

88 ✓

MINUTES OF THE 38TH MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
HELD ON 9TH FEBRUARY, 1998

At the outset, Chairperson welcomed all present. Shri Ramaiah, Legal Adviser to the Commission was the special invitee. It was decided to take up the legal matters first.

Chairperson informed the Commission that during her visit to Madurai several lacunae in the Family Court Law were brought to her notice. CP was of the view that Government of India and the State Governments should be addressed to remove such lacunae. Shri Ramaiah and Smt. Padma Seth, Adviser(PS) informed the Commission that already in the past NCW has made recommendations for amendment of Family Court Law. It was, therefore, decided that Government of India and State Governments may be addressed and progress of implementation of those recommendations be obtained.

(a) The Family Court should be a mobile court so that it can provide speedy justice in the remotest and far-flung habitations. It was decided to write to State Governments to make such a provision in the Notification which is issued when setting up family courts.

(b) Letters be addressed to all Chief Ministers to set up family courts in each district to provide speedy justice to women.

(c) The judges of the 70 existing family courts be sent a questionnaire and information on the difficulties faced in implementing the Act may be obtained from them. Judges would be assured that the information would be kept confidential.

Amendments be proposed in Hindu Succession Act to provide for a share in the property of the husband for the wife. It was decided a Public Interest Litigation in this regard may be filed as amendments through the due process takes more time.

Smt. Leela Seth, Member, Law Commission may be requested to go through the reports of the successive Law Commissions and bring out a compilation of recommendations relating to women.

The discriminatory provisions provided in Section 156 and 157 (c) of the UP Land Reforms Act may be amended.

It was decided that a separate meeting be called to discuss the amendments in the NCW Act, 1990. Discussion on legal issues ended with vote of thanks to Shri Ramaiah and agenda taken up for discussion.

EM NO.1 : Confirmation of the minutes of the 37th meeting.

Minutes of the 37th meeting of the Commission were confirmed.

EM NO.2 : Action taken report on the minutes of the last meeting.

Review of Acts

Progress was noted.

i) Codification of Criminal Laws for Women

Progress was noted.

(iii) Submission of monthly reports

Progress was noted.

(iv) Amendments to the NCW Act, 1990

Para 1 may be seen.

(v) Allotment of land by DDA

Progress noted.

(vi) Provision of special grants to the ICCW for setting up Sub-station of Delhi Vidyut Board. It was decided that National Commission for Women would bear 1/3rd of the consumer expenditure on the establishment of a sub-station. The remainder should be shared by the ICCW and RMK.

ITEM NO.3 : Film to be produced by NCW.

The Commission was informed that an amount of Rs.3.29 lakhs has been sanctioned as grant to Television, News and Documentary. The agency would film the election campaign of 6 women candidates in the constituencies of Meerut, Mohanlal Gunj, Dhanbad, Vikramgunj, Calcutta and Karol Bagh. The film would be useful for developing the future strategies for the political empowerment of women.

ITEM NO.4

It was decided that after UNESCO conveys the sanction of funds for holding of SAARC Conference, meeting be held

work out the details of the programme. Smt. Manorama
Malla and D.P. Sethi may be kept in mind for helping out
the Conference.

ITEM NO.5 : Grievance and Litigation Cell

The Commission was informed of the progress and
resent status.

ITEM NO.6

The Commission decided to participate in the Social
Development Fair 1998 being organised by the India Trade
Promotion Organisation between 9th-17th May, 1998 together
with the Department. As in the past, the publications of
the Commission and information regarding our programmes
could be exhibited.

ITEM NO.7

The proposal was approved by Commission. It was
directed that the agenda item should be brief.

ITEM NO.8

Approved.

ITEM NO.9

It was decided to participate in the Conference being
organised by USAID on Family Violence between 8th-11th
September.

ITEM NO.10

The Commission was informed of the progress in the preparation of the function to be organised in collaboration with the Department and CSWB on the 8th of March. It was decided that a meeting of the State Commissions would be held on the 6th of March in the Conference Room of National Commission for Women. It was decided that CP would write to the Indian Airlines and Ministry of Railways to provide free tickets to women freedom fighters. A decision was taken to give a memento to the women freedom fighters together with citation.

ITEM NO.11

The Commission unanimously approved of the proposal to request Mrs. Annie Prasad, former Member Secretary of the Commission to prepare an overview of the NCW from 1992-97. She would be provided to and fro air fares and service of a Consultant and other supportive staff for doing this review. The report should focus NCW's successes in fulfilling its mandate despite handicaps. She may also be requested to review the Rules of the NCW. New initiatives taken by the Commission between 1995-97 and 98 may also be highlighted.

The items circulated through supplementary agenda were taken up for discussion.

The proposal to translate the film "Tomorrow is Ours" prepared by Ms Sehjo Singh into Hindi was discussed in the presence of Ms Sehjo Singh. It was decided to provide a grant of Rs.70,000 for this purpose and still photographs from the footage available on political empowerment of women be made available to her. Ms. Singh would also include short clips of Dr. Hameed, Member on what has been done on political empowerment recently and Mrs. B. Sen,

Member Secretary.

NO.13 : Counselling and Pre-litigation Cells be made permanent.

The Commission was informed that a Counsellor had been appointed exclusively for the Control Room, but she has expressed her inability to take up the job. Shri Sadiq Jilani, Law Officer said though it has been difficult for him to manage the Control Room and do work during the day, he was willing to carry on the work with the Control Room if the necessary staff was provided. The Commission was informed that by rotation one Assistant, One Peon and Smt. Jyoti were on duty in the Control Room from the date the Commission took a decision to establish the Control Room in the month of September. Shri Prem Kumar, Driver of the 3rd floor was also placed on duty for the control room. Member Secretary informed that from 5th September to 12th September 97 representations were registered in the Control Room and in 4 cases the complainant was provided shelter at night.

Member Secretary was of the view that most of the complaints handled in the Control Room, should by their very nature be dealt with in the complaint cell. In cases where legal issues were involved the advice of the Legal Counsellor available in the complaint cell could be consulted for advice. CP was of the view that the utility of the Control Room should not be judged by the number of cases alone. The Confidence which has been created in the minds of women by setting up of Control Room should be appreciated. Member Secretary suggested that the Control Room could continue to function with the staff such as Assistant, Peon and Lady Peon and arrangements be made to refer for Mr. Sadiq Jilani whenever an emergency case came. CP desired to have the expenditure on the Control Room

-7-

to be put up to her.

ITEM NO.14

It was decided that Government of India be requested to post a DIG level Officer in the NCW against the vacant post of Joint Secretary.

The meeting ended with Vote of Thanks to the Chair.