

Roshni

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2020



ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

AIWC Continues Its Fight Against Atrocities on Women.



*(L - R)Smt. Kuljit Kaur, Secretary General, Prof Rakesh Sinha, MP,
and Smt. Sheela Kakde, President, AIWC*



Message from President, Smt. Sheela Kakde, to Members

Good morning! This is to keep you updated. After the meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, on 2nd December 2020, on "Atrocities and Crime Against Women" we were invited on 7th December, by the Rajyasabha member (BJP), Prof. Rakesh Sinha ji of Ranchi to discuss the issues related to Atrocities on Women at his residence on Shahjahan Road, New Delhi. He was impressed by the systematic and organised way AIWC functions throughout the country. He also appreciated the presentation and the depth of the recommendations given on 2nd December 2020. There was also a phone call received from the office of the Chairman of the Committee, Shri Anand Sharma to reconfirm the recommendations given by AIWC. It seems Government is in fact track action. Prof. Sinha discussed at length the problems faced by the tribal women in Bihar. We also discussed the issues of the sex workers and challenges faced by them during this unprecedented period of covid pandemic. He extended his helping hand to resolve the problems of women of different categories. It was a very fruitful long meeting from 10.30 am till 11.45 am. He will be visiting our Head Office to know about our rich legacy.

ROSHNI

Journal of the All India Women's Conference

October - December 2020

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From the Editor's Desktop

From: Editor, Roshni

To: Members, AIWC

This festival season has been unlike any other. Social distancing took its toll, but we rediscovered the spirituality that lies at the root of our celebrations. Members describe how they replaced traditional holiday fun with charity work. On Children's Day and Diwali we brought cheer to children in creches and orphanages. Karva Chauth meant reconnecting with our underprivileged sisters in villages. Christmas was family time, but it was shared with residents of Old Age Homes, who were given gifts of food and clothes. We showed our concern for women who are facing a serious change in their circumstances in rural areas and urban margins. Domestic part-timers, some of whom lived in containment zones, found themselves replaced by white goods and appliances in the homes of their more affluent employers. Blue collar working women lost a higher percentage of jobs than their male counterparts. Statistics revealed that when the economy showed a slight upturn, they were the last to be reemployed. Thousands of them are struggling to make ends meet, and child care has exacerbated their burden after the closure of schools. In middle and upper income families, other worries abound. Our members have addressed many of them- we bring you learnings from webinars on mental health, financial planning, health and diet. We examine the surge in domestic violence, in order to postulate reasoned responses. Communal Harmony was an ideal we stressed upon throughout the country. We held up our beacon of hope as we always do.

Chitra Sarkar

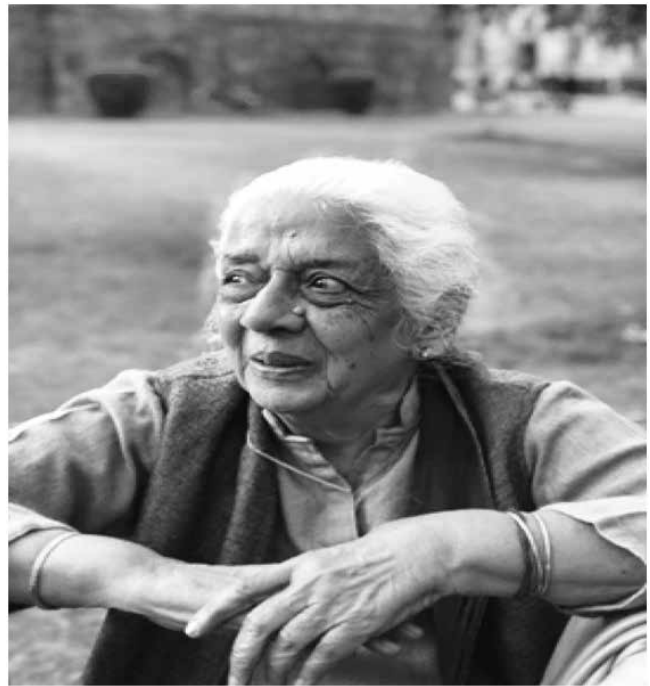
Aparna Basu- A Life of Scholarship & Dignity

By Smt. Mythily Jagannathan, Co-ordinator, Shahdara Project, AIWC

Aparna ji was an intellectual who forsook the Ivory tower, to live and work with people. All her life, until she breathed her last on 3rd December 2019, she reached out to others. She accepted human beings with all their unique gifts, but also with flaws and frailties. Another characteristic was her uniformly courteous and friendly behavior towards everyone, whether it was an international celebrity, or a total stranger seeking help.

Aparna was a Phd (Cantab) in History, who became Head of the Department of History, Delhi University, and was a beloved mentor to many generations of students, with whom the bond continued later in life. In AIWC she was President from 2002-2004. Along with AIWC, and Delhi University, she fulfilled responsibilities in several organizations including The Sarabhai Foundation. She was Convenor of the National Subject Panel of History and Archaeology, Emeritus Scientist NISTADS, member of Gandhi Peace Foundation, India International Centre, and many institutions in India and abroad. Her last exhibition of rare photos with a recorded background commentary, in May 2018 in IIC was on “The Millworkers Strike in Ahmedabad in 1918”. It was hailed as a unique pictorial record of contemporary history. She became Chairperson of the National Gandhi Museum in 2013, where she organized a series of theme based exhibitions for the public, reflecting Mahatma Gandhi’s life and philosophy.

The unique combination of intellect and empathy was undoubtedly derived from her family background. Her mother’s family had given several generations of Dewans (Prime Ministers) to the princely State of Bhavnagar. They were enlightened administrators and liberal reformers, abolishing child marriage, giving land to tillers and starting the Prarthna Sabha, a forum for social reform. Bhavnagar came to be known as “a jewel” among princely states of pre-Independent India. Aparna’s maternal grandmother, Vidyagauri became President of AIWC in 1933. Her mother Saudamini, was President of AIWC Calcutta in



Dr. Aparna Basu

1947, and President of the Harijan Sewak Samaj of Bengal.

On her father's side too, there were community leaders, and entrepreneurs. Influenced by Gandhiji, several plunged into movements of Harijan seva, swadeshi, and village upliftment. Her paternal uncle Vaikunthbhai Mehta became Finance Minister of Bombay Presidency. Aparna's father Gaganvihari (G.L.) Mehta, joined Scindia Shipping and Navigation Co. in Calcutta, and lived there for twenty years, before returning to Bombay, became a member of the first Planning Commission, Ambassador to the USA, and Member, Constituent Assembly.

Aparna, born on 31st October 1931, was the youngest of three daughters, her older sisters being Nilanjana and Uma. All were educated at

the Gokhale Memorial High School, Calcutta, founded by Sarala Ray, Brahmo Samaj leader, who was President AIWC in 1932.

Aparna was in High School, when the family shifted to Bombay. She did her graduation from Elphinstone College. When her father was posted as Ambassador to the US in 1950, Aparna went to Cambridge to do her Masters in History from Newnham College.

In an article in **Roshni 80 Years Special**, the October - December 2016 issue, Aparna wrote about her association with the women's movement and AIWC. Until 1974, she had no particular interest in the subject, because she had never witnessed any discrimination against women. In 1974, she was asked to organize a series of lectures for the Nehru Memorial Museum and



Dr. Basu with her family



Aparna Basu's Life Through Pictures- collage from National Gandhi Museum

Library on “The Role of Women in the Freedom Struggle”. She went through numerous accounts of women braving lathi charges, and going to jail in the national cause. Only then she realized the silent, selfless contribution made by women in the freedom struggle. In 1975, the UN declared it as the Year of Women, and 1975-85 as the Decade of Women. Around this time, the government sponsored Status of Women in India Report brought out the stark reality about centuries of discrimination, and violence suffered by women, and she became a mentor to many students doing their doctorates on the subject of women’s status.

Always an educationist, she took up numerous programs for school drop-outs and held literacy and legal literacy camps, along with other programs like health, sanitation and waste management. During her tenure, under the able leadership of Smt. Lalita Balakrishnan, AIWC made great strides in popularizing bio-gas, improved chulha, and use of solar devices, AIWC became an active member of the International Energy forum, and a nodal agency for Government Renewable Energy projects.

Describing the impact on her of her work, Aparna wrote “AIWC opened up a whole new world for me. I now became aware of the ground realities, the problems of poor, rural, tribal women. Of illiteracy, malnutrition, oppression, drudgery, humiliation, and violence that women face.” Contact with other women NGOs widened her horizons of knowledge.

Aparna was a prolific writer of books. In 1987, during the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of AIWC, Smt. Ashoka Gupta, the then President, asked her to write a book on AIWC, in collaboration with Dr Bharati Ray, of Calcutta University. The result was the book “*Women’s Struggle- History of*

AIWC 1927-2016.” Her other books included a richly illustrated book on the Sarabhai family, and over half-a-dozen books on contemporary history, women’s movement, Gandhiji, and satyagraha. At the age of eighty seven she wrote “Gandhi’s Vision- Freedom and Beyond”, and “Women in Satyagraha”, and also updated the 3rd edition of her popular book “*Women’s Struggle*”. Gifted with a phenomenal memory for dates, events, personalities, in her writings, she perceived the underlying causes and emotions in the flow of events. Her writing style reflected her personality, simple and direct, without being judgmental about either people or events.

Valuing her own privacy, she rarely spoke about herself, her remarkable family, or roll call of distinguished friends and acquaintances. Nor did she probe, comment or gossip about the personal life of others. In her childhood, Aparna had gone with her father and met Rabindranath Tagore at Shantiniketan. She heard the historic “Tryst with destiny” speech of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on 14th August, 1947, on the eve of transfer of power to free India, when she accompanied her father, a Member of the Constituent Assembly. Later in life she interacted with luminaries like Albert Einstein, intellectuals, writers, national icons in India and abroad.

Yet, within the reserved scholar, there was a small girl with a mischievous sense of humour. I had interacted with Aparna ji during preparations for the International Asia- Pacific Region of Micro-credit Councils Conference, organized by AIWC in Delhi in 2000, and again when I was Editor, Roshni for several years. From the start, going by her name, I spoke to her only in Bengali, and every

time she responded cordially in the same language discussing the on-going Conference work, or the journal. It was many, many years later that I found that she was a Bengali- but only by marriage !All along, Aparna ji must have enjoyed the surprised look on people's faces when they saw two people engaged in serious discussion in a language which was not theirs by birth!

When Aparna ji passed away in a Delhi hospital on 3rd December, 2018, she left behind her loving family, a host of friends, colleagues, students, and many many others whose lives had been touched

by her. She once described the lessons she imbibed on the journey of life, and perhaps that is how she would want to be remembered:

"Over the years I have come to believe that qualities of the mind are more important in life than doctrines; that feelings are more important and more vital than formulas. In the ultimate analysis, what matters is how we behave and conduct ourselves, not what we profess and enunciate. Our children and students learn by observing what we do and not by what we say, by what we practice and not by what we preach."

Hansa Jivraj Mehta (1897–1995) was a reformist, educator and freedom fighter from India. After Independence, she was part of the Constituent Assembly which drafted the Indian Constitution. She represented India on the nuclear sub-committee on the Status of Women in 1946. As the Indian delegate on the UN Human Rights Commission in 1947–48, she was responsible for changing the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from "all men are created equal" (Eleanor Roosevelt's preferred phrase) to "all human beings", highlighting the need for gender equality. She later went on to become the vice chairman of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations in 1950. She was also a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO.



The Story of Women's March from A Submissive Family Slave to Commanding Heights in Social Hierarchy

By Dr. Swarna Sakhuja, Treasurer, AIWC, Saharanpur Branch

The journey of women's emancipation and empowerment is a long story of hard struggle and tireless efforts of numerous thinkers, social reformers, women leaders, and of course, the limitless sacrifices of so many women from every class, caste and religion at the grass-root level. In this connection, a major contribution of the worldwide wave of Feminism of the late 60's and 70's cannot be overlooked, which has forced human society to seriously rethink the place of women in wider social and national life. Above all these factors, a historic movement for the revision and redefinition of sex-roles got momentum with the United Nations Declaration on Women's Rights against discrimination, and then the World Conference on International Women's Year in Mexico City in June 1975.

Before the analysis of the above important factors, the writer wants to draw the attention of readers to this fact that gender discrimination in human societies was not built into the roots of human civilization. A Marxian thinker, Eleanor Leacock once said, "In early societies sex roles were reciprocal, women were highly autonomous and social structures were sexually egalitarian." Another anthropologist, Chie Nukine stated that in early tribal societies, women were placed at the pivotal point in their social organization. In western societies too, up to the sixteenth century, gender discrimination did not prevail. Arnold Whittie in

his famous book "Women into Citizen" has said that during the middle ages, women often enjoyed the same rights as men in property, in guilds, in education, and also they occupied an important position in religious orders.

In ancient India too, in the glorious traditions of the Vedic period, women were granted opportunities equal to men in every sphere of social life. They enjoyed intellectual status equal to their men. They had all rights in the property, education, and marriage too, by the custom of 'Swayamvar'. Remarriage of widows was allowed and 'Satipratha' did not prevail. In Atharvaveda, it is stated that the status of wife, mother, and daughter was very prestigious. For example, a newly married husband greeted his wife with these words, " हेवधु, मैं ज्ञानवान हूँ, तू ज्ञानवती है, मैंसामहूँ, तूऋकहै, मैंद्यौहूँ, तू पृथ्वी है। हम दोनों यहाँ पराक्रमी होंगे और प्रजा को उत्पन्न करेंगे". In Rigveda, it is described that the wife was the queen of the household, she was Kalyani, Virat, Saraswati and with her grace, she illuminated the whole household. At that time, the birth of a daughter was a great blessing and the result of several pious deeds done by parents in their previous births.

With the decay of Vedic traditions and many other historical, political, and cultural factors, the degradation of women's status started. The actual decline in women's position started with the

consolidation of Patriarchial authority. All the bad customs relating to women such as early marriage, parda, polygamy, female infanticide, and so on became normal practices in the social milieu. Sons were valued more than daughters, women were considered as inferior species, no personality, no individual identity, totally suppressed, and oppressed. Her status was like a family slave and was deprived of all rights, she was socially, morally, and economically dependent on men. The situation became worse when women themselves accepted their utter subjugation as their destiny.

In such a forbidding social environment, it was very difficult for women to come out from the cage of four walls of familial obligations, particularly from the bondage of a joint family system. In this situation, the emancipation or development would mean the drastic change in the foundation of the system of social, economic, cultural, and political inequality. Luckily, with the grace of God, in the nineteenth century, the world's societies became aware of the dark age of women, and a slow process of women's development started. In the UK and USA, a wave of liberal feminism was seen which was targeted to obtain rights, equality, justice, and opportunities through constitutional amendments and reform campaigns within the existing social and political framework. Liberal thinkers like H.G. Wells, J.S. Mill, and Henry Faucet advocated educational, vocational, and professional rights for women. J.S. Mill's famous book "Subjugation of Women" had a great influence on women activists and women's organizations which were struggling for the right to vote. A vast majority of intellectuals also supported Mill's efforts and ideas regarding women's rights.

In 1904, an International Alliance of Women (IAW) was established. The women organizations of many nations were the members of this alliance. Its first congress was held in Berlin and its 23rd congress was held in India. The aim of the continuous long struggle of IAW was to secure equality and a respectful status for womenkind all over the world. It was the greatest achievement on the part of IAW that UNO had established the Commission on Status of Women (CSW) in 1946. A worldwide survey was done by this commission and the related governments were asked for immediate action to grant franchise and other political and civil rights including marriage, property, and the guardianship of children for married women.

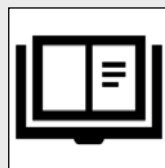
In India, the Hindu Revival Movement of the nineteenth century has done a lot for the emancipation and reestablishment of women in positions of honour. Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, Theosophical Society, and many other such reform organizations told the people that female equality was a part of the Hindu religion. Many women's organizations such as Ladies Association (1886), Mahila Samiti (1909), Bhagini Samaj (1916), Indian Women's Association (1917), and All India Women's Conference (1926) have been striving for the empowerment of women. Many women leaders such as Sarla Devi Chaudhrani, Pandita Rama Bai, Rani of Mandi, Annie Besant, Sarojini Naidu, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kriplani, Usha Mehta, all had organized meetings and conferences to educate the masses for equality and justice for women. Dr. Annie Besant emphasized the women's plural role for the advancement of society. She said, "Indian greatness will not return until Indian womanhood obtains a larger, fuller life."

A drastic change in the mindset of society towards women's position took place after the celebration of 'Women's Development Decade' under the purview of UNO during the world conference in 1975-85. In India, although women were granted all kinds of rights including the right to vote after the establishment of the Democratic Republic political system in the country, they were considered the 'weaker section' of the society - deserving special protection, care, and welfare. Many women's organizations had raised objection to the terminology as 'weaker section' which signaled the word 'Abla' for women. After the UNO conference, women were being referred to as the co-partners of men in the process of development and nation-building, instead of 'weaker-section'.

Inspired by this positive attitude of society, Indian women have come to discover themselves with intelligence, education, and learning. They feel confident and competent to share equality with

men in every field of work. Now women are getting entry even into male-dominated professions, such as business management, executives, engineering, journalism, Indian airlines, television, scriptwriting, film production, politics, IT sector, etc, and they have proved their worth and ability and commitment. Today, women are occupying every position of commanding heights in the social hierarchy.

In this journey of empowerment of women, it will be pertinent to mention the role played by AIWC here. We all know that All India Women's Conference is a pioneer social organization that has two hundred branches all over India from north to south and from east to west. All are totally committed to empowering the deprived and down-trodden women of every village and every slum area that is in their approach. In the journey of women's emancipation, All India Women's Conference is playing a crucial role. We the members of AIWC, Saharanpur branch are proud of being its part.



ROSHNI welcomes your articles!

Email us at aiwc.roshni@gmail.com.

Writeups should be sent in MS Word format.

Please do not send handwritten notes, PDF formats or Powerpoint presentations.

Photos are worth a thousand words – make them well-focussed and in JPG format.

Case Reports

*By Smt. Kalpana Roy, President, Raiganj Mahilasammilani
and Zonal Organizer, Eastern Zone A*

Case Report of Girl Child Harassment

A girl from Raiganj, aged fourteen years, eloped with a seventeen year old boy on 8th March night. The boy took her to his uncle's house at Dalkhola, Siliguri near Islampur. Next morning, her parents went to the Police Station, but they did not get any fruitful result. After three days, her parents informed me about the matter. That evening, I went to the Police Station with the Child Line Organization. After that on that very night, I went to the boy's house to meet his parents, and advised them that their son must surrender himself and hand over the girl to her parents by next morning, otherwise we might take strong action against the boy. As a result, by 12 pm of the next day the boy came with the girl to the Police Station. I sent the girl to the Child Home. The boy was sent to the Juvenile Centre. Next day, I visited the girl but I was shocked that medical aid was not given to her till then. I asked the authorities of the Child Home why they had not done anything yet; then the girl was sent for a medical check-up. After that, the matter went to Court. But the boy was given bail by the Court. After taking counseling of the girl for two days, her mother took her home.

Case Report of Women's Harassment

I came to know about a woman who was being

cheated and physically abused by her husband for many years (three years). She came to me (Raiganj Mahila Sammilani) and asked for some kind and strong help. As it was during the lockdown period, it was not possible for me to deal with her case single handedly. So I took the help of our respected District Magistrate. I arranged every possible security for that woman and made an FIR at the local police station. Her husband was continuously threatening her with life issues and with her survival. On 26th April 2020, on this issue we held a Press Conference with different media houses, keeping safe distance and maintaining the sanitization process. They have broadcast it through their local channels. In that meeting there were our Mahila Sammilani members, some NGO members, some respected teachers and professors who are very responsible towards society and against women's abasement. We all have taken the case kindheartedly and we all empathised with the present condition of the woman. Today this case has been taken to court. We all are hoping the woman will get proper justice through my small initiative.

A Protest on Early Marriage by A Brave Girl

A brave Muslim (Mohammedan) girl, studying

in class 10 from Habibpur, Malda showed her bravery by breaking the rule of Patriarchal Society on 7th May 2020. Her parents forcefully tried to get her married in her infancy. But the brave girl called me on the day of mahr (an obligation, in the form of money paid by the groom to the bride). I was known to her since the day I campaigned in her area. As soon as possible, I, along with the Child Line Organization went to Habibpur and took the girl away with me. I shifted her to the Child Home. She is still at the Child Home. The girl wants to qualify for her 10th class final exam from the Child Home. She conveys to society that early marriage is a social crime. It is a good message for our society- that a young girl tried her best to educate herself; and we must not forget that it is our victory.

A Teenage Girl Rescued from Child Marriage

During the COVID-19 period many illiterate parents have acquired a wrong mindset in every rural area to marry their child. This foolishness has ruined the life of thousands of teenagers. On 29th Nov 2020, a fifteen year old girl was getting forcefully married by her parents. The girl is a resident of Bindole, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur, near our Constituent Branch. But one of her friends showed her bravery by taking a decision to contact us on the day of the marriage. After knowing this information, we reached the venue at 11 am on that day and rescued the teenager from another child marriage. Later on we handed the girl into the child home near us. Nowadays this is one of the biggest problems in our rural society, so we



need the courageous action of every literate person around us, like the friend of that girl.

A Girl Is Physically Harassed by Her Tutor

A girl near Bidhannagar, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur, was being physically harassed by her tutor since many months. When she felt it to be unbearable she exposed the teacher by posting an audio recording on Facebook in November 2020. Thereafter, we visited the girl and heard the matter from her. Her parents looked depressed. We talked to them and promised to help them. We have given our number to her father to contact us if any problems occurred. Later on the tutor said sorry to the girl and her parents. We know that sorry can't reverse time, but it gives a chance to change yourself.

A Teenager Rescued from Child Marriage

25th Dec. 2020, A fourteen year old unnamed girl reading in class 10 from Purnia, Bihar ran away by bus to her twenty five year old boyfriend who lived in Raiganj. She fled from Purnia at around 7 pm by bus on 25th December. Her boyfriend was waiting at the state bus station of Raiganj. As soon as I was informed by the childline, we reached the bus station. The girl was sent to the Child Home. The boy was sent to police custody.

A Kidnapping Case

26th Dec 2020: A fourteen year old girl went to the mobile recharge shop near her home in Narayanpur, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur at around 6 pm on 26th Dec and two boys kidnapped her. Her mother is a member of our society. The mother reached the boy's house, but when they refused to give back her daughter, she contacted us. Later I, in collaboration with Child Line informed the local Police Station of Raiganj. The Police arrested the boy's father. Next day a phone call was received from one of the kidnappers to the girl's friend. She informed her



The girl and Police Officer & Constable with Kalpana Roy

married elder sister, who informed me and took the number of the kidnapper and placed it at the Police Station. Police tracked the number and successfully arrested the boy. The girl was sent for Medical Test in front of me and we came to know that the girl is all right. But when we reached the court the girl refused to agree about her kidnapping in front of Magistrate. She said that she went to a relative's home. When she was asked by her mother she disclosed that she was threatened by the boy that they would kill her father.

AIWC 'Cause Partner' NFCH—Webinars on National Integration, Peace & Communal Harmony—with Zonals

By Dr. Manju Kak, MIC- National Integration, Peace & Communal Harmony

The world's biggest lockdown began in March 2020 due to the Global Pandemic caused by Covid-19. It brought with it tremendous challenges in human behavior, economic and social changes, educational freeze, trust issues, communal and family dissonance, health challenges, unemployment, mental health, agricultural and factory labour, etc. The rapid spread not only disrupted the global economy but also brought enhanced disparity amongst people. Homemakers faced an increasing burden of work catering to family members and making economic and other adjustments due to closure of schools. The pandemic also exposed and exploited gender inequality prevailing in society. Statistics will slowly emerge showing how employers evaluated the impact on the workforce during this period both of men and women. And certainly these statistics will contribute in the future to a Global Preparedness Policy of all countries, developed and developing.

In response the All India Women's Conference under the **President Smt. Sheela Kakde, Secretary General Kuljit Kaur and Treasurer Rehana Begum** immediately rose to the occasion tackling many fields. But one of the biggest challenges was keeping peace and harmony in our families, community and workplace due to these

stresses. It was a challenge that AIWC took up with quick speed as the lockdown lengthened. AIWC branches wholeheartedly worked for the welfare of common people, and along with higher authorities they distributed cooked food, groceries, vegetables and essentials goods to needy ones without thought to religion, class and caste. Members supported doctors, health workers, police, administrative staff and worked hand in hand with them. We learnt how people rose to the occasion to help each other unconditionally and fed the stranded migrants returning to their villages. People came together from different religions to work together to save lives showing us the true meaning of 'united we stand, divided we fall'.

But one important initiative was organizing ten Webinars as 'Cause Partner' to the National Foundation for Communal Harmony, Delhi, which is an autonomous body under the umbrella of the Home Ministry with several trustees who are also Union Ministers of Home, Defense, HRD, Culture, etc. The objective was to spread the message of harmony, hope and peace in these trying times.

When people in the spirit of humanity celebrate India's diversity and rich heritage it is inspiring. Unless we have harmony in family life, our neighbourhoods and in our societies, our objective

of creating a just, equitable and sustainable world cannot be achieved. Therefore insuring communal harmony is a primary objective of India's Directive Principles of State Policy and is also enshrined in the AIWC Constitution, Article no. 4, "To promote harmony, and to work towards national integration and unity". Since its inception in 1927, AIWC has always worked for this Cause and successfully carried out awareness programs through its ten Zones and five hundred branches all over India. It has also partnered the NFCH earlier. So it was nothing new to the organization. Already at the beginning of 2020 NFCH had funded AIWC to organize two Symposiums in two National Universities in the states of (Rajkot) Gujarat and (Lucknow) UP attended by more than three hundred people, and a third was slated in (Hyderabad) Telengana.

But come March, 2020, due to the need to observe Social Distancing and other Health Safeguards, AIWC was honoured to be chosen by NFCH to continue this work through Webinars—on subjects titled, **Together we Win, Harmony amid COVID-19 times, India: Symbol of Harmony during Corona Outbreak, Nation Building through Services for Unity and Peace, Role of Women in Promoting Harmony, Lessons to be learnt from Pandemic Covid 19, Responsibilities of Citizens Towards Society**, by senior government officers, professors, renowned social activists, doctors, journalists, psychologists, NGO heads etc., to an engaged audience digitally by lectures, dance, song etc. It was clear midst vulnerability, death and disease, we needed to also celebrate the resilience of the human spirit. Civil Society and AIWC branches participated with

one single objective to sensitize people, reiterate mutual respect and mutual responsibility as both Indian and Global citizens, reinforce solidarity through attitudinal change, peaceful co-existence by acceptance of diversity in all its forms: religion, caste and class, and respect all cultures and religions that would lead to communal harmony. The Webinars received overwhelming response from a cross section of society. The Indian folded palms—Namaste- became the form of greetings during the pandemic while maintaining social distancing.

COVID 19 has made us aware of the importance of family and society. It gave us a window of silence to admire the beauty of our diverse cultural backgrounds allowing us to revisit values and principles that in our busy lives we don't have time for—to smile, to take care of each other, friendly discussions, faded cultural values, forgotten traditions. Our cultural values of brotherhood can give us the strength to fight back against COVID 19. We also learnt that though communal feeling is not determined by gender, women can play an extraordinary role in fostering this by being the local ambassadors for communal harmony and can play a key role in minimizing violence. If such values are inculcated, students and youth can be involved in the execution of this aim.

The Webinars also highlighted some policy issues such as the prime importance of Care Workers, of insurance for labour, both agricultural and industrial, our developmental needs, the role of psychology in nurturing nonviolence etc. It also reminded us of the value of Ayurveda, respect for indigenous knowledge systems, a new understanding how our mothers' and grandmothers' kitchens are enriched

with the medicinal values through use of spices that boost immunity; how necessary it is to take care of mental health by supporting family and friends with love and warmth.

Finally, as one of our Speakers, Prof Malabika Sarkar, Vice Chancellor of the prestigious Ashoka University Delhi, said, “First, we have learnt to live with ourselves, with our loneliness, and to recover our sense of the wonderful world we live in. Secondly, we have rediscovered the power of language and we have built verbal bridges through

virtual means to stay connected. Third, we have become more sensitive to the challenges of hitherto faceless groups such as migrant workers and front line health workers. Fourth, technology has advanced in one year as a mass revolution drawing in people from all ages and all backgrounds. And an important Fifth is the global team-work including scientists, laboratory workers, governments, regulatory agencies, financiers and volunteers that has brought us vaccines in one year as against the average time span of a decade that is needed to produce a vaccine.”

Webinar on Communal Harmony and National Integration

By Dr. Karuna Sharma, Secretary, Jagriti Women's Conference, Haridwar

Jagriti Women's Conference, Haridwar organized a webinar with DPS RANIPUR Haridwar on 29th November 2020. Smt. Uma Pandey, Vice President, Jagriti Women's Conference, Haridwar anchored the program, and welcomed all the guests. Our National President Smt. Sheela Kakde addressed the audience, followed by Smt. Jasmeen Sharma, a DPS teacher, who spoke on the topic: “Responsibility of A Citizen Towards Society”. Class VIII students of DPS RANIPUR recited poems on Communal Harmony and National Integration. Smt. Preeti Joshi, a DPS teacher spoke on “Lessons Learnt During Covid-19”. Secretary

General Smt. Kuljit Kaur addressed the audience and appreciated the program. She said that Jagriti Women's Conference, Haridwar Branch had done the program in a different way. No other branch had done it in this way. Children are our future generation and when they are shaped in this way then our country will face no problem of communal harmony and national integration. The vote of thanks was given by MIC Smt. Manju Kak. She thanked DPS RANIPUR and Jagriti Women's Conference, Haridwar for a wonderful program. She congratulated Smt. Neru Jain, Dr. Karuna Sharma and Smt. Uma Pandey.

Sanju Women's Welfare Association Celebrates National Integration Day

By Smt. Shanthi Socrates, President, Sanju Women's Welfare Association

A webinar was conducted by Sanju Women's Welfare Association(WIA), belonging to the AIWC family, Chennai, in celebration of National Integration Day on 19th November 2020. The webinar began with Sarva Dharma Prarthana. Smt. Shanthi Socrates, President of Sanju Women's Welfare Association welcomed the gathering. Dr. Manju Kak, MIC - National Integration, Peace and Communal Harmony, spoke about the need for national unity and communal harmony among the citizens, particularly in the times of pandemic crisis. Smt. Sheela Kakde, President, AIWC, inaugurated the session and explained AIWC's role in national integration through their branches. The guest speaker Smt. Nithya, Head, Department of Human Rights and Duties Education, Ethiraj College for Women, Chennai, explained the role of women in national integration and communal harmony,

From history in both the pre- and post-Independence era, women's role in protecting peace and harmony was very evident. Even in modern days, women are important in all fields. Women activists and NGOs play a major role in recent years for protection and promotion of human rights and harmony. As mothers and teachers, women are the pillars of instilling the thought of unity and equality in future citizens.

As women are the major victims and often bear the brunt of violence, especially during communal violence, we have not just a role but a responsibility to promote non-violence and equality. The members of the association entertained the audience by singing national integration songs and dressing up in costumes of the states of our country.



Chirayin Keezhu Branch Youth Empowerment Program

By Dr K G Vijayalekshmy, Trustee, AIWC Health Trust & SCM, Urban Welfare Society

The Mission of the Program

To empower and strengthen the youth population towards active participation in the developmental process of the country.

6th October

All India Women's Conference in association with WHI organized a national webinar for youth assemblage. The objective of the program is to prepare the youth in a broader perspective to think and act positively, conceiving and proliferating the directive of peace and communal harmony. Dr. Vijayalekshmy spoke about the broader objectives of this program. This webinar intends to specifically focus on national integration, peace and communal harmony.

This programme is the second edition of the Youth Empowerment programme, which will be followed up with a mentoring program aimed at creating a self-sustaining ecosystem of autonomous, regenerative and grassroot youth programs.

Hon. Governor Arif Mohammed Khan spoke about how national integration helps in keeping the stability of the country and adds up to its overall developments. It unites the people in working towards an unified India. It is very important for the youth to come together and join hands to make people aware about the diverse cultures of our nation. More involvement of the youth will give rise to new ideas and practical solutions to the problems the country faces.

Brig.Seshadri spoke about how the armed forces are proud of their all-India all-class character and complete integration of all communities into a single mould: that of the Indian Soldier. The uniformed services are the pillar of national integration. The armed forces are not only for national integration but also motivate the youth to join the armed forces.

Smt. Kuljit Kaur, Secretary General AIWC defined National integration as the bond and togetherness between people regardless of their caste, religion or gender. She spoke about the youth being involved closely in national integration and the role they play in unifying India. Dr. Manju Kak, Member in Charge, National Integration and Communal Harmony, spoke of the role of AIWC in choosing the key issues in the country and addressing them by way of creating awareness among youth and women. Smt. Radhika Somasundaran extended a vote of thanks to the guests as well as the participants.

22nd October

The third Youth Empowerment programme on Women's Safety was held on 22nd October 2020. Shri Vijayand formally inaugurated the Webinar and spoke about the increase in violence especially during the Covid-19 period. He also spoke about the low rank of India in women's safety. He suggested that the voice of the women should be heard. There should a self-help group which serves as a voice for the women. He also suggested that there should be political representation of women.

Smt. Sheela Thomas, IAS spoke about the necessity of having a change in attitude of both men and women. The sense of discrimination should be abandoned. Even in the topmost positions, women had to prove themselves and face harassment at the hands of men.

Smt. Ashitha Saran, Vice President AIWC, introduced Smt. Kuljit Kaur to the august gathering. Smt. Kuljit Kaur spoke with extreme passion about the difficulties she faced during her visit to Hathras, how the family was isolated and the problems they faced from the Govt. officials.

Kum. Aishwarya Dongre, IPS spoke about the role of the police in women's safety. She spoke about how the police get a bad name but are not always at fault. She spoke about how not only women, but children and transgenders are also harassed and marginalised. Smt. Devika, academician and writer spoke about how and when women face a serious issue like molestation or domestic violence. They receive very little support from the public. There is a need for women to support each other and have a forum to voice their problems, as well as a support system which will back them always. Smt. PE Usha spoke about how women and children who were subjected to assault and molestation were housed in Nirbhaya homes. She spoke about the problem faced by the pregnant girls in these homes. The lack of proper nutrition, health care and their protection need to be urgently addressed. She emphasised the need for empowering the victim.

25th November

Fourth edition Youth Empowerment Programme

Dr Vijayalekshmy clearly elucidate the objective of

the webinar in her welcome address. Smt. Kalyani Raj (Member in Charge, Climate Change) delivered the thematic presentation about India being the most vulnerable country in the world for climate change. She also spoke about the Paris Agreement where India has promised 40 percent of major renewals and also increase in forest cover. She ended by saying that we have not inherited this world but borrowed it.

In a powerful and hard hitting speech, Smt. Maneka Gandhi spoke about how India ranks second in the emission of methane, which causes mood changes, slurred speech, vision problem and memory loss.

She insisted on wearing cotton clothes and using natural dyes. Chemical dyes cause pollution of the river and the death of many animals drinking water. Follow a vegetarian diet. Meat and dairy products account for around 14.5 percent of global greenhouse gas. Meat is one of the prime factors contributing to the mass extinction. A hundred acres of forest were being destroyed to construct a railway line in the Andamans.

Mrs. Madhavi Joshi (senior programme director CEE) spoke about the 13th SDG Goal and the Paris agreement, also recognising that sustainable lifestyles and sustainable pattern of consumption and production parties taking the lead play an important role in addressing climate change. Food waste alone causes ten percent of greenhouse gases.

Suggestions

- To plant and nurture indigenous plants
- Cultural and traditional methods of farming.
- Encourage local economy.

- Support recycling

Colleges and schools: Increase your hand print and decrease your footprint.

1. Hand print challenge
2. Sustainable campuses
3. SDG HP lab
4. Street plays
5. Green fests
6. Campaigns

Udit Singhal is a young enthusiastic and passionate climate changer who started the glass to sand NGO in October 2018. The NGO has crushed 10000 bottles into six thousand KG of high grade silica sand. It has partnered with fifteen institutions and set up a volunteer network to collect bottles. His work has won accolades from the world over as the young leader for the SDGs.

Smt.Usha Nair Zonal Organizer South Zone B, gave the summing up of the webinar. Smt. Ashitha Saran gave the vote of thanks.



RPM Women's Welfare Association (Regd.) Adambakkam, Chennai Webinar on Relevant Skills for Financial Success

By Smt. Preetha Raj, President, RPMWWA

In commemoration of World Student's Day, RPM Women's Welfare Association conducted a webinar on 18th October on Empowering Women Through Skill Training, based on SDG Goal 4.4 – Relevant Skills for Financial Success. Shri V. Vishnu, IAS holding the post of Director of Employment and Training and Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation presented an interactive session on the topic.

He briefed members about the skill training programmes provided by the Central and State Government under various Schemes such as 'Pradhan Mantri Koushal Vikas Yojana' (PMKVY), 'Pradhan Mantri Koushal Kendras' (PMKK), 'Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion' (SANKALP) of the Central Government, 'Short term Skill Training', 'Recognition of Prior Learning', 'Amma Skill Centre and Employability Scheme' offered by Tamil Nadu State Government.

The interactive session was laced with plenty of queries from the participants, Smt. Padma Venkatraman, Smt. Kalyani Raj, Smt. Usha Nair, Smt. Jameela Begum, Smt. Kannaki Prabhakaran, Smt. Shanthi Socrates, Smt. Vasanthi and a few others. Shri Vishnu patiently replied to each query and said that anybody can start a skill training unit provided they possess adequately qualified trainers. He suggested that Gypsy women should be encouraged to use natural colours in their products so that they would achieve the standards in world market.

According to him, skill training is largely based on the locality and hence the Tamil Nadu Government

has formed the District Skill Committee which identifies the skills prevailing in the particular localities and works on equipping them in that area. The Government forms a curriculum and lays down standards to be followed to provide skill training, assess, certify and provide them with jobs. He passed on information about the 'Coursera Training' started by TNSDC for providing online skill training for 50,000 persons.

Shri Vishnu talked about the various traditional as well as other skills covered under twenty five sectors classified with various sub sectors and certified by the NSDC, the National Authority. Tamil Nadu is one state that promotes women through the Tamil Nadu Corporation for Women and Pudukkottai Thittam, through which funds are being sanctioned for setting up Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. He said that in the current pandemic situation it is better to get locally equipped training and employment as it would be the best way to maintain safety while earning.

The speaker said that TNSDC is trying to make skill training glamorous by bringing in DRONE operating and related skilling, and redefining certain skills already prevailing such as carpentry and Interior Decoration, which might attract more to take up skill training. The TNSDC have started working on certain clusters to develop traditional skilling and he spoke about promoting Pathamadaai mats from Tirunelveli district as Yoga Mats. He added that the creators had to be trained in banking and other trade activities simultaneously.

Lekshmi N Menon Institute for Empowerment of Women (LIEW)

TVPM Branch, Thiruvananthapuram

By Smt. Indira Ramakrishna Pillai, Director, LIEW, Sahana, TVPM

AIWC Trivandrum branch has launched a YouTube channel. It is an effort to take the voices of these committed workers to the general public, alerting them about the need to follow guidelines. The videos are in Malayalam.

Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon's Commemoration was organized on 30 November 2020. Dr. Shashi Tharoor MP delivered the Commemorative Lecture at a webinar. The lecture was also live-streamed on YouTube.

A Literary and Cultural Forum has been set up in the branch. It will host webinars on literary and cultural topics featuring eminent people on the first Thursday of every month. The Forum was inaugurated by Shri K. Jayakumar IAS on 3rd December 2020.

UST Global, a leading digital technology services company with offices in Techno Park, Trivandrum, has sponsored a Zoom Pro package for one year for AIWC South Zone-B through AIWC-TVPM branch, under their CSR initiative.

List of Webinars hosted by AIWC-TVPM

26/10/2020	Inauguration of Zoom Pro App webinars by Smt. Indira R.Pillai, President AIWC-TVPM
10/11/2020	Mahakavi Akkittam - a talk in Malayalam by Prof. Madhusoodanan Nair
30/11/2020	Lakshmi N. Menon Commemorative Lecture 2020 by Dr. Shashi Tharoor MP
03/12/2020	Inauguration of Literary and Cultural Forum by Shri K. Jayakumar IAS
22/12/2020	STAY SAFE IN CYBER SPACE - Webinar for students by Shri Sunil Sadasivan

On 23 December 2020, Christmas and New Year were celebrated with cake-cutting and a sumptuous feast, sponsored by Vykunda Gaja Sewa Sangham. Ms. Arya Rajendran, Councillor of the Mudavanmugal Ward and later elected Mayor of Trivandrum (youngest Mayor in India), was present and appreciated the activities of the Centre.

Kakinada Branch Webinars

By Smt. Bhanumati Nukala, Secretary, Kakinada Branch

During Covid-19 period our branch attended many webinars conducted by Head Office, New Delhi. With that experience Kakinada Branch started webinars. We have chosen important dates and topics and invited relevant speakers.

1st October was International Day of Senior Citizens. We invited Dr. Alluri Vijayalakshmi, senior gynaecologist: Shri Shri Holistic Hospitals, Hyderabad to speak about the care of senior citizens in Covid-19. She explained in detail how corona attacks senior citizens and the precautions to be taken. She said food, rest, mask and social distance are very important. Family members support is equally important. Multivitamins are to be taken regularly. Hot water gargling, inhalation and pranayamam help to develop immunity.

10th October is World Mental Health Day. It is an important topic as we know that being mentally healthy makes a lot of difference in our lives. We invited Dr. Vijayalakshmi, Phycologist from Kakinada. She explained the reasons and the causes for mental ill-health and suggested some remedies. Tension and Depression are the main cause of mental ill-health. Family atmosphere and support plays a major role in women's health especially mental health. She said "Yoga and Meditation helps a lot" When the women in a family are mentally healthy the whole family will be healthy.

On November 6th. we conducted a webinar on hair and skin care during COVID-19. Dr. Zareena Begum, famous beautician from Kakinada was the guest speaker. She clearly explained the structures

SKIN CARE – FOOD FOR HEALTHY SKIN

FOODS FOR HEALTHY GLOWING SKIN
beauty is in nature

WATER
FLUSHES OUT TOXINS
SMOOTH SKIN
REDUCES DRYNESS & WRINKLES
REDUCES PUFFINESS

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS
PROTECTS FROM UV DAMAGE
PREVENTS SKIN DRYNESS, ACNE
Ex: Salmon, Walnuts, Beans, Flaxseeds

VITAMIN A (ANTIOXIDANT)
RETINOID (ANIMAL BASED)
- PROTECTS FROM UV DAMAGE

CAROTENOID (PLANT BASED)
- PREVENTS PREMATURE AGEING & OTHER SKIN CONCERNS
- Ex: Eggs, Meat, Carrot, Milk

VITAMIN C
COLLAGEN PRODUCTION
REDUCES HYPER PIGMENTATION
REDUCES INFLAMMATION
REDUCES POST ACNE MARKS
HELPS IN CELL REGENERATION
HELPS IN WOUND HEALING
Ex: Citrus fruits, Papaya, Kiwis

VITAMIN B6
COLLAGEN SYNTHESIS
REDUCES WHITE SKIN RASH
PREVENTS CHAPPED LIPS
BOOSTS IMMUNITY
Ex: Avocado, Spinach, Plums

VITAMIN E (ANTIOXIDANT)
BOOSTS IMMUNITY & CELL FUNCTION
REDUCES UV DAMAGE
LIGHTENS APPEARANCE OF SCARS & STRETCH MARKS
Ex: Nuts, Apricots, Almonds, Olives

of hair and skin. Many factors damage hair and skin. Depression is the main cause which acts on our skin and hair. She explained the problems generally faced by us and has given remedies. Nutritious food and good sleep are best. Sun screen lotion in the morning and moisturizer in the night protects skin. Good and proper products play a vital role. Twice weekly head bath after applying oil and the use of a good and mild shampoo, followed by proper drying helps hair to look healthy.

November 25th is observed as International Day for Elimination of Violence against women. We invited two eminent professors from Nit Warangal, Dr. Sailaja and Dr. Rama. They both touched the root causes for violence against women and also suggested certain remedies. The family background and surroundings play a major role. A boy must be

taught how to treat a girl from his childhood.

We conducted two webinars on Women Empowerment on December 21st and 26th. These two webinars are different from other ones, as we have not invited any outside speakers. All our members were free to express their feelings. On 26th December, the topic was Learn to Earn. Many branches explained their programs to empower women financially. They explained about various government projects and how to approach and start one's own business.

All the above webinars were attended by different branches in large numbers. We were able to conduct these with help and encouragement of Head Office, Zonal In-charge and Zonal Organizer of South Zone- A.

Human Rights Day

By Smt. Chandrababha Pandey, MIC- Event Management

A webinar was organised on Human Rights at Head Office on 10th December 2020.

After a welcome address by President Sheela Kakde, the speakers were introduced:

Professor Anand Kumar of Jawaharlal Nehru University spoke on Human Rights and Women. Assistant Prof. Nithya, who teaches human rights in a college in Chennai, explained in detail the fundamental rights and duties of Indian citizens as enshrined in the Indian Constitution and

protected by law. Vice President Bhavna Joshipura of Rajkot, a lawyer by profession, spoke about the role of AIWC in promoting awareness about human rights and protecting them. Roshni Editor Chitra Sarkar proposed a Vote of Thanks. In open forum members asked questions and made comments.

The meeting was organised by Smt. Chandrababha Pandey. MIC-Event Management and coordinated by Smt. Supriya Bhalerao, Joint Secretary, AIWC

An Awareness Talk on “Women’s Mental Health in Covid-19 Era”

By Smt. Bhuvaneswari Ravindran, Secretary, SUVARNA, AIWC Kozhikode Branch

SUVARNA, AIWC Kozhikode Branch organised an awareness talk on “Women’s Mental health in COVID Era” on 21st October 2020 wherein Dr. Varsha Vidyadharan, Assistant Professor in Psychiatry, Government Medical College, Kozhikode unravelled in a simple, engaging manner several facts relating to the impact of COVID 19 and mental health of women in particular.

Interestingly, global statistics reveal that the psychological impact of COVID 19 has been more on women than on men. This issue appeared to be a matter of concern not only in the Indian scenario, but the world over, whether in developed countries like USA or even in developing countries. Factors responsible for this may include (a) the pressure arising from the multitasking that women are expected to generally perform, (b) to strike a balance between their home and workplace (c) norms on working from home and its resultant accessible timings, (d) absence of domestic help and lack of understanding on the part of their partners, and so on.

There are other categories of women undergoing stress due to their being left alone, away from their loved ones and unable to reach out to people; and those who are frustrated about not participating in any social gatherings, be it family functions, marriages, funerals or even going to places of worship. Coupled with all that, there is also the worry that they themselves could be affected by the illness and also whether their family, friends

and other near ones would be victims. People are finding it difficult to adjust to the sudden change in the normal routine and lifestyle.

While most people are learning to cope with the uncertainty in life which is a lesson that this unprecedented pandemic has taught us, this uncertainty is increasing the level of anxiety, frustration, stress and distress in many around us. In these circumstances, it is important that we keep a watch on warning signs of worry or anxiety creeping into our lives or those around us, such as: (a) continued sleeplessness; (b) lack of concentration in doing even those things that generally we love to do; (c) fatigue and lack of interest in anything (c) nurturing irrational fears, worries and disturbing thoughts coming to the mind; (d) getting irritated fast and not being able to give a patient hearing; (e) getting worried and startled easily; (f) complaints of multiple aches such as body aches, neck pain, headaches, continuous lower back pain, heaviness in chest, numbness, burning sensation, loss of appetite etc.

If these things continue for more than a few days, it is a sign that our mental health is being affected and it is time to seek Psychological First Aid, by sharing these thoughts with persons whom one can trust and would help. When someone whom we know, whether in the family, friends or others are going through such stress and loneliness, though we will not be able to physically go and help, we should offer our help by reaching out to them through voice calls, WhatsApp, Messenger

etc., giving a patient hearing. Giving feedback or some positive comments, through conversations conducted in a gentle, soft manner without indulging in blame games or being judgemental or prejudiced, will help. We should also try to give maximum emotional support, maintain patience and confidentiality. Wherever it is beyond us to help, one should take psychological help.

In the interim, till the time that we conquer this disease, which will take a few more months or more, it is also important that we should protect ourselves. For this we should keep wearing good masks; maintain social distancing; and wash hands frequently, which will help in reducing the risk of getting the illness and if at all we are infected make the intensity and severity milder.

Sound sleep for at least six hours being integral to keeping ourselves physically fit and energetic, some tips on sleep hygiene were given as: getting up at a fixed time whatever time you may sleep; hearing music or reading books before sleeping; going to bed only when you feel sleepy; avoid sleeping during day time; doing some exercise at least five days a week for 20-30 minutes preferably in the morning; restricting time spent online and not being online for more than 20-30 minutes at a stretch; having a periodical “Happy Time” by spending time on hobbies like gardening, listening to music, cooking, watching TV programmes, etc. If such a routine is followed, our biological clock will start adjusting in about five to six weeks, thus unlearning the faulty sleeping pattern and slowly bringing in a regular habit.

An important message for us is to reassure ourselves and those around us that these difficult times too will pass soon, driving out negative disturbing thoughts, and replacing them with healthy, positive thoughts of happy times. Regularly, keep connected with

family, friends and near ones through voice calls, video calls, or online chatting. Promptly attend to such needs of vulnerable persons around us, such as children, pregnant and lactating mothers, elderly persons, etc., trying to share some time with them, supporting and encouraging them to communicate their difficulties.

The COVID 19 scenario and social distancing has put tremendous pressure on small children also, who find it difficult to adjust to the new norms. It is important to try and put to rest such anxiety, fear or restlessness that the young ones may be going through, by talking to them regularly, giving them moral courage and support, reassuring them that the span of any pandemic is generally between fifteen to eighteen months and this will also end very soon. Telling them stories of positive experiences of how the world has in the past survived several such calamities, be it plague, cholera, small pox, the recent attack of Nipa virus, the devastating floods etc., will help them realise how much better placed we are now as compared to those times when there was no means of communication. They should also be made to understand the difference between taking precautions and being fearful. Teach them how important it is to take all precautions by washing hands, maintaining distance and wearing a mask properly which will protect them from the disease. Instil confidence by citing examples of how so many medical and other staff working very closely with patients are safe because of the precautions they take. It is also good to keep them engaged through video chats with friends, playing games with them via various platforms like google meet, etc.

Feedback received from those who participated in the webinar was quite encouraging, full of appreciation for the Speaker and the usefulness and relevance of the Session in the current Covid times.

Lakshmi N. Menon Commemorative Lecture 2020

Honourable Guest : Dr. Shashi Tharoor MP.

By Smt. Sasikala Vijayan, Trivandrum Branch

A webinar was organised under the aegis of AIWC Trivandrum branch on 30th November, to observe the 26th death anniversary of Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon, freedom fighter and politician. She was President and then Patron of the AIWC for many years.

The President of AIWC-TVPM branch, Smt. Indira Ramakrishna Pillai, welcomed the keynote speaker Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament representing Trivandrum, and all participants to the webinar. She also paid homage to the memory of Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon. Smt. Sheela Kakde, President, AIWC, delivered a short address through video about the significant contributions made by Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon to AIWC.

Dr. Tharoor spoke about the contribution of women towards the development of India especially women activists like Lakshmi N. Menon, Sarojini Naidu, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Dr. Sushila Nayyar and many others. Their contributions should be put in perspective, he noted. Not only did they fight against the colonial power but also against entrenched patriarchal mindsets. He decried the 'historical amnesia' in India which has led to neglect of the contributions made by early leaders and social reformers. Dr. Tharoor recalled that Lakshmi N. Menon played a pivotal role in the drafting of the UN Charter on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She objected to references like- 'All men are born free and equal...' etc. This led to the final draft which said - 'All human beings are born free and equal ...'.

Referring to the paradox of women being deified on the one hand and persecuted on the other, he said a change in attitude is still a work in progress. He concluded by paying homage to the memory of Lakshmi N Menon, and said her work and message needs to be disseminated to the younger generation.

Mr. Derek Rutherford an Indophile and Director of the Institute of Alcohol Studies, London was a surprise guest speaker. He had met Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon in Chennai in 1994 when she was the Vice President of the All India Prohibition Council and had established Alcohol and Drug Information Centre -India (ADIC-India). Mr. Rutherford had delivered the first Commemorative lecture on Lakshmi N Menon organised by ADIC India in Trivandrum in 1995. He fondly recalled her concern in reducing the consumption of alcohol, and its effect on the health and family of the addict.

Mr. Johnson J. Edayaranmula, a social worker and founder member of ADIC India, recalled his long association with Lakshmi N. Menon since his college days and her influence in shaping his career as an activist. He said she and her team would visit remote villages to create awareness on temperance at the grassroot level.

The meeting, which commenced with Vande Mataram and concluded with the National Anthem (a practice Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon always insisted on), was moderated by Smt. Usha Nair, Zonal Organiser, South Zone (B).



Webinar on “Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Empowerment of Women”

By Smt. Indrani Sengupta, MIC- Art and Culture

The year 2020 marked 200 years of the birth anniversary of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, an educationist and social reformer from Bengal. Since education has been on the agenda of A.I.W.C from its inception, our President Smt. Sheela Kakde gave the inaugural address mentioning the importance of women's education and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's very important role in implementing education for girls in Bengal. It was held on 12th December 2020 and the resource persons were Shri Amiya Kumar Samanta, a Vidyasagar scholar and Smt. Manisha Banerjee, Headmistress of SNSN Girls' High School, Labhpur, West Bengal. The focus was on Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar as an educationist and as a social reformer to empower women. I give below the important highlights of the webinar.

1. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar worked tirelessly to provide equal education to all irrespective of their caste, religion and gender. He opened many schools for girls and believed the status of women and the injustice

and inequality they suffered could only be changed through education.

2. Vidyasagar was also known as the Father of Modern Bengali Language. He wrote the Bengali primer “Barno Porichoy” which is still the first book studied by children even now. He wrote books on grammar rules and published an extensive series of literary works.
3. As a social reformer he worked to uplift the status of women. His method was to change the orthodox Hindu society from within. He introduced the practice of widow remarriage and worked against polygamy and child marriage. The British Govt passed the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act, adding the stamp and seal of legitimacy to his movement.

It is a matter of great concern for us who work for social welfare that two hundred years have passed and we are still dealing with issues that do not seem far removed from those that confronted the nation during Vidyasagar's time.

Webinar on “Celebrating Festivals in Pandemic times”

By Smt. Indrani Sengupta, MIC- Art and Culture

Festivals are an intrinsic part of Indian culture and celebrating them adds joy to our mundane life. During pandemic times celebrating festivals is a challenge. Before Durga Puja and other festivals including Diwali, a webinar was organised to alleviate unnecessary fears and provide a guideline on how festivals could be enjoyed by keeping safety precautions in mind. The resource person was Dr Manoj Saha, Senior Cardiologist of Bellevue Clinic, Kolkata. I give below the salient points Dr Saha advised:

1. Do not be afraid. Enjoy the festival keeping safety precautions in mind. If one is afraid, a certain hormone is released that may lower our immunity.
2. Enjoy the festival as we used to do previously with our family. Traditional home made sweets and savouries are preferred.
3. Drink plenty of water and do breathing exercises like pranayam regularly.
4. Children are very intelligent, and things should be explained clearly to them. Competition of cultural activities can be arranged for them through webinars. Even pandal hopping during the five days of celebration can be done digitally as such arrangements are being made by a few organisers. If there is a sick person at home, take special care.
5. Rituals may be observed with safety precautions.
6. Enjoy and be safe!

Durga Puja During Pandemic Situation 2020

By Smt. Shikha Mitra, MIC-Resolution and President, East Calcutta Constituent Branch, ECM

Durga Puja is not only a festival but an emotion for many Bengalis. The Covid-19 pandemic, the abrupt lockdown and the gradual unlocking have, in different ways, found expression across Puja pandals in the city. From the plight of refugees robbed of livelihood to a city gradually waking up from slumber, theme artists have used various metaphors to portray the surreal that is new reality. With Coronavirus playing the spoilsport this year, pandal hopping is off the charts. Because of the Covid pandemic the crowd control is a crucial determinant in everyone's planning of the Durga Puja.

Just days before the Durga Puja festivities started in West Bengal, the Calcutta High Court on 19th October 2020, declared all pandals across the state no-entry zones to prevent the surge in Coronavirus cases in the state. No visitors are allowed inside Durga Puja pandals across West Bengal.

As per high court directives puja committees have taken the following steps

- 1) Dhakis are allowed just outside the no-entry zone in each pandal.
- 2) List of persons who are allowed in the pandal are fixed on a day-to-day basis and the list has to be hung every day at 8 am.
- 3) Only 15 persons are allowed inside the pandals for the smaller Pujas. And not more than 45 persons for the larger pujas (pandals more than 300 sq mts in size) at any point of time. The maximum number of people included in the prior list is 60.
- 5) For small pandals, barricades are put up 5 meters from the entrance, while for the larger pandals the distance is 10 meters.
- 6) There are 'no-entry' boards on the barricades.

The court also has not given permission for the popular rituals of 'Anjali' on Ashtami and 'Sindur Khela' on Dashami.

Everyone is trying their best to overcome Corona and rejoice in our most beloved festival in this new normal situation.

Celebration of Christmas in our Area

By Smt. Shanthi Socrates, President – Sanju Women's Welfare Association, Chennai

Christmas is celebrated all over the world in remembrance of the birth of Jesus Christ. The Christians believe that he is the son of God and the Light of the world. The word 'Christmas' is derived from 'Mass of Christ'. A mass service is where Christians remember that Jesus died for us and then resurrected. So we get the name Christ – mass, shortened to Christmas.

In foreign countries, Christmas is not just a day. It is a season. It is also called as the Advent days and the days between 1st and 24th of December, encompassed into a special Advent calendar. Even non-Christians celebrate Christmas as "Xmas". The spirit of Christmas is infectious and is widely celebrated around the world as a season of love, sharing and gifting. When it comes to India, going to church is a big part of the Christmas spirit. Attending the sermon and meeting friends and relatives in the church venue, exchanging and distributing sweets and Christmas goodies certainly has its own thrill and excitement. Though Covid-19 has to some extent curbed the celebration activities and some states even have curfews and banned the celebration of festivals in a large gathering, this has not definitely dampened the spirits of the families in our area. They went to church, following the safety measures with

masks and sanitizers, decorated their homes, met with friends and relatives, enjoyed the festival spirit surrounded with love and warmth. The festival marks the close of the year and symbolises all things that are beautiful, spirited and heart warming. Christmas is a time to rejoice before the year ends.



Serenading the Moon with Stars in the Eyes

By Smt. Shevata Rai Talwar - Assistant Secretary, AIWC

The green fields and the fresh air beckoned me as we drove into Village Jamunwalla on the outskirts of Dehradun . It was a trip not only to integrate myself with the rustic ambience but also to share and educate the Hill women to an opportunity that the A.I.M.S Rishikesh was offering free cosmetic gynecology and reconstructive surgeries to them for various issues, primarily stress inconsistency.

I was pleasantly surprised to see many women dressed in bridal finery with “Solah Shringar” and fasting for the longevity of their spouses . The festival of “Karva Chauth” was in full swing and they happily fasted without even a drop of water from sunrise to moonrise . It was a beautiful sight to behold women singing ,dancing, praying and the tinkling of bangles and anklets along with the intoxicating fragrance of Henna and flowers .As per the Universal designs I had the good fortune of being a part of this revelry. It took me down memory lane - how as a blushing bride I had broken my fast on a hillside in Turkey, then once in Syria, even in Kasauli during the Khushwant Singh festival. They were simple rural women and I was an urban lady, bonding together entangled in the web of our culture and identities.

The role of media ,television and cinema was so obviously visible as this festival is primarily celebrated in North India amongst the Punjabi communities and some other states but not in the hill region of Garhwal. The advent of television and portraying of femininity and festivities had drawn these women to an amalgamation of the cultural interchange just as cuisines from the provinces of China have made such a strong advent all over India as a street food in many villages and of course the cities. Momos, Chowmein , noodles and the

Indianised version of them is highly appreciated by the youth today.

This beautiful festival is celebrated on the fourth day ,Krishna Paksha of the Karthik month and the “Karva “ that is a vessel filled up with grains is offered to the goddess. The festival starts early morning before the sun rise by the partaking of delicacies which are sometimes sent by the mother and definitely the mother-in-law of the bride and they share them together. The afternoon is spent amongst bridal dressed women in groups praying with “Thalis and Diya’s” reciting folklore. After moonrise in the evening women serenade and look at the moon and their spouses through a sieve with a lit lamp and pray for his longevity. The twinkling of stars ,the luminous moon ,and the tittering of these ladies, their bonding together reminded me of the strength and interplay of culture but left me with one deep reverie. Would masculinity offer the same privilege to its other half , each and every year -surpassing senility and frailty of age and years? Issues of equality and patriarchy ran as a muddled mist in my mind, while in my heart I prayed that no bride was tortured or burned for bringing insufficient dowry or subjugated to drudgery by battering and violence by her in-laws or husband.



NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

Allahabad City Branch

By Smt. Ranjana Gulati, President, Allahabad City Branch

ऐसा दीपक जो आपका हाथ नहीं जलाता।
ऐसा दीपक जो तेल नहीं सोखता।
दीपक के प्रयोग के बाद आप इसे गमले में डालें खाद स्वरूप।

ऐसा दीपक जो लकड़ी के दीपक जैसा लुक देकर घर में चार चांद लगा देता है।

ऐसा दीपक जो पूरा जलता है।

ऐसा दीपक जो नेगेटिविटी फैलाने वाले कीटाणुओं को भगाता है और पॉजिटिविटी देता है।

इस दीपावली हम कुछ नए संकल्प के साथ माता समान 33 करोड़ देवताओं के निवास का प्रतीक गौमाता के नाम।

सबसे खास बात गौशाला और गौमाता को इससे सीधा लाभ मिलता है, बस यही बात काफी है यह दीपक लेने के लिए।

चलो साथ चलें... वातावरण को कोरोना मुक्त बनाएं।

घर... घर महालक्ष्मी की कृपा बरसाएं।

गृहक्लेश... वास्तु दोष को दूर भगाएं।

गौमाता का आशीर्वाद घर लाएं।

पृथ्वी को बचाएं....

पर्यावरण को बचाएं....

“Challenges are gifts that force us to find a new center of gravity”

Oprah Winfrey

A lot has changed around us globally . Even in this pandemic we have learnt new ways to

communicate, learn and showcase the talent of our group members by celebrating Janamashtami, Independence Day and Teej and by holding online competitions on topics given on environment.

During a recent Zonal and National competition held in AIWC, our members brought laurels to our city branch.

Purnima Agrahari won 1st prize for Surya Namaskar and 2nd prize for Om Ucharan in the Zonal Competition.

Dicasta Kesarwani stood 5th at the National level in the Classical Dance competition. Rashmi Pataria came 2nd and Dicasta Kesarwani came 3rd in the Junior group.

Kiran Gupta our shining star came 1st in the senior group and Rashmi Shukla came 2nd.

We have been organising several camps during this pandemic to help the poor and needy. Ration was distributed to physically challenged people with the contribution of members.

To protect the environment and to promote AtmaNirbhar Bharat and Vocal for Local, the members with the help of SHG made diyas of cow dung and shudhmitti of Gangaji.

As the world presses the reset button , we are creating an engaging and progressive forum for the development of our members and society as well.



Garia Mahamayatala Jadavpur Constituent Branch

By Smt. Basudha Ganguly, President, AIWC, GMJ Branch

On 11th December, AIWC GMJ Constituent Branch visited an AIWC Old Age Home, Apanghar, run by AIWC Metropolitan branch at Ranganathpur Colony, Thakurpukur, West Bengal. It

was truly a memorable visit. Coloured bags filled with a mask, cream, orange, biscuit packets, apple juice, sweets and apple were distributed among sixteen senior women residents by our branch.



Amritsar Branch

By Smt. Prem Duggal, President, Amritsar Branch

Solar Power Plant:

A Solar power plant of 15 KVA was installed under the leadership of Branch President Smt. Prem Duggal. The installation cost of ₹6 Lakhs was borne by the branch's financial resources and the donations from local people.



Mental Health Awareness Program:

An informative session on the topic “Mental Health – Depression” was organized at AIWC Amritsar. Renowned consultant- psychiatrist Dr. Sonal Rai was the key speaker. She discussed the problem of depression, anxiety and OCD among women.

Legal Awareness Program:

Amritsar Branch organised a Legal Awareness Program in collaboration with district legal service authorities, where Shri Kawal Bhatia was the key speaker. He explained the rights of senior citizens. In case their property is confiscated by their children by illegal means, they can seek free litigation services. He educated the female students about the law where victims of acid attacks, misbehaviour, rape cases etc. can claim free medical aid.



Senior Citizen Welfare Program:

- Amritsar Branch has adopted sixteen elderly ladies.
- Every month ration worth Rs. 300/- is distributed
- Sweater/Shawl, Socks and leggings are given every year in winter
- In summer, cotton salwar kameez is given
- AIWC Amritsar premises has an old age home with eight inmates
- Sweets, fruits and seasonal eatables are distributed on festivals to twenty four elderly ladies every year.



Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha, Meerut.

Dispensary Report

By Smt. Beena Agarwal, SCM, Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha

It was the dream of Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha, Meerut to start a dispensary and we are pleased to announce that “Sanjeevni Dispensary” was inaugurated by our Guest of Honour, Dr. Laxmikant Vajpayee (Former State President BJP) on 20th December 2020. Many other known personalities and Sanjeevni members attended the inauguration ceremony.

The Dispensary has been started at a small bhavan built on the area of one of our Sanjeevni members by Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha. The Physician will be visiting the dispensary four days a week and a lady gynaecologist will be visiting once a week. Consultation fees will not be charged from the patients and medicines will be provided free by Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha (as per prescription).



Jammu Branch

By Smt. Nirmal Padha, J&K Women Society, AIWC Branch Jammu

The Organisation celebrated International Day of the Girl Child on 14th October

by conducting a Signature Campaign on the Empowerment of Girls.



East Calcutta Branch Celebrates Children's Day and Diwali

By Smt. Shikha Mitra, President, East Calcutta Constituent Branch and MIC-Resolution

AIWC East Calcutta Constituent Branch distributed school bags, drawing books, erasers, color pencils, toffees and fruit juice to the local children in Nibedita Colony, Kolkata on November 11, 2020, on the occasion of Children's Day (14th November) and Happy Diwali. AIWC ECC members visited the colony and handed over those materials to the children. Masks were also distributed to the beneficiaries. Our members talked to the local women and explained to them how to keep themselves and their family members safe from COVID 19. Since 1980 we have been doing social service in this colony. We have a child welfare center (crèche); however due to present COVID19 situation it is closed. But during this

period we are trying to help children and their families by distributing food etc. The program was completed smoothly. The children were very excited to receive their gifts. Our members were happy to see the smiling faces of the children.



RPM Women's Welfare Association (Regd.) Adambakkam, Chennai (Affiliated to WIA)

By Smt.Preetha Raj, President, RPM Women's Welfare Assn

The COVID-19 Pandemic capsized the dreams of the whole world this year and the introduction of complete lockdowns were shocking for the people, but the severity of the situation slowly sunk into their minds and people adapted to the new normal ways of life by following the pandemic protocols. The biggest blow of the Lockdown situation was unemployment and lack of income generation, mainly for the daily wage laborers and low income group. But the Lockdown also witnessed extensive philanthropic activities by the public, readily extending help to the needy in many different ways.

Members of RPM Women's Welfare Association were no exception in this regard. Members readily donated money for various kinds of needs throughout the year. Bedsheets were donated to the inmates of an old age home, provisions were supplied to sanitary workers, masks and gloves were given to the Police personnel, and school fee paid to forty primary school children hailing from the below poverty line families.

Though the deadly virus took away innumerable precious human lives, we believe that rays of hope and happiness are again generated by the birth of each baby. With these hopes and aspirations for a better new year in 2021, members of RPMWWA

decided to help needy mothers from the economically weaker sections, by providing them basic requirements for their newborn babies. Thus during the month of December 2020, our members donated money and thirty kits consisting of new dresses, towels and soaps for the babies, were procured at a total cost of Rs.9000/-. On behalf of RPMWWA, our Executive Committee Member, Smt. Prabhavathi Satyanarayana, took up the initiative and distributed the kits to the mothers who had delivered babies at the Corporation Emergency Obstetric Care Centre, Saidapet, duly following all the pandemic protocols.

Once again the members of RPMWWA have happily and humbly adhered to the motto of the Association, 'Service to Mankind is Service to God'.





New mothers were presented kits

Thanjavur District Branch

By Dr. Vasantha G., President, Thanjavur Branch

We distributed one week's meals to the **COVID-19** care unit patients at Medical College, Thanjavur. The Thanjavur main branch held a meeting with the branch office bearers and discussed the support extended to the community. A session on the importance of wearing a mask, social distancing and awareness was conducted near the surrounding villages. Gandhi Jayanthi

was celebrated on 2nd October with the support of the village people. At the time of **COVID -19**, food grains, vegetables, kitchen equipment, masala powder etc. were distributed to about two hundred and fifty poor beneficiaries. November 14th – Children's Day was celebrated at the orphanage. Sweet packets and dresses were distributed to the children.

★★★★★★

Vishakhapatnam Branch

By Rahimunnisa Begum, SCM Vishakhapatnam Branch

Ms. Rahimunnisa Begum advocate and noted human rights activist, participated in a brainstorming session organised by the Project Director, Smt. Sitamahalakshmi of Women and Child Welfare Department of Government of Andhra Pradesh in lieu of the proposed hundred days of activities planned by the Andhra Pradesh Mahila Commission. The function marked Women's Day Celebrations 2021, and was conducted to ensure women's safety and empowerment, to promote women's education and increase awareness on various aspects of women's issues. The meeting took place on 30th December 2020. Rahimunnisa Begum had the opportunity of sharing various ideas pertaining to "Women's Safety" on digital mode. The need of the hour was to safeguard young and adolescent girls from being targeted by

traffic agents working in remote control through digital gadgets. She also expressed her willingness to contribute to various awareness programmes in the student community in specific and to womenfolk at large. Cyber challenges are a steep threat during the global pandemic. This was brought before the august audience to implement various levels of advocacy and awareness campaigns to safeguard the student community in particular and womenfolk in general. Officials of various Departments of Government of Andhra Pradesh, Prof P. Usha, Director of Dr. Durgabai Deshmukh Centre for Women's Studies, Department of Andhra University, NGO representatives and Child Protection Officers at the city and mandal level participated in large numbers.



Rahimunnisa Begum (at centre) discusses women's issues.

रानी खैरगढ़ी

रानी खैरगढ़ी के विषय में जानने के लिए काफी प्रयत्न करना पड़ा लेकिन कहते हैं कि कोशिश करने वालों की कभी हार नहीं होती। इसी तरह से मुझे 93 वर्षीय लेखक कहानीकार श्री कृष्ण कुमार नूतन जी से जानकारी मिली जिसे मैं आप के साथ साझा कर रही हूँ।

हजारों देशभक्तों की तरह ही रानी खैरगढ़ी का इतिहास भी गुमनामी के अंधेरों में डाल दिया गया। यह इतिहास लगभग 80-90 साल पुराना है। कहीं भी रानी का वर्णन नहीं होने के क्या कारण रहे होंगे। राजा जोगिन्द्र सिंह जो रानी के गोदीपुत्र थे, श्री नूतन जी के शिष्य रहे। इस प्रकार जो राजा जोगिन्द्र सिंह ने नूतन जी को बताया वो प्रमाण के रूप में नूतन जी ने अपनी पुस्तक में वर्णित किया।

राजा भवानी सेन मण्डी रियासत के राजा विजय सेन के पुत्र थे। मात्र 20 वर्ष की आयु में विजय सेन की मृत्यु के पश्चात् भवानी सेन ने राजगद्दी संभाली। राजा भवानी सेन का विवाह (बाल विवाह) उनके पिता ने मियां सूरत सिंह की दोनों बेटियों से कर दिया था। एक बेटी विवाह के तुरन्त बाद मर गई थी तथा दूसरी जीवित थी।

राजा भवानी सेन पहाड़ी राजाओं में सबसे सुन्दर थे और वे इस शादी से खुश नहीं थे। उन्होंने उत्तर प्रदेश के खैरगढ़ रियासत की राजकुमारी ललिता कुमारी (खैरगढ़ी) को विवाह का प्रस्ताव भेजा। इस तरह सन् 1907 में जब राजा 24 वर्ष के थे और रानी मात्र 16 वर्ष की थी तो उनका विवाह हुआ।

मण्डी राज्य भी सन् 1845 में अंग्रेजों के संरक्षण में था। राजा का राज तो था परन्तु अंग्रेजों के एजेण्ट मण्डी का सारा कार्य करते थे। वह राजा भवानी सेन को शराब के नशे में धुत रखते थे परन्तु रानी खैरगढ़ी अंग्रेजों के एजेण्टों के रास्ते की रुकावट बन गई थी।

रानी न तो उम्र से परिपक्व थी और न ही ज्यादा पढ़ी-लिखी थी। रानी को अंग्रेजों की दखलांदाजी खटकती थी। वह राजा को बुरी संगत से बचाने का हर संभव प्रयत्न करती।

रानी ने स्वयं राजकाज के कार्यों में हिस्सा लेना शुरू कर दिया। उस समय परदा प्रथा भी थी पर रानी परदा नहीं करती थी। वह स्वयं घोड़े पर बैठकर सारे शहर में चक्कर लगाते हुए प्रजा की शिकायतें सुनकर स्वयं फैसले करती थी। इस तरह रानी से अंग्रेज बहुत नाराज रहने लगे।

जब राजा भवानी सेन ने स्पष्ट कह दिया कि हमारी गैरहाजरी में हमारी रानी राज्य का काम संभालेगी तो अंग्रेजों के एजेण्ट आगबबूला हो गये पर कुछ कर न सके।

अंग्रेजी एजेण्टों ने राजा को शराब के नशे में धीमा जहर देना शुरू कर दिया और सन् 1912 में 29 वर्ष की आयु में राजा भवानी सेन की मृत्यु हो गयी।

रानी दिमाग से तेज थी और वह अंग्रेजों की चाल को समझ गई। अंग्रेज मण्डी राज्य को भी अंग्रेजी हुकुमत में लाने की सिफारिश करने लगे लेकिन रानी को इस बात का पता चल गया था। रानी खैरगढ़ी मुंशी बृजलाल से, जोकि नूतन जी के दादा थे और कानून के अच्छे जानकार थे, सलाह-मशवरा लेती थी। उन्होंने रानी को सलाह दी कि वह किसी को गोदीपुत्र घोषित करके राज्य का उत्तराधिकारी बना दें ताकि अंग्रेजों से मण्डी को बचाया जा सके। इसी तरह रानी खैरगढ़ी ने मुंशी जी की सलाह पर मियां किशन सिंह के लड़के को भूतनाथ शिव मन्दिर को साक्षी मानकर गोदीपुत्र ले लिया तथा उसी दिन जोगिन्द्र सिंह, जोकि आठ वर्ष की आयु के थे, को मण्डी राज्य का उत्तराधिकारी घोषित कर दिया गया।

इस घोषणा पर अंग्रेज बहुत नाराज हुए परन्तु मियां किशन सिंह के पास मण्डी की फौज की कमान थी जिस कारण अंग्रेज एजेण्ट गोदीपुत्र की रस्म को रोक नहीं



पाए। इस तरह रानी खैरगढ़ी मण्डी के राज्य को अंग्रेजों की गहरी साजिश से बचाने में सफल रहीं।

अंग्रेज रानी की सब चालों को नाकामयाब करने की कोशिश में रहते थे। 28 अप्रैल 1915 को रानी का गोदीपुत्र जोगिन्द्र सिंह विधिवत रूप से मण्डी की राजगद्दी का उत्तराधिकारी घोषित किया गया और रानी को राजमाता बनने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त हुआ परन्तु बर्तानिया सरकार द्वारा नियुक्त मण्डी के अधीक्षक तथा वजीर को इस समय अपनी हार महसूस होने लगी। वह रानी को हर समय नीचा दिखाना चाहते थे क्योंकि जब राजा भवानी सेन जिन्दा थे तो उनसे रानी साधारण नौकरों सा व्यवहार करती थी। हर बार अंग्रेजों के एजेण्ट इस ताक में रहते कि किस तरह रानी को नीचा दिखाएं।

उधर रानी अपने राज्य में अंग्रेजों की दखलंदाजी सहने को तैयार नहीं थी। वह ज्यादा पढ़ी-लिखी नहीं थी पर इतिहास में रुचि रखती थी।

इधर देश 1857 की क्रान्ति नहीं भूला था। इस तरह हर तरफ अंग्रेजों से टक्कर लेने की योजना बनी। वहीं पंजाब के कुछ लोग नौकरी की तलाश में अमेरिका, कैंनेडा गए थे तथा वहीं युगान्तर आश्रय में गदर पार्टी की स्थापना की गई। वे देश को आजाद करने की योजनाएं बनाने लगे। अप्रैल में गदर पार्टी का चुनाव हुआ। मण्डी के स्वामी कृष्णानन्द हिरदाराम गदर पार्टी के प्रमुख कार्यकर्ता थे। इनके जिम्मे मण्डी राजघराने से सहायता और डोगरा रेजीमेण्ट अंग्रेजों के विरुद्ध करके गदर पार्टी में लाने का था। गदर पार्टी को मजबूत करने में रानी का विशेष हाथ रहा। मण्डी षडयन्त्र राज्य षडयन्त्र के रूप में जाना जाता है। जिसमें अंग्रेजों के एजेण्ट को मारना था और अपनी पार्टी के लिए हथियार और पैसा चाहिए था। रानी खैरगढ़ी यही चाहती थी और इस षडयन्त्र में रानी का हाथ था। सन् 1914-15 में क्रान्तिकारियों की बैठकें हुई जिसमें मण्डी का खजाना लूटना, व्यास पुल उड़ाना तथा मण्डी सुकेत को हथियाने की कोशिश थी पर नागचला डकैत के अलावा वे कुछ नहीं कर पाए। पांच व्यक्तियों को बंदी बनाया गया।

रानी जब महल में योजना बना रही थी तो अंग्रेजों ने चारों ओर से घेराव किया। रानी कूद कर वेश बदल कर

बाहर निकल कर घोड़े पर सवार होकर निकल गई। मण्डी से रानी के जाने के बाद कुछ समय तक क्या गतिविधियां रहीं, कुछ पता नहीं।

राजा जोगिन्द्र सिंह जब लाहौर से पढ़कर वापिस आए तो मुंशी बृजलाल जी ने राजा को रानी के जिलावतन की खबर दी और उन्हें रानी से मिलवाया। उस समय वह उत्तर प्रदेश में कांग्रेस पार्टी में शामिल थी तथा अखिल भारतीय महिला कांग्रेस की प्रधान रही।

राजा जोगिन्द्र सिंह ने रानी की सजा कम करवाई और उन्हें मण्डी ले जाने की तैयारी कर ली। जोगिन्द्र सिंह रानी को राजमाता के रूप में मण्डी ला रहे थे। रानी अभी मण्डी से लगभग 52 किलोमीटर दूर थी तभी उनकी तबीयत अचानक बिगड़ गई और उन्हें जोगिन्द्र नगर रुकना पड़ा। लेकिन एक षडयन्त्र के तहत रानी को जहर का इंजेक्शन देकर मौत के घाट उतार दिया गया। उर्दू में लिखा हुआ रानी खैरगढ़ी का पत्र उनकी कहानी स्वयं बयान करता है।

वर्तमान में रानी खैरगढ़ी का महल एक मशहूर होटल राजमहल के नाम से शहर के बीचोंबीच है। रानी खैरगढ़ी की तुलना यदि झांसी की रानी से की जाये तो कोई दो राय नहीं होगी।

देश की मिट्टी पर लिखी अमर गाथाओं में
क्रान्ति का आधार बनी वेदनापूर्ण यातनाओं से
उभर कर एक दूसरी झांसी की
रानी का नाम आया था।

अपने मयान में छिपे असीम साहस के शस्त्रों से
रानी खैरगढ़ी ने इतिहास में परचम लहराया था।
पर भूल गया इतिहास उस वीरांगना के बलिदान को
जिसने अपने प्रयत्न से राज्य के मस्तक पर विजय
तिलक लगाया।

!! आओ फिर मिलकर प्रयत्न करें और याद करें
वीरांगना के बलिदान को !!

श्रीमती नरेन्द्र कपूर
सचिव मंडी शाखा

महिला विरुद्ध हिंसा में सामाजिक दायित्व

25 नवंबर “महिला विरुद्ध हिंसा में सामाजिक दायित्व” दिवस पर एक वेबिनार ऑल इंडिया वीमेंस कान्फ्रेंस भोपाल द्वारा किया गया।

सर्वप्रथम संस्था की उपाध्यक्ष श्रीमती सुशीला गोयल ने विषय का उद्देश्य समझाया। हम प्रतिदिन समाचार पत्र में पढ़ते हैं कि महिलाओं के साथ बलात्कार व अन्य हिंसा हो रही हैं। न्यायालय में उन महिलाओं को न्याय जो मिलना चाहिये वह नहीं मिल रहा है। परिवार की बेटियों व बहुओं के सम्मान को बचाना आवश्यक है जिसके लिये सोच बदलना जरूरी है। इन अपराधों को रोकने के लिये हम सबको मिलकर प्रयास करना होगा।

संस्था की अध्यक्षा श्रीमती मधु सरन ने सभी उपस्थित अतिथियों का स्वागत किया तथा उन्होंने बताया कि ये आज के समय का अत्यंत ही ज्वलंत विषय है जिसकी चर्चा करना अति आवश्यक हो जाता है। हमारी संस्था सदैव ही महिलाओं की समस्याओं पर कार्य करने के लिये तत्पर रहती है। श्रीमती मधु सरन ने कहा जब तक कानून सक्त नहीं बनेंगे तथा अपराधियों का सामाजिक बहिष्कार नहीं होगा तब तक हमारे देश में इस प्रकार की घटनायें होती रहेंगी। हमारा कर्तव्य है कि हम पीड़िता को सम्बल दें, सम्मान दें तथा ऐसा उनको बल दें कि वह अवसाद में न जायें। माता-पिता का कर्तव्य होता है कि वह अपने बच्चियों को आत्मसुरक्षा के बारे में जागरूक करें ताकि वह किसी प्रकार की दुर्घटना का शिकार ना हों।

आज के वेबिनार में श्रीमती शीला काकड़े प्रेसीडेंट ए आई डब्ल्यू सी न्यू दिल्ली मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में उपस्थित थी। उनके विचार में सबसे पहले हमें स्वयं अच्छा व्यवहार करना चाहिये। माता-पिता का सामंजस्य अच्छा होना चाहिये। परिवार में दादा-दादी, नाना-नानी सभी के

साथ सौहार्दपूर्ण माहौल होना चाहिये क्योंकि बच्चे परिवार से ही सीखते हैं। हमें घर का वातावरण प्यार भरा रखना चाहिये, घर में शांती होगी। सबका व्यवहार अच्छा होना चाहिए, चाहे वह नौकर ही क्यों ना हों। भाई-बहन का आपस में व्यवहार प्यार भरा होना चाहिये, बेटे-बेटियों के साथ समान व्यवहार होना चाहिये। दादा-दादी का कर्तव्य यह है कि वह पोता-पोती को समान प्यार दें। स्वयं को वक्त देकर समझना जरूरी है कि हमें बच्चों के सामने कैसा व्यवहार करना चाहिये। चिंता, मनन करें व अपनी गलतियां सुधारें।

श्रीमती आशा शुक्ला वाइस चांसलर अंबेडकर यूनिवर्सिटी महु की आज मुख्य वक्ता के रूप में उपस्थित थी। उनके विचार में महिलाओं को हम दो श्रेणियों में बांटते हैं एक कामकाजी व एक घरेलू। परंतु हम वास्तव में देखते हैं कि महिला की एक ही श्रेणी है की वह महिला है। कामकाजी महिला ने घर में रहना शुरू किया तो उनका कार्य करने का समय और बढ़ गया। पति, परिवार, बच्चे और बुजुर्गों की अपेक्षाएं बढ़ गई। शुरू में बहुत उत्साह से काम किया लेकिन बाद में वह थक गई और तनाव की शिकार हो गई। तनाव बढ़ा तो घरेलू हिंसा भी बढ़ी। स्त्री की उपस्थिति के कारण आदमियों की शारीरिक भूख भी बढ़ी जिसकी हर वक्त समय पूर्ती करना संभव नहीं था। श्रीमती आशा शुक्ला जिन्होंने कई रिसर्च पेपर अंतराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर तैयार किये हैं, उन्होंने बताया कि विदेश में एक महिला ने अपने पति के बॉस से निवेदन किया कि वह उसके पति को ऑफिस से ही काम करने की अनुमति दें क्योंकि लॉकडाउन के पीरिएड में 24 घंटे पति के घर में रहने से वह उनकी शारीरिक पूर्ती करने में सक्षम नहीं हैं जिसके कारण घरेलू हिंसा बढ़ती जा रही है।

श्रीमती आशा शुक्ला ने बताया कि आज बच्चियों के साथ जन्म से ही अपराध होते हैं। उनको संसार में आने से पहले ही मार दिया जाता है। 1000 लड़कों पर 904 लड़कियां हैं जिसके कारण निर्धन परिवारों में लड़कियों की खरीद फरोख्त होती है। 10 से 14 साल की लड़कियों की अच्छी कीमत मिलती है। लड़कियों का मूल्य उनकी सुंदरता, उम्र तथा वर्जिनिटी पर निर्भर रहता है। घर में एक आदमी से उस लड़की की खरीद कर शादी कर दी जाती है, लेकिन उसका शारीरिक शोषण घर के सभी पुरुष करते हैं चाहे वह कोई भी हो। घर का पूरा काम उसी से कराया जाता है। जो बच्चा पैदा होता है उसके बारे में कोई नहीं पूछता की उसका पिता कौन है, वह उसके पति का ही कहलाता है। जब उसकी उम्र बढ़ने लगती है तब उसे पुनः बेच देते हैं और फिर एक नवयुवती की तलाश में निकल जाते हैं।

निर्भया कांड से सभी अवगत हैं। पहले बलात्कार होते थे अब सामूहिक बलात्कार होने लगे हैं। कार्यस्थल पर छेड़खानी बहुत ही साधारण सी बात हो गई है। इनको रोकने के लिये कड़े कानून बनना चाहिए तथा माता-पिता को जागरूक होना चाहिए। हर स्थान पर पुलिस उपस्थित नहीं हो सकती इसलिए अपनी सुरक्षा स्वयं करना होगी। संस्था ने गौरवी जैसी संस्था बनाई है। हमें संवेदनशील होना होगा और महिलाओं की समस्या के समाधान पर बार-बार विचार करना अति आवश्यक है। श्रीमती मधु सरन ने आशा जी से कहा की आपने हमारी आंखें खोल दी। महिलाओं की समस्याएं सुनकर दिल दहल गया।

दुसरी वक्ता श्रीमती कुसुम त्रिपाठी जो अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर कार्य करती हैं। उन्होंने भी माना की घरेलू हिंसा पूरे विश्व में होती है। जन्म से ही लड़कियों के साथ भेदभाव शुरू हो जाता है। लड़कियों के जन्म पर मां की देखरेख ठीक से नहीं होती। खाना भी घर में पहले पुरुषों को दिया जाता

है बचा खुचा खाना घर की महिलाओं को दिया जाता है। मां भी पहले लड़कों को खाना देती हैं उसके बाद लड़कियों को दिया जाता है। बचपन से ही लड़कों को ना सुनने की आदत नहीं होती है। यह एक बलात्कार का बहुत बड़ा कारण है। लड़की के मना करने पर या तो बलात्कार किया जाता है या तो उसपर एसीड फेंक दिया जाता है। इस प्रकार लड़कियों का जीवन हमेशा के लिये बर्बाद किया जाता है। दहेज प्रतारणा की घटना हर वर्ग के लोगों में होती है। विज्ञापन में महिलाओं का उपयोग एक वस्तु की तरह किया जाता है। किसी भी चीज को बेचने के लिए खाना परोसने की तरह किया जाता है। महिला एक उपभोग की वस्तु बन गई है। जब क्रिकेट होता है तो वहां पर कम कपड़ों में लड़कियां नाचती हुई दिखती हैं, उनको एक उपभोग की वस्तु समझकर वहां पर प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। जिस देश में महिलाओं को दुर्गा, सरस्वती व लक्ष्मी के रूप में पूजा जाता है वहाँ लक्ष्मी धनहीन हैं, सरस्वती अनपढ़ हैं, दुर्गा को मारा जाता है। पूजा केवल मूर्तियों की जाती है। जीती-जागती दुर्गा को हम प्रतारित करते हैं। हमें अपनी सोच बदलनी होगी। महिला व पुरुष को समान प्यार, सम्मान व अधिकार देना होगा। माताओं को बचपन से ही बेटे और बेटियों को अच्छे संस्कार देने होंगे तभी देश में इस प्रकार की घटनायें कम हो सकती हैं। महिलाओं विरुद्ध हिंसा को कम करने का दायित्व केवल एक का नहीं है यह पूरे समाज का दायित्व है।

श्रीमती मधु सरन
जोनल ऑर्गेनाइजर,
सेन्ट्रल जोन बी
नई दिल्ली

शाखा गतिविधियां

बापनु घर - आ.भा.म.प., नई दिल्ली

22.12 2020 को बापनु घर में क्रिसमस का त्यौहार बड़ी धूम धाम से मनाया गया तथा पूरे बापनु घर को सजाया गया साथ ही क्रिसमस ट्री को भी सेंटा के साथ-साथ सजाया और चरनी बना कर उस में बेबी जीसस, माता मरियम, जो से फको भेड़ बकरियों तथा गजरियों के साथ गौशाले में पैदा होने का दर्शाया। नाचते गाते हुए प्रोग्राम की शुरुआत की तथा मैनेजमेंट के अधिकारियों और सभी का स्वागत किया गया। मेगदलीन मैरिन मेम्बर इंचार्ज ने संदेश दिया कि ये सुने किस तरह कुंवारी मरियम के द्वारा नम्र होकर एक गौशाले में मनुष्य बन कर जन्म लिया। येसू दुनियां का मुक्तिदाता बना और सभी को प्यार का संदेश दिया इसी लिए पूरे विश्व में क्रिसमस बड़ी धूमधाम से मनाया जाता है सेंटा के द्वारा लोग गरीबों को गिफ्ट और कपड़े बाँटते हैं। प्रेसिडेंट शीला जी ने संदेश दिया की परमेश्वर एक ही है सभी के मानने के तरीके अलग है सभी धर्म एक दूसरे से

प्यार करना सिखाते हैं। सुशीला काउंसलर ने चरनी की सजावट करी। मोनिका ने और स्टाफ ने पूरे बापनु घर को वार्डन सुषमा के साथ सजाया और आशा, अमृत गुप्ता, सुषमा ने सब के लिए खाना बनाया तथा केक काटकर सभी को खिलाया गया। मेगदलीन मैरिन ने लास्ट में सभी का धन्यवाद करते हुए कहा की AIWC सब एक परिवार की तरह है और हमें एक दूसरे के साथ प्यार से रहना है तथा एक दूसरे की मदद के लिए आगे आना है। प्रोग्राम में प्रेसिडेंट शीलाजी, सेक्रेटरी कुलजीत जी खजांची रेहाना बेगम जी, लीग लइंचार्ज सुब्रा मेंदीरत्ता, डॉ नीलू श्रीवास्तव, AIWC और बापनु घर का स्टाफ मौजूद रहे। आप सभी को हम सबकी तरफ से नये साल की खुशियां मुबारक हो। धन्यवाद

मेम्बर इंचार्ज
मेगदलीन मैरिन
बापनु घर शैल्टर होम



शैल्टर होम काउंसलर, सुश्री सुशीला एस कुमार द्वारा बनाया गया पालना

जागृति वीमेंस कांफ्रेंस हरिद्वार द्वारा निम्नलिखित वेबिनार का आयोजन किया गया—

1. OCTOBER BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH में 28-10-2020 को ब्रेस्ट कैंसर पर एक वेबिनार का आयोजन किया गया जिसमें डाक्टर विमुग्धा प्रेमी द्वारा PPT के माध्यम से बहुत ही सरल भाषा में ब्रेस्ट कैंसर के विषय में विस्तार से बताया गया। डॉक्टर विमुग्धा ने बताया कि यह महिलाओं में होने वाला बहुत COMMON कैंसर है और EARLY DETECTION ही इसका इलाज है। इसके लिए महिलाओं को 40 कि उम्र के बाद निरंतर परीक्षण (MAMMOGRAPHY ETC) आदि कराते रहना चाहिए।
2. नवम्बर में DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH OBSERVE करते हुए 21-11-2020 को मधुमेह (DIABETES) पर एक वेबिनार का आयोजन किया गया। DIABETOLOGIST DR- M- S- SINGHAL का टॉपिक था "DIABETES: PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT IN COVID 19"। संस्था के इस कार्यक्रम को INTERNATIONAL DIABETES FEDERATION WEBSITE पर रजिस्टर किया गया। भारत से रजिस्टर होने वाली तीन एक्टिविटीज में से एक हमारी संस्था की ये एक्टिविटी थी। डॉक्टर सिंघल ने बताया कि मधुमेह के विषय में जागरूकता ही बेहतर इलाज है और इसके द्वारा मधुमेह को नियंत्रित किया जा सकता है।
3. 24-11-2020 को DENTAL AWARENESS पर एक वेबिनार का आयोजन किया गया जिसमें डॉक्टर कल्पना चौधरी ने PPT के माध्यम से बहुत ही सरल और स्पष्ट तरीके से सभी को दांतों के देखभाल, ब्रश करने का तरीका, दांतों की सफाई आदि के विषय में विस्तार से बताया। डॉ. कल्पना ने DENTAL ANATOMY – PHYSIOLOGY के बारे में भी बताया। प्रतिभागियों ने अपनी अपनी समस्या के बारे में भी पूछा।
4. 29-11-2020 को COMMUNAL HARMONY – NATIONAL INTEGRATION पर एक वेबिनार का आयोजन किया गया। इस वेबिनार में DPS रानीपुर हरिद्वार के कक्षा 8 के छात्रों द्वारा प्रतिभाग किया गया। 10 छात्रों ने उक्त विषय पर कविता पाठ किया। DPS की अध्यापिकाएं जासमीन शर्मा ने समाज के प्रति एक नागरिक के उत्तरदायित्व तथा प्रीती जोशी ने COVID-19 के दौरान सीखे गए सबक विषय पर अपने विचार व्यक्त किये।
5. 10-01-2021 को NATIONAL YOUTH DAY के अवसर पर एक वेबिनार का आयोजन किया गया जिसमें सम्पूर्ण भारत के अलग अलग विश्वविद्यालयों महाविद्यालयों से प्रोफेसर्स, रिसर्च स्कॉलर्स, विद्यार्थियों एवं AIWC की अलग-अलग शाखाओं से कुल मिलाकर 102 लोगों ने प्रतिभाग किया। AIWC दिल्ली की प्रेसीडेंट मैडम शीला काकडे जी ने INAUGURAL एड्रेस द्वारा कार्यक्रम का प्रारंभ किया। इस अवसर पर प्रोफेसर श्रवण के. शर्मा, गुरुकुल काँगड़ी विश्व विद्यालय, ने विशिष्ट वक्ता के रूप में "LOCATION OF WOMEN" SWAMI VIVEKANAND'S IDEA OF SOCIAL CHANGE" विषय पर अपना आख्यान देते हुए बताया कि स्वामी विवेकानंद जी समाज में गार्मी, मैत्रेयी की स्थापना करना चाहते थे – बिल्कुल बंधनमुक्त। उसमें नारी को एक ऐसा परिवेश दिया जाए जिससे वह एक नए समाज का निर्माण कर सके। उन्होंने ये भी बताया कि जिस समाज या राष्ट्र ने उन्नति की है वहां नारी शक्ति के प्रति सम्मान व्यक्त किया गया है। विशिष्ट वक्ता मंजुला भगत, संरक्षिका एवं फाउंडर सेक्रेटरी, जागृति वीमेंस कांफ्रेंस हरिद्वार सोसाइटी, ने "SWAMI VIVEKANAND'S IDEAL OF INDIAN WOMENHOOD" विषय पर प्रकाश डालते हुए कहा कि स्वामी जी ने आदर्श भारतीय नारी के स्वरूप पर प्रकाश डाला है। हमें स्त्रियों की स्वाधीनता, स्वतंत्रता, शिक्षा पर जोर देना चाहिए। बच्चों को संस्कारी बनाने के लिए माताओं को बच्चों को अधिक समय देना चाहिए। संस्था की यूथ विंग द्वारा कोरोना काल में युवा शक्ति द्वारा किये गए कार्यों पर "समर्पण को तेरे सलाम" एक छोटी सी प्रस्तुति दी गयी जिसे सभी ने बहुत सराहा। विशिष्ट अतिथि AIWC दिल्ली की GENERAL SECRETARY ने बताया कि समाज का पथ प्रदर्शन करने हेतु स्वामी विवेकानंद जी के विचार आज भी कितने समीचीन हैं, इस बात पर बल दिया। AIWC दिल्ली की

TREASURER मैडम रेहाना बेगम ने बताया कि स्वामी जी का संपूर्ण जीवन से युवा शक्ति को सीख लेनी चाहिए और सही मार्ग पर चलना चाहिए। AIWC दिल्ली की संरक्षिका बीना जैन जी ने कहा कि आज की वेबिनार युवा शक्ति को सीख देने वाली है। AIWC दिल्ली की VICE PRESIDENT

एवं जागृति वीमेंस कांफ्रेंस हरिद्वार की PRESIDENT नीरू जैन जी ने सभी अतिथियों का धन्यवाद किया। कार्यक्रम का संचालन संस्था की सचिव डॉक्टर करुणा शर्मा ने किया।

डॉ. करुणा शर्मा
सचिव

“चरित्र”

चरित्र पर संकट छाया है...
लोगों ने बातों ही बातों में...
जाने कितनों को चरित्र हीन बताया है..
बात चाहे पुरुष की हो, या बात हो नारी की...
चरित्र को कलंकित करना,
हम ने बहुत सरल बनाया है...
अगर नारी घर की चार दीवारी में है...
तो वह अच्छी लगती है...
पर घर से बाहर निकलते ही...
उस पर आरोपों की होती बौछार है...
किसी से हंस कर बात करें तो निर्लज्ज है...
किसी के साथ चले तो कुलटा है...
किसी का काम करें तो दुष्टा है...
और भीन जाने कितने विशेषण...
आभूषण के सिवाय भी बनते उसके अलंकरण...
यदि पुरुष करे निंदा तो कोई बात नहीं...
पर नारी भी नारी पर करती प्रहार है..
असंख्यतानो की करती बौछार है...

क्या कोई नारी यदि रहे सिर्फ बेचारी..
क्या तभी वह कहला सकती है संस्कारी...
यह मिथ्या परिभाषा क्या उचित है???
एक नारी का इस तरह का अपमान...
क्या समाज की गरिमा नहीं गिराता???
सच झूठ जाने बिना किसी का मूल्यांकन..
हर किसी का न्यायधीश बनने कामन...
बहुत गलत यह विचार धारा है...
एक नारी के व्यक्तित्व की पीड़ा को जाने बिना...
उस के दर्द और गरिमा को पहचाने बिना...
उस पर आरोप लगानेवालों...
तनिक अपने गिरेबान में भी झांको...
दूसरों का छिद्रान्वेषण त्यागकर
अपने मन के सारे पाप धोकर
नारी का सम्मान करो, नारी का सम्मान करो...
और सही मायने में सभ्य और सुसंस्कृत बनो!!

डॉ. कुसुम पांडेय
सदस्या
AIWC नगर शाखा इलाहाबाद

अखिल भारतीय महिला कॉन्फ्रेंस शाखा सहारनपुर

1. 10 अक्टूबर 2020 को सभी संवासिनियों का डॉ॰ मीनु मित्तल और मिस अन्नु शर्मा द्वारा Medical Checkup कराया गया ।
2. 10 अक्टूबर 2020 को सभी संवासिनियों और सभी स्टाफ का कोविड-19 टेस्ट कराया गया ।
3. 16 अक्टूबर 2020 को सभी संवासिनियों और सभी स्टाफ का कोविड-19 टेस्ट कराया गया ।
4. 18 अक्टूबर 2020 को **मिशन नारी शक्ति** का प्रोग्राम किया गया ।



5. 21 अक्टूबर 2020 को श्रीमती अनामिका चौधरी (ADJ Saharanpur) द्वारा स्वाधार गृह का निरीक्षण किया गया ।

नवम्बर 2020

1. 05 नवम्बर 2020 को श्री पुष्पेन्द्र सिंह (DPO) Saharanpur द्वारा स्वाधार गृह का निरीक्षण किया गया ।
2. 09 नवम्बर 2020 को नगर आयुक्त (सहारनपुर) द्वारा मिशन नारी शक्ति का प्रोग्राम किया गया ।
3. 20 नवम्बर 2020 को श्रीमती अनामिका चौधरी (ADJ Saharanpur) द्वारा स्वाधार गृह का निरीक्षण किया गया ।
4. 23 नवम्बर 2020 को सभी संवासिनियों और सभी स्टाफ का कोविड-19 टेस्ट कराया गया ।
5. 26 नवम्बर 2020 को सभी संवासिनियों और सभी स्टाफ का कोविड-19 टेस्ट कराया गया ।
6. 29 नवम्बर 2020 को श्री विजय प्रकाश (मान्यता निरीक्षक लखनऊ) द्वारा स्वाधार गृह का निरीक्षण किया गया ।

दिसम्बर 2020

1. 17 दिसम्बर 2020 को श्रीमती अनामिका चौधरी (ADJ Saharanpur) द्वारा स्वाधार गृह का निरीक्षण किया गया ।
2. 28 दिसम्बर 2020 को सभी संवासिनियों और सभी स्टाफ का कोविड-19 टेस्ट कराया गया ।
3. 31 दिसम्बर 2020 को महिला थाना सहारनपुर अध्यक्ष श्रीमती सरिता सिंह द्वारा **मिशन नारी शक्ति** का प्रोग्राम किया गया ।

गुड़गांव ग्रामीण महिला मंडल हरियाणा

गुड़गांव ग्रामीण महिला मण्डल कोरोना-19 के आरम्भ से ही समाज की भलाई के लिए कार्य कर रही है जब सभी कार्य व ऑफिस, फैक्टरी बंद होने से सब के रोजगार बंद हो गए तब हमारी संस्था ने कादीपुर व झारसा जो भी वर्तमान व पहले प्रशिक्षण ली गई महिलाओं, लड़कियों व बच्चों की मदद की। हम महिलाओं ने अपना चंदा एकत्रित कर महिलाओं को पका हुआ भोजन व सूखा राशन उपलब्ध करवाया जो उनकी पहली जरूरत थी। महिलाओं को मास्क सिलने के लिए दिए जिसके उन्हें सिलाई चार्ज भी दिए मास्क व सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग का पूरा ध्यान रखा गया।

धीरे-धीरे अनलॉक का समय आने पर केंद्र पर कार्य आरम्भ किया महिलाओं को प्रशिक्षण देना आरम्भ किया। महिलाओं को मास्क सिलने के लिए दिए जिसके उन्हें सिलाई चार्ज भी दिए ताकि उनके पास कुछ पैसे जमा हो व अन्य कार्य में खर्च करें। मास्क भी फ्री बांटे गए। महिलाओं को मास्क व सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग का पूरा ध्यान रखा गया।

कादीपुर केंद्र को बच्चों के टीकाकरण के लिए खोल दिया गया। जहां सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग के साथ प्रति मंगलवार को टीकाकरण करवाया जाता है।

आशा वर्कर, आंगनवाड़ी वर्कर व सिविल अस्पताल के सहयोग से कोरोना टेस्टिंग कैंप कादीपुर में आयोजित किया गया जिसमें 200 व्यक्तियों ने टेस्ट करवाया। जिनको भी कोरोना पॉजिटिव पाया, उन्हें आईसोलेशन व दवाईयां दी गई व सबको CORONA-19 के बारे जागरूक किया गया।

लॉकडाउन समय में महिलाओं में घरेलू हिंसा विषय पर एक सर्वे किया गया जिससे पता चला कि महिलाओं

पर इसका बहुत बुरा असर हुआ पर वे महिलाओं थाना व अन्य मदद लेने में सामाजिक दबाव में रही। हमने 5 महिलाओं को सखी सेंटर भेजा व उनकी काउंसलिंग भी करवाई। हमारी काउन्सलर ने भी उनमें आत्मविश्वास पैदा करने हेतु अनेक बार जागरूक किया।

कादीपुर सेंटर पर वेबिनार घरेलू हिंसा, स्वास्थ्य व स्वच्छता विषय पर आयोजित किये गए जिन महिलाओं के पास बटन फोन था उन्हें केंद्र पर कम्प्यूटर से हॉटस्पॉट इंटरनेट लगाकर डॉ. के. के. अग्रवाल आलइंडिया मेडिकल, दिल्ली, डॉ. मानसी, दिल्ली, व अपनी अखिल भारतीय महिला परिषद के कुलजीत कौर मैडम का घरेलू हिंसा विषय पर वेबिनार सुनवाए व स्मार्ट फोन पर इंटरनेट zoom, webex प्रयोग करना सिखाया गया।

6 महिलाओं एवं बालिकाओं को नेशनल ओपन स्कूल द्वारा आयोजित नर्सरी टीचर ट्रेनिंग का 1 बर्षीय सर्टिफिकेट कोर्स के फॉर्म भरवाये गए व उनकी फीस जो राशि 24800/- होती है चंदा जमा करके भरी व उन्हें किताबें भी फ्री दी गई।

मैंबर इंचार्ज पंचायती राज व ग्रामीण विकास श्रीमती शोभा लाल के द्वारा रोल ऑफ वूमेन इन पंचायती राज विषय पर वेबिनार आयोजित किया गया जिसमें सुरीना राजन मैडम आई ए एस डायरेक्टर जनरल, शीला मैडम प्रेसिडेंट, कुलजीत मैडम सेक्रेटरी, अखिल भारतीय महिला परिषद ने अपने विचार व अनुभव व योजनाएं बताई जिन्हें हम जल्दी ही कार्यरूप में लाने का प्रयत्न करेंगे।

श्रीमती शोभा लाल
अध्यक्षा



Christmas at Head Office



Matajis at Tarash Mandir Old Age Home being given gajak



Sweaters distributed to children at Short Stay home



Ram Lila celebration at Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha, Meerut



Patron Smt. Shobhana Ranade celebrated her 97th birthday, with Smt. Bina Jain, Patron and Smt. Neru Jain, Vice President



Andheri Mahila Parishad, Mumbai, Shishu Kalyan Kendra celebrated World Disabled Day, organized by Smt. Harshada Parekh, President



Smt. Gunkeshri Pradhan, (Darjeeling Branch) MIC Disaster Management, felicitated by North East People's Voice



Hygiene kits presented to front line corona workers by Counsellor Brahm Yadav in Gurgaon Grameen Mahila Mandal



Shree Sarvajani Mahila Mandal, Bardoli inaugurated an e-waste collection centre with Hulladex Pvt Ltd.