



**D.A.V. P.G. College**

(An Institution for Higher Education & Research)  
(Admitted to the Privileges of Banaras Hindu University)  
(Accredited by NAAC with Grade "A+")

# Stree Vimarsh

## News Letter

Year - 2021

**'WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP : ACHIEVING AN EQUAL FUTURE IN A COVID-19 WORLD'**

Issue - 4

### WOMEN'S CELL

## International Women's Day - 2021-22



Photo of U.N.Women



The theme for International Women's Day-8 March 2021 is 'Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world'. In consonance with International theme of Women's Day 08th March, 2021, Stree Vimarsh Cell devotes this issue of Newsletter to the theme of women in leadership roles to accomplish the visionary mission of gender equality.

NCW CHAIRPERSON Hon'ble **Rekha Sharma** was interviewed by **Dr. Swati Sucharita Nanda**, Coordinator, Stree Vimarsh. The interview published in this e-newsletter is one of the initiatives undertaken by Stree Vimarsh to disseminate and institutionalise women's rights discourse.

### VISION

- To provide a platform to women & girls
- To develop an inclusive bonding among women and girls in the college
- To evolve a discourse on women's rights
- To support and encourage girl students

### MISSION

- Sensitizing both women and men on gender issues
- Recognizing women's achievements as well as evaluating the role of women in society critically
- Disseminating information regarding women's health issues and spread awareness towards laws for women.
- Institutionalizing women's rights discourse

### Sphere of Influence

**DR. S.D. SINGH**

Principal, DAV P.G. College  
Varanasi



I take this opportunity to congratulate Stree Vimarsh for its prudent and pragmatic approach over the years specially during Covid-19 pandemic, when all Stree Vimarsh members organised various informative online events. Ever since its inception Stree Vimarsh has been the most shining jewel in the glittering crown of DAV PG College. When it comes to gender sensitization and combating with issues pertaining to gender disparity it has always stood its ground and has always been commendable and empathetic in establishing peace and harmony fostering quality ambiance for quality learning. Nevertheless, it has not only instilled a new and unshakable confidence among the girl students but has also undertaken innumerable confidence building measures to keep gender disparity at bay.

The women of today are charting their own course; rubbing shoulders with their male counterparts in all spheres to prove their mettle. With renewed vigour, indomitable spirit and a never say die attitude they are out to restore their lost pride, glory and self-worth which once used to be among the hallmarks of the rich ancient Indian culture.

I firmly believe that Stree Vimarsh will continue with the excellent work and will leave no stone unturned in realizing its objectives, thereby creating a conducive and congenial atmosphere of holistic learning negating all possible impediments that might arise because of gender related issues.



डी.ए.वी. पी.जी. कॉलेज, वाराणसी

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### DR. SWATI SUCHARITA NANDA

Convener - Stree Vimarsh  
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science  
DAV P.G. College, Varanasi

On behalf of the Stree Vimarsh cell, I congratulate the team of the *Stree Vimarsh* Newsletter to have made excellent efforts in bringing out this publication under the able leadership of Dr. Sangeeta Jain. The *Stree Vimarsh* cell has been organising academic and awareness programmes related to women's empowerment since last decade in the college. The cell has always set one of the best examples of the way women faculty members and the non-faculty members can join hands in a non-hierarchical manner to organise various events for the betterment of women students of the college. The cell also gives women faculty members from different disciplines the space to organise events related to their fields. The publication of the newsletter complements the activities of the programmes *Stree Vimarsh*. As the convener of the programmes section, I congratulate the team for bringing together so many creative minds together. I would also take this opportunity to thank the team for highlighting the programmes conducted by the *Stree Vimarsh* in the last academic year.

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### Whither Generation and Gender Equality?

#### DR. SANGEETA JAIN

Chief Editor- *Stree Vimarsh* Newsletter  
Associate Professor and Head Department of English  
DAV P.G. College, Varanasi.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women, has made '**Women in leadership : Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world**' theme of **International women's Day 2021**. Women's Day is celebrated on 8<sup>th</sup> March every year to recapitulate, revive and reenergize the agenda set for the holistic development of women in all spheres across the globe. It's moment to look back and look forward together for an integrated vision of progressive development towards women related issues. Undoubtedly much has been achieved by modern women at social, educational, legal levels but due consideration has to be given to the domestic level also. A highly educated, professionally qualified woman is also a daughter in law, wife and mother. Is familial responsibility her responsibility alone? Are child education, child health, household chores, taking care of ageing parents in law her responsibilities only? The multiplicity of her roles puts a great challenge before her and that raises many unanswerable questions. The need of

gender equality at home is an idea to be pondered over now. Husbands and wives are equally qualified with equal profession and pay - do they equally share the burden of family front with equal physical, mental and emotional vigour? Generally men come home and relax and women discover themselves re-employed. The mission of gender equality remains unfulfilled without the equal status at home. The need of the hour is to sensitize people of all ages and all generations on the challenges of domestic responsibilities present before the professional women with the firm determination for equal sharing of responsibilities at home.

This e-newsletter of *Stree Vimarsh* is a compilation of all the activities undertaken by the women's cell for gender sensitization in the college. It also enfold the programmes of Internal Complain Committee earlier known as Sexual Harassment Committee. I am indebted to honourable Principal Sir for giving me this opportunity, Convener of *Stree Vimarsh* Cell, and Convener of Internal Complain Committee for providing the details of their programmes. The newsletter is divided into three different sections News, Views & Interviews. News section will elaborate the details of the programmes and Views section will throw light on the different discourses concerning the life of women and the third section comprises the interview of Chairperson of NCW Hon'ble Rekha Sharma.

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### ACTIVITIES OF STREE VIMARSH : 2020

- A special lecture was organized by the *Stree Vimarsh* Cell of DAV PG College on the topic '**Feminine Sacredscapes: Illustrated in Bharat (India) and Kashi Kshetra**' on February 19, 2020 and **resource person was Prof. Rana P.B. Singh**, Professor (Retired) of Cultural Geography, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. He highlighted various religious and spiritual temples devoted to goddess.







डी.ए.वी. पी.जी. कालेज, वाराणसी

# Stree Vimarsh



## ACTIVITIES OF STREE VIMARSH : 2019

- A Virtual Dialogue with **Women Civil Servants administering India during Covid-19** was organized on 11.07.2020. The resource persons were Ms. Niharika Barik Singh, Ms. Mugdha Sinha, IAS Officer Swadhadev Singh, Dr. Sunita Chandra, Deputy Registrar, BHU, Varanasi.



An interactive session with a young film maker **Ms. Shraddha Singh** on February 27, 2019. The young film maker's short film was nominated for Oscar Award. She screened her short film Kathakaar Cinema and shared her experience of making films in Bombay.



Considering the lack of legal awareness of women a written competition for the legal awareness of students regarding women and law based on objective type Multiple Choice Questions was held on November 15, 2018.



- Special Virtual Lecture on **The Gendered Contours of the Pandemic - Opportunities and Challenges** on 19 January, 2021. The Speaker was Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda, Principal, Miranda House College, New Delhi.



Stree Vimarsh celebrated Women's Day 2019 on 9<sup>th</sup> March by conducting a day-long lecture and interaction sessions with the delegates from the Centre for Women's Studies, University of Central Oklahoma. **Prof. Lindsey Churchill** and other delegates :

Speakers	Topics
1. Dr. Lindsey Churchill	- Teaching Sex Ed in Higher Ed: A Global
2. Dr. Diana Pardo	- Feminism and Revolution : A Woman's.
3. Marco Sales	- Emotional Intimacy in Relationships in Mexican and Mexican American male students".
4. Jacob Reavis	- Judaism and Gender and Sexuality in the United States
5. Joshua Mitchell Arbital	- Gender, Inclusion and Medical Issues.
6. Ana Marie Lopez	- Examining Gender Inclusion and Exclusion in the Medical Field in the United States
7. Jennifer Phillips	- History of Sex Trafficking in the United States
8. Asheley Middleton	- Teaching Sexual Ed and Collaboration with Religious Entities.





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A special lecture on the topic 'Future of Gender Studies' was organized by the Stree Vimarsh Cell of DAV PG College on October 25, 2019 the resource person **Prof. Anita Singh**, Co-ordinator, CWSD, BHU, Varanasi delivered lecture on the history and futuristic vision of feminism.



A Gender Sensitization Session of faculty members was organized by the Stree Vimarsh Cell of DAV PG College on September 25, 2018 and resource person **Prof. Madhu Kushwaha**, Faculty of Education, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi spoke on Gender Issues in different Institutions.

9. Andrew Hedges - Fundamentalism Christianity and gender in Oklahoma

➤ Stree Vimarsh Cell of DAV PG College took an innovative step to bring out a calendar for the College with an aim towards giving the college a branding for being an institution that recognises women's contributions in Varanasi. It sought to celebrate the spirit of women in Varanasi by showcasing 12 achievers women from different work areas.



### Activities of Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

**DR. RICHA RANI YADAV**

Convener - Internal Complaints Committee

(Sexual Harassment and Violence against Women Redressal Committee)

**DAV PG. College, Varanasi**

As per the law, it is mandatory for every workplace to have an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) that would play a critical role in prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment at the workplace. The ICC has a responsibility to establish an effective internal complaints procedure, where:

- ✓ Assurance that no victimisation will result from making a complaint
- ✓ Procedure is well documented, available and in accessible formats;
- ✓ Members who manage complaints are well trained
- ✓ Assistance is provided in the form of language interpreters as needed for parties to a complaint





- ✓ Ensuring the process is confidential, independent and based on principles of natural justice
- ✓ Ensuring the process has clear timelines
- ✓ All conflicts of interest are managed appropriately

## VISHAKA GUIDELINES

**Sexual harassment is a subjective experience** Conduct that many men consider unobjectionable may offend many women... Men tend to view some forms of sexual harassment as “harmless social interactions to which only overly-sensitive women would object. The characteristically male view depicts sexual harassment as comparatively harmless amusement.... Men, who are rarely victims of sexual assault, may view sexual conduct in a vacuum without a full appreciation of the social setting or the underlying threat of violence that a woman may perceive.”(Dr. Punita K. Sodhi v. Union of India & Ors. W.P. (C) 367/2009 & CMS 828, 11426/2009 On 9 September, 2010, in the High Court of Delhi).workplace sexual harassment in India, was for the very first time recognized by the Supreme Court of India in its landmark judgment of *Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan*<sup>2</sup> (“**Vishaka Judgment**”), wherein the Supreme Court framed certain guidelines and issued directions to the Union of India to enact an appropriate law for combating workplace sexual harassment. In the absence of a specific law in India, the Supreme Court, in the *Vishaka Judgment*, laid down certain guidelines making it mandatory for every employer to provide a mechanism to redress grievances pertaining to workplace sexual harassment (“**Vishaka Guidelines**”) which were being followed by employers until the enactment of the POSH Act.

As per the *Vishaka judgment*, 'Sexual Harassment' includes such unwelcome sexually determined behavior (whether directly or by implication) as: a. Physical contact and advances, b. A demand or request for sexual favours; c. Sexually coloured remarks; d. Showing pornographies; e. Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct of sexual nature.

The following is an indicative list of conduct that could be considered as sexual harassment:

1. Unwanted sexual advances or propositions; 2. Pester for dates or receiving unwelcome sexual suggestions or invitations; 3. Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favours; 4. Leering; 5. Making sexual gestures; 6. Displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, calendars or posters; 7. Making or using derogatory comments, comments about a person's body or dress, slurs, epithets or sexually suggestive jokes; 8. Written communications of a sexual nature distributed in hard copy or via a computer network, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations; 9. Physical conduct such as unwanted touching, assault, impeding or blocking movements; 10. Being forcibly kissed or hugged; 11. Having someone expose their private parts to you or repeatedly staring at a woman's body parts that makes her uncomfortable; 12. Making or threatening retaliation after a negative response to sexual advances or for reporting or threatening to report sexual harassment; 13. Eve-teasing; 14. Sexually tinted remarks, whistling, staring, sexually slanted and obscene jokes, jokes causing or likely to cause awkwardness or embarrassment; 15. Subtle innuendoes or open taunting regarding perfection, imperfection or characteristics of physical appearance of a person's body or shape; 16. Gender based insults and/or sexist remarks; 17. Displaying pornographic or other sexually offensive or derogatory material; 18. Forcible invitations for dates; 19. Forcible physical touch or physical assault or molestation; 20. Suggesting or implying that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual favours would adversely affect the individual in respect to performance evaluation or promotion; 21. Explicitly or implicitly suggesting sexual favours in return for hiring, compensation, promotion, retention decision, relocation, or allocation of job/responsibility/work; 22. Any act or conduct by a person in authority and belonging to one sex which denies or would deny equal opportunity in pursuit of career development or otherwise making the environment at the work place hostile or intimidating to a person belonging to the other sex, only on the ground of such individual providing or refusing sexual favours; 23. Physical confinement against one's will and any other act likely to violate one's privacy. So, Workplace



Sexual Harassment is behaviour that is-  
UNWELCOME

SEXUAL in nature

A SUBJECTIVE experience

IMPACT not intent is what matters  
often occurs in a matrix of POWER

There are professional and personal adverse effects of sexual harassment-

## PROFESSIONAL

Decreased work performance a Increased absenteeism,  
loss of pay a Loss of promotional opportunities a  
Retaliation from the respondent, or colleagues/ friends  
of the respondent a Subjected to gossip and scrutiny at  
work a Being objectified Becoming publicly sexualized a  
Defamation a Being ostracized a Having to relocate a Job  
and career consequences a Weakened support network

## PERSONAL

a Depression a Anxiety, panic attacks a Traumatic stress a  
Sleeplessness a Shame, guilt, self-blame a Difficulty in  
concentrating a Headaches a Fatigue, loss of motivation  
Personal Difficulties with time a Eating disorders (weight  
loss or gain) a Feeling betrayed and/or violated a Feeling  
angry or violent towards the respondent a Feeling  
powerless a Loss of confidence and self esteem a Over all  
loss of trust in people a Problems with intimacy a  
Withdrawal and isolation

## DOS AND DON'TS FOR COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

### DOS

1. Create an enabling meeting environment.
2. Use body language that communicates complete attention to the parties.
3. Treat the complainant with respect.
4. Discard pre-determined ideas.
5. Determine the harm.

### DON'TS

1. Get aggressive.
2. Insist on a graphic description of the sexual harassment.

3. Interrupt.

4. Discuss the complaint in the presence of the complainant or the respondent.

In the light of professional and personal adverse effects of sexual harassment this committee has been constituted by the college, has taken initiative to organize certain programmes in the college under the aegis of NAAC committee of the college are as follows -

A- Orientation programme was organized on 15/03/2019 followed by one day seminar on "Role of Law and Justice in Achieving Gender Equality".



B- Poster making competition on 18/03/2019 has been organized for the students to see their cognitive projection on the theme "Sexual Harassment and Violence Against Women at Workplace". Prize was given according to their performances and five minutes was given to them to speak about their thought related to their poster.







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**C-** A programme conducted by the committee for the poster presentation, prize and certificate distribution on 11/04/2019.



**D-** On 31/10/2019, Committee organized special lecture session on “Badgering and Bantering : Gender Difference in Experience of and Reactions to Sexual Harassment at Work Place”, Resource person was Professor Bibha Tripathi, Faculty of Law, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.



**E-** One Day Workshop was organized for teaching and non-teaching staff of the college on “An Intersectional Analysis of Sexual Harassment: Gender and Society at Workplace”. Resource persons were- **Prof. Sushma Gchildiyal**, Former Head & Coordinator ICC, Department of Physical Education, BHU, Varanasi, Advocate, Tripti Ghosh (Criminal), Civil Court, Varanasi and Dr. Pradeep Kumar Yadav, Head, Department of Psychology, Government P.G.Nehru College, Jhajjar, Haryana.



## VIEWS

### SEARCH FOR THE 'SPIRITUAL SYMBOLISM OF GENDER EQUALITY'

**Dr. Anup Kumar Mishra**

Associate Professor, Department of Economics,  
DAV P.G.COLLEGE, Varanasi.

Much of the research that tagged women as the weaker sex was flawed or biased. A body of work counters that early science, showing that women possess intellectual capabilities equal to their counterparts. While men have greater physical strength and a height and weight advantage, studies show that women have a distinct edge when it comes to resilience and long - term survival. Women have worked – and succeeded – in occupations long seen as the province of men: as laborers, scientists, printers, navigators and mechanics , but most often invisible simply because of their gender. Even Mahatma Gandhi declared that to call women weaker sex was libel and a gross injustice to women. He



believed that strength means moral power hence women are immeasurably superior to men. In a letter to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur from Wardha on 21, October , 1936, Gandhi writes “ If you women would only realize your dignity and privilege , and make full use of it for mankind, you will make it much better than it is “ . Even as a general rule he considered that the standards observed by women in their conduct were superior to those of men. Therefore he advised men to copy women. Gandhi believed that men and women are equal as the same atma (soul) dwells in the women's body. Since soul is sexless men and women are perfectly equal in the eyes of God.

The concept of Ardhanarishvara in our Hindu Mythology indicates the same, that is "totality lies beyond duality" and the essentially equal nature of both the masculine and feminine energies. It talks of both being part of the Supreme Being, being two equal parts, making the whole. Shiva's half part holding a rosary indicates asceticism, while Parvati's half holding the mirror is an embodiment of the highly material and illusory world. The fusing of these two opposites indicates that both the material and spiritual spheres have to coexist in one's life, for it to be complete. Shiva and Shakti are inseparable and interdependent. This indicates that both these opposing forces are one and the same and cannot be regarded as two individual identities.

The traditional assumption has been that just as individuals are biologically either male or female, psychologically, they are either masculine or feminine. Even Freud believed that all human individuals, as a result of their bisexual disposition and cross-inheritance, combine in themselves both masculine and feminine characteristics, so that pure masculinity and femininity remain theoretical constructions of certain content. Since Ardhanarishvara represents the perfect synthesis of male and female forms, it also embodies the Prakriti and the Purusha, the feminine and masculine energies of the cosmos and also illustrates how Shakti , the Sacred Feminine, is inseparable from Shiva, the male principle of God . This form also symbolizes the all-pervasive, all-enduring nature of Lord Shiva.

Hence, with the positive spirit, we should admire

the Spiritual Symbolism of “ Ardhnarishvara” and also remember Gandhi's view who advocated society which will be free of exploitation , establishing equality in all sphere of life , which would not discriminate against human beings on the basis of birth , colour , sex or nation. The basis of this society will be love, cooperation, care, sympathy, and all those virtues with which women are associated, against coercion, selfishness or brute force. So we could see empowerment of women through enhancement in their qualities and capabilities which the women especially own. The role of men should be as facilitator in it. Empowerment of women in this way would ensure women's efficient and effective role in family, our society, economy and politics which would ultimately strengthen the social fabric and would evolve a society based on eternal moral and human values.

## स्त्री विमर्श मंच और मेरे अनुभव

— डॉ. पूनम सिंह

एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर, संस्कृत विभाग  
डी.ए.वी. पी.जी. कालेज,

काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी — 221001

‘स्त्री-विमर्श’ सेल सन् 2008 में विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग के दिशानिर्देशानुसार डी.ए.वी. पी.जी. कालेज में स्थापित किया गया था और इस सेल के समन्वयक का कार्य कालेज प्रशासन द्वारा मुझे सौंपा गया था। इस प्रकार इस सेल से जुड़ने का सुअवसर मुझे इसकी स्थापना के समय से ही मिला। यह कालेज लड़के एवं लड़कियों के लिए अपने स्थापना के समय से ही था लेकिन 2008 से पहले केवल कामर्स डिपार्टमेंट में ही लड़कियाँ पढ़ने के लिए आती थी। कला एवं सामाजिक विज्ञान के विषयों में इनकी संख्या नगण्य थी। जब 2006 में कालेज में जब महिला अध्यापकों की नियुक्ति हुई तब कला एवं सामाजिक विज्ञान के विषयों में लड़कियों की संख्या में बढ़ोत्तरी हुई।

तब यह महसूस किया गया कि स्त्री अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूकता एवं लैंगिक संवेदीकरण के लिए मंच हो और वह मंच ‘स्त्री-विमर्श’ के नाम से जाना गया। इस मंच के माध्यम से कई कार्यशालायें, संगोष्ठी और जागरूकता के कार्यक्रम आयोजित किये गये। मेरे मन में बार-बार यह विचार उठता था कि जब किसी स्त्री को उसके कानूनी अधिकारों की जानकारी नहीं होती है तो वह अपने मूलभूत अधिकारों से वंचित रह जाती है, इसलिए इस मंच की स्थापना के पहले ही वर्ष में बी.एच.यू. के महिला विकास एवं अध्ययन केन्द्र के सहयोग से स्त्रियों के कानूनी अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूकता





हेतु एक कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया गया, जिसमें कानूनविदों द्वारा इस विषय पर जानकारी दी गई।

इस मंच की परिपाटी यह भी रही कि हर अकादमिक सत्र में कम से कम दो विशेष व्याख्यान आयोजित कराये गये, जो स्त्री स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा और अन्य सामयिक मुद्दों पर केन्द्रित रहे। कई बार मलीन बस्तियों एवं मुस्लिम बाहुल्य बस्तियों में एक दिवसीय कैंप लगाकर इस मंच से जुड़े प्राध्यापकों एवं विद्यार्थियों ने स्वास्थ्य एवं साफ-सफाई के प्रति महिलाओं को जागरूक करने का कार्य किया। कालेज में भी स्त्री रोग विशेषज्ञों की टीम के साथ निःशुल्क स्वास्थ्य जाँच शिविर लगाये गये।

दिल्ली में दामिनी नाम की लड़की के साथ 2012 में सामूहिक दुष्कर्म की बहुत ही दुखद घटना घटी थी। उस घटना ने पूरे देश को झगझोर कर रख दिया था। मैं सोचा करती थी कि समाज हमारा किस ओर जा रहा है। उस समय मेरे मन में ख्याल आया कि स्त्रियों के प्रति होने वाली हिंसा में क्या दोषी सिर्फ अपराधी होता है, मैं मानती हूँ कि केवल जिसने अपराध किया वही अकेले दोषी नहीं है। उसका समाजीकरण जिस समाज में हुआ वह समाज भी बराबर का अपराधी है। हम व्यापक स्तर पर सीमित संसाधनों के साथ इस संबंध में कुछ कर नहीं सकते थे। इसलिए इस मंच के माध्यम से अपने सामर्थ्यानुसार हमने 'भारतीय महिलाओं की अस्मिता की रक्षा में समाज एवं कानूनी प्रक्रिया की भूमिका' विषयक सात दिवसीय कार्यशाला का आयोजन किया गया, जिसके सातों दिनों के प्रत्येक दोनों सत्रों में स्त्री अध्ययन एवं कानून के विशेषज्ञों को हमने आमंत्रित किया। इस कार्यशाला में कालेज के छात्र-छात्राओं ने प्रतिभाग किया था और कार्यशाला के अंतिम दिन अपने अनुभवों में उन छात्र-छात्राओं ने कहा कि जो हमने इस कार्यशाला में सीखा, उससे स्त्रियों के प्रति हममें एक अलग प्रकार की सोच पैदा हुई है। मैंने स्वयं जब विद्यार्थियों से बात की तो मुझे संतोष हुआ कि जो हम करना चाहते थे, वह काफी हद तक सफल हुआ है।

प्रत्येक वर्ष अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस के अवसर पर एक संगोष्ठी का आयोजन इस सेल के द्वारा किया जाता रहा, जिसमें दो बार पुलिस विभाग के आला अफसरों द्वारा विद्यार्थियों के बीच संवाद का कार्यक्रम रहा और एक बार प्रशासन के आला अफसरों विद्यार्थियों के बीच संवाद का कार्यक्रम रहा। जिसमें आई. जी. वाराणसी जोन, एस.एस.पी वाराणसी एवं प्रशासन से वाराणसी मंडल के कमिश्नर एवं जिलाधिकारी वाराणसी रहें। पुलिस-प्रशासन के अधिकारियों से विद्यार्थियों के संवाद का मुख्य उद्देश्य यह भी रहा कि जब भी कोई यौन हिंसा की घटना घटती है, तो पुलिस और प्रशासन के लोगों से ही संपर्क करना होता है और हमारे विद्यार्थी इतने जागरूक हो कि वो इनसे संवाद स्थापित कर सकें।

सेल्फ डिफेंस शिविरों में विद्यार्थियों को आत्मरक्षा के गुर सिखाने का भी कार्य इस मंच के माध्यम से किया गया। इस मंच की समन्वयक रहते और एक स्त्री होने के नाते भी मेरी हमेशा से इच्छा

रहती थी कि मैं लैंगिक जागरूकता के लिए कुछ कर पाऊँ और मैंने अपना सत्-प्रतिशत इस मंच के माध्यम से योगदान देने का भरसक प्रयास किया।

ये पितृसत्ता आज की नहीं है और ये तंत्र आज नहीं बना है, इस व्यवस्था से लड़ने के लिए प्रयास होते रहे हैं और हो रहे हैं। लोकतंत्र कोई एक दिन में भी बनने वाली प्रक्रिया नहीं है वह अनवरत बन रहा है। हम एक उम्मीद के साथ समाज को सभ्य और लैंगिक रूप से संवेदनशील बनाने का प्रयास करते हैं। मेरे द्वारा भी इस मंच के माध्यम से वही प्रयास किये गये। स्त्री विमर्श एक अनवरत प्रयास है, स्त्री स्वावलम्बन एवं सशक्तिकरण की यात्रा जो समय के साथ चलती रहेगी।

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF FEMALE WORKERS IN UNORGANISED SECTOR IN INDIA

**DR. PARUL JAIN**

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Unorganised sector in India forms an important part of the Indian economy. Employment in this area is generated but it is of a seasonal nature. Most of the workers are from deprived sectors. It has been observed that whole family works as a unit. It has also been found that nearly fifty per cent of such workforce is from women folk who work to supplement the family income. When women work in brick industry, they play a dual role. On one hand they have to take care of their children and on the other hand, they also work in brick kilns. However, it is unfortunate that the role of such women is not recognized properly. Their contribution in national income is underreported. The working conditions are unhealthy and the health of such women workers is ill affected. It has also been found that such women workers, who are mostly illiterate, are thrown in this work at very early age on account of poverty prevalent in their families. Hence, in the interest of justice, it is needed that the working conditions in should be properly studied and suitable measures should be suggested to improve the health conditions of such female workers. It is desired that government should take necessary steps in this direction so as to provide proper environmental facilities and assess their contribution in national income of the country.



डी.ए.वी. पी.जी. कॉलेज, वाराणसी

Stree Vimarsh



## GIRL CHILD: A BLESSING OF NATURE

*Man is Woman Born and Woman Nourished*

**Dr. Mahima Singh**

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The role of women for the entire universe is most vital and abiding. She is source of all creation with the blessings of nature and possesses everything equal to men but cultural construction of their roles, duties and responsibilities has assigned them inferiority and secondary position since times immemorial. Often they are victimized with the faceless problems and find themselves helpless in sharing their traumas in the male dominated world. However, in the contemporary scenario we talk about women empowerment and their multifarious growth and undoubtedly so many conceptions have got altered. The extent to which women have attempted to search their identity, individuality and creativity is really laudable and deserves great applause. The topic I have taken of my choice here for writing is not all about or only about term like 'feminism' or what are the ways through which women can come out of clutches of male passivity and servility rather why we cannot be simply sensitive human beings. Government has tried to sensitize the people regarding killing of female fetus by passing the bill of prohibition against gender determination of a child in womb but still ratio of girl child is constantly decreasing in comparison to male child. Hariyana, one of the states of our nation is burning example. We need on large scale vision and dream of Mahabir Singh Fogut for girls as he nurtured his daughters Babita and Gita. They won Gold Medals in wrestling in Commonwealth Games for their father, for themselves, and for Nation. Cinematic representation of this inspiring real life struggle in the movie Dangal has necessarily appealed the society. I appreciate movie like Pink for bringing on celluloid screen laws constituted for women such as "section 503, section 154, Zero FIR, section 354 etc". Overall I feel to some extent people are noticed wearing the mask of sensitivity but real picture is something else. Apart from all government attempts, cinema and different

campaign and social movements cruelty is still persisting in one or another form. The decline in the female population is the matter of great concern. In theory and on paper several rights and education are given to women and men but in result the treatment to women by men is far from improving. The heavy words like self dependant woman are in practice but are they really independent, if they cannot take stand for the child in their own womb then what is independence. Most of the time mothers do not go for female foeticide, they are compelled by the family members. Here we must exclude the exceptions. As far as social security is talked about it can be ensured legally to women but not in reality. Newspapers' pages littered with the violence done to women at various level gives very gruesome picture of their suffering state. The incident that took place on the occasion of New Year celebration in Bangluru is an example of attitude of the people in our society. Recently Dr. Priyanka Reddy's rape and brutal murder is the proof of animalism prevailing in the mindset of people. The demand of the hour is to check the injustices by our own done to women at every level family, institution and society which is possible when men are sensitized from the beginning. Unless we are not going to realize by ourselves value of women in the society and life nobody can make us understand. What is needed most is the inculcation of right kind of attitude in the children towards girls and its possible not only through formal education but with the process of socialization.

**अंतराष्ट्रीय है तो मना लेते हैं....मुबारक हो महिला दिवस!!!**

डॉ- सुमन सिंह

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**तब महिला दिवस मनाने का चलन नहीं था**

"स्त्री"! जब तुम्हारे अंतःपुर में नई आई बहू प्रताड़ित होती थी। कभी गोइठा की थाप, कभी बर्तन की झन्न-झन्न और कभी घूँघट की आड़ में मन का पीड़ा झनक देती या ओढ़ लेती थी। लड़कियाँ पैदा होतीं तो तुम्ही हाँ तुम्ही 'स्त्री' उन्हें मार डालने के हजारों तरीके ढूँढने लगती। पुरुष का अंतःपुर में प्रवेश वर्जित था तब ताड़ना के सारे हथियार तुम्हारे होते सिर्फ तुम्हारे। गाँव-घर का हर अंतःपुर अपनी





## FRAILITY TO STRENGTH

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*Beloved! I have been nurtured within limits*

*But have sported with the limitless as well!*

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage. It offers us two ways either to complain or reject or to adore and accept the challenging and testing situations. The purpose of life is not merely to ramble in an imaginary heaven, but also to make the thorny and stony path of life more bearable. We believe either in 'every rose has its thorns' or 'every cloud has a silver lining', either 'it never rains but it pours' or 'there is light at the end of the tunnel'.

Indian women have covered a trajectory that passes from frailty to power. By their strength they have changed their struggle into success. In tune with the global phenomenon, educated Indian women seem to have formed a vision of equality with men. They have acquired a tremendous zeal to secure what they call 'lost rights.' They are working hard to gain freedom to explore their potential as integrated human beings.

Today's women have strength to keep up with the variations and circumstances that life has to offer. They are marching ahead with appreciable intent and courage. Her identity and individuality is never lost in these roles but emerges with forceful vigour. She is very well establishing harmony between home and outside world but also cutting away the fetters that she has accepted from time immemorial. She is accomplishing with skills the task of employment along with her traditional roles of "sahdharmacharini", (the sharer of his dharma,) and "sahbhagini", (sharer of his fortunes.) They strive for sufficient courage and power to stand their ground and they have enough spirit to shape up their life and their society. It is their striving with strength that gives them experience. Women's empowerment and emancipation is ensuring better justice, better living, and a progressive society. The story of nose ring exemplifies it:

In a folktale a arrogant husband shows his valour

दीवारों के इस पार झेलती—मार खाती स्त्रियों की पीड़ा को छुपाये बैठा है। मर्मान्तक पीड़ा, ईर्ष्या, दम्भ, अभिमान यही तो दिया एक स्त्री ने दूसरी स्त्री को विरासत में। अंतःपुर ने झरोखे दिए आसमान तक ने को। देहरी दीदुआर झाँकने को लेकिन मन की भोली सी, थोड़ी सी उन्मुक्त चाह को भी घूँघट उढ़ा दिया। तब घूँघट ने अपने ही घर के दुआर को भरपूर देख लेने और देखकर अपना घर समझ चीन्ह लेने की इजाजत नहीं दी।

अपना घर? कैसे पहचानती तुम। वह तो जादू था न। जादुई चीजों पर यकीन कैसे वह तो आँखोंका भ्रमजाल हैं। आँखें खुली कि जादू गायब....कुछ देर के लिए विस्मित अपनी ही आँखों की नादानी पर। तुम भी तो ठगी—ठिठकी देखती रही कितने ही बरस और जब आँख खुली तो पता चला यह अंतःपुर कितना निर्मम, कितना पीड़क और कितना हिंसक है। छटपटाना लाजिमी था, छटपटाई। बाहर निकलने को आतुर बाहर निकल आई।

आज समय ने कें चुल छोड़ा है, सुना है तुम आजाद हो। कविता की मुक्तछंद, कहानी की गौरवगाथा। उपन्यास की स्वच्छन्द—सशक्त नायिका हो। डॉक्टर हो, इंजीनियर हो। हर जगह हर कहीं अपना वर्चस्व कायम किया है तुमने। सराहती आवाजों को सुनो। मंचों से अपनी शौर्य—गाथाओं को सुन आनंद मनालो। खुश होलो आज का दिन तुम्हारी गरिमा—महिमा को नमन करने का दिन है।

परक हो तो, क्या यह सारे क्रिया—कलाप क्या अंतःपुर में हर्ष और माधुर्य लाने में सक्षम हैं। क्या अब वहाँ की स्त्रियों ने आपस में ईर्ष्या, डाह और हाँ वर्चस्व की लड़ाई के लिए क्रूर हो जाना छोड़ दिया है। क्या कन्या भ्रूण हत्या का पढ़ी—लिखी माँओं ने विरोध शुरू कर दिया है या कि सासों ने उन्हें अबोर्शन के लिए समझाने—बुझाने का कोई प्रेमिल रास्ता अपना लिया है।

क्या तुमने ससुराल में नरक भोग रही बेटियों को अपनी ममता का शीतल आश्रय दे दिया है। बेटों के लिए दहेज लेना और बेटियों के लिये दहेज जुटाना छोड़ दिया है?

स्त्री—विमर्श करते और स्त्री सशक्तिकरण पर जोर— जोर से बोलते वक्त क्या तुमने कभी दिल से पूछा है कि जिस स्त्री—जाति के लिए संघर्षरत हो उससे कभी प्रेम भी किया है। 'प्रेम' इतना कठिन था क्या? शायद.....तभी तो तबसे लेकर अबतक के अंतःपुर के इतिहास में देखने—सुनने को नहीं मिला।

यह प्रलाप एक पागल स्त्री का है, जो अपनी ही स्त्री जाति से क्षुब्ध रहती है और बड़बड़ करती है। खैर आप उसकी बातों पर न जाएँ....पागल है वह। आप सभी महिलाओं को महिला दिवस की बधाई।



to his wife by shooting an arrow through her nose-ring, then waits to be congratulated on his manliness. The wife rejects his excellence saying its nothing but a constant practice that enables him to shoot through a nose-ring. She left the house. On the way found a Calf. She danced with it in her arms. They travelled from village to village and as the calf grew, her fame spread far and wide, till even the local Raja sent his Vazir to investigate. The Vazir watched the dancer with the full-grown cow on her shoulders. And he said: "This is a strange and wonderful thing! How do you do it?" She smiled and answered: "It is nothing but the experience that comes with constant practice. The lady made her husband realized her worth. The women exemplify the truth that no matter the struggle or the challenge in your path, the brickbats hurled at you, or the number of situations that pull you down, a sense of optimism and the will to keep going is what make you an achiever, in every sense. To conclude with the words of Raj Rao: 'Woman is the earth, air, ether, sound; woman is the microcosm of the mind, the articulation of space, the knowing in knowledge; the woman is fire, movement, clear and rapid as the mountain stream; the woman is that which seeks against that which is sought. .. Woman is kingdom, solitude, time; woman is growth,... the woman is death, for it is through woman that one is born; a woman rules, for it is she, the universe.'

## WOMEN ENVIRONMENTALISTS OF INDIA

**Dr. Pratibha Mishra**

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**DAV P. G. COLLEGE, VARANASI**

Women, in the society, many times have acted as a catalyst correcting the fallacies which are strongly manifested in some of the fields concerning us all. Environment is one of them. Through their pioneering work they have left an indelible mark in the bio diversity movements in India.

Hailing from Himanchal Pradesh, Kinkri Devi is an Indian activist and environmentalist who is best known for waging a war against illegal mining and quarrying in her native state of Himachal Pradesh. She was awarded Stree Shakti in 1999.

Medha Patkar, winner of Goldman Prize for Asia in 1992, is associated with 'Narmada Bachao Andolan'. She fought for the justice of the dam project affected people. She mobilised massive marches and peaceful protests against the construction of India's Sardar Sarovar Dam, which

displaced thousands of tribal peoples and submerged vast stretches of forests and farmland.

Sunita Narain is the Director of Centre for Science and Environment and editor of the fortnightly magazine 'Down to Earth'. She was Awarded Padmashri in the year 2005. She is the major exponent of the green movement in India.

Assam conservationist and environmentalist Purnima Burman has won the Whitley Awards for the conservation of the Greater Adjutant Stork and its habitat in 2017.

Environmentalist Almrta Patel has been actively associated with such causes as protecting the Gir Lions, saving Ulsoor Lake, solid waste management, and building low cost homes for the needy.

Vandana Shiva is a Delhi based environmental activist and anti-globalization author. She worked to promote biodiversity in the field of agriculture. More than twenty books are to her credit. She is one of the founding members of an NGO 'NAVDANYA', meaning 'nine seeds'. This NGO has been working for the promotion of biodiversity conservation since 1982. One organic farm has been established in doon valley of Uttarakhand.

Shangnaidar Tontang runs the NGO, Weaker Sections Development Council (WSDC). A resident of Manipur, Tontang has successfully led the disaster management and rehabilitation work in the aftermath of the floods and landslides that hit Chandel district of Manipur in 2016.

105- year- old Padma Shri awardee Saalumara Thimmakka is possibly the oldest environmentalist. Based in Karnataka, Ms Thimmakka has spearheaded the work of spreading the message of tree planting along with her husband by planting as many as 384 odd banyan trees along a four-kilometre stretch of highway between Hulikal and Kudur. She has been awarded the National Citizen's Award in India.

Sugathakumari has been at the forefront of environmental and feminist movements in Kerala, South India. She is one of the founders of Prakriti Samrakshana Samithi. In her own words, "I am grateful to the love and trust all gave me. My thanks to the sun, soil, shade and grains for feeding me. I will come again in this earth in my next life."

Bano Haralu is a managing trustee of the Nagaland Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation Trust. A journalist turned conservationist, Bano along with her two colleagues, unveiled the rapid decline of the Amur Falcons in 2012, which were a vital factor for the agriculture as they preyed on the termites that would otherwise destroy the





crops. these Falcons were being hunted and sold in the local markets.

Radha Bhatt's name is associated with the Uttarakhand Nadi Bachao Abhiyan in 2008. She opposed the construction of a series of hydel power projects that threatened the flow of the Ganga and most of its tributaries. They also imperilled the fragile, heavily deforested ecosystem of the Himalayan state.

Amla Ruia from Maharashtra is popularly known as 'Paani Mata' in the region. Ruia has been using traditional water harvesting techniques and building check dams in an effort to somewhat reduce the burden on the environment. She is the founder of Aakar charitable Trust.

Nalini Sekhar is dedicated to improving the livelihoods of waste pickers. She has over 7,500 waste pickers as members who have been empowered with municipal identity cards and improved working conditions. She is co-founder of Kach Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP), a union of waste-pickers and award-winning Bangalore-based Hasiru Dala (Green Force), a social enterprise dedicated to improving the livelihoods of waste pickers, advocating for their rights and social security by integrating informal sector waste workers into the formal solid waste management machinery.

The above list isn't an all inclusive one. There are women like Kavitha Kuruganti, Arati Kumar Rao, Dr Latha Anantha, Poonam Bir Kasturi, Dr Vanaja Ramprasad, Janaki Lenin who inspire and empower new generations of women to join the struggle for environmental conservation. These women's contribution calls for a dual celebration as the Mother nurtures the Mother Nature and what can be beautiful than this.

## महिला शक्ति एवं शोषण

डॉ. तमन्नाशाहीन

उर्दू विभाग

डी.ए.वी.पी.जी. कॉलेज, वाराणसी

वजूद ए जन से है तस्वीर एकायनात में रंग

उसी के साज से है जिन्दगी का सो जए दरूँ

अल्लामा इकबाल ने सच कहा है कि इस संसार में चारों ओर जो सुंदरता, रंग रूप दिखाई पड़ता है उसमें महिलाओं की विशेष भूमिका है। क्योंकि ईश्वर ने जब सृष्टि की रचना की, और पुरुष को बनाया तो उसे सफल बनाने के लिये महिला के रूप में सहारा दिया तथा महिला को इतना सहनशील बनाया कि वो स्वयं को परिस्थिति के अनुकूल ढाल सके। प्रकृति ने तो स्त्री तथा पुरुष को विभिन्न गुणों से संवारकर पृथ्वी का सर्वाधिक महत्वपूर्ण प्राणी बनाया किन्तु मनुष्य

ने अहम के चलते दोनों के कार्यों को पृथक कर दिया। पुरुष ने घर का काम, बच्चों की परवरिश एवं परिवार के सदस्यों की देखभाल आदि कार्य महिलाओं के हिस्से में डाल दिए तथा बहार के कार्यों को अपने हाथ में ले लिया जिससे पुरुष प्रधान समाज का निर्माण हुआ और धीरे धीरे कार्य के साथ दोनों के अधिकार भी अलग अलग कर दिए गए।

हमारे धार्मिक ग्रंथों में स्त्री चित्रण कुछ इस प्रकार हुआ है कि हमारा समाज उसे विभिन्न रूप में देखता है। कभी वह देवी नजर आती है तो कभी ममतामयी माता, कभी वह सहधर्मिणीपत्नी की सूरत में दिखाई देती है तो कभी योग्य और आदर्श बहन एवं बेटी के रूप में उभरती है। हदीस शरीफ में पुरुषों को संबोधित करते हुए कहा गया है कि "औरतों के साथ मुहब्बत और नरमी का सुलूक करो, वह तुम्हारे घर की जीनत भी है और उनकी खुशी में तुम्हारी भी भलाई है।"

महाभारत में तो एक सीन पर कहा गया है कि जहाँ स्त्रियों का आदर होता है वही देवता भी निवास करते हैं और जहाँ स्त्रियों का निरादर होता है वहाँ सभी क्रियाएं फलहीन होती हैं। इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं कि सृष्टि की रचना से वर्तमान समय तक महिलाएं अपना कार्य पूरी ईमानदारी एवं लगन से पूर्ण कर रही हैं। वर्तमान समय में महिलाएं शिक्षा, राजनीति, मीडिया, कला एवं संस्कृति, सेवा क्षेत्रों, विज्ञान तथा प्रद्योगिकी आदि के क्षेत्र में भी भागीदारी कर रही हैं। समय समय पर भारतीय समाज में कुछ महिलाओं ने अपनी सशक्त पहचान बनाई है। बेगम रजिया सुल्तान, रानी लक्ष्मीबाई, मदर टेरेसा, एनीबेसेंट, बछेन्द्री पाल, सरोजनी नायडू, इंद्रा गांधी, कल्पना चावला, किरण बेदी, प्रतिभा देवी सिंह पाटिल, शहनाज हुसैन, सौनिया मिर्जा इत्यादि के नाम मुख्य रूप से लिए जा सकते हैं अर्थात् प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में महिलाओं ने अपनी महत्ता का लोहा मनवाया है फिर भी बड़ी हद तक इसकी स्थिति दयनीय है। पुरुष संसार वाले इस समाज में आज भी महिलाओं को द्वितीय सीन दिया जाता है भले ही इसने विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में पुरुष से बेहतर काम किया है। मैं यह नहीं कहती कि आज पूर्ण रूप से केवल महिलाओं का ही शोषण हो रहा है, बल्कि अगर देखा जाये तो अन्य वर्ग भी शोषण का शिकार हो रहा है। हर ताकतवर आदमी अपने से कमजोर का कहीं न कहीं शोषण जरूर कर रहा है। केवल मानव जाति में ही नहीं बल्कि जानवरों एवं कीड़े मकोड़ों में भी हम इस शोषण प्रक्रिया को आसानी से देख सकते हैं कि किस तरह बड़ा अपने छोटे को निगलता है।

यदि गंभीरता से देखा जाये तो हमें अंदाजा होगा कि पुरुष शोषण की तुलना में उन महिलाओं की संख्या अधिक है जो समाज के बेजातीरों का निशाना बनी हुई हैं, क्योंकि स्वतन्त्र व्यक्तित्व के रूप में यदि कोई महिला दिखाई देती है तो समाज उसे स्वीकार करना नहीं



चाहता। इसका कारण यह है कि प्राचीन काल से ही स्त्री पुरुष की दासी या अनुगामिनी बनकर रहती आई है तथा उसका जीवन पुरुष के इशारे पर नाचने वाली कठपुतली की भांति रहा है, फिर भी समय समय पर हमारा समाज किसी घटना अथवा प्रसंग के माध्यम से स्त्री जाति को पीड़ित करता आया है। आज जबकि बहुत कुछ परिवर्तित हो चुका है फिर भी महिलाओं को उत्पीड़न का शिकार होना पड़ता है। यह शोषण कब खत्म होगा कुछ कहा नहीं जा सकता।

यह सच है कि महान दार्शनिकों ने भी स्त्री की महत्ता को स्वीकार किया है, किन्तु जहाँ विचार— विमर्श की बात आती है तो स्वयं को ही श्रेष्ठ समझता है, वह उसके विचारों से लाभ तो उठाता है किन्तु खुलकर इजहार नहीं करता। आज जबकि हमारे देश की गिनती प्रगतिशील देशों में होती हैं, पुरुषों के साथ साथ महिलाएँ भी प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में अपनी सफलता के ध्वज लहरा चुकी हैं, फिर भी उसे वह स्थान नहीं मिलता जिसकी वह हकदार है। उसकी स्थिति में पूरी तरह सुधार नहीं हुआ है। उस बराबरी का स्थान देने के लिये बहुत सी बातें की जाती हैं किन्तु सदियों से चली और ही ना बराबरी और शोषण की यह परंपरा अब तक समाप्त नहीं हो सकी। यदि इंसाफ से समाज का निरीक्षण किया जाये तो हमें अंदाजा होगा कि पुरुष मानसिकता की गहरी छाप कहीं न कहीं स्त्रियों पर भी पड़ी है, यही कारण है कि शिक्षित समाज का हिस्सा होने के बावजूद आज भी लोग सौ साल पुरानी जहानियत रखते हैं, ऐसे लोगों से मुझे केवल इतना ही कहना है कि समाज के निर्माण एवं विकास में पुरुषों के साथ महिलाओं की भी विशेष भूमिका रही है। यदि पुरुष समाज की रीढ़ की हड्डी है तो स्त्री दिमाग है। इसलिए आवश्यक है कि उसके स्वतंत्र अस्तित्व का महत्त्व समझा जाये, उसे सजावट की वस्तु समझने के बजाये पूर्ण मानवाधिकार प्रदान किया जाये तथा ये अधिकार केवल कागज तक सीमित न हो बल्कि घर परिवार में भी उसे लागू किया जाये ताकि समाज के झूठे ठेकेदार उनका शोषण एवं दमन न कर सकें।

## INTERVIEW



HONOURABLE CHAIRPERSON  
**DR. REKHA SHARMA**  
*National Commission for Women,  
New Delhi*

**Swati Nanda :** Given the rise of women's professional aspirations (especially in traditional cities like Varanasi) in the New India, what would be your general advice to the new generation?

**Hon. Chairperson :** Girls of New India must make their dreams a reality. They can do so only when they

have dreams. Unfortunately, dreams of many of our girls today are limited by marriage. They must come out of this. They must live a life beyond marriage. They should get married to men of their choice. They should have complete control of their lives.

**Swati Nanda :** It is being seen that in many cases, men/boys are not taking women's rising aspirations in a positive way and this is leading to conflict within families and violence outside, how should the new generation girls/women handle this?

**Hon. Chairperson :** Indian women have always stood for their rights. Yet, they have never suppressed men. Girls need to remember that they are individuals in their own right. They must not bow down to the societal pressures that reinforce gender differences in various spheres. We need to tell our girls and boys that they must evolve their mindset to understand both girls and boys can do all kinds of work whether it is about being a teacher or a doctor. This has to begin from the families. If one generation devotes itself to training their children in such a way, the future would automatically be taken care of. I would also insist that girls of today must have knowledge and understanding of various laws of our country that supports and promotes gender equality.

**Swati Nanda :** Skill India Mission has created a lot of space for women, yet many of our womenfolk (especially in traditional places like Varanasi) still do not avail the advantages given by the mission, what should be done for this?

**Hon. Chairperson :** If we bring up our daughters just as we bring up our sons, then this problem would not arise. We should set education and financial independence as goals of our daughters just like our sons, they will look for ways to have skills.

**Swati Nanda :** How does the National Commission for Women see itself in integrating women in the government programmes?

**Hon. Chairperson :** We are primarily an advisory body and our job is to provide suggestions to the government to improve its programmes with a view to empower women. We have just made a survey of the aspirational districts identified by the Niti Ayog and have compiled of all the results into a report and are in the





process of sending it to the Government of India. We are also planning to send these reports to the concerned states so that the respective governments take note and work towards improving the areas. We are also supporting seminars and research proposals to support women's entrepreneurial dreams such as starting their own businesses. We are also spreading the messages of gender equality through various programmes for school students with a view to support the governmental mission of bringing complete gender equality by 2030. We are specifically focussing on SDG No.5 and on legal awareness of both girls and boys. We feel awareness can help us to change the situation in a big way.

**Swati Nanda :** What would be your message to the younger generation of women in cities like Varanasi?

**Hon. Chairperson :** My message to the girls of Varanasi is that they should try to be independent. They must aspire to get education beyond the college levels. They must have some special skill or expertise that will help them to earn their own money. I would again tell the girls not to make marriage the most important things of their lives. I would also tell that to the boys.

## ENLIGHTENING LUMINARIES ON THE FORUM OF STREE VIMARSH

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- a Shri Prakash D. (IPS), I.G. Zone, Varanasi
- a Shri Nitin Ramesh Gokarn, Commissioner ,Varanasi Divison
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