panchayat President, Sh Neelamegham, Panchayat Secretary, and Sh G.Venkatesan, Ward member.

Program activities were:

Medical check-up of inmates done by Dr Arulalan and his assistants, on 15th June, 24th June, and 5th July, with required medicines distributed after each session.

On 1st August an outing was arranged for visiting Tiruttani, some other temples, and Pallikonda hills, the abode of Nine babas, locally called “navasai”.

On 6th August, about 30 pregnant women were invited to attend a session on the importance of breastfeeding, and nutrition needs of mothers during the lactation period. According to the



requirement, calcium, iron, and B.P. tablets were distributed.

On 26th August as part of our “green” drive, vegetable seeds were distributed for growing in backyards and kitchen gardens.

We are happy to see the marked improvement in the health and confidence level of the elderly women, who enjoy literacy classes, get nutrition tips, and learn useful skills like broom making etc. at the centre.

*Prema Damodar, President, AIWC
Gandhinagar, Vellore*

Kanika Womens Forum, Trichur:



On Children's Day, 14 November, Kanika Womens Forum, AIWC Trichur branch, conducted a programme at Namboodiri Vidyalyam , an upper primary school of Thrissur. The lecture on Recharging Dugwells was part of our water conservation series. The keynote address was by Mr P.V. Vinod-Chief Technical Officer-District Rainwater Harvesting Mission, Thrissur. The Headmistress of Namboodiri Vidyalyam mt Radha presided over the function.

Mr Vinod spoke about the mission's objective of leading the state into Jalasamriddhi- drinking water in abundance. He is part of "Mazhappolima" - a rainwater harvesting programme in coordination with local panchayats whereby they rejuvenate wells by channelling rainwater into dugwells with a filter .The slides helped the children understand the procedure and its benefits. An interactive Q&A session followed .

Kanika's charity segment extended help and donated books to the school library.

Usha Nair

Wai Mahila Mandal:

We organized a Dental Check-up and general health awareness camp for students and members



in Sathe Mangal Karyalay, Wai. In the first session, Dr Archana Kelkar did dental check-up of primary school children, and gave guidance about regular dental care, she suggested checkpoints to regularly assess dental health. In the second session, Dr Mohini Wadadekar gave tips on nutritional values in our daily diet, and importance of different types of food for maintaining good health and immunity from disease. The third session, also taken by Dr Wadadekar was on daily diet and checkpoints for womens health after their '40's. About 50 members and many school children were benefited by the program.

Anita Joshi, President

Ujjawal Womens's Association:

A one day health camp was conducted at Radha Krishna mandir, East Delhi on 30th September. The medical team from Max Hospital, Parparganj, was led by Mrs Prerna Dogra. Out of about 100 participants including students and families from many nearby slums, it was found that 30% suffered from BMO, there were

After the program, there were requests for many more health camps which would benefit people of lower income group, who could not consult doctors in big hospitals. It was found that due to our frequent camps in the area, many young people were careful about their diet, and had hygienic habits.

1 case of sugar and 2 of low BP. Describing causes of womens ailments, Dr Minakshi Jain spoke of



deficiency of vitamin D and B12, and nutrition needs. She covered the subject of hygiene during menstruation and menopause, for preventing many chronic ailments. She interacted with the audience, asking women to share their knowledge with others, and improve health and hygiene in their area. Mrs Monika Gupta spoke of naturopathy and cooking methods to preserve minerals and vitamins in our food. "Nature provides us with many remedies, we can find these in spices and herbs used in our daily food. With patience, we can find cures for many ailments through food and drink", she commented.

Smt Bina Jain, Founder- President

AIWC Amritsar-Some recent events included-

International Seniors Day was organized on 21st August. Mr Sumit Makkar, CJM, advised members of the Old Age Home and others about rights of women, and ways to ensure receiving their rights. He took positive steps to ensure that old age pension was received by all.

#On 26th August, we held a Climate Change



Awareness camp. Mrs Renu Bharadwaj, Dean of GND University explained the sequence of climate change and its impact on all living beings as well as plants. A big source of infectious diseases was water pollution caused by floods, and rise of harmful gases like methane and carbon dioxide, adversely affecting our health.

#Two important topics-Gynae health, and healthy childhood, were taken up in the health camp held on 20th September. Hormonal changes which occur in adolescent boys and girls call for improved nutrition and health care.

#We held a popular Cyber crime awareness program on 20th September. The experts invited were Sh Jagmohan Singh, ACP, Sh Somnath, DSP (crimes Against Women), and Smt Rawinder Kaur, Inspector. It was attended by about 30 boys from Government Schools. The speakers pointed out that drugs and Cyber Crimes were like infectious diseases and hard to control. The police work from 2 bases- supply and demand to control drug circulation. Medical ambulances have been launched in rural areas for administering deaddiction medicines.. The success of these efforts depended on inducing positive thinking in addicts.

Say No to Plastic Bags, was our theme for a special program on Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary celebrations.

A team of doctors from Ladli Foundation, collaborating with CSR Fortis Foundation organized awareness of Menstrual & Personal Hygiene for girls. Hygiene and cleanliness were stressed by the doctors, who replied to questions posed by the girls.

The year was memorable for me as I received an International Women Achievers Award, Adarsh mahila, from the Legal Rights Council, at a ceremony held in CPDHE University, Delhi, on 3rd August.

Prem Duggal, President

शाखा गतिविधियां

साढ़राणा ग्रामीण शाखा, गुरुग्राम : शाखा सचिव, सुनिता वशिष्ठ

‘जल संरक्षण’ पर एक दिवसीय कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया गया जिसमें महिलाओं व बच्चों ने हिस्सा लिया

सभी को जल संरक्षण के लिए जानकारी दी कि किस प्रकार हम पानी को बचा सकते हैं। सभी ने पूरी लगन से जल बचाने के तरीके सीखे।

संजीवनी महिला संस्था : शाखा अध्यक्ष, श्रीमति निशि जैन

झोपड़ी पट्टी में संजीवनी पाठशाला के नये सत्र का आरंभ किया गया व Skill Training में महिलाओं ने बैग बनाने सीखे व बनाकर ‘शिल्प कला उत्सव’ में स्टोल लगाया और एकदिवसीय जागरूकता कार्यक्रम का

आयोजन हुआ जिसमें महिलाओं के स्वस्थ व उनकी अपनी साफ-सफाई किस प्रकार रखनी चाहिए व महिला कैदियों में सकारात्मक ऊर्जा के संचार हेतु जिला जेल में खेल प्रतियोगिताओं का आयोजन किया गया। साथ ही जेल में समय-समय पर शाखा अध्यक्ष महिला कैदियों की काउन्सलिंग भी करती रहती है।

हयूमन टच फाउंडेशन, ग्रेटर नोएडा अध्यक्ष, डॉ. उपासना सिंह

वायु प्रदूषण पर नुक्कड़ नाटक का आयोजन : दिन प्रतिदिन विकराल रूप धारण करती जा रही वायु प्रदूषण की समस्या के प्रति जागरूकता फैलाने के लिए सामाजिक संस्था हयूमन टच फाउंडेशन तथा ऑल इंडिया वुमेन कांफ्रेंस ग्रेटर नोएडा ने नुक्कड़ नाटकों का आयोजन शहर के ओमेक्स मॉल में किया। इस नाटक को गलगोटिया यूनिवर्सिटी के छात्र-छात्राओं ने प्रस्तुत किया। संस्था

की अध्यक्ष डॉ. उपासना सिंह ने वायु प्रदूषण के कारणों तथा समाधानों पर विस्तार पूर्वक प्रकाश डालते हुए समाज के सभी वर्गों से त्वरित कार्यवाही का अह्वान किया। वायु प्रदूषण की भयावह स्थिति के कारण लोगों को सांस लेने में तकलीफ होने लगी है। प्रदूषण की वजह से पर्यावरण प्रदूषण रोकथाम एवं नियंत्रण प्राधिकरण ने दिल्ली एनसीआर में हेल्थ इमरजेंसी घोषित की हैं प्रदूषण बढ़ने से लोग बहुत ज्यादा स्तर तक बीमार हो रहे हैं। इससे उनकी उम्र कम हो रही है।

गुड़गांव ग्रामीण महिला मंडल

शाखा अध्यक्षा, शोभा लाल

जल संरक्षण पर एक दिवसीय जागरूकता कार्यक्रम अखिल भारतीय महिला परिषद के सोजन्य से गुरुग्राम ग्रामीण महिला मंडल ने वार्ड 13 कांदापुर में महिलाओं व बालिकाओं हेतु कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया। कार्यक्रम में अखिल भारतीय महिला परिषद् की सचिव श्रीमती कल्याणी राज व प्रतिभा जी (परियोजना अधिकारी) मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में भाग लिया कार्यक्रम का उद्घाटन श्री ब्रह्म यादव पार्षद वार्ड 13 कांदापुर ने किया। जिन्होंने कार्यक्रम के बारे में व महिला सिलाई केंद्र नई बिल्डिंग की प्रशंसा की।

श्रीमती कल्याणी राज ने महिलाओं को अखिल भारतीय महिला परिषद के महिला विकास कार्यक्रमों के बारे

बताया आज के युग में जब की पानी की कमी लगातार बढ़ती जा रही हैं महिलाओं को बेकार पानी ना करने व घरेलू कार्य में कम से कम पानी के प्रयोग पर बताया।

श्री मृतुनजय जी रोटरी क्लब साउथ सिटी, पर्यावरण विशेषक है। महिलाओं को पौधा रोपण, पानी, जमीन की उपयोगिता के बारे बताया उन्होंने कहा की सैकड़ों वर्ष पहले रहीम ने एक दोहे के माध्यम से पानी का महत्व बताया था वह आज भी सही है पानी के बैगर मानव की जिन्दगी व मोती का बनना व रोटी बनाने का आटा भी तैयार नहीं हो सकता है।

संस्था की अध्यक्षा शोभा लाल व शारदा देवी ने संस्था के विकास कार्यों की चर्चा की पॉलिथीन बैग प्रयोग न करे इस पर भी सभी को बताया।



दिल्ली वूमन लीग

शाखा अध्यक्षा, डॉ. श्री बाला चौधरी

सन् 1926 में स्थापित Delhi Women's League का अद्भूत इतिहास रहा है। यह AIWC की दिल्ली की सबसे पहली व पुरानी शाखा है।

इस शाखा द्वारा दरियागंज में Vocational Training Kendra संचालित किया जाता है जिसमें गरीब बालिकाओं मुख्यतर अल्पसंख्यकों को हुनर प्रशिक्षण दिया जाता है। 6 महीने के कोर्स में 30 की संख्या के दो दलों में विभिन्न कार्यशालाएं आयोजित की जाती है।

यह शाखा दरियागंज क्षेत्र की गरीब बालिकाओं व महिलाओं में जागरूकता व उत्थान के लिए पूरे वर्ष विभिन्न कार्यक्रम आयोजित करती है।

‘विश्व जनसंख्या दिवस’ पर आयोजित संगोष्ठी में महिलाओं को बढ़ती जनसंख्या के दुष्परिणाम व रोकथाम पर जानकारी दी गई।

डेंगू से बचाव अभियान में इस शाखा की सदस्याओं ने छात्राओं व उनके परिवार वालों को अपने घर, ऑफिस व कालोनी के आसपास सफाई तथा पानी एकत्रित न होने देने के बारे में चर्चा की।



स्वच्छता ही सेवा

स्वच्छता ही सेवा 2019 एक जन आंदोलन है जो स्वच्छता के लिए आयोजित किया गया दिल्ली समाज कल्याण विभाग के निर्देश अनुसार पारिवारिक परामर्श केंद्र व सुधार गृह द्वारा अखिल भारतीय महिला परिषद में मनाया गया। जिसमें बापनू घर की सहवासियों व ए वी आई के छात्रों व सारे स्टाफ के द्वारा संपन्न किया गया। अखिल भारतीय महिला परिषद की सेक्रेटरी जनरल व बापुन घर की मेम्बर-इन-चार्ज ने स्वच्छता ही सेवा पर रोशनी डाली। उन्होंने बताया प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने 12 सितंबर 2019 को स्वच्छता पर एक व्यापक देशव्यापी जागरूकता अभियान स्वच्छता ही सेवा का शुभारंभ किया। इसका उद्देश्य स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के अंतर्गत महात्मा गांधी की 150वीं जयंती पर भारत को प्लास्टिक कचरे से मुक्त बनाना है।

सेक्रेटरी जनरल ने सब से अनुरोध किया कि सब अपने आसपास के कार्यालयों व कार्य स्थलों की सफाई करें। अपने आसपास के प्लास्टिक व अन्य सभी कचरे को इकट्ठा करें और स्थानीय प्रशासन की सहायता से उसका निपटारा किया जाएगा। आगे कोई भी प्लास्टिक का इस्तेमाल न करें और वातावरण को सुरक्षित रखें। सभी उपस्थित समूह ने मिलकर एक रैली भी निकाली

और आस पास के सभी लोगों को जागरूक किया कि आप सब अपने आसपास सफाई व स्वच्छता का ध्यान रखें और नारे लगाए "Say no to Plastic"

पारिवारिक परामर्श केन्द्र की काउंसलर मोनिका चतुर्वेदी ने स्वच्छता ही सेवा पर एक अच्छी सी कविता सबके सामने पेश की। बापुन घर के अन्य काउंसलर ने अपने आसपास की स्वच्छता के साथ-साथ अपने मन व व्यक्तिगत सफाई का भी अग्रह किया।

अंततः सब की मेहनत रंग लाई सभी छात्र व बापुन घर के सहवासी काफी खुश थे और सब ने शपथ ली कि हम स्वच्छता का पूरा ख्याल रखेंगे और जो भी हमें मिलेगा उनसे भी अग्रह कर स्वच्छता ही सेवा के अभियान को पूरा कर देश की तस्वीर को बदलने में सहयोग करेंगे।

आखिर में बापनू घर की सहवासियों द्वारा बनाए गए कागज के लिफाफे में रिफ्रेशमेंट दिया गया और यहां उपस्थित लोगों ने पेड़ लगाये और भारत को स्वच्छ बनाने की तरफ एक कदम उठाया गया। इस तरह से हमारा स्वच्छता ही सेवा का कार्यक्रम संपन्न हुआ।

स्वच्छ देश, स्वच्छ तन, स्वच्छ मन ही हमारे देश की शान है।

मोनिका चतुर्वेदी, एफ.सी.सी. बापनू घर नई दिल्ली





Fire safety demonstration/ drill in High School, Jagriti Haridwar



Anemia Camp, Nanthencode Vanitha Samithi



Women entrepreneurs' Saturday market,
Kasturba Mahila Mandal, Pune



Blood Donation camp, Ponnur hills branch, Vellore



Health camp, Khaira Naubatpur, Bihar



"Dan Utsav" by Laughter Club helps children, Noida



Gender sensitization in schools, Nainital



Outing for special children, Andheri, Mumbai



Udaan Training camp, Darjeeling br.



Anemia checkup, Tripura Adibashi Mahila Samithi



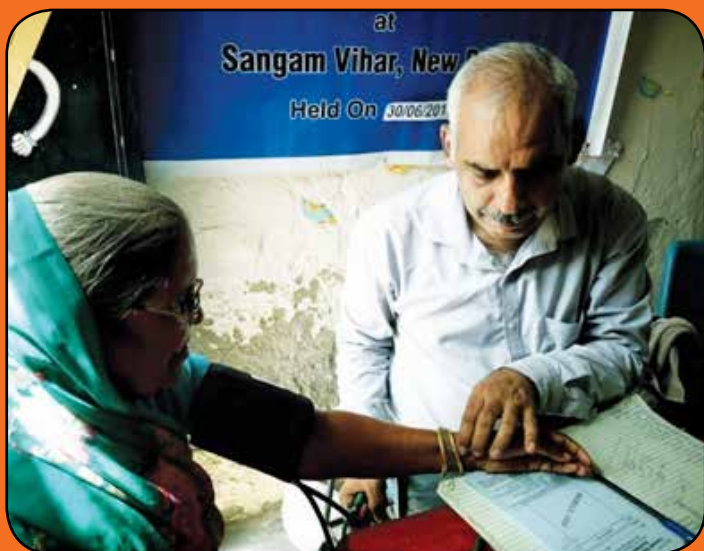
Environmental Awareness Programme, Vikaspuri br.



Study materials donated at Madarsa, Hyderabad br.



Water Conservation Day for school children-
Kanika Womens Forum, Trichur



Health Check-up Camp, Sangam Vihar br., Delhi