



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

Rashtra Mahila

VOL. 1 NO. 221 | DECEMBER 2017



@NCWIndia



@NationalCommissionforWomen

www.ncw.nic.in

e newsletter

Snippets



Exchanging Ideas with State Commissions for Women



Ms. Rekha Sharma, Chairperson (I/c) in the middle with Mr. Alok Rawat, Member, NCW (left) and Dr. Satbir Bedi, Member Secretary, NCW (right) along with Representatives of State Commissions for Women.



NCW Chairperson (I/c) Smt. Rekha Sharma addressing a meeting organised by Raipur State Commission for Women to espouse the cause of 'Beti bachao beti padhao' scheme.

Tackling Women Issues at One-Stop Centre



Member Sushma Sahu visited a One-Stop Centre at Chajju Bagh, Patna, Bihar, on December 04, 2017 to resolve some cases registered with the Commission and counselled the parties to arrive at a solution.

A PIO delegation visits National Commission for Women

A delegation of Persons of Indian origin visited India in December 2017, as part of the 44th chapter of the Know India Programme. The delegation comprising 40 young students and professionals from countries such as the Fiji Islands, Guyana, Israel, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, South Africa, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago, visited the National Commission for Women on December 18, 2017. The delegation had a detailed interaction with the NCW team on issues relating to gender equality and equity, women empowerment, protection and privileges available to women in India and measures being taken for gender mainstreaming in the country. The PIOs were appreciative of the fact that the Commission, which by itself is a small body, discharges its role in partnership with NGOs, universities, the police, State Women Commissions, and other Commissions at the National and State level. The delegates were informed that in some cases, the Commission also partners with international organisations.

The delegation was also apprised that the National Commission for Women takes all steps to address the special needs of women residing in different parts of the country at each stage of their life and ensures that various laws such as the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the Dowry Prohibition Act, Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, Maternity Benefit Act, and other laws are properly implemented. ■





Edit Note

Women emerging stronger

The year 2017 will be remembered as the beginning of a new era in the process of women empowerment, as women, the world over, shedding their inhibitions and reservations, opened up and placed in public domain the harrowing stories of harassment, and of denial of their due owing to entrenched prejudices and prevalent patriarchy.

#MeToo became the platform for women to talk about their abusers without being ashamed for it. Speaking up and voicing complaints, has led to demolition of the psychological barriers that prevented women from speaking out in open against their harassment. In India too, more women ranging from celebs to commoners are speaking up, finding their voice, reading and reacting to each other's experiences and building a movement as if to say 'no more to such wrongs'.

Our social and cultural arena including the advertisements and movies has witnessed a discernible shift in the stance for treating women with equality, and advocating for their rights.

Such empowerment of women coupled with the freedom to think on their own and act according to their will and not be subjected to diktats of others has paved the way for women to rise above the traditional norms and position themselves as equal partners in all activities. ■

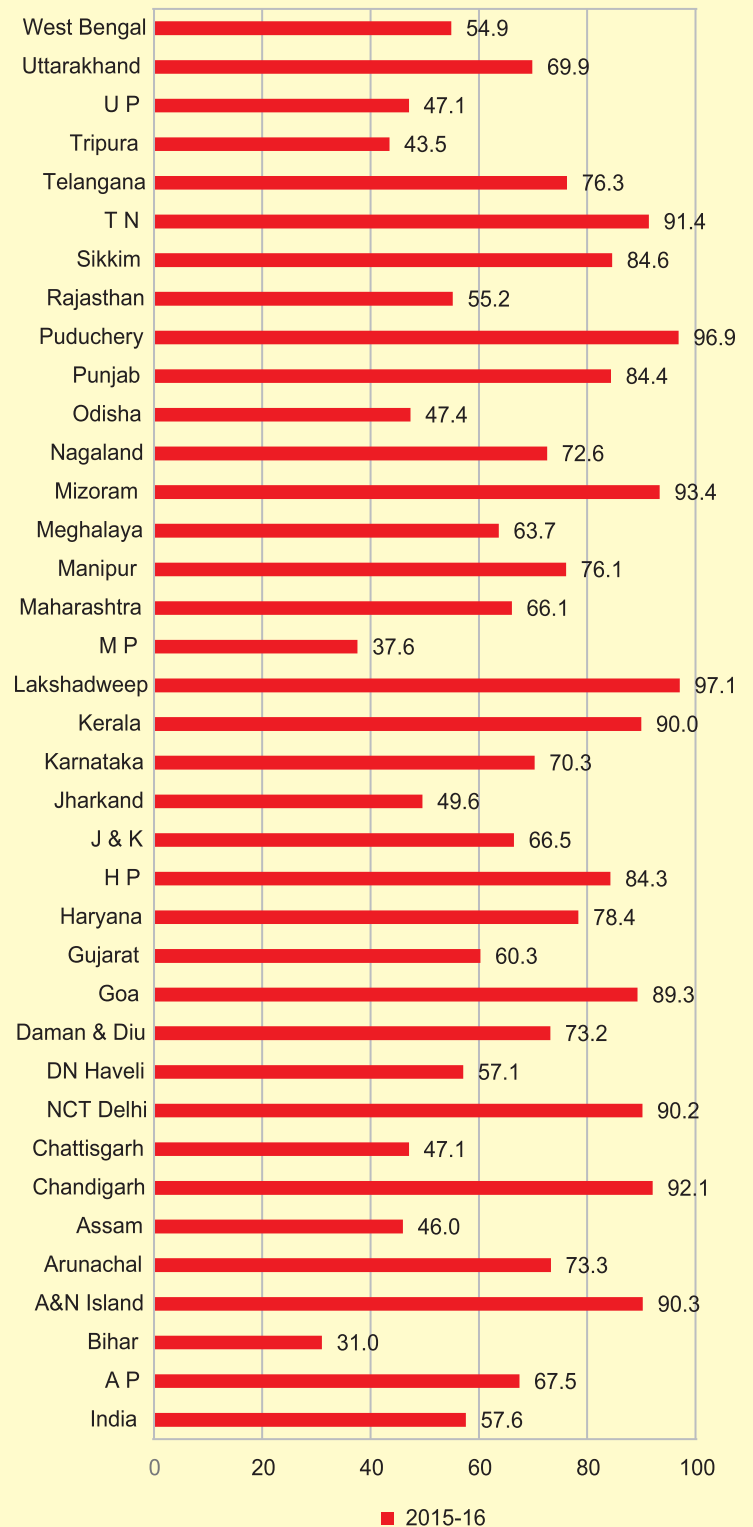
Commission inspects Tihar Jail



As part of its ongoing initiative to inspect Jails across the country, the National Commission for Women has devised a comprehensive proforma for evaluating the facilities available for women in Jails. All Jails in the country have been asked to fill up the proforma and make it available to NCW. A four-member team of the Commission visited Tihar Jail on November 22, 2017 to assess the treatment of women inmates and the state of their living conditions and facilities available including skill development, hygiene, medical facilities access to legal representation, a fair and speedy trial, proper living conditions, etc. The Commission is working closely with Jail authorities on how to address and rectify such problems. ■

Statistically speaking : Women & Personal Hygiene

The graphic representation of data collected during NFHS 2015-16.



Source: NFHS-5 2015-16

Manipur: Training of Women Members of PRIs



A two-Member team of the National Commission for Women comprising Member Shri Alok Rawat, and Sr. Coordinator, Ms. M. Lilabati, visited Imphal, Manipur on November 28, 2017, to hold discussions with the State Government and the National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Hyderabad for finalising the Capacity Building Training programmes of Elected Women Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Manipur. ■

Haryana: Creating awareness from the ground level



Speaking on the eve of a one-day programme on Legal Awareness organised by Amity University, Haryana on November 09, 2017, Member Sushma Sahu emphasised that awareness about the legal rights of women need to be generated at the ground level more particularly, in our homes, schools, colleges, among colleagues and, in fact, amongst all those whom we meet in our day-to-day life. The programme was part of the National Commission for Women's drive to create awareness through Nation-wide Competitions about legal rights of women. Member Sahu also shared her experience with participants. ■

From NRI Cell

- ➔ A complaint was received from an Indian woman residing in Auckland, New Zealand, regarding marital disharmony with her husband, an NRI living in Auckland, New Zealand seeking intervention of the Commission to resolve the matter amicably. Since both the parties were in New Zealand, NCW had taken up the matter with the High Commission of India in New Zealand to counsel the parties. The Head of Chancery, High Commission of India, New Zealand has informed that both parties have sorted out their issues and a petition of mutual divorce is already with the court.
- ➔ A complaint by the sister of an Indian girl residing in Finland was received wherein it was mentioned that the husband harassed and abandoned her sister in Finland. The victim was staying alone there and assistance was sought so that she could stay and work there. The matter was taken up with the Embassy of India in Finland and a prompt reply was received mentioning that Consular Office had contacted her telephonically and confirmed that she was pursuing a health care course in Finland and her parents and in-laws were contemplating in India the issue of divorce. The Embassy ensured her that if she required any further help she could contact them. ■

Outreach Programmes by NCW in 2017

Seminars and Research Studies by PPMRC	15 Seminars and 6 Research studies
Legal Awareness Camps	59
Review of Law	1
Legal Awareness Programmes in colleges	1051
Capacity Building Programmes of Judicial and Police officials	04
Interactive Meets with State Commission for Women	03

Pro-Woman Judgements of 2017

➔ *Independent Thought vs. Union of India*

In this case, a division bench of Supreme Court held that sexual intercourse with minor (below 18 years) wife is rape.

➔ *Pawan Kumar v. State of Himachal Pradesh*

In this case, Judges held that it has to be kept in mind that a girl has a right to life and is entitled to love according to her choice. She has an individual choice which has been legally recognised. It has to be socially respected. No one can compel a woman to love. She has the absolute right to reject. ■



Successful Interventions by the Commission

Denial of Maternity Benefit Rights

In a case of denial of Maternity Benefit, a mid-level woman executive working for more than three years in the Human Resource department of a Real Estate Developer Group operating in the National Capital Region filed a complaint via e-mail with the National Commission for Women. She alleged that she was being forced to resign/accept termination of her services on account of her pregnancy. She further alleged that she had been issued a termination letter, upon her refusal to tender resignation.

The Commission intervened in the matter and followed it up by holding a hearing. At the hearing, both the parties produced documents to substantiate their case. Based upon the facts ascertained during the hearing, the Commission advised the respondent to assess the matter raised by the complainant in the light of the rights granted to her under the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 and flagged the consequences of denying the benefits of our legislation. The Commission was able to assist the complainant in getting back her job in the same company. ■

Mumbai journalist reports indecent behaviour

Reporting a case of indecent behaviour, a woman journalist working as a Senior Reporter in Mumbai sent an e-mail to the Union Minister for Women and Child Development, against the Founder Editor for allegedly misbehaving with her. She had filed an FIR at Amboli police station, Mumbai, and reported that the respondent had filed a WP making her a party in a Criminal WP before the Hon'ble Bombay High Court. She also complained about the lack of progress by Mumbai police in the matter.

The said case, which had been referred by the Commission to Mumbai Police, was taken up during a Jan Sunwai, held at Mumbai. In the Jan Sunwai, the Mumbai police was advised to proactively pursue the matter in the Court, as also with Immigration authorities. Mumbai police has since informed that the accused who was earlier in USA had been kept on watch and was detained upon arrival at Sahar Airport, Mumbai, and produced in the Court. A charge sheet had also been filed in the Court of Metropolitan Magistrate. Further, the criminal WP filed by the respondent was also dismissed by the Hon'ble High Court. ■

Death under suspicious circumstances

During the course of a Jan Sunwai at Jodhpur, Rajasthan, the Commission on 01-04-2017, received a complaint by a Jodhpur resident regarding the death of her daughter under suspicious circumstances at Pune. The complainant mentioned details about the FIR filed at Pune in March 2017 and provided gruesome photographs of her dead daughter with injury marks. The victim was staying with her husband at Pune at the time of her death; Although the husband had been arrested by the local police, the complainant mentioned about the slow progress of investigation at Pune. The NCW team referred the matter to the Police Commissioner, Pune and pursued it further, and took it up in the Jan Sunwai held in Pune on 27-06-2017.

The Commission's constant efforts led to a charge sheet being filed against the husband under various sections of IPC. The Commission also enabled counseling to the complainant through District Legal Service Authority (DLSA). ■

Policy: "Triple Talaq" a criminal offence

On December 28, 2017, the Lok Sabha passed a Bill that makes instant "triple talaq" a criminal offence. The Bill proposes a three-year jail term for a Muslim man who divorces his wife by uttering the word "talaq" thrice. Earlier, in August 2017, the Hon'ble Supreme Court had invalidated utterance of the word "talaq" three times. The verdict would ensure that a Muslim woman's marriage remains intact and like all other women, they too have a recourse in law both criminal and civil. Keeping in view the reservations of certain sections of society, the Bill could not be considered in the Rajya Sabha. ■