



Editor's Column

A recent survey conducted by a well-known TV channel and newspaper 'The Hindu' shows that 50 percent of voters across 18 states wants the next Parliament to be elected in 2014, to have one-third women MPs. The support for reservation for women spills across gender, regional and state divisions.

Unfortunately, the Bill, which holds the potential for transforming India's political reality and substantially empowering women has been hanging fire for the last 14 years after it was first tabled in the Parliament. The National Commission for Women has held numerous consultations on the subject and also

with Members of Parliament. Most MPs profess ostensible support for the Bill, yet the Bill cannot be passed because some regional parties are bitterly opposed to the Bill. These parties want further quotas for their own constituencies like the OBCs, Muslims and Dalits within the 33 percent women's quota, so that these marginal

groups get fair representation in the Parliament. If that concern was indeed genuine, the parties should have nominated greater numbers of OBC, Muslim and Dalit women candidates. Actually, it is the patriarchal psyche among our political class, which does

not want to create more space for women in Parliament and State Legislatures. Although no one says it openly another reason for opposition to the Bill is that the Parliamentarians are afraid that once the Bill becomes law, overnight their numbers would be reduced.

However, as all major political parties are supporting the Bill, the government has the numbers on its side to pass the Bill during this monsoon session. A last attempt should be made by the government to push the Bill before the next election and gauging the mood of the electorate in the recent survey, all you know, passing of this bill could be advantageous for the ruling party.

WOMEN FOCUS RESERVATION BILL

Intervention by NCW

Calling it a "shocking breach of women's had issued a showcause notice to the Delhi cognizance of news reports of CCTV footage pornographic websites. NCW Chairperson highlighted a serious security lapse on the violation of the privacy of the passengers. report from DMRC within two weeks what was being done to ensure that it was conduct surprise checks in Delhi Metro to see Metro or not.



Chairperson Mamta Sharma

privacy" the National Commission for Women Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) taking of some Delhi Metro passengers uploaded on Mamta Sharma said, "this incident has part of DMRC and the CISF and a serious. The NCW has asked for an action taken explaining how the lapse had happened and not repeated". NCW is also proposing to whether women are being harassed in the

Status of complaints received in the month of June, 2013

Month	Opening Balance	Complaints Received	Number of complaints on which action taken	Complaint cases closed	Complaints pending for action
June 2013	Nil	2,282	2,282	678	Nil

The commission took suo motu cognizance of 28 cases in June, 2013

Important NCW Numbers : NCW Reception: 011-23237166, 23234918 • Complaint Cell: 011-23236153, 23219750, 23213419 • NRI Cell: 011-23231222

● Ms. Mamta Sharma, Chairperson, National Commission for Women inaugurated Vijaya Bank's all-women branch at Janakpuri, in New Delhi on July 02, 2013. Shri H.S. Upendra Kamath, the Bank's Chairman & Managing Director along with a large number of women customers were present on the occasion.

● Ms. Sharma inaugurated a training workshop on "Gender Sensitization and Gender Justice" organized by Police Training College, Indore on 25th July, 2013. Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Sharma urged women police officers to be sensitive to women's issues. As police

the focus of her second tour of the state. She said that NCW, for the first time, would be opening a stall at the famous Puri-Jagannath Ratha Yatra. The stall would educate women on their rights and showcase various programmes relating to women's empowerment. Brochures, posters and booklets, printed in Oriya language would be distributed at the stall for raising awareness among lakhs of women visitors. Later, she left for Puri to inaugurate the Puri edition of "Nirbhaya Samaroh", organized by OYSS Women as a countrywide tribute to the Delhi gang-rape victim as part of the Honour for Women National Campaign.

Inaugurating the festival, Ms. Sharma said that violence against women cannot be stopped without participation of the civil society. Hence, sensitization and mobilization of public through innovative means like Nirbhaya Samaroh could go a long way in country's fight against atrocities on women.



Ms. Mamta Sharma addressing the workshop

are the custodians of laws and security, they must be sympathetic to the societal problems, she said. Stringent laws alone cannot combat atrocities against women unless they are implemented sincerely. Ms. Sharma said that perpetrators of acid attacks on women must be given life imprisonment. She also condemned awarding of punishment by IMS Director to 3 girls for wearing sleeveless T-shirts in college, as nobody could dictate girls of a free nation to wear a particular type of clothes.

Ms. Sharma said that Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal and Chattisgarh topped in crime rate in the country. She urged the Madhya Pradesh State Women Commission to pressurize the government to enforce measures for security of women in the State. NCW Member Charu WaliKhanna, as the Special Guest, discussed in detail, the various types of atrocities committed on women.

● The Chairperson went on a two day visit to Odisha on 9th July, 2013. Speaking to reporters at Bhubaneswar airport, Ms. Sharma said that women empowerment was



The Chairperson inaugurating the NCW Stall

● Before leaving for Delhi, she addressed a press conference at Bhubaneswar and briefed the media regarding several initiatives taken by NCW for women empowerment. She said she was touring the most inaccessible areas of the State, meeting tribal and dalit women and was aghast to see their deplorable living conditions. The state government has even failed to provide the basic facilities; many are surviving on "mango kernels" despite the state government's campaign on providing rice at Rs. 2/-. She also castigated the state government for its callous attitude towards women's security and implementing NCW's recommendations in serious cases it has investigated in the past few months.

Members' Visits

❖ Member Shamina Shafiq as Guest of Honour attended the 4th All India Seminar on "Challenges before Minority Communities", at Jaipur. Speaking on the occasion, she stressed the need for people to work neck to neck for the development of the nation and their community to meet challenges before the minorities. ● The Member was the Chief Guest at a legal awareness programme organized by Gramin Mahila Vikas, in collaboration with NCW at Jajjar in Haryana, wherein she informed women about their legal rights. ● The Member conducted 5 hearings during this period in her chamber.



Ms. Shamina Shafiq speaking at the seminar on "Challenges before Minority Communities"

❖ Member Adv. Nirmala Samant Prabhavalkar attended the Annual Award ceremony of "Shishukunj International



Member Prabhavalkar addressing the award ceremony

School" at Indore. In her address, she said that students should be gender-sensitized at the school, college and university level and parents and teachers should encourage students to treat men and women equally. She said that education should not be limited to creating job opportunities but should be used as a tool for promoting justice, non-violence and women's development.

by National Commission for Safai Karmacharis at New Delhi. The programme inaugurated by Kumari Selja, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment was graced by Shri Rahul Gandhi, Member of Parliament. He assured the participants that the government was committed to abolishing the "inhuman" practice of manual scavenging. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. WaliKhanna said that there was no separate legislation for protection of rights of the safai karmacharis and for regulating their employment. She suggested that to provide dignity to their work, the nomenclature "Safai Karmachari Workers" be changed to "Sanitation Workers". ● Dr. WaliKhanna was the Chief Guest at a workshop on "Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Work Place" organized by Central Bank of India, Mumbai. ● The Member was the Chief Guest at a Valedictory Function of the Public Meeting on Human Rights, organised by the National Alliance of Women in Bangalore. She paid a courtesy call on the Governor of Karnataka, Dr. Hans Raj Bhardwaj and discussed gender issues. ● Dr. WaliKhanna was the Chief Guest at a workshop on "Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Work Place," organized by Container Corporation of India in New Delhi as well as the Chief Guest at a workshop on "Women's Human Rights - Strengthening Capacities and Capabilities" organized by National Alliance of women in Chandigarh.

❖ Dr. Charu WaliKhanna was the Guest of Honour at "International Day of Widows" organized by Guild of Services, War Widows Association & UN Information Centre for India and Bhutan in New Delhi. ● The Member was a speaker at the workshop on "Awareness of Rights and Upliftment of Women Safai Karmacharis" organized



Dr. Charu WaliKhanna, (third from left) at the meeting on human rights

❖ Member Member Hemlata Kheria went on a 5-day visit to Odisha and visited village "Binjhala" in Khurda district to evaluate schemes for women in the region. Over 500 village women, alongwith local BDO, DSWO, CDPO and other officials were present. The officials were directed to attend to the grievances of the women and file an ATR with NCW within one month. Later, she reached Puri where she attended the evening programmes at the 10-Day NCW stall hosted during the Jagannath Ratha Yatra. She gave replies to the questions of women regarding their legal and political rights and the procedures for approaching NCW to register women related complaints.



Member Hemlata Kheria addressing women at NCW Stall

From the Complaints Cell

The Commission received a complaint from Mr. X on behalf of his daughter for dowry demand by her husband and in-laws. Taking cognizance of the matter, hearings were conducted at the Commission, wherein the complainant requested the Commission to get back her dowry articles and "streedhan" from the respondent as she does not wish to continue her marriage. With the intervention of the Commission, two hearings were held. It was decided by both the parties that they would file for divorce with mutual consent and all dowry articles, such as furniture, etc. would be sent back to the complainant's house at Hardoi. "Streedhan" and a demand draft amounting to Rs. 49,000 and a Rs. 1000 in cash was given to the complainant in the presence of the Commission Member Shamina Shafiq.



The Girl's father (right) receiving Draft, Cash & Jewellery

Enquiries undertaken by NCW

- Member Shamina Shafiq along with Advocate Anand Narain Sinha conducted an enquiry into a newspaper report "Stalked by neighbour, UP girl hangs herself in classroom," wherein a 12th class student in Sitapur town was found hanging from the ceiling fan in her classroom by other students. A detailed report has been submitted.
- Member Shamina Shafiq alongwith Ms. Arti Dixit conducted an enquiry into a complaint regarding an alleged incident of kidnapping of a new born child from a hospital of Kanpur in UP. A report with recommendations has been submitted.
- Ms. Shafiq as Chairperson of an enquiry committee conducted an enquiry along with Ms. Yogita Bhayan into a complaint, wherein six persons allegedly raped a woman at Sitamarhi in Bihar. A report with recommendations has been submitted.
- Member Hemlata Kheria as Chairperson of an enquiry committee accompanied by Ms. Manasi Pradhan enquired into the rape and murder of a 14-year blind girl in Puri-Konark marine drive. She visited Beladal village in Puri and recorded statements of the victim's parents and other witnesses. She visited the spot and heard the testimonies of the concerned officials and reviewed the progress of police investigation. The enquiry committee also visited the entire stretch of Puri Beach, Puri Railway station, district hospital and important police stations to evaluate arrangements made to deal with crimes against women.

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