

Inside

Introducing the new EC members (Profile)	2
Announcements	3
National Consultation on Sexual Harassment on University Campuses	4
Note on Women and Regional Histories	5
Report of the 8th National Conference of IAWS, Pune	7
Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth : A Report	19
Reports & Information	20

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Editor's Note

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On 3rd November 1998, Pandit Sapkale, the prime accused in the Jalgaon sex crime case has been acquitted by the division bench of the Bombay High Court comprising of Justice N Arumugham and Justice Vishnu Sahai. The High Court overturned the order by the Pune sessions court, which had sentenced Sapkale to seven years rigorous imprisonment. The Sessions Court had found Sapkale guilty of raping a minor girl, and sentenced him to seven years rigorous imprisonment, and a fine of Rs. 6000. The High Court judgment in acquitting the accused has used arguments that indicate that the women's movement's efforts to fight rape have still to reach the judiciary. We look at the judgment, and other judgments that reflect the trend of disbelieving women in cases of sexual violence in this newsletter. In this context, the effort of the IAWS and the Human Rights Department, Central University of Hyderabad to hold a national consultation on sexual harassment on university campuses, is significant. More details are inside.

We would like to invite readers to respond to the issue of violence against women, and to share with us efforts made to counter violence and harassment in your areas of work. In addition, we repeat the usual request for the following:

- * **analytical reports** of workshops, seminars, meetings. (700 words)
- * **announcements** of seminars, workshops, courses, etc.
- * **reviews** of recent works in women's studies. (approx. 700 words)
- * poems, songs
- * **letters** (approx. 300 words)

Send all the newsletter material to :

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We hope that you will respond so that this newsletter will be different from any other!



INTRODUCING THE NEW EC MEMBERS

For various reasons, we were not able to introduce all the members in the last issue. To complete the process....

Nirmala Banerjee

Professor of Economics at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. Nirmala Banerjee has worked as an economist/ town planner for the West Bengal government. She is a founder-member and joint secretary of Sanchetana, a 15 year old women's organization in Calcutta. She is also a founder member of DAWN international network. She has been studying women workers in the urban labour market since 1970.

Rohini Gawankar

A retired Reader and Head of Political Science at SNDT University, Rohini Gawankar is the first President and founder-member of the Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Vyaspeeth. She is the Vice President of the Mahila Dakshata Samiti, and the Maharashtra Federation of University and College Teachers. She has authored *Contribution of Maharashtrian Women to Politics* and conducts training camps for women members of gram panchayats. She has recently been awarded Meritorious Service to keep alive Netaji's ideology and foster the spirit of patriotism by the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Memorial Trust for the book, *Captain Lakshmi and the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. (Contribution to Indian Freedom Struggle)*

Maithrayee Krishnaraj

Maithrayee Krishnaraj retired as Professor and Director of Women's Studies at SNDT University. She joined the Department in 1975 and has given her unstilted efforts to see it grow into a premier centre. Beginning with a Master in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics, she branched into

education, and taught education and economics for some years. She has published widely on many aspects of women's studies, has been a visiting faculty in Syracuse and New York University. Her Ph. D was on women and science. She was Professor of Women's Studies and has held the Chair in Women and Development at the Institute of Social Sciences, the Hague for two years. She has been associated with the IAWS from its inception and was President for a part of the term in 1992. She has worked on many national level committees, and was Chairperson, National Resource Group of Mahila Samakhya. She is editing a series for STREE, Calcutta, on 'Theorizing Feminism in India', with 22 contributors on various themes, some of which is nearly ready.

Jayshree Vencatesan

Jayshree Vencatesan is a student of Home Science, and is currently working on a Ph.D on Gender, Biodiversity Conservation and Food Security with Prof. Ranjit Daniels. She has worked on policy research in the area of food security, and has published papers primarily on the issues of myths and realities about women's work and gender and conservation in academic journals, like Indian Journal of Gender Studies and Current Science. Her other interests are drawing and painting. She is married with one daughter.

Seema Sakhare

Seema Sakhare has been active in the Indian Women's Movement for two decades. She has taken an active role in the campaign against rape in the early 1980's, following the Mathura rape case. She is the founder member of the Stree Atyachar Virodhi Parishad, Nagpur, which works on the issue of violence against women.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The IAWS wishes to announce its decision that the registration fees for the IAWS conference will not be returned in the event that the person concerned has not attended the conference. No correspondence on this subject will be entertained.

Courses

The Research Centre for women's Studies, SNTD University, Mumbai will be conducting an interdisciplinary refresher course in Women's Studies from 2-25th March 1999. Sponsored by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi, the course is open to university and college teachers in Maharashtra. Eligible teachers have to be from the Humanities and Social Sciences stream, with at least 5 years teaching experience. The idea is to familiarize them with basic concepts in women's studies, and to explore socio-economic and political determinants of women's lived experiences.

Participants will have to route their applications through the heads of their institutions. Women outstation participants will be provided boarding and lodging in the campus. Men will have to make their own arrangements for stay.

Rules governing re-imburement of travel and dearness expenses are as follows:

- 1.) Traveling
 - a.) Journey by the shortest route.
 - b.) Second class train fare for participants from destinations within 500 kms.
 - c.) First class train fare (on production of tickets) for participants from destinations beyond 500 kms, or if the journey entails 12 hour or more of traveling.
 - d.) AC, AC sleeper class will not be reimbursed.
- 2.) Dearness Allowance
Outstation participants will be paid Dearness Allowance (after deduction of the boarding and lodging costs) only during the refresher course, i.e., 2-25th March 1999.

Address for Correspondence:

Contact:

Research Centre for Women's Studies,
SNTD Women's University,
Sir Vithaldas Vidyavihar Juhu Campus
Mumbai 400 049
Tel: 022-612 6648, 612 8462, 612-8493
Ext. 227/ 297/ 298.

The Unit for Women's Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences is organising a UGC Refresher Course on Women's Studies entitled, Gender Issues in Development: Perspectives and Methodologies in Research and Training from 13th - 30 April 1999. The policy of the UGC has been to encourage lecturers from all disciplines to participate in Refresher Courses on Women's Studies and has laid down participation as a criterion for career advancement.

The broad objectives of the course are:

- ◆ To equip participants with historical and critical perspectives on women and development.
- ◆ To provide empirical knowledge on women's situation in various spheres.
- ◆ To examine the emerging methodologies in training and research.
- ◆ To understand the methodologies through case studies

Since the Refresher Course aims to provide sound perspectives on gender issues, along with an introduction to Research Methodologies, we invite applicants from Phil/ Ph.D. scholars from all disciplines to register for the course, as ten seats have been reserved for the same. We expect that expenditure on travel and food to be borne by the scholars. However, in special cases, some assistance can be availed of to meet the costs.

For further details, contact:

Lakshmi Lingam, Reader,
Women's Studies Unit,
The Unit for Women's Studies,
Tata Institute of Social Sciences,
Sion Trombay Road
Deonar
Mumbai- 440 088

NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

INDIAN ASSOCIATION for WOMEN'S STUDIES and HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMME, Department of Political Science, Central University of Hyderabad.

The incidence of sexual harassment on university campuses has been increasing in alarming proportions. Despite a two decade long struggle against violence against women in the country, protests against sexual harassment on university campuses has been muted in some instances, and non existent in most. When concerned students and faculty make efforts to build up an organized protest, university authorities are often unwilling to take a strong stand on the issue, shielding the accused by volition or default.

The Supreme Court judgment on 13 August 1997 on sexual harassment in the workplace enables groups to take up cases in a serious and systematic manner. The University Grants Commission has also circulated a set of guidelines to all heads of universities to set up cells to deal with individual cases. However, there is considerable confusion regarding the applicability of the Supreme Court judgment to university campuses as well as the nature of the UGC guidelines, i.e., whether they are mandatory or recommendatory, and more importantly, whether the guidelines preclude the implementation of the Supreme Court judgment.

In an attempt to resolve these confusions, and move towards a national coalition on sexual harassment

on university campuses, the *Indian Association for Women's Studies and the Human Rights Programme*,

Central University of Hyderabad will be organising a two days consultation on 23 rd and 24 th January, 1999 at Central University of Hyderabad. Accommodation and local hospitality will be provided at the HCU campus. Members of university communities and other educational institutions who have been involved in struggles and protests on the issue are invited to make presentations at the consultation. Students and faculty of universities and other educational institutions are requested to seek travel assistance from their institutions. University departments, women's groups and university based women's studies centres are encouraged to provide travel assistance to students. Students who have been

active on the issue, and have no access to these sources of support may please get in touch with the IAWS Secretariat with details of their work on campuses and we will try to find support on a case by case basis. We invite concerned members to University communities to participate in this important debate.



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Note on Women and Regional Histories

The importance of regional histories and comparative research can scarcely be understated. While there has been considerable work on social reform and feminist historiography in different locales in the subcontinent, a comprehensive understanding of 'regional histories' has not yet emerged in any significant way. Further while there is work on various trends within each region, there is a virtual absence of any systematic comparative research that looks at parallel, continuities and disjunctures between one region and another. In looking at Women and Regional Histories, we need to delineate specific thematic divisions and regional priorities, as well as conceptual clarity on notions of citizenship and identity - especially the ways in which they intersect with gender and region. Moments for social reform in the early part of this century provide an illustration. More recent movements that have signalled the rise of regional politics often in opposition to a homogenising national politics provide yet another illustration, the flip side being the assertion of regional identities within a region, for instance the Telangana movement. It would also be interesting to look for histories of women's work and issues of participation in organised and unorganised labour struggles. A peculiarity of India is the wide variation in the work force participation rates of women in different regions. Yet another area of inquiry would be that of state and public policy in relation to regional histories with specific emphasis on law and legal changes. What are the directions that legal reform has taken in different regions? What are the issues that it has focussed on? Environmental histories and literary histories also have not been explored enough. Demographic trends are also region and culture specific. In other words workshops would aim at identifying work on political, social, demographic, legal, environmental, literary and economic histories. The framework of workshops in each region would be determined by the specificities of that region and its priorities. These workshops will aim at drawing up a comprehensive review of work that has already been

done on region specific trends and what gaps there are in each region.

Call for Papers

Reconstructing Women's Histories in Western India

The IAWS proposes to hold a two-day seminar jointly with the Research Centre for Women's Studies (RCWS), SNDT Women's University, Juhu Campus, Mumbai - 400 049. It is tentatively scheduled for early June 1999 at the RCWS, to discuss new and unpublished research papers on the following themes :

- 1) Women and the Social Reform Discourse
- 2) Women and Education
- 3) Women and Work
- 4) Women and Politics
- 5) Women and Cultural Representations
- 6) Women and Demography
- 7) Women and Law
- 8) Women and Environment

The RCWS invites indications of intention to write papers on any of these themes, with the following details : name, address, academic status, present occupation, and a one-page abstract. The complete papers will have to be submitted one month before the seminar in order to facilitate circulation, and revised versions (if required) of the papers accepted for publication will have to be submitted about a month after the seminar. The selected papers are proposed to be published either by the IAWS or the RCWS.

Focus on Women's Health : Critique of Programs and Policies

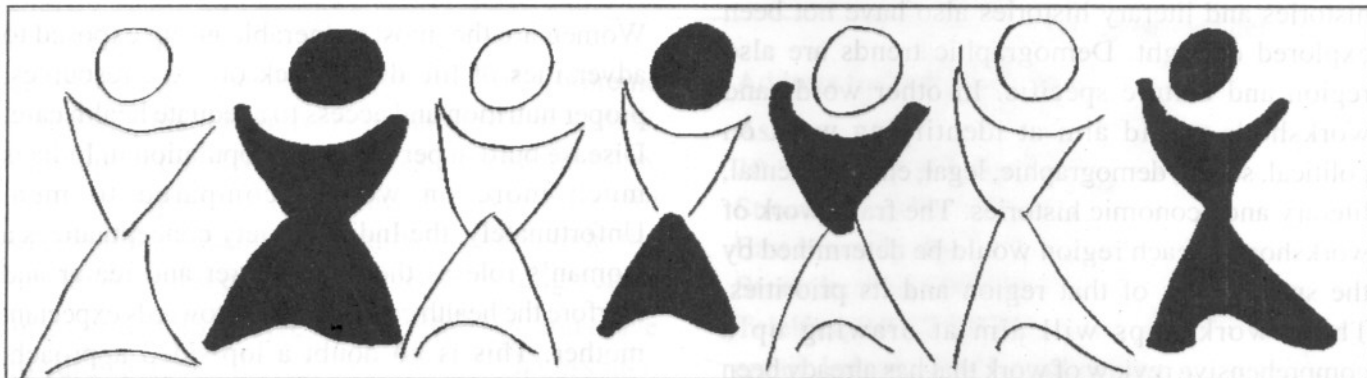
Women are the most vulnerable group exposed to adversities of life due to lack of basic resources, proper nutrition and access to adequate health care. Disease burden per thousand population in India is much more on women compared to men. Unfortunately, the Indian society conceptualizes a woman's role as the child bearer and rearer and therefore the health care is targeted towards expectant mother. This is no doubt a lop-sided approach,

which ignores the health needs of the women at various stages in their life cycle. A holistic, mental and social - in an integrated fashion. Many of the specific women's health concerns have emerged from this framework. Moreover, the government programs and policies having impact on women's health require critical appraisal from a gender perspective. Women's responses to the health care system, service delivery, population policy, biomedical and other technologies affecting reproduction and health need to be highlighted and properly documented. The impact of environmental degradation and policies of environmental management affect women's health. Women's health is very much linked with biomass availability, the declining productivity of resources, and increasing workload for those women who depend upon these resources for sustenance. A national official policy on resettlement and rehabilitation is not adequate to meet the requirements of displaced people from various development projects such as dams, mines, power plants etc. The people have lost their resources of subsistence and women are the hardest hit. Therefore there is a need to look at women's interface with the environment and the policies addressing environment, development, and settlement. Economic context of these stresses upon women's health is the global and national trend towards privatization and structural adjustment under the new economic policy.

Under the auspices of the Indian Association of Women's Studies, we hope to focus on the following aspects of the women's health and examine the related government programs and policies critically taking into account historical as well as contemporary developments.

1. Health-care system and service delivery
2. Puberty growth disorders
3. Reproductive health, contraception and fertility regulation
4. New reproductive technologies, infertility
5. Menopausal health and aging
6. Occupational health
7. Mental health
8. Community health and communicable diseases
9. Women, family welfare programs and population control
10. Development and displacement
11. Environmental health, globalisation and food security
12. New economic policy, employment and survival
13. Women and pharmaceutical industry
14. Women, livelihood and nutrition
15. Violence and its impact on physical and mental health
16. Legislation and reproductive rights
17. Medical education and medical ethics
18. Women and genetic engineering

The IAWS proposes to hold a two-day seminar jointly with the Women's Studies Unit, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, P.O. 8313, Sion-Trombay Road, Deonar, Mumbai- 400 088. It is tentatively scheduled in the last week of May 1999 at the TISS. We invite indications of intention to write papers on any of these themes taking into account regional specificities, with the following details: name, address, academic status, current position etc. and a one page abstract. Please write to Dr. Lakshmi Lingam, Reader, Women's Studies Unit, at TISS.



Report of the 8th National Conference of IAWS, Pune

SUB THEME 1

INTRA-HOUSEHOLD ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Coordinator: Padmini Swaminathan

The focus of the sub-theme as outlined by the coordinators was to examine and to reflect on whether, over the years, 'woman-focused' schemes of intervention specifically aimed at empowering women to overcome different disabilities, have in fact made an impact on the household. If so, in what manner. Women's studies have identified the household as the primary source of patriarchal oppression. The sub-theme was conceived to further our knowledge and capture the changing dynamics of the household consequent to increased empowerment of women, particularly as a result of increased employment and educational opportunities.

The theme was discussed over three sessions. The papers were grouped into three broad categories to fit the three sub-themes of (a) theoretical and methodological issues, (b) regional and sectoral issues and (c) unraveling the black box - the household itself.

On the theoretical level, it was argued that there was need to make a distinction between patriarchy and patriliney to have a nuanced understanding of the structure, composition and (gendered) functioning of the household. What was also emphasized was the manner in which patriarchy and patriliney have coalesced to give the Indian household certain specific characteristics.

On the methodological level, the discussion centered around the manner in which the Indian data systems define and collect information on the individual, family and household. It was pointed out that a gender-sensitized approach to even the existing frameworks of the Census and the NSS (the major data collecting systems of the country) would go a long way in eliciting quality information on

the household. At the micro level, the participatory research approach was argued to be more useful in eliciting information on the dynamics of the household.

The papers that dealt with women's paid employment and its impact on the household brought out in detail how the organisation of production and the nature of women's work combined to marginalise women's contribution to the household and consequently their status within the household. Worse, women themselves have internalised disempowering and negative characteristics that made it harder to bargain for a better position within and outside the household. At the regional level, the paper on Punjab very clearly pointed out that economic development had increased the work burden of women without concomitantly increasing their remuneration or bargaining. More important, the desegregated data on the nature and pattern of development within Punjab also revealed how different paths of development impacted differently on households within each path of development. The study of Nepal's Tharu community, besides having parallels with the Indian situation demonstrated what 'modernisation' was doing to the community.

The 'within-household-dynamics' focused on three starkly marked out categories of women, namely, widows, parityakta (castaway or abandoned) women, and minority (Muslim) women. These labels themselves were disempowering and the papers brought out very clearly how any attempt to address the disabilities faced by these women within and outside the household continued to be met with stiff resistance more for the social disturbance it would inevitably lead to. A positive note was struck by the paper from Rajasthan which spoke of an innovating programme aimed at bringing more girl children into the educational system through the appointment of shikshakarmis (women education workers).

SUB THEME 2

WOMEN'S AUTONOMY AND REPRODUCTION: PUBLIC POLICY AND PRIVATE LIVES

Coordinator : Lakshmi Lingam

This Sub - Theme was devoted to understand 'Women's Reproduction and Autonomy: Policy and Private Lives'.

The representation, violations and annihilation of the body has received greater attention in the various campaigns of the movement. The campaigns against various contraceptives and a coercive population policy marks the beginning of the discourse on reproductive autonomy in India.

The multiple players in the arena of health: the Government, the NGOs, women's groups, freelance consultants and so on, throw fresh challenges to the movement and women's studies.

The sub - theme sessions focused on policy analysis, research evidences and strategies. The major highlights of the sessions are as follows.

The Reproductive and Child Health policy introduced in the country in April 1996 continues to be 'Old wine in a new bottle'. It was also pointed out that the limited focus in reproductive health apart from neglecting the various factors that contribute to women's low health status, it also neglects women's health in other vertical health programmes, like malaria, TB and Leprosy. It was observed that production of bulk and essential drugs is on the decline cast of drugs is spiraling ; market is flooded with unessential drugs such as high cost Multi vitamin and potency drugs; as a result of globalisation and pressure to abide by patent laws and international trade regulations. This is at the cast of poor men, women and children.

The analysis of the draft population policy documents revealed the coercive dimension of the policy inspite of it masquerading as women and girl child friendly.

Research covering aspects such as menstruation, abortion, Reproductive Tract Infections reproductive decision - making, and health seeking

behavior from the Government, provided a glimpse of the pan - Indian scenario, that reiterates, the close relation of health to women's status. Class, caste and gender variables play a significant role. It was evident that women's autonomy or reproductive autonomy cannot be attained by dabbling with any one factor.

The final session discussed strategies in the sub - theme session and also at a sub - group level. The group strongly recommends that sub - theme on health of women should be a permanent concern of the IAWS.

Resolutions:

- 1.) The IAWS notes with deep concern that women's health is viewed exclusively in terms of reproductive health.
- 2.) The IAWS recommends that the Reproductive and Child Health Policy programme has to be broadened in its focus to locate women's health within comprehensive health care system.
- 3.) The IAWS strongly opposes all forms of discrimination against women, in the gives of promoting small families, which deny women the right to public office, access to basic services, public distribution systems employment, education and the like.

SUB THEME 3

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Coordinator: U. Vindhya

The sub - theme Violence Against Women, as expected, was full of brutal and chilling details about various forms through which women are brutalized and traumatized and served as a reminder to us once again that women's rights to life, liberty and dignity are constantly under threat in our society. Although the issue of violence was a prime concern of the women's movement in its early years and had initiated a heightened awareness of gender based inequalities, that it continues to be major concern was demonstrated perhaps by the fact that this sub - theme received the largest number of papers, though uneven in quality. The presentations were

mostly by women studies researchers and those from academic institutions and what seemed to emerge from most of the papers, by and large, was that violence continued to be sharply delineated and viewed over and above anything else as a "women's issue".

The sub - theme was divided into three sessions, based on the thematic consistency of the papers. The first session was on Forms of violence : Empirical reports from different states, the second dealt with strategies, perspectives and the law, while the third session focused on representation of violence in literature.

The point that was repeatedly emphasised during the discussions was that although issues of land, wages, employment, health and so on have begun to dominate our concerns in the current women's movement, there is an ever urgent need to emphasise on systematic violence as a central concern. With the poignant refrain in the background of the ever increasing scale of violence it was emphasised that we need to re-examine our ways of intervention and to continue to build public opinion by exposing the very agencies of protection - the police and the judiciary in particular - and their collusion in perpetuation of violence.

A theme that came out strongly was that the nature of violence itself is undergoing a change in the context of consolidation of patriarchal forces unleashed by liberalisation as well as fundamentalism. The situation in Rajasthan was repeatedly cited to highlight the point that more ominous than the increasing crimes against women is the attitude of the ruling B.J.P., the votaries of Hindutva in the state. A demand raised frequently by women's groups over the last several years for the setting up of a Women's Commission and a Human Rights Commission in the state has been disregarded by the B.J.P government. It showed great enthusiasm, however for setting up a Commission for the Service of Cows last year! The anti-women pronouncements and attitude of the ruling section reinforces the silence shrouding injustice and excludes women from the realm of rights, justice and dignity.

The presence of a broad-based women's movement is challenging status quoist forces. Despite the enormity of the scale of violence, sustained intervention by groups and organisations at the micro-level have made an impact on the public discourse around violence. Various modes of resistance, from community justice in Rajasthan to vigilante groups in Manipur were highlighted and the urgency of networking between various women's groups and other democratic organizations was repeatedly addressed. And yet it was also felt that solutions to endemic violence cannot be general, but have to be context-specific.

No discussion on violence is possible without referring to the law and so an issue that came up often was can women get adequate protection and retribution against violence when the existing criminal procedures are framed in ways that demand evidence that do not address the realities of the violated women. This has been a long-standing contradiction for the women's movement. Thus the dilemma whether even laws considered to be progressive and favorable to women such as 498A of IPC can be effective in a biased legal and social system was addressed with a number of illustrations. The problems that confront women right from the time of registration of the case in the police station, to judicial pronouncements that view women mostly as the bearers of duties and obligations to perform but not of rights were discussed. What is of grave significance in all these violations of women's rights is the role of the state. The point that was once again made was that while the institution of legislative provision, by and large, the consequence of a massive mobilisation of women, is a necessary and useful step, it can be subverted by a state dominated by decadent social and patriarchal values, as the judicial decisions in numerous cases attest to.

Another dimension brought out was the communalisation of a law like section 498A IPC in the city of Mumbai. In the wake of the communal riots in the city in 1992-93, the adversarial relationship between the police and the Muslim community (due to communalisation of the police

force) has had a direct impact on Muslim women's right to seek protection from domestic violence.

The paper presentations and discussions during the three sessions highlighted the problem of endemic and systemic violence against women. Some of the papers however, marked by a lack of analytical and methodological rigor, were indicative of the chasm between the women's movement and its supposedly academic arm, women's studies. It is perhaps a sign of the state of affairs in women's studies research that it is still far behind what has been documented by the women's movement nearly two decades ago.

SUB THEME 4

WATER AND FORESTS: EQUITY AND SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

Coordinator: V. Rukmini Rao

In this sub theme, we looked at issues related to forests, agriculture and women and water use with a focus on drinking water. The impact of globalisation on fisheries and other natural resources was also examined.

Forest issues

It was noted that over the last 150 years the history of forest management and access to forest resources has been an area for struggle. With the coming of the British, this pattern changed with colonial rules taking control of forest resources and disenfranchising local communities systematically. Struggles led to a recognition of people's needs and the forests were divided into various categories, with some areas earmarked for use by the communities.

Peoples movements with emerging leadership of women such as Chipko and Apiko have focused attention on the needs of women. The current Joint Forest Management programmes provide an opportunity to give women leadership. Due to the inherent gender biases women are excluded at present and active interventions by NGOs and people's movements are necessary to ensure women have their rightful share.

Communities of Fisherfolk

The study of communities of fisherfolk in Visakhapatnam showed the impact of mechanisation. This had created differentiation in the community, shifting of women from sale of fish to other work in the informal sector such as domestic work and pauperisation of families without a means of production such as their own boat. The depletion of fish in the area made the work extremely risky. The study corroborated findings elsewhere in the country.

Agriculture and Technology

The papers related to introducing new technologies to farm women examined agricultural practices, and introduction of sustainable agriculture methods.

The following discussion highlighted:

- the need to carry out research with gender sensitivity;
- Technologies put out in the "extension mode" made false assumptions which led to rejection of the promoted technologies by women.
- Technologies do not meet women's needs.
- To develop and introduce new technologies we have to first understand the prevailing situation and existing skills of women.

Approaches to Watershed development

Studies highlighted that current approaches to watershed development neglected the role of women in land and water management and that there was a need to involve women actively. In this context, the experience of Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangham showed that to make women effective, it is necessary to provide them with technical skill and knowledge in all aspects of watershed development.

Drinking water and Sanitation

Studies from Maharashtra showed that the government of Maharashtra had worked out an elaborate gender policy to implement its policy. The included providing space to women on local committees, employing women as water persons and creating women friendly technology.

Participatory planning appears to be practiced in rural programmes, but there was a need to look at the programmes critically. Very often people are

brought into to process at the implementation stage and no genuine, informed choice is possible at that late stage. With drinking water schemes we need to challenge whether piped water from long distance is a solution or whether local conservation, and management should be promoted.

The papers and the discussions highlighted :

- 1.) The need to make more gender sensitive analysis.
- 2.) The need to examine research methodologies critically and make them more people centered.
- 3.) A number of participating methodologies are now available and these can be used to do "research from below" rather than in a top-down manner.
- 4.) For gender studies to be effective, it is important to link up with ongoing movements and concerns of the women's movement.

SUB THEME 5

LAND ALIENATION AND DISPLACEMENT : IMPACT OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND URBANISATION

Coordinator : Ritu Dewan

The 3 sessions in this sub-theme were structured in the following manner:

Session I had three major presentations which laid down the basic issues and parameters. Dr. Walter Fernandes gave the opening paper delineating some fundamental issues.

Session II took up seven case studies were taken up which dealt with some issues, that is:

1. Sardar Sarovar Project (Narmada)
2. Raigad district in Maharashtra
3. Chittoor district in A.P
4. Santhals of Bihar
5. Cotton Farmers' Suicides in A.P.
6. Migrant Women Workers
7. Earthquake affected families and widows in Latur, Maharashtra.

Session III was a special session on Issues of Tribal

Women presented by Tribal Women themselves from Thane district of Maharashtra and Udaipur district of Rajasthan. Five women shared their first hand experiences and analyses of issues involved in displacement relating to their own villages.

A large number of issues were focused upon in the course of the sessions, a few of which are detailed here:

I Definitions of Displacement

- Direct displacement from Land and Sea

This raises the fundamental issue of why and how the state dispossesses the poor to benefit the rich. Land is acquired from the poor with little or no compensation and given free on extremely low leases. This is a form of large hidden subsidies to the private sector and multi-national corporations.

- Indirect Displacement

Displacement indirectly induced through displacement of large and prosperous villages which give employment to people from neighboring areas, destruction of sources of livelihood such as denial of access to forests, to common property resources, minor forest produce, grazing of cattle, diversion of water and power to industries etc.

- Displacement due to Industrialisation

Destruction of environment and natural resources due to industrialization - water - logging, erosion, desertification, salinization, pollution etc. rendering both the land and sea unusable as well as reducing productivity levels so drastically that people are forced to migrate.

- Urban displacement

Displacement due to demolition of slums and relocation if at all to areas unrelated or too distant from the regular sources of livelihood and employment. Unfortunately no paper dealt with this important issue.

II Impact of Displacement on Different Sections, especially Women.

- (1) Unemployment
- (2) Increased dependence on wage labour which is erratic/ seasonal/ casual/ unskilled/ low paid and highly exploitative.

- (3) Reduced role of women in economic activity whether on land or sea or in access to the labour market.
- (4) Sharp reduction in calorie intake and nutrition levels.
- (5) Increased mortality rates due to loss of medicinal herbs.
- (6) Breakdown of whatever traditional community support structures that had existed.
- (7) Prostitution, alcoholism, wife - beating, gambling.
- (8) The worst impact is on children; often it is the cause of emergence and increase of child labour.
- (9) Denial of access to safe sanitation, leading to increased vulnerability to physical and sexual violence.
- (10) Downward economic and social mobility of especially tribal people.

III Rehabilitation

- (1) Women are given little or no information of even the announcement of acquisition; they are not involved in the choice or design of alternate rules, if they are to be resettled at all - only a fourth of those directly displaced are ever re-settled. About 26-27 million have been displaced by mega-project alone since 1951 in India.
- (2) As rehabilitation is generally based on land ownership as recorded in land records which we know are badly kept and very often manipulated, women as non - owners are not recognized generally as ousted / affected.
- (3) There has been little , if any, rehabilitation of landless and fisher folk. To quote a Kohli (fishing community) woman who has been displaced in Maharashtra: "The Government can give a piece of land to the cultivators. Where will I get a piece of the sea?"
- (4) India has **no** Resettlement and Rehabilitation policy to date.

IV Conclusion

The entire issue of displacement of all types relates to the basic pattern of the socio-economic system

as well as the development models and paradigms being followed by the state today particularly after globalization. Also, it related to the issues of priorities of investment

Dealing with displacement means not improving compensation packages or having a better Resettlement and Rehabilitation policy but opposing the basic socio-economic system and development models and paradigms themselves.

SUB-THEME 6

FOOD SECURITY AND ENTITLEMENTS

Coordinator: Amita Shah

The sub-theme on Food Security and Entitlements was set on to discussing the three broad categories of issues:

- The macro level processes pertaining to production, aggregate supply and consumption.
- The actual access or entitlement with special reference to Public Distribution System (PDS) as a variant and a prime source of entitlement for the landless poor.
- Intra-household allocation of food from the view point of a gender perspective.

In all, there were 12 presentations over the three sessions, besides inputs from three Chair Persons namely, Prof. Utsa Patnaik, Dr. M.H.Suryanarayana, and Ms.Renana Jhabwala.

The discussions during the three sessions reinstated official policies that emphasise criticality of self sufficiency in food grain production. It was asserted that this would necessitate, notwithstanding the recent developments of liberalisation, a close monitoring of (a) commercialisation and diversification on the production front; and (b) stimulating the productivity growth especially of foodgrains-of late, the growth rates in foodgrain production has trailed behind the population growth.

It was argued that while recent trends of diversification for export markets is a move in the wrong direction, it was however felt that selective and gradual commercialisation for domestic market should be supported through appropriate price as well non-price interventions. On the issue of

productivity, the need was felt to explore options on two fronts: (a) institutional i.e. land reforms and collective access to cultivable waste lands to the poor and to women; and (b) technological i.e. a proper mix of external inputs and indigenous practices. Moreover, it was emphasised that the production base ought to be broadened through more and more of local initiatives and through more skillful and informed blending of farm technologies.

The group discussed at length the changing consumption pattern reflecting a net decline in cereal consumption. This has taken place by shifting away from coarse to finer cereals and from cereals to non-cereals. Such a consumption pattern may have undesirable implications on the production front which then is forced to adopt mono-culturing and thereby reduce the options within a farming system.

Also, it was noted that the decline in average cereal consumption is taking place at a stage when a large proportion of the population is facing calorie-insecurity. This reflects gross inadequacy and inefficiency in the food distribution system. In the context of the recent efforts - rather, pressures - to revamp the PDS, it was pointed out that the need is more to include the poor (Type I error), rather than to exclude the non-poor from the PDS net.

Given this backdrop, the group discussed some of the encouraging experiences in terms of local initiatives - taken up by the collaborators of The Action Aid in Orissa and Rajasthan; and by SEWA in Gujarat - towards creating people's (women's) institutions to work as "Grain Banks".

A detailed analysis of the ICDS programme in Andhra Pradesh provided useful insights into the shortfalls in actual implementation.

Finally, in the context of hilly region in Uttar Pradesh, it was felt that the crucial issue is to unravel the phenomenon of male migration which brings a complex combination of autonomy and at the same time, excessive work burden for women.

Unfortunately, the group could not discuss much on the third issue of intra-household dynamics of food security.

To sum up, some of the important features emerging from the discussions, could be highlighted:

1. Need to check export oriented diversification on the production front.
2. Foodgrain production have to be made more broad based. This would call for improving the access of the poor to the land and water resources and; proper blending as well as dissemination of technology especially in the rainfed/dryland regions.
3. Careful analysis of the secondary data for properly gauging the incidence of food-insecurity among various categories of people.
4. Correcting the Type-I Error while revamping the PDS.
5. Questioning the wasteful consumption pattern of the top 20 percent of the Indian population so as to achieve not only better distributive justice but also reduce the burden on land and water resources and simultaneously improve women's access to such resources.
6. Scaling up the local initiatives for food grain storage as well as distribution with women playing special role in managing these institutions.
7. Finally, lobbying by the NGOs and other groups for decentralising the planning and implementation of schemes like ICDS. Women's representatives in Panchayats might take a lead in this direction

SUB THEME 8

CULTURE, REPRESENTATIONS AND MOVEMENTS

Coordinator: Jasodhara Bagchi

I would like to begin with a disclaimer. I will not be giving you an enumeration of the paper and the names of the presenters. I shall talk about the way that disparate voices talking about disparate modes of gendered representations have contributed to the debates that have been resonating through the conference. How does culture throw up representations that challenges the existing ordering of our society that is caught within fundamentalism and globalisation.

Culture, could be both nourishing and constricting. India, as a post - colonial country, is specially

manipulation by representations of women. Control of women through representation has been a standard device for arriving at a consensus that way used for nation building purposes.

The fifteen papers that were presented and discussed and one or two others that could not be read but are being circulated, addressed the problem through every of a variety of forms and genres of representation: cinema, television advertisements, popular romance, gendered perception of marginal languages or marginal social groups like eunuchs, oral narratives and folk painting traditions going back to pre-colonial times and coming down to the present times, realist experiments in mainstream visual art forms in the forties, a powerful contemporary intervention in theatre, literature. Discussions also veered round problems and dilemmas within the family, feminist practice today and self hood in a segment of backward caste girls.

Out of this rich form of multiple voices what came out was the concern about *laksman-rekhas* drawn around the *Bharatiya Nari* and the complex ways this needs to be addressed. For this it is clear there are signal that are available to us in several experiment like those of Ashapura Devi or Kamal Desai who belong to the recent past, of realist experiments of Marxist painters in which stereotypes had been contested and spaces opened up. Oral narratives from Rajasthan, or patios depicting the good woman/god binaries have used the dominant representation yet some of the earlier forms show variations and choices that are no longer available to the colonial and post colonial varieties. Representations in all these areas also show negotiations with the socio-historical forces that help the present phase of the movement to relate representation to the current reality. Widowhood, motherhood, chastity and women's sexuality linked up with the social order. Nation building process etc., came up for a lot of discussion in their representational form. The subversive potential of some of these community based representational stereotype were revealing in the presentation about an interventionist theatre. In the present global era with all the high tech hype representation of women

appears to have shrunk to the *grihalakshmi* type. The fashion - designer clothes specially in the Western modish versions do not seem to have brought Indian woman any closer to her real potential. The deliberations also made it clear that to counter this globalised trend with the fundamentalist one of *Bharatiya Nari* world reinforce the *lakshman rekha*. Naming the site of the nuclear blast as *shakti - path* is a clean indicator of this threat.

Finally I dedicate this session to M.F. Hussain who has had to face unaccountable humiliation in the name of Indian culture and its authorised version of Representation.

SUB THEME 9

WOMEN, WORK AND RESISTANCE

Coordinator: Samita Sen

We received 33 abstracts and papers combined. Of these, 24 were presented at the Conference. The presentations included a wide range of themes and case studies from different parts of the country. In order to facilitate discussions, the papers were grouped in five separate sessions. a sixth session comprised a panel of speakers on aspects of the 'Economic Marginalisation of Women'.

New Economic Policy

There were two general papers examining the possible long-term gender implications of globalisation. One paper discussed the gender stereotyping in the labour market, another examined a possible 'feminisation' of labour under MNC regimes.

The other papers were case studies. One paper examined the conditions of employment in the extended region of the Bhilai industrial estate where the operation of fly-by-night capitalists have instituted a highly insecure and exploitative contract labour system. Some unusual aspects of the labour movement in the area were discussed. It combines protest activities with social activism and other 'constructive' efforts. The other papers examined the impact of new economic policies on women's self-employment. They argued that contrary to professed claims of policy-makers, such

employment was declining.

The discussions centred around the specificities of the Chhatisgarh case and the unusual nature of labour movements in that area. There was some discussion around the contrast between this kind of activism and conventional trade unionism.

A more general question was raised about the definition of 'globalisation'. Could it be interpreted in purely economic terms? Were we running the danger of ascribing to it ills wrought by a complex admixture of other economic factors?

Forms and Organisation of Labour

This session included 6 presentations covering different sites of (manufacturing) labour deployment - the factories and mills (privately owned and run under co-operative schemes), small workshops and the unorganised sector (including self-employment and home-based activities). The first paper examined the highly gendered impact of liberalisation on the sectoral distribution of labour and its rewards in the Indian economy. Some of the papers examined the new forms of women's participation in newly mobile manufacturing enterprises under the regime of the NEP. Two papers discussed the variety of exploitative arrangements under which women worked in unorganised and home-based economic activities.

The papers appear to indicate a gradual blurring of the sharp distinction between the organised and the unorganised. This carries enormous implications for modes of labour resistance. There was some debate on whether the convention 'political' trade unions or the 'ten paise' shopfloor based unions or whether even smaller more informal more collectives were the way forward. The underlying issue was whether 'consciousness' (with its association with dichotomies like 'true' and 'false' and with teleologies of progress) offered a viable theoretical tool for understanding of labouring women's workplace behavior which was characterised by collusion, negotiation, contestation and conflict. Moreover, the older 'class versus gender' debate, it was pointed out, has reached an inconclusive cul de sac. Some argued that the need of the hour is to grapple with the multiple identities of poor women

(and men). It is important to relate individual protest, collective resistance and informal groupings to the complex historical and political conjunctures within which different identities come into play and find expression.

Household, Family and Women's Work

In this session, various papers addressed the issues of domestic work (both paid and unpaid), self-employment, household-based work and women's entrepreneurship. In discussions about women's access to credit, questions about their effective rights to property were raised.

There was also some discussion about NEP and its differential impact on various segments of the population. This raised questions about the desegregation of data (and arguments) in relation to the NEP. One paper examined the impact of NEP on Muslim women in Mumbai. The argument was that the recent rounds of retrenchment did not affect these women directly since they were never inducted into the formal sector in the first place. But the loss of male employment in the household pushed these women into more intensive home-based work that was highly exploitative.

Gendered Attitudes

There were 7 papers in this session. There was one conceptual paper arguing the importance of psychology as an important tool in understanding some of the complex issues around women's relationship with the workplace. She argued that mainstream psychology as practiced in India was too blinkered to address or even raise these issues. Yet, there was much potential for a reappraisal of the possibilities of the discipline.

The other papers addressed specific issues - mostly on micro studies. There were papers on the attitudes of working and non-working women, on the question of sharing of household work among household members and the different experience of 'working wives' and 'housewives' in this regard, on sexual harassment in the work-place, and on the ways in which working women coped between the conflicting demands of the family and the workplace.

Resistance and Empowerment

There were two papers in this session. One described the Mahila Samakhya organisation and stressed the need for multi—directional intervention in economic and social lives of poor rural women to achieve some measure of 'empowerment'.

The second paper was a study of time-use patterns among rural women in Karnataka and concluded that there was no major discernible gender differential in the time men and women spend working.

Panel on 'Economic Marginalisation of Women'

One paper discussed the case of handloom weaving in Hooghly district, West Bengal. She discussed some of the changes that had come about in the last few years (some possibly due to SAP and Liberalisation). Women had previously been excluded from the task of weaving by a ritual bar though they undertook all the preparatory and finishing tasks. With the emergence of powerlooms and the relatively more attractive prospects they offered, the men migrated to mills and workshops, leaving the relatively poorly rewarded handloom weaving which the women were then permitted to take on. The sexual division of labour is thus reconstituted - but on the same basic principle that women undertake the more less lucrative and inferior tasks.

The second paper discussed the artificial gem industry in Tamil Nadu. This had previously been a rural work-shop based industry where the workers and employers belong to the same castes (in the same village) and where labour was organised and retained by 'baki', i.e., debt-bondage. The system allowed employers to maintain a steady labour force to serve a steady market. Moreover, the work required special skills. The employers were keen to retain skilled workers. In the mid-1990s came the American Diamond. The availability of sophisticated machinery to produce a standardised product and a greater dependence on a volatile export market completely transformed the industry. There were now young semi-educated women from nearby towns who came into the workshops from a

mixed caste background and were paid wages. The debt-bondage system was not longer required, rather the employer was more interested in retaining flexibility in the handling of labour. But these women found this opportunity of earning an independent income relatively empowering.

Another paper discussed a project aimed at desegregating data on the NEP. She pointed out that the nature and organisation of labour was intimately linked with the character of the industrial/manufacturing unit. The current trend was to combine the skills that were earlier parceled out through the assembly line. While this enabled employers to undertake retrenchment of unskilled labour and increased the workload of those who retained their jobs, it also encouraged development of multiple skills. The trade unions in emphasising very narrow job descriptions have undermined the possibility of workers acquiring these multiple skills which would help in a tighter labour market.

The last paper discussed the importance of treating questions of women's economic roles in the context of marketisation or commercialisation (or liberalisation or structural adjustment) in a long-term historical perspective. The changes that are occurring at present are part of very long process - it is the processual nature of this changes which need much more attention that it has merited so far. She too stressed the importance of desegregating the differential and variable impact of various aspects of economic policy. After all, globalisation is not only an externally imposed exigency - as has been repeatedly pointed out - there has been substantial Indian demand for Liberalisation. there are gainers and losers and other left relatively unaffected by these set of policies. It would be useful to take a more nuanced approach to questions of liberalisation, globalisation, NEP and SAP (the definitional differences between these remained relatively unclear in their usage throughout the conference). The importance of institutions like the family and the household (along with others) showed how local community institutions mediated 'globalisation' or attempts to contain such forces and how these were inevitably disempowering for

women. These 'local' institutions are critical for concretising policies and determining their operation on the ground. The interplay of the local and the global is thus the immediate, proximate and crucial context against which policy implications must be examined.

There was a discussion on the marginalisation of women in trade unions, as in other political mainstreams, as being old history. The autonomous women's movement emerged from precisely that recognition. The big trade unions are still resistant to questions of women's and children's separate interests.

The Chair person discussed the importance of long-term economic marginalisation of women and argued that why women go in and out of the labour market requires careful analysis. There is little significant improvement in age of marriage or of child-bearing - women enter the labour force when they are already wives and mothers and these latter are roles which carry specific responsibilities which they cannot under any circumstance negotiate. As a result, entry into the labour market substantially increases women's workloads. And when they fail to cope, they must withdraw from the labour market, since they cannot escape housework.

SUB THEME 10

STATE AND SHARING OF POLITICAL SPACE

Coordinator: Medha Kotwal Lele

The papers in this sub theme centred on three issues, that is:

1. Reservations for women in the parliament and state legislatures in the context of the 81st Amendment Bill.
2. Case studies based on experiences of grass root activists who had contested elections or had been elected as sarpanchs or based on survey work done in selective areas.
3. General papers on the present status of women in the decision making bodies at various levels.

Larger and important political issues of fundamentalism and communalism within which we

must locate our gender politics remained unexplored.

The First day's workshop was titled **Groping Towards an Agenda**. In this session we had three papers. The first paper, "Towards an Agenda for Gender Politics." identified two issues being currently debated by the movement as well as scholars. One, the issue of the Uniform Civil Code and the second, the issue of reservations. About the first, a consensus seems to have been reached. About the second, there seems to be a unanimous consensus asking for reservations. This unanimous consensus somehow was very disturbing. The paper argued that both issues were not being located historically nor in the larger broader political context within which we operate. We must locate our debates in the history of the process of the formation of the modern democratic Indian state in which the important landmark is the Hindu Code Bill controversy. Ambedkar's insistence on the codification of the Hindu personal law has a double significance. One, the constitution which outlined a concept of citizenship and basic human rights did not touch upon the religious life of the majority of Indians while religion (for the majority Hinduism) was nevertheless a site for the preservation and reproduction of inequalities among Indian citizens. Therefore, the need for the codification of the Hindu code to be able to address these inequalities.

These arguments were linked to the context of the 81st Amendment Bill. We seriously discuss the issue of quotas within quota as a way of arriving at a truly democratic position.

In the second paper "**Negotiating for Legitimacy: Policy for women in Maharashtra**" there was an analysis of the relationship of the state apparatus with women in the context of the policy document. There has been a change in the perception of women on the part of the state, at least apparently, from objects of compassion to partners in the process of development. The dangers of this view is that development benefits never really trickle down. In the end under the name of development women are the losers. The state seeks legitimacy by putting forth apparently progressive policies and appropriating the language of the movement.

The third presentation made an open plea for changing the political culture by active intervention by women with gender consciousness.

The second day's workshop was **Case studies from different states.**

Two case studies presented were members of the Shetkari Sangathana, a peasant movement led by Sharad Joshi. This movement had put forward, prior to reservations being declared, an argument for 100% women panchayats. Both the speakers had put up such panels and their papers raised issues from these experiences.

One paper pointed out that after reservations were declared, one change was that no longer are the *sarpanchas* and *upa sarpanchas* from the upper castes alone. To some extent, this has changed the politics in the villages. It has made some difference to women at the personal level. This was basically

in terms of self confidence. However, the threat of a no-confidence motion from the other members of the panchayat made women sarpanchas vulnerable. The reaction of men to the 81st amendment bill was negative as they feel they will be denied access to power. An argument was made for the need of affiliation with a political party or group for effective and proper functioning of the panchayats.

The other paper held that making Gram Sabhas more effective was the only way to counteract the domination of the upper castes and classes. Until a person could stand up and ask a question to an upper caste/class person in the open gram sabha it was not really possible to break the hegemony of the upper class and castes.

The point was raised that the issue of alcoholism needs to be looked at seriously by the women's movement. It is a challenge before the movement. We need to expose the close links between political power and the liquor lobby.

A case study based on survey work and interaction with the mahila pradhans in the Varanasi district in UP discussed their role and effectiveness. The family does not necessarily become a support. Instead, house care and child care makes her responsibilities as a pradhan a part time job. The men in the family relocate themselves to play the role of the pradhan. The last paper was a study of Goa and was based on the survey work done by

Seema Salgaonkar. She argued that Goa was a different kind of state being culturally very different from the rest of India. The Portuguese influence as well as the Indian or rather Hindu culture had given rise to a culture where women had a different status. This was contested by some of the participants.



The last day **Political Participation and Women** had four presentations of a general nature.

One paper argued that greater participation of women can take place only if women received education. Political parties must give greater number of seats to women to increase their participation levels.

Another discussed the present status of women at the different stages of the decision-making process. The next paper argued for accountability of elected women. According to her, reservations have adverse effects as more women with political connections have come to power.

The last paper argued for reservations without any other considerations as a necessary first step.

MAHARASHTRA STREE ABHYAS WYASPEETH: A REPORT

Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth was established on 14th March 1992 at Pune. Dr. Rohini Gawankar and her friends and colleagues from the women's studies movement, felt the need to establish a regional women's study organisation. As a member of the Executive Committee of the IAWS, Rohini Gawankar had put forward the proposal to start such an organisation at the Maharashtra level in Delhi in 1991. The members of the EC liked the idea and asked Rohini to take the initiative. Divya Pande and Vibhuti Patel as academicians, and Sudha Kulkarni and Neelam Gorhe as activists, volunteered to help her. A meeting of nearly sixty teachers and activists—male and female—was held in Pune and the dream of establishing the Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth was realised on 14th March 1992. Today, the Wyaspeeth has a strength of 150 life members, 45 ordinary members and 5 ordinary members.

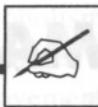
The Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth has accepted the Constitution, aims and objectives of the IAWS in toto. The Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth has decided to hold bi-annual conferences, especially in small towns, so that the

message of gender equality and women's studies reaches the common woman. Until 1997, the Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth has organised three conferences in backward areas of Maharashtra.

The Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth is aware that until the students are reached, women's studies will not prosper. Therefore, the Wyaspeeth arranges three or four Yuvati Melas annually in colleges in different cities. The melas last for a day, and some time is kept aside to explain to the students various issues, such as, what is women's studies, what is the importance of women's studies. In the afternoon, the students are made to articulate their problems. Now, different colleges are taking the initiative to organise such melas.

The Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Wyaspeeth has published the Marathi translation of "What is women's studies?" written by Neera Desai and Maitrayee Krishnaraj. Two books on the women's movement are forthcoming. The Wyaspeeth had organised the IX National Conference in Pune in June 1998.





JALGAON RAPE CASE: ACQUITTAL BY HIGH COURT.

The Bombay high court overturned the judgment of the Pune Sessions Court on 3rd November 1998, acquitting the prime accused in the well known Jalgaon rape case. The bench of the Bombay High Court comprising of Justice N Arumugham and Justice Vishnu Sahai ruled that Sapkale be set free if there were no other complaints against him. The grounds for the acquittal were that the 'alleged victim', a minor girl had not disclosed about the rape to her family on the day of the incident. Further the FIR was lodged five days after the incident, and the medical report showed that the girl was 'used to sexual intercourse'.

What lends this case poignancy is the sequence of events. Sapkale and his accomplice, Raju Tadvi, had been arrested for their involvement in sexual offenses. The police had appealed to girls in Jalgaon who had been exploited by the duo to come forward and testify against them. It was only when this was reported in the newspapers that the girl confided in her family, and an FIR was lodged on July 3, 1994. Given this situation, it is not difficult to understand the reasons for the delay in the FIR. The sexual history of the victim has been used in this case, as in many other cases before it, to malign the woman. The logic that a woman who has sexual experience can not be raped is a patriarchal truism, which feminists in India have been combating. It might be fitting to end with the remark made by a judge of the Kerala High Court, that the way we treat a rape victim is a mark of the civilisation of our system. Keeping that in mind, the recent judgment raises fundamental questions.

Announcement for Fellowships

Dear Friends,

Unit for Women's Studies at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences announces Fellowship for designing and formulating research proposals on Women's issues. Based on the nature and scope of work and the kind of data required, fellowship ranging from Rs 10,000 - 20,000 would be made available. The fellowship would be for a period of three months. Lecturers who wish to pursue their PhD. or activities from Non-Government Organisations are especially encouraged to apply. The candidate selected would be provided interaction with the faculty and access to our documentation Centre. Fellowships would be useful for those who wish to undertake exploratory study, or review of literature. Accommodation is likely to be available for the candidates during vacations.

Please send in your proposal at the following address :

CHHAYA DATAR
Unit for Women's Studies
Tata Institute of Social Sciences
 P.B. 8313, Sion Trombay Road,
 Deonar, Mumbai - 400 088.
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