

No.6-24/93-NCW

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NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

4, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg,
New Delhi - 110 002

28th July, 1993

Subject : MINUTES OF 7TH MEETING OF NCW
HELD ON 14th JUNE, 1993

Enclosed herewith please find Minutes of the 7th Meeting of National Commission for Women, held on 14th June, 1993. Action taken on the items concerned may please be sent to the undersigned immediately. 8th Meeting of NCW is scheduled to be held on 03rd August, 1993.

(K.K. Kirty)
Deputy Secretary

All Members

Heads of Units

Consultants

✓PAO

PA to Member Secretary

OSD to Chairperson

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MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN HELD ON
THE 14TH JUNE, 1993.

The Seventh Meeting of the National Commission for Women was held at New Delhi on June 14, 1993, under the Chairmanship of Ms. Jayanti Patnaik. The following were present :-

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| 1. Ms. Jayanti Patnaik | Chairperson |
| 2. Ms. Padma Seth | Member |
| 3. Ms. Monika Das | Member |
| 4. Ms. B. Senapati | Member |
| 5. Ms. Annie Prasad | Member Secretary |

Ms. Anna Malhotra and Ms. Rama Devi, Hony. Advisers, attended the meeting as Special Invitees.

Shri K.K. Kirty, Deputy Secretary, Shri R.P. Madan, OSD to Chairperson and Consultants Shri B.K. Samaddar and Shri P.S. Ravindra were also present for rendering assistance.

After Chairperson's introductory remarks, the agenda items were taken up for discussion.

Item No. 1: Confirmation of the minutes of the Sixth Meeting of National Commission for Women held on the 6th April, 1993.

The minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Commission were confirmed subject to the undermentioned amendments to be made in the said minutes as proposed by Ms. Padma Seth, Member :-

(a) Item No. 1 relating to the confirmation of the minutes of the fifth meeting of the Commission held on the 1st December, 1993 to be recast as under :-

" Smt. Padma Seth, Member, informed that the Advisers attend the Commission's meetings only by invitation and when they give their advice to the Commission either in the Expert Committees or otherwise, it is the Chairperson/Members who present the

expressed by the Advisers could form part of discussions in the meeting. The suggestions of the Member was accepted. It was also decided that the minutes should also record in brief the discussions and not merely the decisions taken under discussion that the Member's dissent, if any, should be recorded with these decisions, the minutes of the Fifth Meeting were confirmed."

Item No. 2 : Action taken

(A) The decisions taken at the Fifth Meeting held on the 1st December, 1993

(i) The Commission noted that the Commission met on 28-29 April, 1993 and finalised its recommendations to the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890 and requested the repeal of the Hindu Minority and Educational Institutions Act, 1956. (See item No. 3, infra taken at the 6th meeting).

(ii) Study on the Impact of Economic Reforms on Women :

In the absence of M(SA), the discussion on the item was further deferred.

(iii) PUBLICITY ON NCW'S ACTIVITIES

(a) Meeting of the NCW with the Chief Editors of the National Dailies.

The Commission noted that the meeting was not take place in April, 1993 due to lack of response from the Chief Editors.

(b) Regarding AIR and Doordarshan, policy for depicting women in film and television light.

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The Commission noted that a special meeting of the Lady MPs was convened on the 15th May, 1993 by the Commission to highlight the inappropriate projections of women in the electronic media and also to request them to take up the issue of positive portrayal of Women in all available fora including the MPs' Consultative Committee attached to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

- (c) NCW should assist in projection of serials, skits, plays etc. on Women's issues to be telecasted by Doordarshan.

The Commission noted that the proposals for the production of "fillers" on Doordarshan were being examined.

- (d) NCW should have a library of its own :

It was noted that action had been initiated in this regard.

- (iv) Ms. Veen Verma's " The Married Women's (Protection of Rights) Bill ".

The Commission noted that the Expert Committee to suggest new laws would meet shortly to discuss the provisions of the Bill.

- (v) Questionnaire for Visits to States.

It was noted in the meeting that the Questionnaire covering (a) Education of Girls/Women (b) Training of Girls/Women (c) Employment of Women (d) Atrocities against women including rape, etc. and (e) Women in jail-custody, had been prepared in connection with the Member's visits to the States. It was also noted that the aforesaid questionnaire was sent to all the seven Chief Ministers and authorities concerned of the North-Eastern States for necessary action. It was suggested that the Questionnaire should be circulated in the first instance to other states before the Members visited the states. It was

be addressed to make necessary arrangements for Members' visits. It was noted that Member (PS already written to the States of Andhra Pradesh Haryana for making necessary arrangements for Members' Visits to those States.

(vi) Petition to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha the sale of minor girls.

It was noted that the Expert Committee to existing laws met on the 28-29 April, 1993 and for the recommendations and suggested amendments to Indian Penal code and other laws. (see item No. under decision taken at the 6th meeting).

(vii) Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act - convening MEETING WITH THE UNICEF to discuss certain provisions of the Act with a view to suggest amendments if any required.

The Commission noted that the Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 8 May, 1992 and the corresponding Act was eventually published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part-II Section I dated 13th Dec. as Act No. 41 of 1992. However, Chairperson suggested that it should be ascertained from the Ministry of Resource Development (Deptt. of Women & Child Development) as to why the NCW was not consulted in respect of even if it had lapsed twice. It was also decided that a meeting with Ms. Meena Swaminathan should be arranged after a reply is received from the UNICEF regarding the meeting to be convened to discuss the subject.

Item No. 4: Proposal for setting up of sub-committee to study the four zones for collecting information regarding rape cases of minor girls all over the country.

At the outset Chairperson suggested that straightaway an Expert committee might be constituted, who would suggest guide-lines and advise on the collection of data and set up case-laws for a detailed study of the child rape

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all over the country. Member (MD) however desired that sub-committees should be formed in the first instance to collect the data regarding the child rape cases, which would also include unreported cases. After further discussion it was decided that six women social workers (2 from Karnataka, 2 from Maharashtra and 2 from Andhra Pradesh), who would serve on the sub-committees to be formed should have a meeting with the Chairperson on the 28 and 29 July, '93, when Member (MD) will also be present.

Item No. 5 : Consideration of the report of the Expert committee on Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987, and Roda Mistry's suggestion regarding amendment of section of 198 of the Cr. P. C.

The Commission noted that the report of the Expert Committee had been forwarded to the Government on the 30th April, 1993.

Item No. 6 : Monthly review of all the complaints should be conducted on the first Tuesday of every month.

It was decided in the meeting that the cases pending over 1 month, 2-3 months, 3-6 months might be reviewed to keep track of these cases so that these could be finalised without further delay. It was also decided that a meeting of all the "Crimes Against Women's Cells" located in Delhi should be convened for reviewing of the cases referred to them and also to consider ways to make the Cell, more effective. The meeting was fixed for the 30th June under the Chairmanship of Smt. Padma Seth Member.

(B) On decision taken at the Sixth Meeting held on 6 April, 1993.

Item No. 3 : Consideration of the report of the Expert committee with regard to custody and guardianship of minors.

The report of the Expert Committee to examine existing laws with regard to the custody and guardian-

out that the amendments proposed by the Expert Committee concerned mainly the Guardians and Wards Act, 1956 to make the Act more secular in as much as the Act is a general law applicable to all citizens irrespective of their religion. Consequently, the Expert Committee has recommended the repealing of Hindu Minority Guardianship Act, 1956 as the idea was to have a uniform approach while deciding about the guardianship of a child. After some discussion it was decided that the portion of the report dealing with custody and guardianship should be referred to the Voluntary Organisation for their comments.

Item No. 4 : Training Programme for elected representatives of Panchayats (West Bengal).

The proposal for contribution of Rs. 75,000 during 1993-94 and an equal amount during 1994-95 was discussed by the Commission for the purpose of training programme for elected representatives of Panchayats in West Bengal. It was discussed in the meeting and it was noted that no other State had sent similar proposal to the Commission. There was general agreement in principle to accept the proposal made by the State Governments and to make contribution of Rs. 1.50 Lakhs (in two instalments). It was decided that the Government of West Bengal should be asked to forward a copy of the training modules to the Commission for study and information.

Item No. 5 : Consideration of the report of the Committee to examine existing laws relating to sale of minors-need for amendment of Indian Penal Code, 1860, the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 and the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.

It was noted in the meeting that the amendments suggested by the Expert Committee in their report for imposition of penalty on both the father and mother for both buying and selling of children. Any marriage of a minor girl which is followed by "Sale" of the girl would be declared null and void. All other amendments recommended are consequential ones. It was decided

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the recommendations of the Committee should be straightway forwarded to the Government for implementation.

Item No. 6 : Any other item with the approval of Chairperson.

(i) The Commission noted that Smt. Lata Singh, Secretary, Deptt. of Women & Child Development would visit the Commission on 15th June 1993 at 11.30 A.M.

(ii) The Commission took note of the details of the proposals sent to the Deptt. of Women & Child Development justifying an additional budget provision of Rs. 2 crores for 1993-94 for the Commission. The proposals relate to (a) Awareness generation regarding women's issues (b) Children and Gender Equality which includes promoting gender equality through school text books, (c) Panchayati Raj and Women's representation in local bodies (d) Research, evaluation and other collaborative efforts towards promoting employment of women (e) Networking and joint efforts between the NCW and State level Women's Commissions (f) Conducting studies as a follow-up of the Conference of Inspectors-General of prisons in respect of women prisoners under trial (g) Crimes against Women & Girl Child, which includes workshops with Crimes against Women's Cells in police stations and follow-up action on the recommendations made in the Seminar on Child Rape and (h) Additional administrative cost, staff support etc.

In connection with the staff of the Commission, it was stated in the meeting that the staff was quite inadequate. The need for a full-fledged Public Relations Officer in the Commission with complementary staff was also emphasised in the meeting. Accordingly, it was decided that the proposal for additional staff should include an item relating to the posting of a PRO with complementary staff in the Commission.

(iii) The Commission gave its approval to the proposal for the funding to the tune of Rs. 1.99 Lakhs, under Section 10(1) (h) of the NCW Act, 1990 of a project to study the employment potential for women in export

industries to be taken up by the Council for Social Development under Shri Muchkund Dubey, former Foreign Secretary. It was also suggested that the Council for Social Development might be requested to conduct a study as to whether the Press was portraying positive picture of women in India and whether articles on women's issues were being published in newspapers; a comparative study of the situation in India and that obtaining with those in the USA, Japan etc. could be made. The Commission should interact with Editors to achieve its objective and also should give briefings to journalists for publishing articles on women's issues. It was decided that to begin with, the Council for Social Development should be supplied with all the Press Clippings available with the Commission, for the afore-said study.

(iv) The Commission took note of the suggestion made in the meeting that there should be continuing dialogue with News Editors to get print media involved in Women's Development. This would include imparting of training to the journalists in gender sensitisation and espousing women's cause etc. The Commission also took note of the information that the Editors' Guild might invite Chairperson for a meeting.

(v) It was noted in the meeting that Dr. Durga Prasad, Chairman of Maharashtra Pradhiyapika Parishad, had submitted a proposal to publish a Directory of Women Teachers in Universities and Colleges. It was suggested that the Commission should give a token amount to fund the project.

(vi) The Commission was pleased to note that Joint Women's Programme (a Women's Voluntary Organisation) would be taking up a study in 3 or 4 cities of cases where Courts had decreed payment of maintenance allowance to wife but the husband did not pay any heed to the Court's order.

(vii) It was decided to call a meeting of all the Women's Studies Centres/Cells all over the country, which are funded by the University Grants Commission, on the

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1993 with a view to establishing linkages and coordination with such Centres/Cells.

(viii) The Commission decided to hold a workshop on 30th September and 1st October, 1993 to decide about the issues to be placed before the Fourth World Conference on Women being organized by the UN in Beijing, China in September, 1995.

(ix) The Commission noted that the Department of Women & Child Development referred to a proposal for the appointment of a Commissioner for Women's Rights, in the Conference of State Secretaries of Social Welfare held on the 19th May, 1993. It was decided that this issue should be considered further by the Commission.

(x) Preparation of Annual Report of the Commission for the financial year 1992-93.

The draft format for preparing of The Annual Report A.R. was discussed in detail. The format was agreed to, with minor modifications.

It was decided that the main report should focus on the achievements of 1992-93 and the programmes to be implemented by the Commission in the coming years. Since it is the first Annual Report, emphasis should also be laid on the status to be conferred on the Commission, which should facilitate interaction with all other agencies, and organisations. The draft of the report should be placed before the Commission by the end of July, 1993.

(xi) High Powered Committee to suggest reforms in the Insurance Sector.

The Commission was informed that a High Powered Committee had been set up to recommend sweeping reforms in the Insurance Sector and that the NCW could appear before the Committee to give suggestions to promote and safeguard the interests of women. It was suggested that the provisions of the " Married Women's Property Act, 1872 should also be examined in this

context. The relevant material should be prepared previously.

It was decided that the next meeting of would be held on 3.8.1993. The meeting ended with thanks to Chair.