

# *Roshni*

January - March 2025

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***SAFEGUARDING OLDER WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND ENSURING THEIR WELLBEING***



**ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE**





Thiru.R.N.Ravi, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu, participated as chief guest and addressed the gathering at the inaugural session of Annual All India Women's Conference organised by Women's Indian Association, Chennai at Brahma Kumari's Retreat Centre, Sunguvarchatram, Kanchipuram District today (29.01.2025)



*International Women's Day at AIWC*



*Food Safety and Standards at FSSAI,  
FDA Bhawan, New Delhi*



*Nari Shakti Shiromani Award - presented to Smt Murti  
Meena by Antarashtriya Samrasta Manch*

## ROSHNI

Journal of the All India Women's Conference

**January-March 2025**

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## *From the Editor's desk...*

*Dear Sisters,*

*The first quarter of the year is always filled with excitement as Members look forward to meeting each other and sharing their ideas at the Annual Conference. This year's Annual Conference hosted by WIA was an Event to remember. The team work displayed by WIA was exemplary. All the Members came back to their headquarters with lot of memories and new ideas.*

*Head Office activities for the year began with the celebration of Sarojini Naidu's birthday in the form of dance/ drame etc., performance based on her poems. International Women's day was celebrated on a grand scale, details of which are in the issue.*

*Please continue to send articles and small write ups about your activities at the Branch with a few photographs. I want to once again request you all to send the articles and photographs by mail only. Sending photographs on Whatsapp is not good enough. I look forward to your cooperation and support.*

***Sheela Satyanarayan***

***Editor -Roshni***

*Jan – March 2025*



## ***93rd Annual Conference - All India Women's Conference hosted by Women 's Indian Association, Chennai on 28,29,30,31- January 2025***

*(By Smt. Shanthi Socrates, Hony. Secretary, WIA)*



The prestigious Annual Conference of AIWC commenced with grandeur on January 29, 2025, at the Happy Village Brahma Kumaris Retreat Centre, Podavur, Kanchipuram District. The event was marked by the esteemed presence of the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu as the Chief Guest, adding significance to this remarkable gathering.

The proceedings of the inaugural session commenced at 10:30 A.M. with the arrival of the Hon'ble Governor, who was warmly received and led to the stage while exchanging greetings with distinguished attendees. The event officially began with the melodious rendition of the National Anthem, followed by the soulful Tamil Thai Vazhththu, evoking a sense of patriotism and cultural pride.

A symbolic Lighting of the Lamp (Kuthuvilakku) ceremony was led by the



Hon'ble Governor, alongside prominent figures including the President of the Women's Indian Association (WIA), the President of AIWC, Sister BK Beena, and the Secretary General of AIWC. This traditional ritual illuminated the spirit of empowerment and unity among women.

Smt. Padma Venkataraman, President of the Women's Indian Association, delivered the welcome address, extending her heartfelt greetings to all attendees and emphasizing the conference's objective of fostering

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women's safety, leadership, and progress. As a gesture of honor and respect, Smt. Venkataraman felicitated the Hon'ble Governor, acknowledging the Governor's contributions and support for women's initiatives.

Smt. Shanthi Socrates, Hon. Secretary of the Women's Indian Association, provided an insightful introduction to the Association's journey, its mission, and its role in advocating for women's rights and empowerment. This was followed by a brief but impactful presentation by Smt. Kalyani Raj, President of AIWC, who introduced the theme of the Conference and unveiled a comprehensive report on women's safety. The Hon'ble Governor had the honour of releasing this significant report, reinforcing the commitment to addressing pressing issues concerning women's well-being.

A moment of reverence took place with the felicitation of Sister B.K. Beena by Smt. Vanaja Krishnamurthy, Treasurer of the Women's Indian Association, for her invaluable contributions to the cause of women's empowerment.

The highlight of the event was the Chief Guest's address by the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu. The Governor's speech resonated deeply with the audience, emphasizing the importance of gender equality, education, and policy-driven initiatives to uplift women across various sectors.

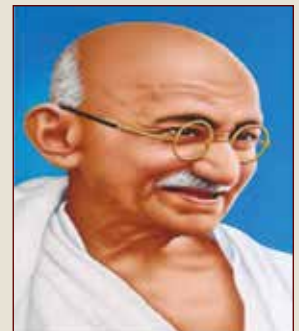
As the event neared its conclusion, Dr. Booma Srinivasan, Vice President of the Women's Indian Association, delivered the Vote of Thanks expressing gratitude to all dignitaries, organizers, and participants for making the event a success. This was followed by another soulful rendition of the National Anthem signifying a heartfelt conclusion to the formal proceedings.

The inaugural session of the All India Women's Conference set the tone for meaningful discussions, policy recommendations, and actionable steps toward a future where women continue to break barriers and achieve remarkable milestones. The event reaffirmed the unwavering dedication of AIWC and WIA to creating a more inclusive and empowered society.



*"To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then, indeed, is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior."*

*(M.K. Gandhi)*





## ***Presidential Address at the 93rd Annual Conference***

Smt. Kalyani Raj, President began her address appreciating all the efforts taken by WIA team, warmly welcoming all the members, making meticulous arrangement for the conduct of the meeting and excellent hospitality. She highlighted that AIWC was having its Annual Conference in Chennai after 32 years and thanked Smt. Padma Venkataraman and all the WIA members for their time and patience. She further thanked members across India for assembling in the serene venue of Happy Village Retreat Centre justifying the true meaning of the organization - 'Conference'. Smt. Kalyani Raj, President began her address quoting from a circular issued by Smt. Zulekha Rukhsana who was MIC National Integration in 1994. Smt. Zulekha had stated, "In the new year we had a good gathering at the Lucknow Conference. We had very good discussions. Many good resolutions were passed. But at the same time differences of opinion will always be there, that is the specialty of the human mind, unlike the sheep which only follow. Appreciating this fact, for progress and development, we must unite our efforts for betterment, not strife. On the last day however, there was integration when all members as one, gathered around Smt. Margaret Cousins' family, who had come all the way from Ireland to share with us the early life of this great patriotic lady, who showed the rare quality of courage, love and devotion to the cause of Indian nationalism and Independence.' President felt that there was something for us to learn from the



above statement. It guides us to accept the diversity in totality, be it culture, language, background or geography and that is the objective of AIWC.

Thereafter, President spoke about the work undertaken in the last six months. Interesting discussion was held on the three renamed laws, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam of 2023 including its implications and interpretation relating to our work.

Shilpkala 2024 was again very well attended and full of fun.

The three Zonal Meetings in last six months, she attended in Ranchi, Kakinada and Kolkata were also very well managed, participatory and a good exchange of ideas took place.

President further mentioned that we had a discussion about women's safety among our members, and decided to reach out to youth about the issue, because young girls face challenges while travelling, working and moving around in public spaces and probably have a very different and trendy perception of safety. With that in mind, we approached colleges and institutions to have a dialogue with young boys and girls about how to create more safe spaces for girls and women. We had two sessions in JNU and Ambedkar University and two sessions at the community level in Delhi where mothers of young girls also participated along with youth group to share their views on the matter. The discussions were eye openers, frank and healthy. Even boys from the colleges and community participated very well and assured proactive action when required. Based on all the discussions, we were able to bring out a report which was released by the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu during the Inauguration ceremony. The report will be uploaded in AIWC website and soft copies will be shared with all the branches.

President further advised that she along with Dr. Upasana Singh, Treasurer, had met officials from MNRE to renew AIWC'S working relationship and had received a very good response. President has circulated the brochure received from National Institute of Entrepreneurship & Small Business Development (NIESBUD) and requested branches to go through the same. Interested branches can get in touch with Head Office, for training of women in solar panel

manufacturing. If we have a good number of interested trainees from our branches and once the training is completed, we can work out a programme for micro entrepreneurship through Socio Economic programmes.

MNRE has also redesigned biogas scheme recently and the information has already been circulated by the President.

Rural Branch revival and strengthening has been President's primary focus right from taking over and several initiatives have been mooted by her. A separate webinar of rural branches was held in the month of May and was well participated by number of rural branch representatives. Durbadal Canning (West Bengal) and Sinnar (Maharashtra) have taken up long term programmes, following the webinar and Chamtagarh (West Bengal) has also sent in an application for Senior Citizen's Day Care Center under the AIWC Trust. We hope more rural branches will be active and take up meaningful programmes.

President elaborated that on the road to Centenary Celebrations, we have also been able to do some important work in time. Two weeks ago, we have sent out a proposal to the P&T Department for release of Commemorative stamp on the occasion of the Centenary. As per rules, we need to submit the proposal two years in advance. Technically we complete our Centenary in January 2027 and depending on the Management in future, they can decide on the actual dates. She has only facilitated the future management's work. The design, shape and colour etc. will be decided by the P&T Department once the proposal is approved.



Another instance of progress, Smt. Raj shared was about Anemia Programme target set for the Centenary. She said that we had set a target of reaching out to 5000 beneficiaries in three years, but it was increased to 8000 by the SCM. President mentioned that during 2024, we have been able to reach out to approximately 3100 beneficiaries, out of which roughly 1300 were found anemic. At this rate, she was sure that we would reach our target of 8000.

She also mentioned that the target for the directory is also underway. We had an intern who started updating it zone wise. We will try to get another intern this year and complete the work.

The President advised that we have received new ideas for the Centenary, from Smt. Jayashree Kumar - Coin and Diary release and from Smt. Ashita Sharan - 100 years, 100 youth wing. The idea of 100 Youth Wing was accepted by the SCM.

Next, in keeping with our dedication towards environment protection and climate change, we have recently placed an order for 100 KW solar panels for generating around 10,000 units of renewable energy for our office building. We will be saving more than Rs.1.30 lakhs per month, around Rs.15.5 lakhs per year out of what we currently pay to NDMC. Actually the total need for our office is double of this i.e. roughly 200 KW. We tried to get funding for the rest of the requirement but meantime began the process with what we could currently afford. We will continue to try to go completely solar

for our office if possible by end of this year. The 100 KW now is being funded out of the unspent GUCCI balance money.

Some of the Zones have requested for repeat of the Capacity building webinar we held last year. HO will coordinate with the Zonal organizers and conduct the same.

President thereafter, shared some concerns she has about inactive branches and their becoming stagnant. Incomplete documentation relating to branches including information about Constituent Branches is another big issue. President advised that she will be sending out a format to all the branches and requested them to support updating work as soon as possible. She also reiterated what she had mentioned during the Half Yearly Conference that members should be judicious and careful in their projections and statements issued outside AIWC, especially if they are speaking on behalf of AIWC. She said that she was sharing her concerns because all of us have the same objective that AIWC should go places. That is our motto so let us look at all our strengths and weaknesses and address them suitably.

President concluded by suggesting to all that let us pledge that in the next two years, we will revive and strengthen as many branches as possible, increase capacity of existing members, encourage more active members to join in, work together and implement a good number of purposeful projects towards keeping the AIWC legacy alive and strong.



## ***United Nations' 69th Commission on the Status of Women***

*(By Ms. Navina Sitaram, AIWC's UN Representative)*



From the 10th to the 21st of March 2025, the United Nations held the 69th Commission on the Status of Women in New York which was attended by thousands of delegates from UN member states and from non-governmental organizations. The theme of this year's conference was: The review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. The conference examined the current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action (detailed in the link here <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw59/feature-stories>) and the achievement of gender equality.

On the 7th of March, in celebration of International Women's Day, the Permanent Mission of India and UN Women hosted an event honoring Dr. Hansa Mehta, AIWC's founder and former President who was a trailblazer working for women's rights

both at the national and international level. Chandrika Tandon, the business leader, philanthropist and Grammy winner, gave the keynote address and spoke glowingly of Hansa Mehta's remarkable life and achievements. She was instrumental in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the UN and in drafting the Indian Women's Charter of Rights and Duties which had a direct impact on the Constitution of India. It was inspiring to all and a proud moment for AIWC!

At the conference's Opening Session on the 10th of March, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, assessed the current situation for women worldwide. Some of the continuing challenges he described are the worldwide backlash against women's rights, the gender pay gap that still stands at 20%, the horrific violence being perpetrated against women in conflict zones and elsewhere, and women in countries like Afghanistan being denied basic human rights.

Sima Bahous, UN Women's Executive Director, spoke of the encouraging progress seen in the past 30 years. Across the world there are more girls in school, more women in Parliament and in the judiciary, and the global maternal mortality rate has decreased. Unfortunately, however, progress towards attaining the goals set in Beijing has been neither fast enough nor far reaching enough.

Ms. Bahous detailed the actions necessary to achieve the UN's gender equality goals:

1. Harness technology to advance equality – for a digital revolution
2. Freedom from poverty
3. Zero Violence
4. Redefine power structures to ensure equal access to decision making
5. Women, peace and security
6. Advance climate justice
7. Young women and girls as agents for change

On the 12th of March, the Permanent Mission of India to the UN and UN Women hosted a ministerial roundtable focusing on Digital and Financial Inclusion for Women's Empowerment. Smt. Annapurna Devi, India's Union Minister for Women and Child Development, spoke of India's successes in empowering women through digital and financial inclusion. She mentioned how the Aadhaar card identity system has made it easier for women to achieve financial

autonomy and how girls are the primary beneficiaries of the Diksha digital education platform. She also described how the UPI (Unified Payments Interface), helps Indian businesswomen at all levels. She stressed that financial literacy and autonomy strengthen women's voices to speak up against discrimination. Ministers from Indonesia, Morocco, Australia, Qatar and Panama also spoke of the current climate for women in their respective countries and described the reforms they are undertaking to ensure women's full digital and financial participation

NGO CSW in New York, the largest group of NGOs, held events throughout the conference in parallel with the UN's member state deliberations and side events. Over 12,000 people from 110 countries attended these events both virtually and in person and there was a palpable sense of solidarity and excitement amongst them.

On the 17th of March, AIWC held an in-person Panel Discussion along with three partner organizations, AARP, The International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers, and South Asian Council for Social Services (SACSS). The panel, titled Trapped in a Cycle of Abuse: Safeguarding Older Women's Rights and Ensuring their Well being, addressed an often-neglected topic and was attended by more than 50 delegates from all regions of the world. After a warm welcome from AIWC President Kalyani Raj, the panel began with



AIWC's Principal UN Representative Sudha Acharya moderating.

- The opening panelist, AIWC's Secretary General, Manju Kak, spoke about the vulnerability of older women to financial, psychological, and verbal abuse at the hands of their children or other family members. She spoke of the need for respect and a sense of dignity for older women and described institutions like AIWC's Vrindavan Center for widowed women as a solution.
- Beth Finkel, State Director of AARP New York, spoke of the widespread prevalence of elder abuse both in the US and internationally. She mentioned the particular vulnerability of older women who have dementia and those in care facilities, some of whom have less autonomy than people in prisons! She outlined the need for legislation to protect the elderly against financial scams and the importance of looking after caregivers who may be older adults themselves.
- Ariana Elezay, the Secretary of the NGO Committee on Ageing, stressed the intersection between gender disparities and ageing as older women are particularly vulnerable to different forms of abuse. The contributions of older adults are often discounted because of society's focus on the monetary amount that people earn. She also stressed the importance of giving older adults dignity and the need for a life course approach to policy development.
- Mary Archana Fernandez, Director of Family Services at SACSS, spoke of how elder abuse is universal across countries and communities. She described the stigma often associated with elder abuse, with many older adults not wanting to admit that their own children are verbally, psychologically or financially abusing them. Older women, in particular, are sometimes infantilized leading to a loss of autonomy. She mentioned the need for effective senior programs and mental health counseling for older adults.
- Finally, Giby Varghese and Theresa Susan from AIWC's Trivandrum branch described how AIWC's senior center helps the elderly through interaction with peers, activities, and programs including medical checkups. Activities like yoga, meditation, and music all contribute to improving older adults' mental health and they also develop skills that can generate income.
- There was a lively discussion after the panel and a wrap up by AIWC's UN Representative, Navina Sitaram. The Treasurer of AIWC, Upasana Singh, then closed the session with the Vote of Thanks. NGO delegates from different regions were very appreciative of the discussion, with many finding the issues faced by the elderly common across regions and cultures.

## ***“Trapped In A Cycle Of Abuse; Safeguarding Older Women’s Rights And Ensuring Their Wellbeing”***

*(Paper presented by Dr Manju Kak, Secretary General at Parallel Event - CSW 69)*

India’s aging population is growing rapidly, bringing both opportunities and challenges. While the elderly have traditionally relied on family support, shifting social structures, economic vulnerabilities, and health issues have left many in distress. The need for comprehensive elderly care policies is urgent, especially considering issues like economic abuse, property fraud, inadequate healthcare, and social isolation.

The well-being of the elderly is not just a social responsibility but a fundamental human right. Strengthening government policies, community involvement, and digital integration can ensure a secure and dignified life for India’s aging population.

Elderly individuals, particularly women, are highly vulnerable to abuse. Economic abuse and property fraud are rampant, with many seniors manipulated into transferring assets or being denied financial resources by their families. Fraudsters also exploit them through deceptive schemes and cybercrime, leading to severe financial distress.

In many cases, legal protections are not adequately enforced, leaving seniors without recourse. Strengthening laws protecting seniors from financial fraud and property exploitation, coupled with awareness campaigns and legal literacy, is imperative.

Health neglect is widespread, especially



among lower-income groups. Chronic conditions such as arthritis, hypertension, and diabetes require regular monitoring, but many lack access to sustained medical care. While higher-income seniors can afford premium healthcare and private caregivers, those from lower-income backgrounds struggle with financial dependence, limited insurance coverage, and poor infrastructure. The shortage of elderly care facilities in rural areas further exacerbates these challenges.

India has made strides toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through programs like Ayushman Bharat, which aims to provide financial protection for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization. However, elderly-specific needs often remain unmet. The National Health Policy 2017 emphasizes geriatric care, but implementation gaps persist, particularly in staffing and infrastructure for elderly services (WHO, 2023).

Despite initiatives like Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) and telemedicine services, elderly patients often face long waiting

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times, lack of specialist care, and digital barriers. According to NITI Aayog, only 15% of elderly Indians are covered under any health insurance (NITI Aayog, 2022). Additionally, out-of-pocket expenses for medicines and diagnostics make healthcare unaffordable for many seniors.

India ranks 134 out of 191 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI) 2023, with significant disparities in health and living standards. Life expectancy has improved, but healthy life expectancy for seniors is limited due to poor access to geriatric care, malnutrition, and neglect. The Gender Inequality Index also reflects the compounded marginalization elderly women face in later life stages (UNDP, 2023).

According to the UN World Population Ageing Report (2023), India's elderly population (60+) is expected to reach 319 million by 2050, accounting for nearly 20% of the total population. India is transitioning from a young to an aging society at a rapid pace. Yet, social support structures have not evolved in tandem with this demographic shift, putting a large segment of elderly at risk of social isolation and economic insecurity (UN DESA, 2023).

Community clubs and NGOs are critical in elderly welfare. They facilitate health check-ups, promote social engagement, and safeguard elderly residents against abuse and neglect. Active community hubs reduce loneliness and enhance elderly well-being, particularly for those living alone.

Organizations like the All India Women's Conference and other like minded Institutions

have emerged as frontline institutions. Since 2010, AIWC's Old Age Trust has operated Daycare Centres for senior women, offering a safe and welcoming environment for social interaction. These initiatives foster emotional resilience, dignity, and social inclusion. AIWC's volunteers are instrumental in driving community-based elderly care, demonstrating the value of civil society partnerships in public health delivery.

Technology holds transformative potential in elderly care. Digital platforms now offer telemedicine, pension assistance, emergency services, and health monitoring. However, digital illiteracy remains a major barrier. Government and NGO-led digital literacy campaigns can help elderly populations adopt these tools, thereby improving autonomy and safety.

The installation of CCTV cameras in elderly households and community centres can also enhance safety and deter abuse. Emergency response apps and panic buttons tailored for seniors can be integrated into smart devices, providing rapid aid in times of distress.

India has launched various schemes targeting elderly welfare:

- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS): Provides financial assistance to BPL senior citizens.

- National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE): Offers specialized health services at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

- Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana: Distributes assistive devices to elderly individuals in BPL categories.



-Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund: Utilized for promoting financial security and social welfare for the elderly.

Despite these efforts, many schemes suffer from poor outreach, digital access issues, and bureaucratic delays. Greater transparency, digitized access points, and grassroots awareness can improve uptake and impact.

### The Way Forward: Building a Supportive Ecosystem

To ensure that India's elderly population can live with dignity and security, it is essential to build a comprehensive and supportive ecosystem. This begins with strengthening legal protections and the enforcement of laws to combat elder abuse, especially in cases of financial exploitation. Geriatric healthcare

must be expanded through the provision of subsidized caregivers, the deployment of mobile health units, and targeted outreach in rural areas where services are often lacking.

Promoting intergenerational programs that encourage youth participation in elderly care can help bridge social gaps and foster mutual understanding. Additionally, digital literacy and access to technology should be prioritized to empower seniors to navigate essential services and stay connected. The installation of CCTV and emergency support systems in elderly homes and community spaces will further ensure their safety and well-being. Finally, improving the accessibility and efficiency of government welfare schemes through simplified procedures and inclusive design will help seniors fully benefit from available support.



## *The impact of climate change on women of India*

*(Paper presented By Dr Upasana Singh, Treasurer, at the Parallel Event - CSW 69 - organized by Women's Empowerment and Human Resource Development Centre of India)*

Climate change has become a grave issue today, with the threat of multiple adverse effects impacting not only human lives, but all the flora and fauna. Continuous degradation, pollution, and mindless waste of natural resources have gradually pushed the world to the brink of irrecoverable and irreversible environmental damage. Ecological balance has been disturbed, as is noticeable in the change of seasonal patterns in different parts of the world.



India is a vast country with cold, composite, hot-dry, temperate, and warm-humid climates in different parts. Each climatic

pattern brings in various local and regional problems for women. In recent years, increasing droughts, heat waves, and natural disasters, triggered by climate change, have severely impacted women in terms of their health, well-being, and livelihood. Women face the maximum brunt trying to survive, stay healthy, provide for the family, and even contribute to state economies with their intrinsic involvement in production from the forest, rural, cottage, and corporate sector. Mr. Alok Sharma, the President of COP 26, while urging communities to empower and support women, rightly said “Gender and climate are profoundly intertwined. The impact of climate change affects women and girls disproportionately.”

Women are a vulnerable segment of society, including those belonging to tribal areas, whose sustenance is based on forest produce, and the women from rural areas, who put in a lot of hard work to contribute equally to agriculture or support the farming community. Women of coastal regions help in fishery activity, whereas in rural areas, women put in several work hours to run a family. Women are professionals and entrepreneurs, both in big and small ways.

Women have a unique relationship with nature, rooted in their roles as nurturers, and they actively engage in efforts to combat climate change through this connection. However, their perspectives have been under-represented in climate discourse. The close relationship between food and climate highlights the key factors contributing to

climate change. Today, how we grow the food grains, how we distribute, and the way we consume, will determine in the future, whether humanity can survive or face extinction alongside other species.

As climate change intensifies natural and human-induced disasters, some of India’s most endangered landscapes are on the brink of destruction. Also, encroachment and illegal sand mining on the river plains leads to floods, affecting the lives of millions of people. The cataclysmic floods, caused by encroachments, unleash fury on many villages, towns and cities.

Air pollution is also one of the major cause of concern, especially in India, affecting the health and lives of millions of people. Marginalized communities, especially women, suffer the worst consequences of air pollution. As C.P. Rajendran wrote in ‘The Hindu’, a leading national newspaper “Delhi remains the most polluted city in India, as of December 20. Air pollution in the capital is over 17 times the limit prescribed by the World Health Organization, according to official data. Particulate matter (PM2.5) can go deep inside the lungs, causing respiratory illnesses. Air toxicity also results in increased incidences of cancer and miscarriages. The fight against pollution remains unsuccessful despite efforts by the government and interventions by the Supreme Court. Air pollution in Delhi mostly originates from human activities such as burning coal; petrol, diesel, and gas; biomass in industries; and coal-based power plants. Kitchen smoke,

vehicular emissions, large-scale construction activity, firecrackers, and the burning of residual crops also vitiate the air. Although many of the major sources of pollution are active throughout the year, the worsening of air quality during winter happens due to temperature inversion. Heavier winds prevent pollutants from scattering and keep them concentrated closer to the ground.”

Natural calamities due to climate change owing to the harm caused to the environment have also been a major reason for migration from one region to another in search of livelihood. It is true that women often face higher risks and greater burdens from the impacts of climate change in situations of poverty and due to existing roles, responsibilities and cultural norms.

Women often bear the brunt of poor energy access, which negatively impacts their health, safety, and economic potential. Solar energy is proving to be a game changer for women’s empowerment. It can now be harnessed directly at homes. This transition represents a comprehensive project that is socially, economically, and developmentally significant. As Nikhil Kumar and Karan Mangotra have written “Socially, economically, and developmentally, solar energy places power — literally and figuratively — into the hands of individuals and communities, breaking down barriers that have long excluded them from the energy economy. This shift empowers people, particularly women, making them

direct participants in the economy and catalysts for change.”

Solar energy especially through localised solutions, is advancing women’s financial inclusion and enabling income generation directed towards education, health care and other essential activities. By integrating women across the value chain from end users to entrepreneurs, solar energy is driving considerable progress and elevating the status of women. The solar sector employed more women than any other energy sector in 2022. According to a report released by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the International Labour Organisation, the solar photovoltaic(PV) industry alone provided jobs to around 4.9 million people, with women accounting for 40% of the workforce. With India’s ambitious renewable targets, the sector is expected to create 3 million new jobs by 2030, offering significant opportunities for women. If the current trends hold, no other energy project comes close to this potential. The transition is more than just a shift from fossil fuel to renewable energy. It is about ensuring that all communities, especially those historically sidelined, benefit from the change. For solar energy to truly empower communities, it must be inclusive and equitable, positioning women not just as beneficiaries but, also as powerful change agents. Businesses should evaluate energy policies through a gender lens. Electrification initiatives must integrate with sectors such as agriculture, forestry, and rural development to form a holistic approach to energy access. This integration



helps dismantle systemic barriers, that disproportionately affect women, fostering a more inclusive energy economy. With these efforts, we can ensure that solar energy supports environmental sustainability, drives socio-economic development, and becomes a true catalyst for a habitable planet.

India's Climate Change Initiatives as per Indian Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's 5 goals of 'Panchamrit' or 'Nectar' elements are:

- 1) Reach 500 Giga Watt Non-fossil energy capacity by 2030.
- 2) 50 per cent of its energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030.
- 3) Reduction of total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now to 2030.
- 4) Reduction of the carbon intensity of the economy by 45 per cent by 2030, over 2005 levels.
- 5) Achieving the target of net zero emissions by 2070.

Efforts to mitigate problems of women affected due to climate change:

- Stringent policies, prioritising safeguarding women physically, socially and economically by sheltering them, providing basic amenities in any such situation, and allowances, till they find an alternative livelihood opportunity.
- Provision for medical aid, besides health camps and counselling for mitigating mental trauma to see them through tough times.
- Ensuring hygiene, nutrition, vaccinations, etc. to prevent the outbreak of any epidemic in refugee camps or temporary settlements.
- Building fraternity for sustained support including exclusive women's groups to address women's issues.
- Setting up Self Help Groups for livelihood support.
- Provide crèche and schooling with support of the Non-Government Organisations for children of displaced women.
- Administrative and legal support, as well as counselling for women affected by climate change.

To conclude, climate change is a real-time threat to all, particularly women. I agree with the lawyer and climate activist, Farhana Yamin, that women are completely at the forefront of climate solutions in everyday life. Governments should exhibit proactive participation and action to stand by the other half of the population, which makes the planet Earth complete and liveable.



## “Sufficiency Lifestyle”

By Smt. Bhuvaneshwari Ravindran, MIC Climate Change)

“Carbonization through sufficiency lifestyle”. INFORSE, one of the organizers, had invited those interested to participate in the Webinar and I took this opportunity to learn something new, which I would like to share.

The presentations and discussions centered on the concept of Sufficiency and how adopting Sufficiency lifestyle and putting in place policy measures in this area can lower CO2 levels, with particular reference to the energy sector.

Various aspects of the subject, based on results of research and surveys conducted in EU countries and India, on sectors like housing, food, transport, consumption; 100% renewables etc., were presented. Though there was reference to India, the Webinar mostly focused on experiences and findings in EU countries. The reference to Indian context was minimal. Obviously because the survey in India was limited to only two cities, viz., Delhi and Mumbai, and that too involving a miniscule population of 1000 persons in each city.

Speakers described sufficiency policies as a set of measures and daily practices that avoid demand for energy, materials, land and water. The presentations put forth ideas of conserving energy and better use of energy to avoid demands by turning off



lights; reducing temperature of gadgets; optimising size of buildings; as well as having regulation and fiscal incentives.

It was interesting to note that sharing of resources, which is something always talked about in Climate Change discussions, was one important sufficiency measure. Some examples of sufficiency measures cited were flying less and switching from cars and flights to public transport and bicycles; repairing and sharing goods; sharing transport by car pooling; sharing of use of products like washing machine etc.; using plant based diets; reconsidering consumption patterns etc. Creating co-working space and banning of short distance flights were also some other measures discussed.

Referring to the surveys conducted in Mumbai and Delhi, it was informed that the Indian population was more supportive and inclined towards bringing in policy measures

on Sufficiency in contrast to European countries, which were not very supportive of radical sufficiency measures.

One of the speakers spoke about the findings of the study of Sufficiency trends for 5 countries (Italy, France, Germany, Latvia, Denmark), conducted to analyze the potential contribution of lifestyle changes and its impact on climate economy and society at the European level. The measures studied were Diets, Sharing spaces in housing, moderate car sizing, sharing products, Biking and Flying less. This study had shown that measures regarding diets and flying less have highest potential for reduction of GHG emissions as compared to other sufficiency measures such as cycling, car sharing, sharing products etc. The study also measured the quantum CO<sub>2</sub> that can be saved by the year 2050 and it showed that 90% saving potential was from diets and flying less.

In his presentation Mr. Gunnar highlighted some measures that are already included in the National Energy and Climate Policies of four EU countries and suggested some additional measures for adoption. Some sufficiency policy measures, which can

help all countries in climate action, were suggested as:

- Siting of functions (as housing, shops, workplaces, schools) closer to each other to reduce transport demand and reduce congestion
- Supporting soft transport (non-motorized environment friendly transport) and collective transport to reduce congestion and reduce inequality in mobility
- Eating more plant based food which will also improve health

He also made a reference to India's Mission LIFE – Lifestyle for Environment as something very relevant. A suggestion that Sufficiency policies give more opportunities that can help countries to meet the emission gap and countries should include them in their NDCs was put forward.

The term Sufficiency lifestyle was quite intriguing and this session helped in learning more about it, particularly about how adopting certain sufficiency measures in our day to day life can help in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and its potential in mitigation of climate change impacts.





## Our Environment Our Priority

By Kanika Women's Forum Series on Environmental Pollution



The Kanika Women's Forum, Thrissur, launched a compelling seminar series addressing the grave threat posed by environmental pollution—particularly the indiscriminate dumping of toxic waste, underlining the urgent need for government action and societal awareness.

The first Seminar included renowned keynote speakers **Ms. Mini Muringatheri**, Special Correspondent, *The Hindu* **Mr. M. P. Surendran**, Writer & Former Editor, *Mathrubhumi* **Mr. K. Sethumadhavan**, Retired Regional Head, Federal Bank

The speakers illuminated the precarious state of our environment, supported by hard-hitting data and visuals. Of particular concern was the plight of **River Periyar**, once the poetic muse of yesteryears, now a toxic stream choked by industrial waste. The seminar voiced strong criticism of governmental apathy and widespread corruption that hinders timely intervention. Vivid imagery—burning lakes, dead fish, and polluted waters—amplified the urgent call to **“DO SOMETHING!”**

The Second Follow-Up Seminar, spurred by positive feedback, was organized in Thiruvilwamala, approximately 50 km from Thrissur, in collaboration with Thiruvilwamala Grama Panchayat, the



Local Library, and the Lions Club. Keynote speakers at the Seminar were Sri M. P. Surendran and Smt. Mini Muringatheri

Equipped with compelling visual evidence and sobering statistics on dwindling natural resources, the seminar ignited discussions with Shree Shakthi units working under the Suchithva Kerala Mission, leading to promising community-level action plans.

The Third Programme of the series continued at the MRG Apartment complex "Sreevalsam", jointly organized by Kanika Women's Forum Wing 1 and the residents' associations of the complex. Mr. Vivek Menon, an IIT alumnus, presided and delivered an engaging and informative talk, inspiring residents to adopt eco-friendly practices in their daily lives.

The Fourth and the final event of the series took place at the Mulankunnathukavu Grama Panchayat Hall, focusing specifically on plastic waste toxicity. It was a collaborative effort between Kanika Women's Forum Wing 2 and the Mulankunnathukavu Grama Panchayat.

Vanamithra awardee V.K. Sreedharan addressed the audience, shedding light on the long-term environmental consequences of plastic pollution and the necessity for collective local action.

## *Head Office Events*

### *Birth Anniversary of Sarojini Naidu*

*(By Smt. Mythily Jagannathan, MIC, H.O. Events)*



Participants at the event



Hyderabad Bazaar Tableau by Bapnu Ghar



Queen Gulnar seeks her rival in beauty



Poem "Street Cries" by Asmita, AVI student

The 146th Birthday of Sarojini Naidu was celebrated on 13th February, 2025. Office Bearers, Members and Staff joined together to pay Homage by garlanding the Statue of Sarojini Naidu.

Celebrating the event a cultural program was held in A.V. Hall. Highlights of the programme were presentations of poems

and tableau by Bapnu Ghar inmates and A.V.I. students. We had the privilege of watching the performance of "Queen's Rival" a play written by Sarojini Naidu, enacted by the students of Jamia Milia. The program was attended by a gathering of AIWC members, Faculty members from Jamia Millia, and students of Delhi University.





## International Women's Day

International Women's Day was celebrated in the Head Office with Delhi & NCR branches. Gala festivities, ceremonies of Citations and gifts to women achievers from branches, music and dancing, a tongue-in-cheek comedy enacted by members, were the highlights.



A grass-roots level community leader working on improving AQI in Delhi Ms. Hemlata and an accomplished SI, Ms. Kiran Sethi were honored for their contribution to social causes. Beneficiaries of AIWC programmes and interventions from different Branches spoke about their journey of success in their own words. A day enjoyed by one and all.



## Holi Hai !!!

AIWC celebrated Holi on the premises. With winter beating a retreat, pleasant weather added warmth to the occasion. Members,



Staff, residents of Bapnu Ghar, students of AVI, and guests played Holi with flowers, followed by cultural programmes and games.



## *From the Secretary General's Desk*

### *14th MCM Book Club Meeting*



The subject of discussion was the book **“In a State of Violent Peace: Voices from the Kashmir Valley”**, written by Smt. Meera Khanna. Dr. Yuthika Mishra introduced the speaker, who is President of the Guild of Service, and has initiated and worked for decades, with women of Kashmir.

Speaking about the book, Smt. Meera Khanna, said she wanted to draw away attention from the usual narrative of violence and terrorism in the Valley. Instead, she focused on the impact of decades of militancy on a cross-

section of women, writers, academics, and wives of prominent leaders, as well as wives of militants. Hence the book covered varied situations, which they had to overcome for survival of the family. The title Violent Peace reflected the present challenges as well as the future perspectives of life in the Valley.

Members appreciated Smt. Meera Khanna's presentation of lives of women in Kashmir valley, and her description of how they survived challenges caused by violent conflicts.



*Kashmiri saffron is praised all over the world for its high quality, bright colour and fine taste. But what exactly is saffron? It is the most expensive spice in the world. The reason for its high price is its labour-intensive harvesting method--Saffron has to be harvested by hand from the *Crocus sativus* flower. The term “saffron” applies to the flower's thread-like stigma. Apart from its flavour it is said to have many beneficial properties. It is anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory and said to uplift mood and depression. A study conducted in 2020 even found that saffron and its compounds may selectively kill cancer cells or suppress tumor growth while leaving healthy cells unharmed.*





***The 15 MCM Book Club meeting on 21st February, 2025***  
***Talk by Professor Maria Framke on “Gendered Development Work and Non-State Primary Health Care Provisions - from 1940 to Mid-1970”***



Prof. Maria Framke, from the University of Erfurt, Germany, who was visiting India, spoke about her article “Gendered Development Work And Non-State Primary Health Care Provisions: The Skippo Medical Van Scheme in Rural India, c.1940’s to mid-1970’s.”

Prof. Yuthika Mishra introduced the speaker, and described her book as providing a record of AIWC’s notable role in taking non-state, voluntary health facilities to villages.

The speaker gave an interesting account of how in the pre-Independence year of 1946, AIWC initiated a mobile health van scheme, called Skippo, to provide maternity and child health care services, in which doctors and medical supplies reached remote villages of Bombay Presidency. An important aspect covered in the article was the role of women activists like AIWC, and the impact of the scheme on maternal and child health care in villages. She described how AIWC coordinated with international organisations in rural health programs.



Replying to questions, Prof. Maria Framke said that her current project was on “Hidden Histories; Women’s Role in Rural Development Programs in India, c.1920-1966. It examines Indian women’s contribution to rural reconstruction schemes in three key areas, health, education and sustainable livelihood.

Dr. Manju Kak expressed her gratitude to Ms. Framke for highlighting the healthcare efforts of AIWC in rural areas. Dr. Kak mentioned that many scholars are researching the AIWC women’s movement and its various projects. She suggested that AIWC organize a symposium to bring together these scholars and give them a platform to present their work. She further emphasized that communal harmony is a key principle of the All India Women’s Conference, and the naming of the vans as Ashoka and Akbar symbolizes this harmony. These names reflect the spirit of unity and coexistence between different communities in India. Dr. Kak concluded by acknowledging the importance of AIWC's role in promoting peace and social cohesion.

## Branch Activities

### ***Cervical Cancer HPV Vaccination Camps Supported by Clear water Analytics Pvt. Ltd***

In collaboration with Clearwater Analytics, the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) successfully organized two cervical cancer awareness camps as part of a pilot project. Mr. Anurag Singh, Ms. Vandana, and her team demonstrated a sincere and dedicated approach to this initiative. At the same time, both AIWC and Clearwater Analytics (CSR) shared a common vision in executing the program.

Dr. Manju Kak, Secretary General of AIWC, spearheaded this important initiative, recognizing the critical need for cervical cancer awareness and the promotion of HPV

vaccination among girls and women, with full support for this program by President Kalyani Raj and Treasurer, Upasana Singh.

As a Pilot Project, AIWC Head Office selected two branches, - AIWC Human Touch Foundation for Women, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, and AIWC Shree Sarvajanic Mahila Mandal, Bardoli, Gujarat, to implement the initiative under the guidance of qualified healthcare professionals. These camps were significant milestones in raising awareness about the importance of early vaccination and its role in preventing cervical cancer.

### ***Human Touch Foundation for Women, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh***



On International Women's Day, March 8th, 2025, the Human Touch Foundation for Women, Greater Noida Branch, organized a free Cervical Cancer HPV Vaccination



Camp in Greater Noida. The event was conducted at Kidz and Momz Clinic, Sector 36, Greater Noida. 25 girls attended the camp with their parents to get vaccinated.

Dr. Nidhi Sethia Garg, Senior Consultant Obstetrics & Gynecology at Ivory Hospital, was invited as the resource person for the event. Dr. Nidhi educated the participants about cervical cancer, the HPV virus, and the importance of getting vaccinated. She also provided crucial details about the side effects, vaccine frequency and the proper course of the Cervarix vaccine.

A few parents, especially of the younger girls, expressed concerns and made phone calls seeking clarification regarding the vaccine's safety, its cost, and the need for multiple doses.

One of the main concerns raised during the session was the cost of the vaccine and the number of doses required. While some

girls needed two doses spaced two months apart, other older girls required a third dose. This led to many inquiries about the next camp's schedule, as some beneficiaries were unable to attend the current session. Due to budget constraints, only 25 girls were vaccinated, though several others expressed interest in participating. The next vaccine dose for all beneficiaries is scheduled for May 2025. As a token of appreciation, the pharmaceutical company gifted colorful bracelets to all the beneficiaries. Feedback from the beneficiaries was overwhelmingly positive, reflecting the success of the camp. This successful initiative highlighted the need for more such programs to reach a wider audience and protect young girls from cervical cancer.

### ***AIWC Shree Sarvajani Mahila Mandal–Bardoli, Gujarat***



The Branch organized a Cervical Cancer Vaccination Programme at Dr. Gandhi's Hospital in Bardoli, Gujarat, under the auspices of AIWC. The inauguration of the program was graced by the popular social worker, Shree Tarachand Bapu, and the



President of the Red Cross Society, Bardoli Taluka, Dr. Ashwin Gandhi.

Smt. Trushaben Pandya warmly welcomed all the guests, beneficiary girls, and their parents. Dr. Laxmi Gandhi delivered an insightful address on the significance of



the HPV vaccine and its administration schedule.

Total 28 girls were vaccinated at the camp. Of these, 11 were between 9 and 15 years of age and required only two doses, while 17 girls between 15 and 25 years required three doses. Smt Arti Joshi delivered a vote

of thanks, expressing gratitude to President, Smt. Kalyani Raj, Secretary General, Manju Kak, and Treasurer, Upasana Singh for their support in making the project a success. Special thanks were extended to Clearwater Analytics Pvt. Ltd. for their financial contribution, which made the program possible.

***Awareness Programme on Cervical Cancer and HPV Vaccine (A collaborative Initiative of Clear Water Analytics and All India Women's Conference)***



All India Women's Conference, Head Office with the help of its Branches, pan India, took the initiative to help inform girls and women in the communities about the importance of vaccination, the role of regular check-ups, and encourage a proactive approach to their health, ultimately reducing the incidence of cervical cancer and improving overall women's health in the country. This initiative was taken with the support from



the Clear Water Analytics, CSR Sector 95 Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

AIWC Branches of Pondicherry Women's Conference, Pondicherry, Maitreyi Women's Organisation, Andhra Pradesh and Kalpadharu Women's Organisation, Palakkad, organised the awareness programme on cervical cancer and HPV vaccination at the grassroots level.





## ***International Women's Day – Celebrations At Various Branches Hyderabad Branch***

On the 18th March 2025, Hyderabad Branch celebrated International Women's Day in collaboration with 64 years old, St Francis College for women, one of the best colleges of Hyderabad

The Chief Guest on the occasion was the dynamic Senior Police Officer Ms Shiksha Goel IPS, holding 4 important portfolios viz CID, Women Safety Wing, Cyber Security, and Forensic Science Labs in Telangana. She as a lean and thin girl, set her goal to get into IPS and achieved it, only with sheer determination and will power. She was a great encouragement and inspiration

to the girls in the hall. In an interactive session with girl students, she said women are safe in Telangana now, due to efficient functioning of Bharosa scheme and SHE teams of Women Police in the State.. She assured that her office will extend all help required by women and also that she will tackle all grievances herself.

Around 19 women members representing 3-4 NGOs and 177 girls from 2nd and 3rd year classes attended the event. Next step with this college is formation of youth wing of AIWC Hyderabad. branch. The purpose of International Women's Day celebration was truly served!!

## ***Suraksha Community Centre***



International Women's Day and Annual Day celebrated on 22.03.2025 at Swadher Greh.

Prof. Dr. Malar , Assistant Professor of S.T. Hindu college, Nagercoil and Mr. Dinesh Krishnan social activist were the Chief Guests.

Prof. Dr. Malar delivered an inspiring speech



on women's development, highly appreciated Suraksha's contribution and commitment to the destitute women by providing them shelter and food, helping them to get trained in skills and thereby ensuring their safety and security and dignity. The program was attended by our committee members, Suraksha Staff and Swadher Greh inmates.



Rural Constituent Branch of AIWC, Komaragiri and Durga Bai Deshmukh Main Branch celebrated International Women's Day on 8th March. On this occasion, One day awareness campaign on Maternal and Child Health by Dr. L. Prasanth, Pediatrician

was held. He reiterated the importance of mother's milk in the development of a child.

Smt Sarah Bhempalli M.Sc (Marine Geophysics) Chief Geophysicist ONGC, Smt Ragireddy Chandra Kala, Deepthi Kumar, ex Kudda chairperson, and Dr.Lakkaraju Prashanth pediatrician of Sri Devi Children's Hospital were felicitated.

A new AIWC Rural Branch of Ramanayyapet, was inaugurated by our Guest of Honour Smt. Rajani, Ramarao.

Scholarships of Rs 10, 000 each to students pursuing professional courses sanctioned by Educational Trust, Head Office were distributed.

### ***Vikas Mahila Sangam, Mayur Vihar, Delhi***



Vikas Mahila Sangam celebrated International Women's Day with a special awareness program on women's health, wellness, and nutrition. Held at Mayur Vihar Phase-2, the event brought together 62 beneficiaries for an engaging and informative session. The program commenced with a



welcome speech by President Sapna Acharya. The event featured insightful sessions by Dt. Jyoti Khaniojh, Head of Dietetics and Nutrition at Max Hospital, Patparganj, and yoga instructor Tanya Singh.

Dt. Jyoti Khaniojh shed light on the vital role of nutrition in a woman's life. She shared





her personal experiences during pregnancy and highlighted the concept of Nari Shakti (Women's Strength), reinforcing the idea that self-love and self-care are fundamental to a woman's overall well-being. She provided essential dietary recommendations, focusing

on balanced nutrition for different age groups, as also nutrition during menopause, stressing the importance of calcium, vitamin D, magnesium, and zinc to manage symptoms effectively.

Yoga instructor Tanya Singh focused on holistic well-being, emphasizing the connection between mental and physical health. She encouraged participants to embrace laughter and social interactions to enhance their mental well-being.

The session was highly interactive, with participants engaging in discussions and asking insightful questions about nutrition, healthy aging, and wellness practices.

### ***Kakinada Branch***

“World Water Day” was celebrated by Kakinada Branch by conducting a different programme of Burrakatha, it is a popular art form in early 1930s. To revive and promote this type of art forms we arranged Burrakatha to create awareness on “water conservation and sanitation”



### ***Jagrati Womens Conference, Haridwar***

The Branch inaugurated "Udaan Project Course, cutting and tailoring (Basic and Advanced Course) in Govindpuri, Haridwar sponsored by All India Women's Conference, New Delhi



## ***Zonal Conferences***

### ***West Zone B***



The Conference began with Ganesh Shiv Vandana performed by Smt. Hina Naik, Surat Bhruhad Shalkha followed by Welcome Dance beautifully executed by Smt. Sejal Shah, Vyara Branch. Smt. Sonal Sheth and Smt. Hansa Choksi from Surat Branch performed a dance on devotional song "Adharam Madhura".

The Conference Chairperson Smt. Varsha Thakkar, Zonal Organizer West Zone B warmly welcomed one and all present from the bottom of her heart.

Smt. Shivani Mehta, Maninagar Branch introduced the Chief Guest Smt. Kalyani Raj to the members

President Smt. Kalyani Raj firstly congratulated West B Zonal Officer, Smt. Varsha Thakkar for the success of the past and present conference, expressing her appreciation of organizing the event, by forming a number of committees to take care of smaller events such as welcome committee, cultural committee etc to make

the bigger event successful. Overall, she was truly pleased with the management of the Conference.

President stressed upon the Committee Members of the various Branches to take programmes from AIWC and elaborated on the various projects available.

The introduction of the Guest of Honour, Dr. Manju Kak was given by Dr. Lakshmi Gandhi, Bardoli Branch.

Addressing the members, the Secretary General, Smt. Manju Kak, spoke about the various projects conducted by AIWC at length and guided the members in which way one can remain associated with the said projects.

Smt. Dipti Parikh, Kalol Branch, President of AHMP Gujarat branch of introduced Dr. Upasana Singh, the Hon. Treasurer of AIWC.

Dr. Upasana Singh, the Hon. treasurer of AIWC praised the hard work behind the



management of the conference She further assisted on the procedure of sending the report to AIWC.

Smt, Lata Choksi, Waninagar branch read the good wishes messages sent by Smt. Rama Ananthram and Smt. Bhavana Joshipura.

Thereafter the reports of different branches of South, Middle and North Zone of Gujarat

were presented on the stage by the members in varied forms such as dance, mimicry, skit, qawali, mono act, dance drama, garba etc.

The Conference concluded with the President of AIWC Smt. Kalyani Raj enthusiastically judging the work of the Branches through their presentation. The Conference was wonderfully anchored by Miss Milvi Vyas from Bardoli.

### *East Zone B*

### *A Grand Gathering of Women Change makers at Jamshedpur*



The All India Women's Conference (AIWC), Jamshedpur Branch, hosted a remarkable Zonal Conference on 28th March 2025 at the prestigious United Club. The event brought together dignitaries and representatives from AIWC branches across Bihar and Jharkhand, creating an inspiring platform for dialogue and collaboration.

Padma Shri awardee and mountaineer, Smt. Premlata Agarwal, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while AIWC President Smt. Kalyani Raj and Treasurer Smt. Upasana



Singh attended as Guests of Honour. The conference was a melting pot of ideas, with AIWC Zonal Head Dr. Jyotsna Kumar leading insightful business sessions, where members shared their impactful social and charitable initiatives.

Adding to the vibrancy of the event, 'Utsaah'—the bi-annual bulletin of AIWC Jamshedpur—was officially unveiled, with the editorial team receiving well-deserved appreciation. The evening also featured an interactive Q&A forum with Smt. Kalyani

## 32 *All India Women's Conference*

Raj and Smt. Upasana Singh, fostering meaningful discussions on the future of AIWC's initiatives.

The presence of AIWC Jamshedpur's esteemed patrons, Smt. Daisy Irani and Smt. Vijaylaxmi Das, along with President Smt. Parul Mangal, Vice President Smt. Vinita Shah, and Secretary Smt. Monica Burman, further elevated the grandeur of the event. A heartfelt Vote of Thanks by Smt. Vinita

Shah concluded the day, leaving attendees enriched and motivated.

The Conference was a perfect blend of purpose and celebration, with light entertainment and delightful refreshments adding to the spirit of camaraderie. AIWC Jamshedpur once again proved its commitment to empowering women and driving social change with passion and dedication.

### *South Zone A*



The inaugural session of the South Zone A Zonal Conference was held at Hotel Ram International, Anna Salai, Pondicherry. Around 35 members from Andhra, Telangana, and Chennai participated. Dr. Padma Venkat Raman, President of the Women's Association, was the guest of honor and spoke about the strength of women when united.

Padmashree Dr. Nalini and Margaret Nicholas were felicitated, and the Pondicherry Women's Conference President, Smt. Rehana Begum, compered the event. Dr. Vidya Ramkumar, Vice President of Pondicherry Branch welcomed the gathering,



and Dr. Pramila Tamilvanan, Vice President of the Pondicherry Women's Conference, organized cultural programs, including performances by Indira Gandhi College of Nursing and kids of Shiva Natyalaya.

Dr. Manju Kak shared her valuable insights, and Dr. Upasana Singh spoke about the financial achievements that have contributed to the organization's growth and stability. Smt. Fatima Ali, Vice President of the Pondicherry Women's Conference, delivered the vote of thanks.

The South Zone A Zonal Meet commenced after the inaugural session.

Key Points discussed in the Zonal meeting:

1. Program Reporting: AIWC Secretary General Dr. Manju Kak emphasized the importance of reporting programs conducted by branches, including photos, to be sent to the Head Office.
2. Financial Reporting: Dr. Upasana provided details on submitting bills for one-day programs and requested branches to provide a detailed allocation of funds required.
3. Project Proposals: Kakinada branch secretary presented a proposal on cervical cancer and breast cancer vaccination, as well as village adoption.
4. Donation: Smt Saralakrishnan, Chairman of WIA, offered to donate Rs. 2 lakh to the Kakinada branch for the cervical cancer vaccination project.
5. Capacity Building: Srimathi Neeraja Yuvaraj from Vellore requested capacity building for AIWC.
6. Visits and Inspections: Smt. Amareshwari will visit schools, day care centers, and new branches, and submit reports on social and economic programs.
7. Long-term Projects: Dr Padma Venkatraman suggested that branches take up specific projects that can run throughout the year, with the main branch consolidating and sending reports to the head office.
8. Value-based Education: Smt. Supriya Bhalerao spoke about the project on value-based school education, focusing on gender sensitivity and respect for women.

The meeting provided a platform for branches to discuss their proposals, receive guidance, and align with AIWC's goals and objectives. A Vote of Thanks was given by Smt. Swarnalatha.

### ***President, Smt. Kalyani Raj Visits Nashik District Rural Branches & Mumbai Branch Projects***

In continuation of the initiative of Development & Strengthening of Rural Branches a special visit to the rural branches of Nashik District and several important projects of the Mumbai Branch was undertaken spanning over 4 days, to inspire, encourage, and appreciate the tireless grassroots level work being done for the empowerment of women and children.

**Sinnar Mahila Mandal, Nashik District**





Empowering Women through Vocational Training, 3-month Beauty Parlour Course. Certificates were distributed by Smt. Kalyani Raj, to the beneficiaries of Sinnar Branch. A Warm Maharashtrian Welcome was extended to Smt. Raj with heartfelt traditional rituals—Pheta (Turban) Aarti, Lezim performance by the students, and a floral path accompanied by Dhol-Tasha (Drums). Smt. Ujjwala Khalkar, President of the branch along with her team, school staff and students participated in this grand welcome.

Smt. Raj visited all the classrooms, the science laboratory and the computer section and expressed her appreciation for the efficient functioning of the school. Her inspiring speech during the certificate ceremony deeply motivated the 30 women graduates, who now aim to become self-reliant entrepreneurs.

### **Umberthane (Peth Rural Branch)**



*Herbal Medicinal Plant Project: 17 Years of Impact*

Located 150 km from Nashik, Umberthane houses an Adivasi Ashram School, where the Herbal Medicinal Plant Project initiated

by late Smt. Kalpakkam Yechuri continues to thrive. The credit for nurturing this project so successfully since the past 17 years goes to Smt. Hemalata Bidkar, SCM of Nashik District. Smt. Raj was amazed to witness the fully grown medicinal trees and hear students eloquently explain their uses an enduring example of sustainable rural development.

### **Talasari—Rural Community Development Centre (RCDC)**



A Project of Mumbai Branch, AIWC. Education and Healthcare for Adivasi Communities. Talasari, near the Maharashtra-Gujarat border, is home to an English and Marathi Medium School and a well-equipped Medical Center serving over 100 patients daily with free consultation and medicines by a qualified Doctor.

### **Dadar-Matunga Branch, Mumbai**

This self-owned branch which has a garden rarely seen in Mumbai, runs a Balwadi, Tailoring classes, a Library and a Gruha Udyog Center. The most touching initiative of the Branch is the Awali Bhojan, where domestic workers are honoured with a decorated meal plate which is served by committee members. This is an annual

activity carried out by the branch since its inception to show their gratitude to the domestic staff, without whose help they could not come out to work. .

### **SWKC Branch, Mumbai**



This branch has looms on which durries, bags, and household items are made using old sarees . With a Masala pounding unit, seasonal products like pickles and jams are

made , and they also take meal orders daily. it's a model of women-led entrepreneurship.

### **Education Project at Dharavi**



The two centers are located in Dharavi, Asia's largest slum, where the branch runs education and vocational classes for slum children and women, guided by the Project Chairperson Adv. Smt. Alka Bhagat.

## ***KBWW Hostel, Juhu, A Project of the Mumbai Branch AIWC***

Safe Housing for Working Women houses 101 working women who come to the city of Mumbai to earn a livelihood. The staff welcomed President Kalyani Raj warmly, providing a comfortable stay to a fulfilling day.

### **Andheri Mahila Parishad – Shishu Kalyan Kendra**

Special Education with Dignity and Care , Shishu Kalyan Kendra, is a school for children with special needs. The children greeted Smt. Raj with handmade bouquets. Skills, enthusiasm, and the efficient management by the members headed by Smt. Harshada Parekh really touched Smt. Kalyani Raj.

### **Shraddha – Street Children Project (Mumbai Branch AIWC)**

Academic Progress and Hope for the Future - The final stop was at the Shraddha Project for street children, where Smt. Raj saw the children's academic progress and interacted with them warmly. The Project headed by Smt. Meena Kumbhar showcased the various programs and support systems in place.

Smt. Kalyani Raj's visit reaffirmed the strength of our rural and urban branches. Her words and presence have reinvigorated our teams, and we remain ever grateful for her leadership, warmth, and support.





Secretary General, Dr. Manju Kak, and Honorary Treasurer, Dr. Upasana Singh, visited Vandavasi Ponnur Hills branch, where they met with Ponnur Hills Branch members. This program organized by Smt. Balamani, Ponnur Hills President and Standing Committee Member.

On February 24, 2025, they attended a

meeting with the Member-in-Charge at the Pondicherry branch.

On 25th February 2025 morning, after breakfast, AIWC Pondicherry Branch organized a flood relief contribution event for the sanitary workers of Rainbow Nagar and Venkata Nagar. Thirty-five workers received contribution of AIWC - bed sheets, mats, gloves, and caps.



The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was the culmination of a historic meeting held in Beijing in 1995. In 2025 we celebrate its 30th anniversary. 189 governments agreed to its provisions, at the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Platform centres on 12 areas of action – referred to as “critical areas of concern”. These cover jobs and the economy, political participation, peace, the environment, ending violence against women and more.



*(AIWC Members at the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995)*



## हिंदी जगत सदस्यों द्वारा हिंदी में लेखन

### अंतर्राष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस समारोह विषय : परिवार और नारी – आज के परिवेश में

(डॉ करुणा शर्मा सचिव जागृति महिला सम्मेलन हरिद्वार सोसायटी)



8 मार्च 2025 को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस के अवसर पर 98 साल पुरानी सामाजिक संस्था ऑल इंडिया वीमेंस कॉन्फ्रेंस से सम्बद्ध जागृति वीमेंस कांफ्रेंस, हरिद्वार ने महिला दिवस मनाया। इस अवसर पर जागृति विमेंस कॉन्फ्रेंस ने विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में कार्यरत 5 महिलाओं को समाज में उत्कृष्ट योगदान के लिए सम्मानित किया। लेखिका और योगाचार्य डॉ राधिका नागरथ, डायरेक्टर केयर नर्सिंग कॉलेज डॉ प्रीत शिखा शर्मा, असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर भगवान दास आदर्श संस्कृत महाविद्यालय डा० आशिमा श्रवण, सचिव एकम्स फार्मास्यूटिकल्स श्रीमती अर्चना जैन और राज्य महिला आयोग सदस्य कमला जोशी को शॉल एवं सर्टिफिकेट प्रदान कर सम्मानित किया गया! महिला दिवस पर चिंतन का मुख्य विषय था – परिवार और नारी : आज के परिवेश में। उस विषय पर डॉक्टर भारती शर्मा, उमा पांडे ने अपने विचार रखे। सचिव डॉक्टर करुणा शर्मा ने कहा कि आज परिवार संस्था

खतरे में है। परिवार से ही हमें संस्कार मिलते हैं। परिवार जीवन की धुरी है। अर्चना जैन जी ने कहा कि संस्था को आज की युवा पीढ़ी को जागरूक करने के लिए अवेयरनेस प्रोग्राम विभिन्न कॉलेज में करने चाहिए और मेरा पूर्ण सहयोग है। संस्था की सचिव डॉक्टर करुणा शर्मा ने बताया कि कांगड़ी श्यामपुर में संस्था अनेक वर्षों से सेवा में कार्यरत है और वहां की महिलाओं और बच्चों के लिए कम्प्युटर प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम, हेल्थ केयर कैम्प एवं बुजुर्ग महिलाओं के लिए डे केयर केन्द्र और जागरूकता अभियान चलाए जाते हैं। संस्था की संरक्षिका मंजुला भगत ने बताया कि अब युवा पीढ़ी भी उनके साथ जुड़ गई है और कई युवतियां गांव जाकर लोगों में सफाई और पर्यावरण बचाने के लिए अभियान चलाती हैं। गुरुकुल कांगड़ी विश्वविद्यालय की कुलपति डा० हेमलथा के ने बतौर मुख्य अतिथि शिरकत की और संस्था के कार्यों को सराहा। उन्होंने कहा कि महिलाओं को

खुद सशक्त होना होगा और इसके लिए शिक्षा बहुत जरूरी है जब तक हर नारी शिक्षित नहीं होगी तो समाज में बदलाव लाना मुश्किल है। 12वीं कक्षा की दिल्ली पब्लिक स्कूल की छात्रा श्वेता कौशल की पुस्तक 3 पॉइंट कन्फ्यूजन का भी अतिथियों द्वारा विमोचन किया गया। मंजुला भगत ने बताया कि संस्था के आरम्भ में सरोजिनी नायडू, एवं अन्य गणमान्य महिलाएं पथ प्रदर्शक रही हैं! उन्हीं की सोच को आगे बढ़ाते हुए जागृति संस्था पिछले 37 वर्षों में हरिद्वार में कार्य कर रही है। कार्यक्रम का संचालन सचिव डॉक्टर करुणा शर्मा एवं उपसचिव डॉक्टर निधि शर्मा ने किया। जागृति वीमेंस कॉन्फ्रेंस के सदस्यों में संरक्षिका अलका शर्मा, अध्यक्षा नीरू जैन, वीणा कॉल,

निधि हांडा, मोनिका गर्ग, उमा पांडे, नेहा मलिक, कुसुम उपाध्याय आदि उपस्थित रहे। हरिद्वार शहर से विभिन्न क्षेत्रों से स्त्री शक्ति ने इस कार्यक्रम में शिरकत की। डॉक्टर मनीषा दीक्षित, प्रिंसिपल शिवानी भास्कर, प्रियंका जौहरी, नीरू पुंडीर, नीरू शर्मा, निर्मल त्यागी आदि आदि। संस्था की उपशाखा रुड़की से अध्यक्ष उर्मिला पुंडीर, सचिव डॉक्टर भारती शर्मा, उपाध्यक्ष डॉक्टर अर्चना चौहान ने कार्यक्रम में प्रतिभाग किया। तथा उपशाखा रुड़की से ममता रानी, अनिता कुमारी, वर्षा सक्सेना, सविता एवं यूथ विंग के सदस्य रक्षित, झलक, सोनिया आदि ने प्रतिभाग किया। नेशनल एंथम के साथ कार्यक्रम का समापन हुआ तथा सचिव ने सभी को होली की बधाई और शुभकामनाएं दीं।



## “पानी की एक्सपायरी डेट क्या है”

(डॉ हर्षा मर्चेंट, मुम्बई शाखा)

जहां नल का पानी हर दिन आता है, वहाँ पानी हर दिन बासी हो जाता है और हर दिन बहा (फेंक) दिया जाता है। एक्सपायरी तिथि 1 दिन जहाँ 2 दिन में नल आता है, वहाँ 2 दिन में पानी बासी हो जाता है, और बहा दिया जाता है।

जहां आठ दिन बाद पानी आता है, वहाँ आठ दिन बाद पानी बासी हो जाता है।

शादी समारोह में अगली बिसलरी का सामना होते ही हाथ में रखी पानी की आधी बोतल को फेंक दिया जाता है, वहीं दूसरी ओर रेगिस्तान में यात्रा करते समय पानी तब तक ताजा रहता है, जब तक पानी दिखाई न दे।

अगले मानसून तक बांध और तालाब में पानी ताजा बरकरार रहेगा, वहीं यदि सूखे की स्थिति बनती है, तो यह दो से तीन साल तक ताजा पानी बना रहता है।

जहां 50 फीट के बोरवेल से पानी निकाला जाता है, वह जमीन के नीचे सालों साल पुराना है, यानी सैकड़ों साल पुराना पानी पीने के लिए सुरक्षित है



एक्सपायरी डेट सैकड़ों साल तक भी नहीं आती है।

जहाँ 400 से 500 फीट बोरवेल से पानी निकाला जाता है, वह भी सालों साल तक जमीन के अंदर जमा रहता है। फिर भी उपयोगी रहता है।

कुल मिलाकर पानी की एक्सपायरी हमारी अपनी सोच के आधार पर बिना किसी मापदण्ड के केवल उपलब्धता के अनुसार तय की जाती है। अतः पानी का उपयोग विवेकशीलता एवं संयम से करें अन्यथा हमारे ही विचार हमको प्यासा मार डालेंगे...'



जल ही जीवन है... जल है तो कल है



## ले गति का संकल्प....

ले गति का संकल्प,  
मूर्तिमान बलिदान!  
शक्ति को पहचान,  
छलनी न हो आत्मसम्मान,  
गति बने तुम्हारी पहचान।



उमा पाण्डेय

वाइस प्रेसिडेंट, जागृति वीमेंस  
कांफ्रेंस, हरिद्वार

बाधाएँ आती हैं, आएँ  
हर बेटी अब कलम उठाए।  
शिक्षा का पावन दीप जलाकर,  
हर अंधियारा दूर भगाए।

तोड़ कर ये शृंखलाएँ,  
दूर कर संकीर्णताएँ,  
स्वप्न सब साकार कर,  
तुझमें अमित संभावनाएँ।

हर शोध, हर खोज, बढ़ते नवाचार,  
सब में समान तेरा अधिकार!  
रच नूतन इतिहास, मुखर हो,  
संभावनाओं का अनंत विस्तार।

सृजन, पोषण और परिवर्तन,  
प्रकृति और तेरा ही उपकार!  
प्रकट कर हृदय के उद्गार,  
खुलेंगे समृद्धि के स्वर्णिम द्वार।

नैना, श्रद्धा और हिमानी,  
दरिन्दगी का क्यों बने शिकार?  
रक्षा न हो केवल शब्दों में,  
जीने का सबका अधिकार  
ले गति का संकल्प, मूर्तिमान बलिदान।



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*Jharkhandies Adivasi Women's Association*



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*Aawli Bhojan, Mumbai Branch*



*Jyotirgamaya Educational & Charitable Trust*



*GMJ Branch, Kolkata: Day outing of Matajis  
Belurmata Ramkrishna Mission Mandir*



*Grand Holi celebration at Pakuria village at seniors  
women day care centre*



*Anemia Detection Camp in Karakuduru Village*



*Beach Cleaning Project*



*Inmates of Tarash Mandir - Prasad grahan*