

Roshni

JANUARY-MARCH 2023



ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

New Management Team Year 2023-25



President - Smt Kalyani Raj

An ex-banker and finance person by profession, Kalyani Raj has been involved in a number of project implementations in AIWC for the past 25 years as MIC of Youth, SHG, Disaster Preparedness, Climate Change and Grant-in-Aid departments. She held the post of Hon Secretary General during 2017-19 and took over as President of AIWC in February 2023.



Secretary General - Dr Manju Kak

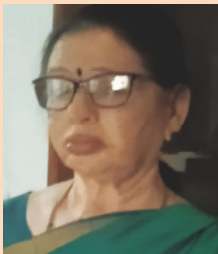
An academican, art scholar, writer, journalist and Women's rights activist. She has been Hon Treasurer AIWC (2017-19), Vice President International Alliance for Women (2019-2022) and is currently elected as Hon Secretary General, AIWC. She is a Trustee on the Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Trust, GoI, an NGO rep at the UN ECOSOC, and has given lectures internationally.



Treasurer- Dr Upasana Singh

A distinguished social activist and a seasoned member of AIWC, who wholeheartedly believes that for a society to be healthy, it needs to provide equal merit-based opportunities to all its sections. Working towards this goal, she has worked at the helm of several reputed organisations. She is the founder and president of the Human Touch Foundation and PoSH Act Compliance; which relentlessly work towards resolving inequality of work opportunities due to unfair prejudice, and sexual harassment of women in the workplace.

Vice-presidents (5)



**Smt MA Hemalata,
Mysuru**



**Smt Nishi Jain,
Meerut**



**Smt Vanaja
Krishnamurthy,
Chennai**



**Smt Rama Anantaram,
Hyderabad**



**Smt Gopamudra
Mohapatra,
Balasore**

Joint Secretary



**Smt Sheveta Rai Talwar,
Dehradun**

Front cover photograph : The new team of elected Office Bearers, Vice Presidents and Joint Secretary

ROSHNI

Journal of the All India Women's Conference

JANUARY- MARCH 2023

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From the Editor's desk...

Dear Sisters,

It is an immense pleasure to connect with you through this prestigious platform!

This issue corresponds with the period that harbingers the most adored spring season when nature rejoices in the pleasant weather of the spring after a harsh winter. This season heralds various festivals being celebrated across the world with different names and in different forms.

For all of us at AIWC, it's time to bid adieu to our old management with a standing ovation, who efficiently and effectively led our organisation through the tough times of the pandemic. Kudos to them for blazing a trail in the digital space—the neo-normal that emerged due to the virus.

And it is also the time to give a warm welcome to our new management team, who occupy their well-deserved positions as office bearers by virtue of winning the AIWC elections, conducted after every three years. They carry forward the illustrious legacy of AIWC and will be a beacon for future generations.

Though the normal way of life is being restored for people across the world, forgetting the bitter lessons learned during the pandemic can be to our detriment. The International Women's Day campaign theme for this year, "DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality" echoes the message rightly.

It was digital technology that came to the rescue of humans to sustain lives during the tough Corona time. Digital skills and competencies have moved from optional to essential. In today's technology-saturated societies, the ability to leverage digital technology is increasingly indispensable to an individual's well-being, on the same plane of necessity as numeracy.

While we cannot overrule the importance of digital faculties on one hand; on the other, we cannot deny the joy of reading printed hard copies of 'Roshni' for which we wait for the entire quarter.

I sincerely hope that you would enjoy the informative articles under the section 'Members speak', the branches in action covered under the section 'Going an extra mile', and an exclusive update about the Hindi festival in the International territory of Fiji in 'Hindi Jagat' section. The painful partition saga from an eyewitness will make vivid the gory scenes from some movies about partition.

'Roshni' welcomes you to share your unique informative or literary stories with the world at large that can be a sneak peek into the glorious past of AIWC and/or the women's struggles.

Hope you enjoy reading this issue!

Meenakshi Kumar
Editor



Inaugural address by President Mrs Kalyani Raj at the 96th Annual Conference, February 2023

Respected Patrons, Sheelaji, Kuljeet, Rehana,
my colleagues and friends,

Namaskar!

Once again, I wish you all health, joy, peace, and immense happiness for the whole year and for the years to come. Let us hope that we have left behind the challenges faced by each one of us as well as the organisation for the past 3 years due to the pandemic. And we will be able to work with renewed energy in the coming years.

To begin with, let me collectively thank and appreciate the efforts put in by our current team; Sheelaji, Kuljeet, and Rehana, for leading the organisation through the difficult times over the last three years, engaging with all the members frequently through virtual platforms, continuing with the regular work of the organisation, bringing the organisation out of the financial strain, and overall keeping theirs as well as all our spirits alive.

Secondly, there is always something to learn from everyone and every team we have had so far in AIWC. The team spirit, support, and attitude towards complementing each other's work of all three office bearers in this team have been, I feel, quite phenomenal. I hope the spirit will continue with the ensuing team as well. A big round of applause to the trio!

During my tenure as Secretary General, I tried my best to connect with branches as much as possible, design need-based programmes, and generally be innovative in my thoughts and actions. At the end of the term, I felt that I could still do more and that there were a few incomplete tasks. As I take over the baton from Sheelaji now, thank you all for placing trust in me and giving me another bigger responsibility. I can only promise you that I will put in all my efforts to fulfil the commitment I have

taken and do justice to the role and the post.

My overall vision for AIWC during my tenure is to carry forward the good work done, add renewed energy to all endeavours, certainly initiate a few steps to accelerate the progress based on the current

trends, improve visibility, and bring in more accolades to the organisation.

The first assignment that I would like to take up is probably organising an event around the G20 summit in India. The priorities listed seem to run parallel with AIWC's aims and objectives. I do propose to form a committee, consult with partner women's organisations, and plan the event. I hope all of you will agree with my view on this topic and support me in any way you can. Thank you, Deena, from Samyukta, for echoing my idea and Usha for supporting me.

That aside, what I would like to focus on is:

1. The strengthening of branches and the capacity of members.
2. Making as many members as possible aware of AIWC's aims, objectives, and functioning. During my conversation with members during the election process, many senior members highlighted that many new members could contribute more effectively with enhanced knowledge and capacity building about AIWC.
3. Put in a system to design programmes depending on branch work area requirements and needs, parallel to running HO programmes.
4. I also wish to seek your support in developing



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as many income-generation programmes as possible and in supporting the setting up of home-based or small-scale ventures by underprivileged women.

Sheelaji had initiated a very good process of the webinar on ex-presidents on the virtual platform. While the initiative helped members learn about AIWC's legacy, it also strengthened their technical capacity to join virtual platform meetings. I would like to make use of the same, enhance the capacity even further, and add value with safeguards and security aspects.

As you all know, I sent out emails to all of you seeking your input on several matters, and I humbly thank all the members who took the time and effort to share their ideas. The ideas shared were all very pertinent, valuable, and practical. Some of the common concerns shared are:

We need to provide stronger and enhanced support to lift rural branches.

- a) Capacity building of members, preferably in regional language.
- b) Restructuring and further simplifying AIWC's awareness and a few other programmes.
- c) Linking of programmes for better impact.
- d) Better and more cordial communication between HO and members from branches.
- e) Facilitate youth involvement.
- f) Specially designed programmes for Hill area branches.
- g) Need for digitization.

These are just some of the ideas shared, but there are more specific ones too, which I propose to separately discuss with members and explore ways to implement. But once again, thank you all from the core of my heart for making my initiation easy.

Lastly, as you are all aware, AIWC will be completing 100 years of establishment in 5 years, and the occasion deserves a very grand, impactful, and memorable celebration. We can discuss and come up

with several ways to plan 'the road to the centenary celebration'. I feel we should make a 5-year plan, prioritise two or three areas, design and strategize a constructive programme, let all branches work on it, and come up with concrete results to showcase during the centenary celebration. Some of the areas I could think about for the 5-year plan are:

1. Village adoption: holistic, sustainable, and tangible development based on survey and research.
2. Health awareness, detection, protection, and cure wherever possible in rural areas.
3. Data collection under Education Trust beneficiaries, skill development, and facilitation of income generation.
4. Adult literacy is one of the primary goals of AIWC, but we need to plan ways so that at the end of 5 years we can have data on how many women became literate under AIWC's programme in 5 years.
5. Environment and climate change - the most crucial subject currently - A 5-year programme can be designed relating to mitigation or adaptation, and an assessment can be done at the end of the 5 years.

These are just a few ideas, but I propose forming a committee that will compile all the ideas, design and strategize plans, and support implementation. I also request that all of you share with me any proposals or ideas you have in this regard.

To conclude. I would like to always be approachable; I am keen to connect with you on an individual basis as well as at the branch level any time you wish. The biggest strength AIWC has is its branches and its members, and I strongly believe in both. I feel proud to be part of such an esteemed organisation, I humbly thank AIWC and its members for providing me with such a great forum and once again assure you of my sincere dedication to the post and its responsibilities.

Thank you for your patient hearing!



Parallel event during the CSW 67 Empowering Girls through Digital Education

- by Smt Sheveta Rai Talwar, Joint Secretary, AIWC, N Delhi

According to the UNGEI, 'a generation of girls is being left outside the labour force or trapped in vulnerable or low-quality employment, due to a lack of skills, the absence of quality jobs, and gendered expectations of their roles as caregivers.' With digital education being a prerequisite for success in the workplace, it will be critical to bridge the digital gender gap and ensure that all girls receive the training and skills they need to succeed.

A parallel event during the CSW 67, **Empowering Girls through Digital Education: Reaching All Those Left Behind**, was held by the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) along with the NGO Committee on Human Rights NY, the International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres (IFS), and the South Asian Council for Social Service (SACSS) to examine the troubling impact of the digital literacy gap on the empowerment and future prospects of girls and explore solutions for reaching the most vulnerable girls, currently being left behind.

Smt Kalyani Raj, President of the All India Women's Conference, welcomed the attendees and

reflected on the importance of this webinar and how AIWC had been, through its branches, spreading awakening by imparting these skills.

Thereafter, **Dr Roberta Nassar**, Chair of the NGO Committee on Human Rights, NY and representative of the International Federation of Settlements, and **Smt Sudha Acharya**, Principal Representative of AIWC to the UN, and the Executive Director of the South Asian Council for Social Service, threw light on the workings of their organisations.

Dr. Manju Kak, Secretary General of AIWC, moderated the webinar in an interesting manner. The profiles of the speakers were given by **Smt Sheveta Rai Talwar**, Joint Secretary, AIWC.

Dr. Pallavi Gahlaut, the eminent panellist and Programme Officer at Global Glow, spoke on gendered access to technology and its impact on women's lives.

She said that due to a lack of access to technology in this digital age, girls were left behind and witnessed a reinforcing of the pre-existing patriarchal sociocultural norms where quality education was



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less prioritised, and therefore they were uninformed and disconnected from the world. Young women experienced social exclusion in accessing technology and education, which further prevented them from being part of decision-making, which was vital for their own economic empowerment and independence. This discrimination also discouraged them, in addition to the mobility restrictions, and they were disconnected from a support system or friends to deal with day-to-day issues, which created an inability to form lasting friendships or seek mental health support, which led to stress and trauma.

She further emphasised that societies must be sensitised to the importance of girls' education and that they should be encouraged in technical education fields. It is important that access to technology, the girl-specific digital education is made affordable, as is girls' access to education in STEM to promote gender-responsive digital teaching and relevant teacher training.

Dr Tasha Singh Parihar, Prof. of Mass Communication, Galgotia University, spoke on understanding the digital gender divide and skills for the new generation of girls.

She stated that recognising gender equality was essential to ensure that girls and women could develop their full potential in the digital world. She said that many other obstacles rooted in sociocultural norms were still preventing the girl child from playing an active role in the digital revolution. Inherent biases and limitations in societies reflected in the education systems curtail women's and girls' ability to benefit from the opportunities offered by digital transformation. She also shed light on the importance of skills such as self-organisation, management, communication, and advanced numeracy, which are in high demand in digitally intensive sectors and are currently more often displayed by men and boys.

Smt Shuba Balasubramanian, Principal with Deloitte Transactions and Business Analytics LLP, spoke on the technology gap for girls, put forth her point of view effectively with facts and figures.

Smt Soma Wadhwa, the fourth speaker, was a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Development Policy and Practise and a Professor, the School of Modern Media. Her topic was Bridging the Gender Digital Divide: Learnings from a Case Study in Rural India. Soma presented the findings from an impact study of a development intervention she had conducted in 2022. Titled "Tara We Add, Soma observed that the intervention's pertinence to the webinar was best indicated by its unabbreviated name: 'Technological and Rural Advancement for Women Empowerment by Annihilating the Gender Digital Divide'. Implemented by Delhi-based CSO Development Alternative, 838 women were taught to use smartphones in this digital literacy programme held in 16 villages in Uttar Pradesh's Lalitpur district in the first half of 2022. Soma's study found a sturdy link between women learning digital skills and a growth in their incomes and livelihood opportunities. Results showed that acquiring digital skills changes women's perceptions of the role digital technology can play in optimising their income generation. As an even more tangible validation of the economic gains that using digital technology makes possible for women, the study found a rise in the participants' incomes.

Soma emphasised that the findings of her study were critical, given that India's female work participation rate of 25 percent in 2020–21, as per the Periodic Labour Force Survey Report, was among the lowest for emerging economies. Also, a glaring digital divide between men and women persisted even as internet access in India, especially via mobile, grew. In fact, the National Family Health Survey-5 of 2019–21 reported that only one in three women in India had ever used the internet, compared to more than half the country's men.

The summation of the findings was done by Smt Navina Sitaram, representative of AIWC to the UN. The general consensus reached was that upskilling was an important task and should be initiated by organisations to help reach gender parity in the workforce and society.



Observing International Women's Day at AIWC

Head office, New Delhi

- from the desk of Secretary General, AIWC, N Delhi

International Women's Day is observed globally on March 8th, every year to recognise the achievements of women. It is a day to celebrate women's progress and advocate for gender equality. India also observes this day with great enthusiasm and fervour. International Women's Day is a day to honour and acknowledge the contributions of women in all spheres of life. Women have made significant contributions to history, culture, society, and the economy. They have played a vital role in shaping the country's destiny and progress.

All India Women's Conference, Head Office, New Delhi, celebrated this occasion with great enthusiasm and zeal with various cultural programmes, awareness sessions, training sessions

and dance performances on 6th March 2023, at AIWC Vocational Institute Hall.

This time, the theme of International Women's Day is 'DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality'.

To celebrate this occasion, the office bearers, trustees, patrons, Delhi branch members, AIWC staff, Bapnu Ghar inmates, and AVI students joined the programme. The special attraction of the event was the Nukkad Natak performed by 'Tech Mahindra Healthcare Academy' on health and hygiene for women and girls. The team of students shared their thoughts about how, even today, 'Menstrual Hygiene' is a taboo subject in our society and how



Presentations by youth wing



Nukkad Natak (Street Play)



Mrs Magdaleen Marin speaking



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girls can deal with the same. The team also focused on the health of women after menopause.

The team of the youth wing of the Human Touch Foundation branch, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, Ms Kriti Naren, Ms Richa Singh, Madhurendra Kumar, Ms Rajeshwari Mitra, Aaradhya Agarwal and Ms Anushka presented a PPT on “Embrace Equity” How technology can be used in Health issues. The team showcased that technology is one way that can be used to address health equity issues through telemedicine or by using the latest tech application on health issues.

Thereafter, a play was presented by the youth wing of Dhuri Hoon Mai Branch, guided by Mrs. Babita Agarwal, branch secretary, on the issue of the safety of women.

Mrs Magdaleen Marin, Member-in-Charge Bapnu Ghar, spoke on ‘Women Empowerment’. A dance was performed by Ms Monika Chaturvedi from the Bapnu Ghar staff to a song by Ms Sona Mohapatra.

A PowerPoint presentation was made by AVI student Aditi Arora on the ‘Digital Divide’ and how contemporary women are empowered by learning the internet and using the latest technology. In the end, a self-defence training session was given by the Women Self-Defence Shashkt Team “Durga Shakti” by the Delhi Women Special Cell, where seven trainers presented a very powerful self-defence training to the audience. The team was headed by ACP Tripti Joshi and Inspector Jospha.

In conclusion, the showcased programme is a powerful example of how art can be used as a tool for social change. These kinds of awareness-generating activities could also help the community identify challenges and opportunities for women to deal with the day-to-day problems related to hygiene. Cultural activities and knowledge-based presentations successfully raise awareness and encourage action towards creating a safer and more inclusive environment for women and making them aware of why it is important to be digitally advanced in all aspects.



Audience



*Secretary
General
& others*



Transforming Struggles into Smiles

- by Ms Pratibha Arya, Programme officer, AIWC, New Delhi

The AIWC Public Charitable Education Trust is one of the three trusts set up by the AIWC in February 2011. This was with a view to providing financial support to the meritorious girl students belonging to the economically challenged section of society. The promotion of literacy and a thrust on the empowerment of women are the basic objectives of the trust.

The trust has benefited 1180 students to date and has disbursed a total grant of 220.50 lacs to the girl students pursuing professional courses at the graduation and post-graduation levels.

Following are our star achievers who received the financial grant from the education trust:

1) Ms Sindusha M. (Hyderabad Branch): A recipient of our grant pursuing an MSc in Food Sciences and Nutrition topped the university and won a gold medal in the year 2019. She later qualified for the NET Examination and bagged a job as an assistant professor in the UGC on a salary of Rs. 1 lac per month. She has now received a further scholarship from Purdue University in the USA to do her PhD while retaining her job with the UGC. Her parents had a very meagre source of income.

2) Ms Kadambri (AIWC Bijnor Branch, UP): A recipient of our grant completed her B.Sc. (Hons.) in Computer Science in the year 2017-18. She now works for an American company, Diverselynx, LLC, in Noida on a monthly salary of Rs. 60,000.

3) Ms Madhuri (AIWC Bangalore Branch): She was our financial grantee and completed her BE in Electronics and Communication in the academic year 2019-20. She works for Accenture as an assistant software engineer in

the 'Salesforce domain' on an annual package of Rs. 4.5 lacs. Her father is a tailor, and her mother is a homemaker. She received a scholarship for four years.

4) Ms Anishma (Bhadra Mahila Samajam, Kozhikode Branch) received our financial grant for the year 2019-20. She completed her B.Sc. (Radiotherapy) and was working as a radiotherapist in Ernakulam. She cleared the Medical Radio Technology Entrance Examination by getting the first rank. As the daughter of a daily wage auto driver and her mother a housewife, the family struggled to make both ends meet. She worked very hard and completed her 4-year degree course as a rank holder in the year 2020. Initially, she got an appointment as a junior radiotherapy technologist in Kochi. She has now been selected as a radiotherapist in the UK and has received a job offer from the Southampton General Hospital, Hampshire, UK. We are proud of her achievement.

5) Ms Chadalavada Dasharna (Mahila Sangham Gudivada, Andhra Pradesh) completed her B.Tech(CSE) in the year 2020-21. She is a daughter of a single parent; her father expired in 2007. Her mother is a small-time tailor. Except for a small income from the tailoring work, the family had no other source of income. She studied hard to complete her degree. Being a very bright and meritorious student. She got the job offer from TCS and is presently working as a software engineer on an annual package of Rs. 7 lacs.

6) Anneri Mukeshbhai Mistry, (Bardoli Branch, Gujarat) received financial aid from AIWC. Trust for education through Shree Sarvajani Mahila Mandal Bardoli Branch AIWC. At present, she is in Auckland, New Zealand, and

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working as a compounding Pharmacy Technician at Optimus Health Care Ltd, Auckland, New Zealand.



Ms Anneri

7) **Ms Margi Kamlesh Shah (AIWC Bardoli Branch, Gujarat)** completed her MBA and is presently working as an assistant professor at Vidyabharti Trust College affiliated to Gujarat Technological University Bardoli on a package of Rs. 2.4 lacs per annum.

She joined the institute on January 15, 2021, and is currently working with the same institute. She is doing higher studies called Philosophy of Doctorate in Financial Management at Gujarat Technological University. She received financial aid from A.I.W.C. Trust through Shree Sarvajanik Mahila Mandal Bardoli Branch A.I.W.C. She had lost her father during her childhood. Her mother provides tiffin service, prepares snacks, and sells them.



"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail..."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

A Home to AIWC

- by Smt Mythily Jagannathan,
Co-ordinator, Shahdra project, AIWC, N Delhi

In the AIWC Constitution, registered in Bombay on 18th July 1930, the first clause states that “The Central Office of AIWC shall be in a place located by the Standing Committee”. But it appears from the records available from 1940 onward that finding office space in Bombay at a low rent was no easy task.

In the early years, there was no mention of any specific office address for AIWC. Reports and speeches in annual and half-yearly conferences and circulars all have the residential addresses of presidents, secretaries, and convenors of various committees. In the absence of any central office, it seems that all work was initiated and implemented from office-bearers’ residences located in different parts of British India and independent States.

Thus, we find that Sarojini Naidu and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay’s correspondence was from their respective residences in Bombay. Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy issued directives and proposals from Hyderabad and Madras; Hilla Rustomji Fardoonji from Bombay; Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Rameswari Nehru from Lahore; Vijaylakshmi Pandit from Anand Bhavan, Allahabad; Hansa Mehta from her home on Lamington Road, Bombay. and Urmila Mehta from her home, 41 Khar Road, Bombay-2.

The venue of AIWC’s annual and half-yearly sessions was decided based on invitations from branches both in British India and the princely states. Around the year, meetings and discussions were held in the homes of office bearers or members. The Annual Report 1944 mentions several meetings held in 1943 and 1944 in the

house of Lady Thackersay. In the early years of Save the Children Society, in the 1940s, meetings were held in the residence of Urmila Mehta, who became President, of AIWC in 1949.

AIWC’s first office

AIWC’s Khar branch worked from Urmila Mehta’s residence, with all correspondence at this address. But this would have been a short-term arrangement.

The first mention of a regular office of AIWC is found in the 1946 Report of Hansa Mehta, AIWC President 1946. At the 18th Annual Conference in Hyderabad (Sindh) in 1945, she mentioned that “a Central Office has been established in Bombay with paid staff”, adding information about the numerous responsibilities of the Central Office.

With AIWC emerging as a major player in the post-Independence period, the lack of a regular office with space for the discharge of all the functions, coordination with branches, national and international agencies, and women’s organisations, reference and research to support the work of members in various select committees and panels, and providing information to branches must have prompted more vigorous efforts to secure office space for AIWC.

The mention of AIWC’s central office is found in more detail in the report of Ms Avabai Wadia,

General Secretary, in the Akola session. In her report, Ms Wadia mentions setting up the central office at the Gilders Tank building in Bombay 7, receiving loud applause from the delegates. She was happy to announce the start of a reference library

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on the premises, thanks to a liberal donation of books from the Servants of India Society and other charitable organizations. When it started, the library had 145 books, was available to social workers and students, and was personally managed by Ms Wadia.

She mentions that it was a relief to have a parking lot for Skippo medical vans, which took doctors, nurses, and medical supplies to villages according to a regular schedule. Thanks to having a regular office, she could also avail herself of the government's supply of printing paper at a low cost for printing Roshni. A typist had been engaged. Office equipment—a duplicator, a cash box, five bookshelves, five tables, and five folding chairs—were all donated. Members like Mithun Lam, Pupul Jayakar, and Avabai Wadia herself contributed books on women's issues, legal rights, and a draft Common Civil Code. And the best part, enrolling members in the library - brought a small surplus of funds!

It is interesting to note that even with a slender staff of one typist and one peon, the Central Office had a remarkable output, compiling a Directory of Institutions for Women in India, making proposals and statements on the Status of Women for Hansa Mehta, who was in the UN.

With the expanding footprint of AIWC, an increase in the number of high-profile responsibilities, and a growth in the number of branches, the office in the Gilders Tank building seems to have become inadequate. In the days when telephone services were inadequate and communication was possible only through the post office, one can imagine the plight of a single typist facing a daily deluge of telegrams, letters, circulars, voluminous correspondence, and reports!

The Annual Report 1949 mentions the renting of new accommodations on Foreshore Road and the housewarming ceremony graced by the Mayor of Bombay and other dignitaries. Urmila Mehta was then president of AIWC. Evidently, shifting to new

office premises in an upscale locality led to a rise in annual expenses on rent from Rs 60/ to Rs 515. The highest expense of Rs 2781 and 2 annas was for the cost of stationery, the printing of Roshni, and publicity material. Total office expenses in the year came to Rs 10,728 and 10 annas. AIWCs moving to the new office had almost doubled the expense of previous years.

This was, however, offset by a sudden, dramatic change caused by its greater visibility. AIWC attracted attention and liberal patronage from industries and charitable trusts. Membership multiplied, donations for women's causes poured in, and activities expanded. The Reference Library caters to more government and non-government agencies and charitable institutions.

In March 1949, AIWC held the first All India Village and Cottage Industries Exhibition, which roused great interest in indigenous arts and crafts. It led to the formation of the Handloom and Handicrafts Board, giving a boost to long-neglected folk art and craft, and providing a lifeline to village artists and artisans.

During the Kashmir insurgency, AIWC contributed much-needed woollens for soldiers and raised Rs 22,000 for the needs of troops engaged in the border conflict. In 1949, funds were again raised for relief work after the Assam earthquake. In October 1950, an MS Subbulakshmi benefit program was arranged in Bombay, and Rs 28,000 was raised, which was used for health care in villages near Bombay as well as earthquake relief and rehabilitation work in Assam. Some funds were left over for adding office equipment.

In 1951, General Secretary Raksha Sharan describes the many efforts made over the years to find a suitable place for a central office for AIWC. In an issue of Roshni in 1952, Hon. Treasurer Prawar Jhabwala wrote, "We have met the Mayor of Bombay and senior government officials for

shifting out of the present accommodation into a more central area”.

A historian tracing AIWC's history would be justified in claiming that the organization reached its height of influence, authority, and impact on the women's resurgence movement in India, in the post-Independence years, when the Central Office

functioned from 41 Queens Barracks, Foreshore Road, Bombay. After a break in 1951–1952, when the country was in the grip of the first general elections, AIWC continued to be in the vanguard of the resurgence, not from Bombay, India's commerce and glamour capital, but from its new headquarters in Delhi, the seat of Imperial power and authority.



Old Bombay photo of Lamington road, Khar, where AIWC's first Central office was located, in Gilders Tank building



Ek Jhalak – Cultural Programme at AIWC Annual Conference 2023, at Manesar

- by Smt Beena Agarwal SCM, Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha, Meerut

On 3rd February 2023, the second day of the Annual Conference, Mrs Nishi Jain (Past Zonal Organiser, Central Zone A and President, Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha Meerut), the newly elected vice-president organised a cultural programme on the theme, "Radha-Krishan," in the conference hall of Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Manesar.

Mrs Ritu Jain (Member-Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha, Meerut) began her performance dressed as "Nand Baba". Then, Mrs Nishi Jain dressed as Kanha ji performed so beautifully that it made the situation live.

Further, in the cultural programme, the other branches presented many soulful performances. They were as follows:

- Krishna Aarti (West Bengal Branch)
- Dance "Kanha so ja zara" (Amritsar Branch)
- Dance "Mohe panghat pe" (Maharashtra Branch)

- Krishna Birth Play (Mathura-Vrindavan Branch)
- Raskhav Play (Agra City and Dhampur Branch)
- Radha Krishan Dance (Nishi Jain Ji, Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha Meerut)
- Sudama Milan Play (Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha, Meerut)
- Dance "Mukunda-Mukunda" (Bhatinda Branch)
- Bhajan (Pune Mahila Mandal)
- Act "Bada Natkhat" (Rajkot Branch)
- Song & Dance "Yashomati Maiya" (Delhi Branch)
- Dance "Radha Nachegi" (Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha, Meerut)
- Radha-Krishan Dance and Maharaas (Gujrat Branch)
- "Catwalk by Gopiya" and "Raas" (Ghaziabad, Nainital, Bangalore, Sanjeevni Meerut, Mathura, Vrindavan and West Bengal Branches)



Mrs Nishi Jain performing as Kanha ji



The office bearers and members of AIWC as audience, appreciated the programme and were all praises for it. Sanjeevni Mahila Sanstha Meerut gifted bags made by female prisoners of Zila Jail Meerut, to all the participants. Finally, Mrs Rehana Begum, Treasurer, AIWC, praised everyone present and the session ended with the National Anthem.



Smt Sadhana Kurushreshtha, Dr Bhavna Joshipura, Smt Janaki Rajaram and Smt Mythily Jagannathan performing



Group photographs of the participants



Felicitation of participants by past Treasurer Smt Rehana Begum



Certificate presentation to participants by past Vice Presidents - Smt Neeru Jain, Smt Suman Yadav, Smt Santosh Agarwal



Going an extra mile...

Branch activities

1. Allahabad City branch activities

- by Smt Ranjana Gulati, President, AIWC City Branch Allahabad

The New Year was celebrated with students at the Learning Hub. A lecture on personality development was given by Ms Naina. Later, students were asked to make resolutions for the new year 2023, and the best students were given prizes.

Makar Sankranti was celebrated by distributing 'khichdi and halwa' to underprivileged people. Republic Day and Basant Panchami were celebrated at Jwala Devi College by distributing blankets to male staff and shawls to female staff.

Vishwa Hindi Diwas was celebrated with students to encourage the budding stars, who recited poems written by themselves.

Grandparents Day was celebrated at Little Scholars School. Grandparents and children took part in very interesting activities.

Hug Day was celebrated with senior citizens at an old age home, where we spent the entire day. They became emotional when we were leaving them, so we left them with a promise to repeat the visit very soon.

On 19th February, an awareness camp was organised on 21st-century geopolitics at Sangam. An impressive talk by the renowned Dr Kusum Lata Kedia was attended by a large number of people. The meeting was followed by lunch, games, and boating.



Holi arranged for specially abled children



Woman of substance award 2023



2. Physiotherapy Project in the Amritsar Branch

- by Smt Poonam Mahajan, Secretary & SCM, Amritsar Branch

All India Women Conference, Amritsar branch established in 1943, has been working for the betterment of women and children for more than 80 years, following the guidelines of AIWC head office.

At present, almost 18 projects are running in the branch. Physiotherapy is the major project that we are working on, and we are trying our best to

improve the physical functioning of individuals. The therapy helps individuals (patients) return to healthy living, work, and indulge in recreational activities.

We also run ITI and ISO-certified courses in our branch, helping the students become self-sufficient. The Amritsar Branch is trying its best to raise women's status through education and awareness.



Training & practicals



3. Balika Divas at Haridwar

- by Dr Karuna Sharma, Secretary, JWC Haridwar Society, Haridwar

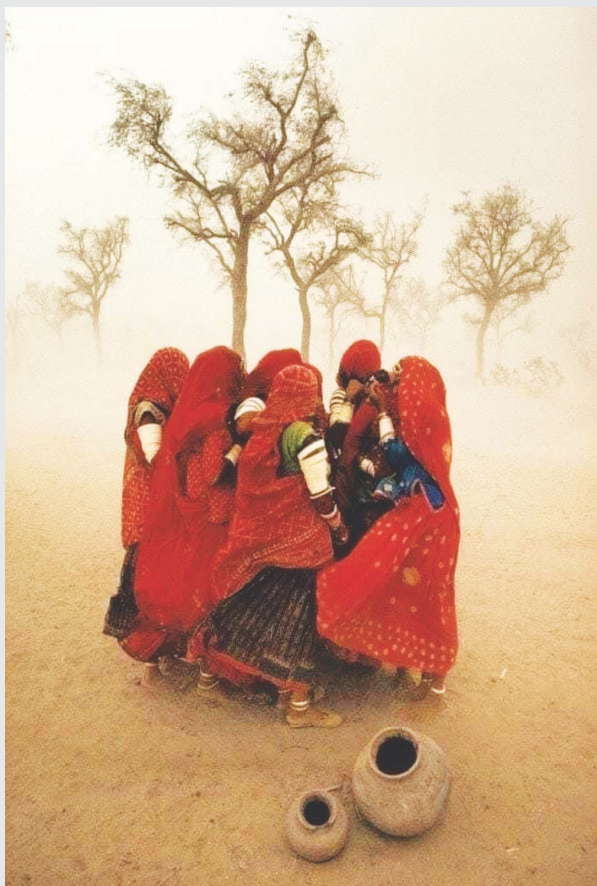
Jagriti Women's Conference Haridwar Society started a new venture to empower the girls under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' Karyakram, which provides Dr Siya Devi Scholarship to a poor and meritorious girl who has passed class 10th and is studying in 11th. We celebrated 'Balika Divas' in Smt Shakuntala Shastri Smarak Inter College, Kankhal, and awarded this scholarship to Ms Khusboo Tyagi.

A cheque for Rs 11,000 was given by our organisation, Dr Karuna told the students that this scholarship is being given in the name of a woman, who herself was an embodiment of women's empowerment.

Patron, Mrs Manjula Bhagat, told the students that girls have the power to do any work. The need is to recognise it, be positive and creative. The students



recited poems. A student presented her thoughts about society and family attitudes towards girls. President, Mrs Neru Jain, appreciated the students' enthusiasm. Principal, Mrs Rekha Purohit appreciated the efforts in the development of society.



Together we stand...!!!

This lovely picture by award winning photographer, **Steve McCurry**, of National Geographic fame, tells a story. Steve was passing through the Rajasthan, India, desert by taxi, when he was caught in a furious dust storm. This is when he spotted a group of Women in a huddle trying to brave its fury. The only way they could protect themselves was by taking support of one another. It had not rained in the region for 13 years and a dust storm like this forebode coming rains. While life hung precariously in this devastating storm, together they not only could fight it, but even sang happily on the prospect of possible rains. What better metaphor to show that Women have the inherent strength and resilience to literally brave any storm and also at the same time rejoice on the positive side of even the most hostile situation. Together we stand...!!!

4. Jamshedpur Branch activities July-December, 2022

- by Smt Monica Burman, Secretary, Jamshedpur Branch

The highlight event of the year is the formation of our school, “Baridhi High School” which got affiliation from CBSE, and the celebration was on 3rd June 2022. All eminent members of the AIWC

Jamshedpur branch were present, along with school management. Different programmes were organised to inform the public of the importance of special days with colourful cultural programmes.



Great achievement - Affiliation of the School to CBSE



Inmates (5) enrolled for 2-year diploma course in ‘INDO DANISH TOOL ROOM.

Two inmates who are special children were sent to “Cheshire Home” and two inmates started their jobs in Indian Steel and Wire Products.

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Environment Day:

It was celebrated on 5th June by planting trees and spreading awareness to protect trees under the supervision of President Mrs Varsha Daga. About 500 trees were planted at the River's Meet on the outskirts of Jamshedpur. The project was executed with the help of the Horticultural Department

of Tata Steel Utility Services. The project aims to increase the forest area in and around Jamshedpur and educate the citizens about the importance of afforestation.

Many of our members also planted fruit trees in the marine drive on the eve of Mr JRD Tata's birthday on 29th July, 2022.



Environment Day

Independence day:

The celebration of independence day on 15th August was done in all 3 schools; Jamshedpur Public School, AIWC Academy of Excellence, and Baridhi High School. We donated packets of biscuits, chocolate, and snacks to underprivileged students. Flag hoisting was done at the schools, and due to the pandemic, various online events were conducted for the students.

The **Annual General Meeting** of AIWC 2021-22 was held on 3rd Sep 2022. President Mrs Varsha Daga addressed the meeting followed by Secretary Mrs Monica Burman.



Annual General Meeting



5. Support by Jyothirgamaya to Cancer patients

- by Dr Vijayalekshmy, AIWC Chirayin Keezhu (main Branch), Trivandrum

The aftermath of COVID left cancer patients reeling under financial constraints.

Jyothirgamaya Trust stepped in to alleviate their problems with a small charity campaign held on 28 March 2023. This endeavour of Jyothirgamaya has been a continuing programme for the past 10 years. The food items, like rice, pulses, sugar, oats,

oil, condiments, flour, tea, snacks, and soaps, were given to the Karuna charities, a home providing free food, accommodation, and more for cancer patients and their bystanders.

It could be possible due to our standing committee member, Mrs Radhika Somasundaram who coordinated this event.



6. Kakinada branch activities - Jan-Mar 23

- by N Bhanumati, Secretary, Kakinada Branch

The following programmes were conducted during the quarter (January to March 2023) by AIWC, Kakinada branch.

JANUARY 2023

On 3rd January Savitribai Phule's birthday was celebrated as Women Teachers' Day. We felicitated two senior teachers, Smt Bhanushu and Smt Meenakshi, from Kakinada. Bhanushu retired as a Telugu Pandit, and she was also in charge of scouts and guides. Smt Meenakshi retired as a Hindi Pandit, and our MLA is her student. The programme was conducted at Girls Polytechnic College. Consumer Court President Sri Vasant Kumar and member Sri

Ch Nageswararao graced the meeting.

On the 25th January, National Girl Child Day is celebrated at the local Srinagar Advanced Foundation School. Distributed scholarships to deserving girl students sponsored by the Education Trust, head office, New Delhi. Five girls from the nursing, physiotherapy and MBA faculties received scholarships worth Rs 75,000. We thank our head office. Smt.Chiranjeevi Kumari, our President, distributed scholarships, and Mahila Police Station SI attended as Chief Guest.

On the 29th, a beach cleaning programme was conducted as a special drive with 75 students of



Distribution of scholarships on National Girl Child day



Beach cleaning

Aditya Degree College. They collected plastic from the seashore and cleaned the beach area.

FEBRUARY 2023

On 4th February, conducted a beach cleaning programme with 90 NSS volunteers from Adikavi Nannaya University for 3 hours. On the 13th Smt Sarojini Naidu's birthday was celebrated as National Women's Day. We felicitated Smt. Valluri Kameswari Garu for her charity by donating Rs. 1,00,000 to the orphanage run by our Head Office, New Delhi.

MARCH 2023

On 8th March, International Women's Day was celebrated at Sambamurthi Residential School for differently abled girls. We felicitated Smt Varalakshmi, who is running her household business by preparing pesarattu and upma and has been supporting her family for 40 years. Cooks and Ayah's workings in the school for 25 years are also felicitated on that day.



Felicitations of Smt Varalakshmi on International Women's day



Events held at Head office

1. **Celebration of Sarojini Naidu's birthday** - February 13, 2023 – Head office
2. **Orientation programme for the Vice-Presidents and Zonal Organisers** – March 1-2-3, 2023 – Webinar
3. **Holi festival** – March 3, 2023 - AVI & Bapnu Ghar
4. **Celebration of International Women's Day** - March 6, 2023 – AVI Hall
5. **Parallel Event at CSW, New York** – March 13, 2023 - Online
6. **Member-in-charge meeting** – March 15, 2023 - Online

7. SUVARNA's First AGM of year 2023

- by Smt Bhuvaneswari Ravindran, SUVARNA, AIWC Kozhikode branch

The first Annual General Body meeting of the year 2023, held on 20 January 2023, turned out to be a memorable event for SUVARNA members, thanks to inspiring talks dealing with several serious issues and ending with a string of enthralling cultural programmes.

The meeting commenced with a prayer, followed by a welcome speech. A report of the activities of SUVARNA for the period July to December 2022 and a presentation of accounts for the year ending March 2023 (for the period up to December 2022) came after this. Smt. Usha Nair, Zonal Organiser, who has had a long and invaluable association with AIWC as an active member and office bearer at AIWC headquarters for over two decades, was the Chief Guest. SUVARNA members are very familiar with the Zonal Organiser through the numerous webinars organised and participated in. Smt Shanta Nair, Senior Patron of Suvarna, introduced the Chief Guest and honoured her with a PONNADA (Shawl).

In her address, Smt. Usha Nair gave a glimpse of AIWC's rich heritage and history. The talk also reflected on her deep involvement and commitment to the principles upheld by AIWC. While doing so, she was full of appreciation for the vision of

its founder members, who had the wisdom to identify numerous problems faced by women that called for urgent attention. Commenting on their farsightedness, she observed that though some issues got resolved over the years, even after nearly 100 years, many are yet to be addressed. She also spoke about some of the eminent women from the Malabar region, as Kozhikode and neighbouring regions used to be known earlier, who were active at the national level during the early years but whose activities and achievements are not well known or documented. She suggested that SUVARNA could explore the possibility of taking up a research project so that the contributions of these women to society and to the organisation can be brought to light and documented to inspire future generations.

Smt. Usha Nair was appreciative of several activities of SUVARNA, some of them being activities during the COVID period when SUVARNA took the lead to train members on using cyber platforms and also to organise a maximum number of webinars; the SAFE VEGGIES project, which was done systematically with proper methodical documentation and reporting; and the annual fundraising activity, the Fancy Fete for women entrepreneurs, etc. According to her, both the SAFE VEGGIES Project, which had all the

processes well laid out, and the Fancy Fete can be model projects for other branches to follow and replicate. The branch was also advised to consider starting a quarterly newsletter, which would give better visibility to the activities carried out by the branch.

There was a change of guard at SUVARNA at this AGM, with the new office bearers taking over charge.

The second half of the meeting started after tea and snacks. It commenced with an invigorating and beautifully rendered folk song by seven students of the Government Higher Secondary School, Kakkodi, which was



Smt Usha Nair addressing the meeting as chief guest

enjoyed by all. Members of SUVARNA performed the graceful traditional dance of Kaikottikkali, which was beautifully choreographed. There was a melodious Carnatic music recital by a Carnatic music exponent, Guru Ranjini Radhakrishnan from Trivandrum. The last item of the cultural segment was a skit on drug abuse performed by SUVARNA members, which brought out the agony of parents whose only child becomes a drug addict and

commits suicide after being charged with a criminal offence.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks, followed by the National Anthem. Feedback received from participating members was highly encouraging. Members were quite happy with the event. They got a chance to share notes with each other personally and, at the same time, were glad to learn more about AIWC from an authentic source.



Some cultural activities at the AGM of Suvarna



8. SPARK-X Event for Women Entrepreneurs at SUVARNA, Kozhikode

- by Smt Bhuvaneswari Ravindran, SCM, SUVARNA, AIWC Kozhikode branch

Organising an exhibition-cum-sale exclusively for women entrepreneurs has been an important event in the calendar of SUVARNA, the Kozhikode Branch of AIWC. The event is eagerly awaited by members as well as women entrepreneurs in and around Kozhikode. Ever since it was launched in 2004, barring COVID year 2021, the celebrated event has been organised annually. This year's event christened "SPARK X: 19th VARSHIKA MELA, was held on 11th March 2023. International Women's Day being on the 8th of March, its celebration was also built into the SPARK-X programme.

The main event was formally inaugurated by an energetic councillor of the area, Ms Alphonsa Mathew, and the sale was declared open at 9 am with the handing over of a basket of vegetables from SUVARNA's own 'Safe Veggie Stall'. In the second part, in conjunction with International Women's Day, three of SUVARNA's own members were felicitated and honoured for their outstanding contributions. Chief Guest Dr Alex Jose, President, BNI, Diamonds, handed over the gift from Suvarna first to Smt. Valsala Gopinath, a social worker in her own right who heads several projects for the marginalised, including one on providing artificial limbs. Next was Smt. Bhuvaneswari Ravindran, a retired bureaucrat and secretary of SUVARNA for the last five years, was honoured for her dedicated contributions to several activities, especially the SAFE VEGGIES project, which attracted wide attention, leading to her being picked as Member in Charge (Climate Change Programme) at the AIWC national level. The third member felicitated was Smt Lakshmi Menon, who was a teacher, well-known in the fields of music and photography, a freelance writer, has published

two books to her credit and is ready to launch the third one.

Through this event, a platform is given to women entrepreneurs to showcase their products, enhance their reach, and increase sales by providing stalls at a subsidised rental. While the profits from the sales go to the entrepreneurs themselves, for SUVARNA, the stall rent collected provides the funds required to sustain its charity activities by giving financial or other assistance to a few social organisations.

This year also, we gave rent-free stalls to a few registered NGOs working for various social causes, including those working for differently-abled people. The rental for these stalls was borne by SUVARNA's individual members on their behalf. In all, there were 50 stalls, which were quite colourful and vibrant with varied products like dress materials, sarees, linen, jewellery, herbal cosmetic products, art items, toys, ceramics, Tupperware, on-the-spot henna creations, and a food court offering different cuisines. That a few of our regular participants have grown and started their own shops or business establishments was a gratifying fact to note.

SUVARNA had kept two stalls, the 'Safe Veggies Stall' and the 'Jumble Stall'. In the 'Safe Veggies stall' vegetables grown under the 'SAFE VEGGIES Stage 2' project as well as some vegetables offered by the participants of the completed SAFE VEGGIES pilot project were displayed and sold. Being organic, these vegetables were much in demand and sold very quickly. The other stall was the JUMBLE stall, which exhibited items donated by members. The items were in good condition and could be valuable to others. These were sold at nominal prices, and the entire sale proceeds from this stall went into SUVARNA's kitty.

For members, it was togetherness, fun, and enjoyment mixed with work, whether it was managing the registration counter, helping the steady flow of over 500 visitors pouring in, taking care of the needs of the stall owners, or helping with

the jumble sale counter, as well as playing some entertaining games. The feedback from participants was also quite encouraging. It was a DAY WELL SPENT FOR A CAUSE FOR ALL OF US.



9. Hyderabad Branch activities

- by Smt Supriya Bhalerao, Secretary, Hyderabad Branch



Sarojini Naidu's birthday was celebrated on the 13th February 2023. She is very dear to the branch members as she is the founder of the branch. The HH Nizam had instructed her to start this women's organisation.



The Executive committee members were felicitated for getting the posts at AIWC HO, in the recent elections, namely, **Mrs Rama Anantaram** for being the **elected Vice-President** at the Central office and the **Mrs Farida Hussain** for being **nominated as Trustee of the Old-age trust**.



World water Day

On this day, Mrs Farida Hussain gave a talk to the children at our WAESA primary school about importance of conserving water. Painting competition was held and prizes – sponsored by Mrs Farida Hussain – were given on the March 27, 2023. Mrs Hussain, Mrs Sasi M Rao and Mrs Asma Osman spoke and Sweets were distributed.



World Health Day

Mrs Farida Hussain displayed vegetables like green leaves, carrots, radish, beans, beet roots, tomatoes etc. and also some packets of grain in our school. Children loved tasting different items identifying them. Farida ji told them to include healthy millets in diet instead on Maida, as this is the year of Millet.



10. Women's Safety and Legal Awareness

One-day awareness programme by Vikas Mahila Sangham

- by Smt Sapna Acharya, President, AIWC East Delhi branch

Women's health and safety are imperative subjects for a healthy and prosperous society. In view of this fact, Vikas Mahila Sangam organized a one-day legal awareness programme on women's safety and a health and hygiene awareness programme on 1st March 2023, at Sanjay Jheel Nursery, Mayur Vihar Phase-2. Programme was funded by the All India Women's Conference. The total numbers of attendees were 80 and 60 migrant daily wage labourers from Madhya Pradesh were the beneficiaries.

Ms Jyotika Kalra, Managing Partner, Resole Legal, AOR Supreme Court of India, spoke about 'Domestic Violence'. She said that as a strengthening measure of the domestic violence act a man cannot file a complaint under this act. The complaint of

domestic violence is filed only against the male adult member with whom the aggrieved person has lived in a domestic relationship in a shared household. An aggrieved person can be a sister, daughter, mother, wife or a live-in -partner who lives or has lived with the respondent in a shared household that may be owned or rented. A wife or a live-in partner can also file complaints against the female relatives of the husband or partner. She explained domestic violence can be physical abuse causing bodily pain or harm, sexual abuse or conduct of a sexual nature that violates the dignity of women, verbal and emotional abuse -insults humiliation, name calling or economic abuse – depriving of economic resources.

She further added that information about domestic



Ms Jyotika Kalra, AOR Supreme Court of India, speaking about 'Domestic Violence'

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violence may be given to the protection officer who is under the control and supervision of the magistrate. Magistrate passes the protection order; of residence, monetary relief, compensation etc. Any breach of the protection order shall be an offence punishable by imprisonment which may extend to one year or with a fine.

The next session was conducted by the students of Tech Mahindra Smart Academy for Healthcare under the supervision of Ms Lavina Dham, senior faculty of English Department and Ms Priyanka

Sharma, Faculty of Nursing. The programme was very well presented through a graphic poster along with 'Nukkad Natak' by eleven expert students. They covered topics like menstruation, diet during menstruation, menopause, exercises etc.

The programme highlighted the problems of women. The interactive session with attendees was quite interesting. At the end of the programme, the refreshments were served and it satiated the tastebuds of all.



Nukkad Natak by professional students



11. Awareness Walkathon on Child Safety

RPM Women's Welfare Association, WIA, Chennai

- by Smt Bharathi Srinivasan, Secretary, RPM Women's Welfare Association, Chennai

RPM Women's Welfare Association, a branch of WIA Chennai organised an 'Awareness Walkathon on Child Safety' on 11th March 2023, to commemorate its 20th Anniversary. It was from Chennai, Velachery MRTS to Puzhuthivakkam MRTS, a distance of 2.5 kms.

Necessary permissions from the police and ambulance services were obtained. Notices were distributed in and around Velachery and Adambakkam, and the topic was also made viral through social media such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp for an extensive reach out to the masses.

The event was flagged off by Mr Chandran, Zonal Chairman, Zone 12, Greater Chennai Corporation who also delivered a special address to the students.

Special invitees, Tmt Virgil D. Samy, a child rights activist and founder of 'Arunodhaya Centre for Street and Working Children', Tmt. Poongodi Jagadeeswaran, Ward (163) Councillor, Thiru K.R. Jagadeeswaran, Ward (165) Secretary of Greater Chennai Corporation, Mrs Sudha Nanchil Sampath an entrepreneur, participated in the event and delivered inspiring speeches to create awareness on the subject.

The welcome address was rendered by Tmt Shanthi



Walkathon participants



Hand-outs & caps

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Babu, our executive committee member and all the dignitaries were honoured by the president and other team members of RPMWWA. Tmt Virgil D Samy in her address spoke to the Children about 'Safe and Unsafe Touch', which is a continuous project executed by RPMWWA in various educational institutions.

After the flag-off, students, parents, and teachers at St. Marks Primary School, local welfare association members and the public, along with RPMWWA members walked along the road from Chennai, Velachery MRTS to Puzhuthivakkam MRTS, covering a distance of 2.5 km, holding placards and raising slogans highlighting various messages relating to 'Child Safety, Child Education, Child Labour and Child Marriage'. Handouts on child safety were distributed to the crowd. The Walkathon caught the attention of the public with all our members in blue and white since the colour blue is meant for 'Child

Safety'. We had provided the students with free T-Shirts and Caps of the same colour with the words, 'Awareness Walkathon on Child Safety' printed on them, making it a visual treat.

The whole event was covered by the media and was telecasted on various TV News channels, viz. 'Sun News, PudhiyaThalaimurai, GEM TV, WIN News, News 18 and Velicham TV'.

Tmt Booma Sreenivasan, Treasurer WIA and other members of Constituent Associations graced the Walkathon and appreciated this mega event.

Members of RPMWWA distributed snacks and water at the start and all through the way. At the end of the grand event, breakfast was provided to all those who had participated in the 'Walkathon'. Participation certificates were given to the participants for being a part of the 'Walkathon'.



Our banners for the Walkathon event



12. World Water Day Celebration

- by Mahalakshmi Hari, Komargiri branch, Kakinada

World Water Day was observed in State Bank Colony, Ashok Nagar, on 22nd March 2023. Smt M Bhanuseshu presided over the programme. 25 children from non-formal education and municipal high schools participated in this programme. Smt B Sridevi Thasildar of Jaggampeta participated as chief guest and Smt N Bhanumati, MIC Water and Sanitation, was the guest of honour.

The topic 'Jalame Jeevanam' was given for essay writing and elocution. A drawing competition was also conducted for the children in nonformal education. Smt Bhanumati explained different methods, uses and methods of saving water.

She appreciated Bhanuseshu for conducting this programme during the Telugu New Year. Smt B Sridevi Thasildar advised the students to save water and stop wasting it.

Smt Bhanuseshu in her closing remarks said that the World Water Day function was being celebrated in New York on the same day. They gave the theme of accelerating change to solve the "water and sanitation" crisis throughout the year. Our members: Umabala. VV Laxmi, Bhanumati Laxmi, and Bhanumati Anusha, Krishnaveni, Subbalaxmi, and Sailaxmi attended the function. Secretary Smt B Krishna Kumari gave the vote of thanks.



Chief guest Smt B Sridevi Thasildar of Jaggampeta speaking





Members speak...

Articles by members

1. The History of International Women's Day

- by Smt Sushma Jindal, President, Indraprastha Women's Development Council (IWDC)

International Women's Day (IWD), March 8, is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action to accelerate women's equality. The East Delhi branch of AIWC celebrated International Women's Day on 13th March 2023. It was organised by the Ujjawal Women's Association on the topic: DigitAll: Innovation and Technology for All.

The president of Indraprastha Women's Development Council (IWDC) Mrs Sushma Jindal spoke about the International Women's day, and her speech is as follows:

"IWD has occurred for well over a century. In 1910, Clara Zetkin, the leader of the women's office for the 'Social Democratic Party' in Germany, tabled the idea of IWD at the 2nd International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), IWD first emerged from the activities of labour movements at the turn of the 20th century across North America and Europe. UNESCO states, 'The 1st National Women's Day was observed in the United States on February 28, 1909, which the socialist party of America, at the suggestion of Theresa Malkiel, dedicated in honour of the 1908 garment worker's strike in New York, where women protested against harsh working conditions, demanded shorter hours, better pay, and voting rights. In August 1910, an International Socialist Women's Conference was organised ahead of that in Copenhagen. But what made history for the modern celebration of IWD, according to the ILO, was the

fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York on March 25, 1911, which killed 146 young workers, most of whom were immigrants.

Inspired in part by the American socialists, German delegates and others proposed the establishment of an annual 'Women's Day' although no date was specified. The 100 delegates representing 17 countries agreed with the idea as a strategy to promote equal rights, including women's suffrage.

The following year, on March 19, 1911, the first IWD was marked by over a million people in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland. In Austria-Hungary alone, there were 300 demonstrations, with women parading on Ringstrasse in Vienna carrying banners honouring martyrs of the Paris Commune. Across Europe, women demanded the right to vote, to hold public office, and to protest against employment sex discrimination.

IWD initially had no set date, though it was generally celebrated in late February or early March. Russia celebrated IWD for the first time on the last Saturday of February in 1913, which according to the Gregorian Calendar was March 8. In 1914, IWD was held on March 8 for the first time in Germany, possibly because that was a Sunday. As elsewhere, Germany's observance was dedicated to women's right to vote, which German women did not win until 1918. Concurrently, there was a march in London in support of women's suffrage, during which Sylvia Pankhurst was arrested in front of Charing Cross station on her way to Trafalgar Square.

On March 8, 1917, Russian women protested, demanding Bread and Peace - an end to World War

I, food shortages, and Czarism. Its effect was that women got the right to vote from the provisional government. There was a struggle in Russia over whether Women's Day should be celebrated like other holidays. After its official adoption in Soviet Russia, IWD was celebrated in many communist countries. The People's Republic of China also made March 8 every year an official holiday, with women given half a day off. The United Nations began celebrating IWD in 1975, which had been proclaimed "International Women's Year". In 1977, the United Nations General Assembly invited member states to proclaim March 8 as the official UN holiday for women's rights and world peace. It has since been commemorated annually by the UN and much of the world, with each year's observance, centred on a particular theme or issue within women's rights.

The theme for IWD 2023 is Embrace Equity, DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality to get the world talking about why equal opportunities aren't enough and to challenge gender

bias and inequalities in their lives and communities. The colour for IWD is purple. It is a colour that denotes justice and dignity. It represented women. Combined with green, it represents the feminist movement. The combination of purple, green, and white was selected to symbolise women's equality. Green symbolises hope, and white represents purity. Mimosa Flower is for women's Day which symbolizes strength. Other popular flowers for Women's Day include roses, magnolias, tulips, lilies & gerberas.

The symbol of IWD is the Venus female symbol (a circle with a cross handle). It is often combined with other symbols such as a raised fist, the number 8, a globe, a flower, and a heart. In India, we celebrate 'National Women's Day' on 13th February, the birthday of Sarojini Naidu. Special quotas are set for women in various fields. This year, Uttarakhand's CM has announced the launch of a self-employment scheme for single women.

This year, IWD was combined with Holi, which symbolises the removal of all vices and negativity.



2. Embracing Equity in Women's digital health

- by Kriti Naren, SCM, AIWC Greater Noida Branch, N Delhi

This year's focus on Women's Day is on embracing equity to attain the goal of equality for women.

Being a homemaker, women have to handle many responsibilities and so they often neglect their health. With the help of technology, it has become very easy for women to take health consultation who do not have the time to go to a physician. With this technology, a woman can consult a doctor and keep track of her health issues like the menstrual cycle, etc. This technology that deals with women's health is called **Femtech**.

Initially, it started with the issues of pregnancy, periods, and menopause. But later, with its growing demand, other services are introduced such as the incorporation of AI to attend results in oncology by early monitoring and diagnosis of various diseases including poly and cervical, ovarian, and breast cancer. It has the potential to enable more equitable collection and data sharing, hence advancing the health care system for women.

One of the most popular apps in women's healthcare is the menstrual cycle tracking app. With the increasing number of working women, this period tracking app is a part of rapidly increasing FemTech products worldwide. This app observes and analyses menstrual cycles and a variety of related factors. A woman can use these apps to monitor menstruation as well as produce workout patterns, nutritional regimens, and family planning tailored to the needs of their body.

This app typically displays a numerical countdown of the number of days to the beginning of the next period or ovulation. PMS which is called pre-menstrual syndrome is also a big problem in women. This app takes its care by tracking and helping in recognising the environment and factors that may amplify PMS,

for example; lack of sleep, increased intake of sugar, etc. There are many tracking apps available in the market, but the following apps are worth mentioning:

1. My Calendar-

This app is one of the best period-tracking apps. Besides helping one to track one's periods this also predicts ovulation and highlights fertile days.

2. Clue-

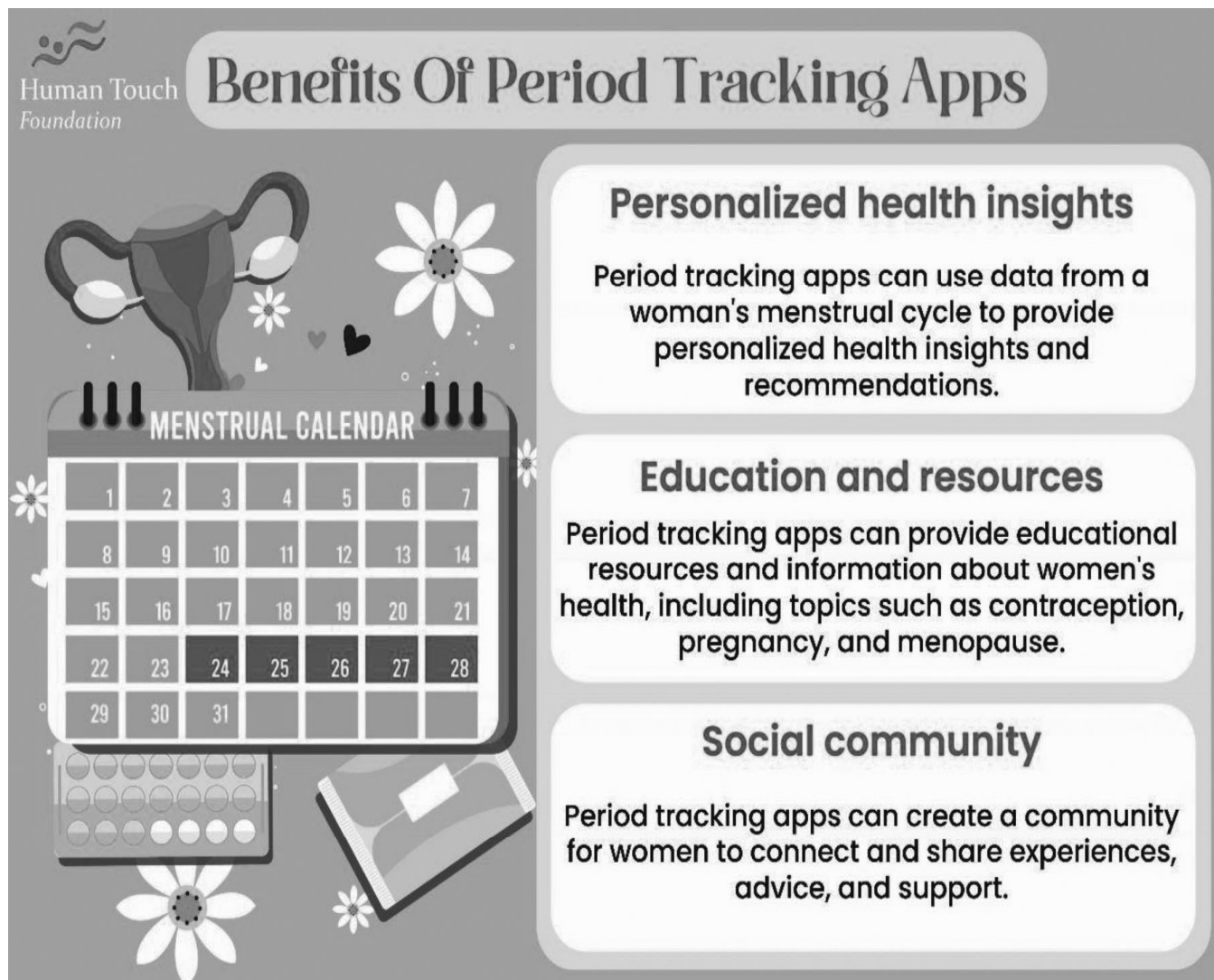
This app gives information about one's digestion health, cervical flute pain, motivation sleep quality, and as many as 30 such options are available.

3. Flo -

This app is on the Play Store with more than 232 million users worldwide. Besides being a simple private period and menstrual cycle tracker this app is marketed as a female health and well-being assistant for women of all ages.

In this way, the benefits of period tracking apps are numerous as they can use data from women's menstrual cycle to provide personalized health insights, recommendations, and sources of information about human bodies including topics such as contraception, pregnancy, and menopause. Not only that, but these apps can also create a community for women to connect and share their experiences advice, and support each other.

The society in India is male-dominated and women neglect their health very often, digital health care can help women prioritize their health without any need to worry about missing time from work, or the household. It can make healthcare available in the comfort and safety of their homes. So, FemTech is not just a niche part of the larger digital health field but is the demand of the day.



Human Touch Foundation

Benefits Of Period Tracking Apps

Personalized health insights

Period tracking apps can use data from a woman's menstrual cycle to provide personalized health insights and recommendations.

Education and resources

Period tracking apps can provide educational resources and information about women's health, including topics such as contraception, pregnancy, and menopause.

Social community

Period tracking apps can create a community for women to connect and share experiences, advice, and support.

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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3. Cultural Legacies of Women in the Family

- by Prof. Giby Geevarughese, Secretary, AIWC Trivandrum branch, Trivandrum

The twenty-sixth session of the web series hosted by the Literary and Cultural Forum on 4 March 2023, had the well-known dancer and social activist Dr Mallika Sarabhai as the esteemed speaker. She spoke on 'Cultural Legacies of Women in the Family.

The welcome address was delivered by Dr Jameela Begum (Director, Literary and Cultural Forum). She stated that new leaders had taken over, both at the central and branch levels of AIWC. She welcomed the Central Office team of Smt Kalyani Raj, President; Dr Manju Kak, Secretary General; and Smt Upasana Singh, Treasurer.

The new team at AIWC Trivandrum Branch is Smt Jalaja Kumari, President; Dr. Giby Geevarughese, Secretary; and Kum Padmini Nair, Treasurer. Smt. Indira Ramakrishna Pillai will continue to guide the branch as a patron.

Dr Jameela Begum pointed out that the Forum, since its inauguration by Mr Jayakumar IAS in December 2020, has been able to continue activities without a break. In the past 2 years, the Forum has hosted invigorating and interesting lectures on diverse topics such as literature, art, dance, painting, cultural issues, the environment, biodiversity, the life of tribals in Kerala, etc. by well-known thinkers, artists, and practitioners.

Dr Jameela Begum introduced the esteemed speaker of the day, Padma Bhushan awardee and the first woman chancellor of the Kerala Kalamandalam, social activist, feminist, and artist, Dr Mallika Sarabhai, who has danced her way into the hearts of thousands around the world. Dr Sarabhai has been effectively using dance as an art form to reach the minds of people and bring about change in the social and cultural spheres.

Dr Jameela Begum recalled the work of pioneer women leaders in Kerala, Ms Annie Mascarene, Ms Dakshyayani Velayudan, Ms Ammu Swaminathan (the grandmother of Dr. Mallika Sarabhai), who

were members of the Constituent Assembly. She also noted that, though cultures are deeply rooted, coexisting cultures flow into each other, leading to change. Women as caregivers are, in fact, torchbearers of this change. Dr. Jameela recalled the immense popularity of Mallika's role as Draupadi in Peter Brook's famous multi-national play, *The Mahabharata*. She also complimented Dr Sarabhai on her production titled 'Conference of Birds' which is an adaptation of the 12th century Sufi poem by the same name. This is an innovative venture in a metaphorical psychological journey where Dr Sarabhai relates dance to social issues.

Dr Kalyani Raj, President of AIWC, addressed the event. She appreciated that the simple yet relevant topics chosen by the Forum for the monthly webinars have been impactful and presented new perspectives on these areas.

The topic of the lecture by Dr. Mallika Sarabhai was 'Cultural Legacies of Women in the Family.' She shared some extraordinary stories of the remarkable women in her family. She and other children were not instructed to do or not do anything in particular; rather, they were influenced by the interactions of the elders in the family. She described her family as fighters and warriors who stood up for what was right and refused to bend under pressure from society. She recalled the story of her maternal great-grandmother, who, at the time a young widow with seven children, stoically faced raiders of the Mapla revolution. She offered the raiders a grand lunch and asked them to interact with the maplas of her farm before taking any impetuous action. The revolutionaries were impressed by the humane treatment meted out to the workers of the land and saw how they were considered part of the family, so much so that they thanked the lady of the house and left in peace.

Dr Sarabhai also spoke of her grandmother, Ammu Swaminathan, who was a socialite in Madras

society but dropped it all to join the Freedom Movement and later took up a successful role in the Constituent Assembly and became one of the signatories of our Constitution. Dr Sarabhai also reminisced about her paternal grandfather's older sister, Anasuya Sarabhai, a strong-willed woman who literally ran away from home, got on a ship to England, studied economics, and became part of the Suffragette movement to get voting rights for women. A few years later, she returned to India as a staunch women's rights activist. She was appalled by the impoverished conditions of factory workers and formed a union of workers to strike against her own family's textile mill. She wrote to Mahatma Gandhi seeking his support, and thus he led a hunger strike against mill owners who had to settle on increasing the wages of workers. Anasuya Sarabhai, better known as Mota Ben, went on to start the first textile labour union, which carried on for the next 70 years until the collapse of the textile industry in Gujarat.

Dr Sarabhai remembered Mridula Sarabhai, her paternal aunt, who at the very young age of 14 years, renounced her family and joined the Freedom Movement. She worked closely with Gandhiji during the days of partition, when she would dress as a male Pathan and ride a horse to cross the borders and save women from the massacre on both sides. Many years later, when Dr Sarabhai visited Kashmir, she heard stories about Mridula Sarabhai, who was referred to as the "Pathan of Kashmir, the fearless leader who saved women from atrocities. She had also made a case for Sheikh Abdullah to become the Chief Minister of Kashmir, which sadly happened only after her demise in 1974.

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Dr Mallika Sarabhai stated that not only women but the men in her family also were feminists, and they were not insecure about the strong women around them. She proudly claimed that she is what she is because of the truths that her forefathers believed in, which helps her continue the fight for social justice.

After the personal narrative of Dr Mallika Sarabhai, the floor was open for discussions during which more light was shed on her fascination with research in medical sciences, her recent book 'In Free Fall: My Experiments with Living', and how the mind and body are connected. She also shared how her parents used their respective fields as a language to bring justice to every Indian and how it reflects in her chosen field as well.

The biggest takeaway from this webinar was that no matter which is your chosen field, you can utilise it to ensure social justice, to make sure that the voices of the oppressed are heard and that opportunities are made equitable across different strata of society, irrespective of caste, creed, colour, or gender.



4. The Painful Partition: A Saga from an Eye witness

- by Smt Raj Dogra, SCM, Pathankot Branch

AIWC Priyadarshini Kandi Area Pathankot honoured a 109-year-old lady from a nearby village on the eve of International Women's Day, i.e. 8th March 2023.

Our branch came to know about a lady aged 109 years still maintaining good health and doing her own daily routine work with ease. Mrs Raj Dogra and Mrs Anita visited her village to meet her.

Our members were amazed to see her response and energetic nature. She introduced herself as Sadro Devi, wife of Thuru Ram, aged 109 years, and she was living with her undivided family. She said that at the time of the partition, she was about 38-40 years old and had four grown-up children. Before partition, her family lived in the village of Dyani, 100 km from Lahore, Pakistan. She took a deep sigh and said that it was a great divide!

The Hindus and Sikhs of her village were told about their migration to India. There was a funeral silence in the whole village. People of different religions were scared of talking to each other. After a day or two, they were asked to board the train to Attari (a railway station on the Indian border). All migrants came on foot to reach Lahore railway station with a few clothes and some food wrapped in cloth

bundles. They could not stop their tears throughout their journey and missed their villagers, animals, homes, and other belongings they had left. Her family was among the few lucky ones to board the train from Lahore to Amritsar. At Amritsar, they remained there for a few days in refugee camps at Samba and finally reached Pathankot, where they settled down in the village of Channi Mohal.

Her family made a mud house to live in and reared some goats and sheep to meet the family's demands. They started doing small agricultural work. She encouraged her children to work hard and try to come out of the trauma of partition, where they had lost their near and dear ones, though it was still very difficult to forget. She herself stood like a rock to safeguard the family's welfare as well as the welfare of the migrants.

She used to work hard in the fields and spun wool to make woollens for the family. Even now, without the help of specs, she is able to make handheld fans (Pankhi). She is now not able to make sweaters because her eyesight is very weak. She always woke up early in the morning, going regularly to the temple for enchanting hymns in praise of God. She eats simple food. She finally expressed that she could not forget the sufferings and fear during the partition till date but was happy that at this age she is living with her family, who care for her.

Our branch decided to honour this legendary lady, Smt. Sadro Devi, on Women's Day at a function at the kindergarten school in Pathankot, where she was respectfully invited. Many of her family members had come along with her to grace the occasion. She was honoured for her heroic deeds and selfless services. She thanked the audience and gave them a lot of blessings.

It was a great event and a lesson for all of us that simple living, hard work, balanced food habits, and selfless service can make our lives longer and stronger.



हिंदी जगत

सदस्यों द्वारा हिंदी में लेखन

1. फ़िजी में हिंदी का महोत्सव

- प्रो (डॉ) एस. तंकमणि अम्मा

विश्व हिंदी सम्मेलनों के इतिहास में एक नया और सुनहला अध्याय जोड़ते हुए 15, 16, 17 फरवरी 2023 को फ़िजी में बारहवाँ विश्व हिंदी सम्मेलन शानदार ढंग से संपन्न हुआ। भारत के विदेशकार्य मंत्रालय तथा फ़िजी सरकार ने मिलकर यह आयोजन किया था।

फ़िजी में क्यों ?

फ़िजी भारत से करीब बारह हजार किलोमीटर की दूरी पर, दक्षिणी प्रशांत महासागर (Pacific Ocean) में स्थित अत्यंत रमणीय द्वीप समूह है। इस द्वीपसमूह में तीन सौ से अधिक द्वीप और पाँच सौ से अधिक छोटे टापू हैं। सबसे बड़ा द्वीप 'वित्ती लेवु' है जहाँ फ़िजी की राजधानी सुवा स्थित है। फ़िजी के नादी शहर में विश्व हिंदी सम्मेलन आयोजित हुआ था। फ़िजी का एकमात्र अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा नादी शहर में है।

फ़िजी और भारत का आपसी सम्बन्ध उन्नीसवीं शती से शुरू होता है। सन् 1879 में ब्रिटिश सत्ता के आदेश पर पश्चिमी बिहार तथा पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश के भोले भाले निरीह भारतीयों को सुनहले भविष्य का सपना दिखाकर, गन्ने की खेती के लिए 'लेवनीदास' नामक जहाज में फ़िजी लाये गये थे। 1916 तक लगभग साठ हजार भारतीय फ़िजी पहुँच चुके थे। पाँच साल के एग्ज़ीमेंट पर आये इन मजदूरों को 'गिरमिटिया' नाम दिया गया जो 'एग्ज़ीमेंट' का अपभ्रंश रूप था। अधिकतर भारतीय अयोध्या, आजमगढ़,

प्रताप गढ़, बस्ती, बनारस, लखनऊ आदि प्रदेशों से आये हुए थे। उनकी मुख्य बोली अवधी थी। वे अपने साथ 'रामचरितमानस', 'हनुमानचालीसा' आदि ग्रंथ ले आये थे। इन्हीं ग्रंथों का पारायण विदेश में भी अपनी भाषा और संस्कृति को बचाकर रखने में सहायक सिद्ध हुआ। कालांतर में राजस्थान, पंजाब, गुजरात, आंध्रप्रदेश, तमिलनाडु जैसे अन्य प्रांतों से भी लोग यहाँ आ पहुँचे। विविध प्रांतों से आये भारतीयों ने आपसी संपर्क के लिए हिंदी को अपनाया। मजदूरों के रूप में आये इन लोगों ने अपनी लगन और कठिन मेहनत के बल फ़िजी को सरसाया, संवारा और समृद्ध किया। गिरमिटियों की तीसरी, चौथी, पाँचवीं पीढ़ी ही अब फ़िजी में बसी हुई है जो शिक्षा प्राप्त कर और स्वावलंबी बनकर फ़िजी के सामाजिक-राजनीतिक एवं प्रशासनिक क्षेत्रों के ऊँचे पदों पर विराजमान हैं। उनकी संख्या साढ़े तीन लाख की करीब है।

फ़िजियन और अंग्रेज़ी के अलावा यहाँ हिंदी की दो धाराएँ चलती हैं - एक खड़ीबोली या मानक हिंदी जिसका उपयोग अध्ययन-अध्यापन, भाषण, लेखन आदि में होता है। दूसरी बोलचाल की हिंदी जिसे 'फ़िजी बात' या 'फ़िजी हिंदी' कहते हैं।

विश्व हिंदी सम्मेलन के तीन दिन

विश्व हिंदी सम्मेलन का शुभारंभ 15 फरवरी दस बजे फ़िजी गणराज्य के मुख्य नगर नादी के "देनाराउ आइलैंड

42 All India Women's Conference

कन्वेन्शन सेंटर' में हुआ। भारत तथा विश्व के विभिन्न राष्ट्रों से एक हजार से अधिक प्रतिभागी सम्मेलन में उपस्थित थे। फ़िजी के असंख्य हिन्दी प्रेमी और लेखकों ने भी अपनी उपस्थिति दर्ज की थी। फ़िजी और भारत के राष्ट्रगान के साथ कार्यक्रम का श्रीगणेश हुआ। फ़िजी गणराज्य के राष्ट्रपति महामहिम रातू विल्यम कटोनिवेरे और भारत के विदेशकार्य मंत्री माननीय डॉ.एस.जयशंकर ने दीप प्रज्ज्वलित करके सम्मेलन का उद्घाटन किया। समारोह में अतिथियों और सम्मेलन- प्रतिभागियों का पारंपरिक ढंग से स्वागत किया गया। फ़िजी के कलाकारों ने नैसर्गिक शक्तियों का पारंपरिक आह्वान किया। प्रकृति-परिस्थिति संरक्षण के साथ-साथ समस्त विश्व के सुख-ऐश्वर्य और शांति का आह्वान ही उसमें था। भारत और विदेशों से आये प्रतिभागियों के लिए यह अभूतपूर्व और विलक्षण दृश्य था, सब मंत्रमुग्ध हो गये थे। उद्घाटन भाषण में राष्ट्रपति ने कहा कि हिन्दी की जड़ें फ़िजी में मज़बूत हैं तथा बोलीवुड की फिल्मों ने फ़िजी में हिन्दी को लोकप्रिय बनाने में अहम् भूमिका निभाई है।

विश्व हिन्दी सम्मेलन का केन्द्रीय विषय प्रौढ़, गंभीर एवं सर्वथा प्रासंगिक रहा - “हिन्दी: पारंपरिक ज्ञान से कृत्रिम मेधा तक”। उद्घाटन समारोह की प्रास्ताविकी में भारत के विदेश राज्यमंत्री माननीय वी.मुरलीधरन ने भारत के उपहार

स्वरूप भारत सरकार द्वारा फ़िजी में भाषा प्रयोगशाला” की स्थापना किये जाने की घोषणा की।

दो दिनों के विविध सत्रों और समानान्तर सत्रों में पारंपरिक ज्ञान के साथ-साथ, नूतनतम तकनीकी से कन्धे में कन्धे मिलाकर आगे बढ़ने की हिन्दी की क्षमता पर सार्थक चर्चाएँ हुईं। हिन्दी शिक्षण, अनुवाद, प्रवासी साहित्य, सिनेमा, संचारमाध्यम जैसे विषयों पर भी गहन संवाद हुए।

शाम को फ़िजी और भारत के श्रेष्ठ कलाकारों द्वारा प्रस्तुत सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम अत्यंत मनोमुग्धकारी रहे।

17 फरवरी को सुबह दस बजे समापन सत्र शुरू हुआ जिसमें भारत और विदेशों के प्रमुख हिन्दी सेवियों का सम्मान किया गया। भारत एवं विदेशों में कार्यरत हिन्दी सेवी संस्थाएँ भी सम्मानित हुईं। भारत की दो संस्थाएँ सम्मानित हुई - केरल हिन्दी प्रचार सभा तथा असम राष्ट्रभाषा प्रचार समिति। भारत से पधारे मंत्रियों के भाषण और फ़िजी के उपप्रधानमंत्री के उद्बोधन भी हुए। फ़िजी के विदेश मंत्रालय के स्थायी सचिव के कृतज्ञता - ज्ञापन के साथ सम्मेलन का शुभ समापन हुआ।

प्रो (डॉ.) एस. तंकमणि अम्मा
प्रतिनिधि



2. होली

हर वर्ष की तरह इस बार भी होली का रंगारंग कार्यक्रम मुख्यालय में आयोजित किया गया। इस अवसर पर कोषाध्यक्ष डॉ. उपासना सिंह ने अपने स्वर्गीय पिता जी की सुन्दर कविता प्रस्तुत की।

होली

– श्री महेश पाल सिंह “ख़ाकसार”

ऐसे मदमस्त मौसम में बहक कर खेलिए होली ।
क़ज़ा आ जाए तो उसको भी रंग कर खेलिए होली ॥

मज़ा होली का तब है, एक रंग हो जाए जब दोनों,
मिलाकर उसके रंग को अपने रंग में खेलिये होली ॥

बंद कर द्वार रंग छत से ना डालो छुप कर चोरी से ।
अगर है प्यार तो बाहर निकल कर खेलिये होली ॥

कोई बेताब है पर्दे के पीछे इंतज़ारी में,
ऐसे बेताब के दिल में उतर कर खेलिये होली ॥

जो होनी थी सो हो ली, स्वागत कर अब नये रंगों का,
भुला कर रंज-ओ-ग़म दुनिया के सारे खेलिये होली ॥

तबाह कर देती है दिल को जो नज़र एक नज़र में,
ऐसी ही नज़रों से नज़रें मिलाकर खेलिये होली ॥

यह रिश्ते प्यार के, ऐ दोस्त बहुत नाजुक होते हैं,
किसी का दिल न दुख जाए, संभलकर खेलिये होली ॥

अगर रंगों की धड़कन को समझना चाहते हैं आप,
तो नफ़रत के अंधेरों से निकलकर खेलिये होली ॥

यह लम्हे मस्ती के, ऐ दोस्त फिर वापस नहीं आते,
मुद्दतों याद करें लोग, ऐसे खेलिये होली ॥

मिलावट रंगों में, ‘ख़ाकसार’ अब बढ़ती ही जाती है,
रंग कान्हा का प्यार राधा सा लेकर खेलिये होली ॥



3. महिला नए ज़माने की

– जूही प्रकाश सिंह, सदस्य, दिल्ली विमेंस लीग

मैं हूँ एक महिला इस नए ज़माने की,
रखती शक्ति हर सपने को पा जाने की।

जानती हूँ अपनी काबिलियत को,
पहचानती हूँ अपने अंदर की आत्मशक्ति को,
मैं हूँ एक महिला इस नए ज़माने की।

ज़िन्दगी जीऊँगी तो सिर्फ अपने अनोखे अंदाज़ में,
नहीं बधूँगी समाज के संकुचित दायरों में,
मैं हूँ एक महिला इस नए ज़माने की।

अपने को पूर्ण सक्षम व सशक्त बनाया है,
किसी की मोहताज बनकर न रहना है
मैं हूँ एक महिला इस नए ज़माने की।

नहीं रहती मैं बनकर एक अबला नारी,
अपने हुनर से जीत रही हूँ कायनात सारी ,
मैं हूँ एक महिला इस नए ज़माने की।

नहीं है मेरी आँखों में पानी,
मेरे मनोबल का नहीं कोई सानी,
मैं हूँ एक महिला इस नए ज़माने की।

यही होगी अब हर उस महिला की ज़िन्दगी,
जो अपने हौसलों को देगी बुलंदगी,
होगी गौरवमयी सदैव उसकी ज़िन्दगी।

– जूही प्रकाश सिंह

Insta– @juhi.prakashsingh



Some spotlight events January-March 2023



Past President and Patron Smt Sheela Kakde with the President of India Smt Draupadi Murumu, at Om Shanti Retreat, Manesar on 9th February, 2023



The Irish Ambassador, Mr Bredan Ward, meeting AIWC office bearers



President Mrs Kalyani Raj with Mrs Sheela Satyanarayan with Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Chief Coordinator for India's G20 Presidency



Recognition and award by TDDPL

Beginning of events for the new team



Sarojini Naidu's Birth Anniversary at HO



New Management team at Ghaziabad Branch



96th Annual Conference of AIWC in progress at Om Shanti Retreat in Manesar



Smt N Bhanumati, Secretary Kakinada Branch donated Rs 1 lakh to the Education Trust, at the HO, N Delhi. She is seen here with the AP members & the past office bearers



Smt Valluri Kameshwari, EC member of Kakinada Branch donated Rs 1 lakh for Bapnu ghar, Orphanage at the HO, New Delhi



Reopening of the Senior Women Citizen's Day-care Centre, funded by AIWC Old Age Tust after 2 years 9 months of Corona pandemic period, in January 2023. Blankets were distributed



Poem 'The Bangle Sellers' by Sarojini Naidu being enacted by AIWC staff and AVI students on her birth Anniversary in MCM library of Sarojini House