

F.No.1/6(3)/99-NCW(A)

**National Commission for Women**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 25.04.2000**

Present in the meeting were:

- |    |                          |   |                  |
|----|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Smt. Vibha Parthasarathi | : | Chairperson      |
| 2. | Smt. S.S. Hameed         | : | Member           |
| 3. | Smt. V. Daksh            | : | Member           |
| 4. | Smt. P. Advani           | : | Member           |
| 5. | Smt. K. S. Reddy         | : | Member           |
| 6. | Kum. A. Uike             | : | Member           |
| 7. | Smt. Binoo Sen           | : | Member Secretary |
| 8. | Smt. Leena Mehendale     | : | Joint Secretary  |
| 9. | Kum. R. Bhama            | : | Dy. Secretary    |

At the outset CP welcomed all present.

**Agenda Item No.1**

**Confirmation of the minutes of the preceding meeting held on 29.2.2000**

The minutes were approved with one change, that the name of Member Secretary would be recorded after the names of Members.

**Agenda Item No.2**

**Guidelines for introducing "Mangalam" in pre-identified areas.**

Member (P.Advani) placed the item to decide parameters for introducing 'Mangalam' in pre-identified areas. The idea of extending Mangalam to other parts of the country was found acceptable. M.S suggested that the Commission could look at the human development indicators from the Census or CSWB

*Rohome*

Reports and choose one or two backward districts. CP suggested that areas may be chosen and discussed with the NGO and the State Government concerned as the assistance and involvement of the State Government was also necessary. Thereafter NGOs would be asked to send proposals. Since Member (P.Advani), Member (A.Uike), Member (S.Reddy), all showed interest in introducing this scheme, it was decided that administration should find out about Census/CSWB report.

### Agenda Item No.3

#### **Hearings on the issues of Immoral Trafficking.**

It was decided that since the condition of prostitutes is well known, hearings should be minimised and should be held with some fresh thrusts. The focus should be on obtaining - suggestions from the prostitutes on how to prevent new girls' entry into the trade, their opinion on targetted intervention in respect of HIV/AIDS as taken up in the NACO project, the views of the prostitutes on the means and methods of their own rehabilitation. Efforts could also be made to study the problems of prostitution on highways, identify areas from where women are coming into prostitution and reasons therefor, and to obtain information from the Govt. on the status of the Task Force dealing with this problem. One or two meetings of this Task Force were attended by MS but no meeting has been held recently. We may ask DWCD regarding the progress of Task Force.

It was also decided that the Members would go through the earlier reports of the Commission on the subject, and view the NCW film on the topic. The proposal would then be discussed once again in the next meeting of the Commission. Meanwhile, the proposals for hearings would be considered by the Screening Committee.

### Agenda Item No.4

#### **Process of dealing with atrocities/violence against women**

CP suggested that Member (P.Advani) could have brought in a sample proforma to form the basis of the brain storming. The following suggestions emanated during the course of discussion :

- i) To try the avenue of police intervention for enforcing attendance on summons.

*R. Shan*



- ii) A meeting may be held with Home Secretaries and DGPs of States.
- iii) Since the primary action lies with the local police station, write to the concerned SP with a copy to the IGP Range/DGP of the State.
- iv) Members may like to attend the weekly meeting with counsellors which is held by JS every Monday.

CP also pointed out that apart from the cases dealt with by the counsellors, Members also take up hearings of some cases for which there is no record in the Complaint Cell. Members were requested to send their lists to Complaint Cell.

#### Agenda Item No.5

#### **Complaint in the case of Km. Alka Chaturvedi, Rural Bank, Main Branch, Etawah.**

It was decided that since there are many complaints relating to sexual harassment, which are coming before the NCW, to deal with which, Members neither have expertise nor time, attempts may be made to engage counsellors who are expert in this field who could then take up such cases. Members were asked to suggest such names of counsellors. SAKSHI had offered to assist, hence they should be asked whether they would agree to assist through their counsellors. Another course of action suggested was the follow up of complaints by Members looking after the concerned States. Such follow up could be tried for three months initially.

#### Agenda Item No.6

#### **Report of Public Hearing organised by Narmada Bachao Andolan on 15.3.2000 at Village Pathrad, Distt. Khargone, Madhya Pradesh.**

It was decided that before the recommendations contained in the report submitted by Member (S.S.Hameed) could be adopted, an Expert Committee should be set up to go into the problem. The Expert Committee should include some local NGOs. After the completion of the tenure of Member (S.S.Hameed), this matter would be handled by Member (A.Uike). Meanwhile, the recommendations in the

*A. Uike*

present report could be treated as observations. At Page 4 of Member (S.S. Hameed)'s report, under the heading 'Recommendations', instead of asking for censure/removal of the officials, the Commission should place stress on the insensitivity of the administration officials. Member (S.S.Hameed) was requested to modify the report accordingly.

Agenda Item No.19 was taken up early (as Shri Rakesh Kuchroo and Shri Rahim Khan from WIPRO wanted to speak to the Members when M.S was also present).

### Agenda Item No.19.

#### **Networking of Computers in NCW in 1st floor**

In addition to the Agenda note, a note was circulated proposing the times for linking up of the server with the ISDN line for a hook up with the Internet. The Commission approved the following:

- a) The operation for hooking up of the server to the internal network and to the ISDN may be known only two persons – JS and PS to JS. The keys of the cabin within the computer room which houses the server would be kept with JS and PS to JS only.
- b) Although internal net-working would be available throughout the working hours, the ISDN link would be provided only between 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. on all working days.

S/Shri Rakesh Kuchroo and Rahim Khan from M/s. Esteem Technologies briefed the Commission about the Networking and offered their services for any briefing required by CP/Members/Officers of the Commission for using the Internet and internal communication.

M.S left for Gurgaon after this agenda item.

### Agenda Item No.7

#### **Sexual harassment and victimisation of a woman officer at workplace – Case of Ms Purabi Nag**

It was decided that legal opinion of Shri Rakesh Prasad would be sought on the lines suggested at Page 5 in respect of paras (a) & (b) of the Agenda Note. The

*R. Sharma*



decision on para (c) at Page 5 of the Agenda note on whether to summon the directors of the Corporation, would be deferred till the legal opinion is received. The decision in respect of Agenda Item No.5, to engage counsellors having experience in handling cases of sexual harassment, was reiterated. Such counsellors be asked to handle the case of Ms. Purabi Nag as well as other cases of Ms Sushila Gaur, Ms. Parul Bharati, Ms.Padma Alva and Ms. Alka Chaturvedi.

### **Agenda Item No.8**

#### **Preparation of Annual Report – Monthly Report of CP/Members/Officers**

It was decided that a monthly reporting system would be reintroduced. Accordingly, CP/Members/Officers would send a monthly report with brief details of the activities undertaken by them during the month which would be forwarded along with a copy of their tour reports/other reports to Member Secretary so as to facilitate compilation of the NCW's Annual Report as well as the Rashtra Mahila.

### **Agenda Item No.9**

#### **Complaint of atrocities committed on women agitators at Saharanpur on 25.6.97 – NHRC's proposal whether the NCW or the NHRC may take it up.**

CP said she would discuss this case with Member, NHRC for dealing with the case in partnership with NCW. A similar case of police highhandedness and atrocities against agitating women members of Sai Baba organisation would be handled in the same manner.

### **Agenda Item No.10**

#### **Committee on Police Reforms constituted by Ministry of Home Affairs – inputs of NCW.**

The Commission observed that there was no women represented on the Committee. A letter would be sent to bring this to the notice of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

*Sharma*

Members observed that the Questionnaire did not contain any gender related questions. The comments on the questionnaire would be sent by Members to D.S, NCW so as to be prepared for the meeting with the Committee on Police Reforms, as and when fixed.

### Agenda Item No.11

#### **Follow up action to the Workshop on Forging partnership with Law Enforcing Agencies.**

Member (P. Advani) explained that after the preliminary discussion in the workshop held on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2000, the work would begin on preparation and finalisation of the modules. Member (P. Advani) clarified that she had sent letters to the concerned institutions seeking confirmation on whether the institutes were agreeable to prepare the modules. As of now, no financial commitment by NCW, is to be made.

It was decided that each of the following institutes would be asked to prepare the modules :-

- a) Re : police – National Police Academy, Hyderabad
- b) Re : administration – Rajasthan Institute of Public Administration, Jaipur – Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy would also be associated.
- c) Re : judiciary – Institute not yet finalised.
- d) Re : media – Indian Institute of Mass Communication in Delhi. Opinion of experts such as Member (S.S.Hameed), Ms Akhila Sivadasan, Ms.Mrinal Pande, and Ms. Usha Rai would also be taken.

While writing to the institutes, their commitment with respect to the time frame should be asked for.

### Agenda Item No.12

#### **Report of the Meeting of NCW with NGOs at Hyderabad – for approval**

The report was adopted with the observation that it was a very good report.

*P. Advani*



- 1 -

**Agenda Item No.13**

**Regularisation of peons on temporary status in NCW**

A reminder would be sent to the Deptt. of WCD. However, if no reply is received within a month, the matter would again be taken up in the Commission's meeting.

**Agenda Item No.14**

**National Seminar on Human Rights and Empowerment of Women in India – to be organised in collaboration with Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati**

It was decided that a Core Committee of NCW comprising CP, Member(V. Daksh), Member(K.S Reddy) and one officer, would consider the proposal. The Commission's approval would be obtained by circulation.

**Agenda Item No.15**

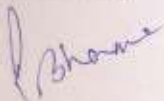
**Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 – ref. from DWCD.**

Member (P. Advani) apprised the Commission of the background of the reference and reiterated the conclusion that implementation of the existing law rather than enactment of new laws is necessary. The recommendations contained in the Agenda note were adopted with the following observations:

- a) That any kind of testing for sex determination should be banned – cannot be implemented.
- b) Representation of NCW in the Appropriate Authority and Supervisory Body – reference is to the **Central** Appropriate Authority.

In the Agenda note, it was proposed to send a letter conveying suggestions to the Health Minister and DG, CGHS. It was felt that a letter may be sent to the Health Secretary.

A letter should be sent regarding NCW's representation in the Supervisory Body/Committee,



Regarding involvement of State Commissions and where State Commissions have not been constituted, the NHRC in the State, letters would be sent under CP's signature.

**Agenda Item No.16**

**Amendment in Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 proposed by the Kerala Women's Commission to strengthen Lok Adalats.**

The suggestions of the Kerala Commission was accepted by the Commission.

Further, in respect of offences not compoundable under law, workshops could be held to identify minor crimes and to develop a system on the lines of the USA's system of plea bargaining. It was decided to ask the Kerala Women's Commission to hold such Workshops.

**Agenda Item No.17**

**Proposal by Comet Media Foundation for holding a Resource Fair**

The proposal for holding a Resource Fair was welcomed and approved. The estimated expenditure of Rs.10.80 lacs, as proposed by Comet Media Foundation, was also approved.

**Agenda Item No.18**

**Adoption of the Girl Child Programme being implemented by M.V Foundation in Ranga Reddy District, Andhra Pradesh.**

The proposal to recommend adoption of the Girl Child Programme implemented by the DWCD as a special programme of Govt. and to implement the same in districts having low levels of GDI, was approved.

It was also suggested that selected groups of anganwadi workers could be taken to see the project in Ranga Reddy Distt. and their services used elsewhere for better results.

Further it was suggested that NCW should take up the problems of anganwadi workers with GoI and State Governments, a letter may be sent to MOS, WCD.

*R. Shome*



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*R. Shome*

Agenda Item No.20

**Any other item with the permission of the Chair**

1. **The Banda Case** – CP observed that the report was pending and needed to be finalised early. A letter needed to be sent to the SP as well, as the complainant is now being terrorised.

2. **Visit of a delegation from Bangladesh** - CP reminded that a delegation from Bangladesh would be visiting the Commission on 26.4.2000 at 3.30 p.m.. A note to this effect had already been circulated.

3. **Work allocation amongst Members** - CP had earlier circulated a note to Members and M.S, asking for their field of interest so as to decide the work allocation. After consideration, CP had decided the following work allocation:

- i) **Member (S.S Hameed)** - would continue to do whatever she has been doing.
- ii) **Member (V. Daksh)** – In addition to her current work, she would look after the following topics :
  - a) Domestic violence
  - b) Dowry
  - c) Empowerment of SC women, Dalit women and Rural women

Member was asked to submit her Plan of Action in respect of (c), to CP within one week.

- iii) **Member (P. Advani)** - she would look into the amendment in the NCW Act.
- iv) **Member (K.S. Reddy)** - She would look after the following subjects
  - a) Matammas
  - b) Health (including alternative systems of medicine)
- v) **Member (A. Uike)** – she would look after the following subjects :
  - a) Tribals women including their Food Rights and effects of Globalisation
  - b) Tribal medicines

*S. Sharma*



In addition to the above, CP said that all Members would be allocated two states – one state from which they come and one state of their choice, in which they would have to undertake intensive work on:

- 1) Legal literacy camps,
- 2) PMLAs,
- 3) Extension of the Mangalam Project.

The states opted for by the Members were as follows:-

Member (V. Daksh)	-	U.P and Rajasthan
Member(P. Advani)	-	Maharashtra and Gujarat
Member (K.S Reddy)	-	A.P and Karnataka
Member(A. Uike)	-	M.P and Orissa

CP also referred to a note circulated by M.S in which were listed certain policies on which NCW should focus. CP desired each Member to indicate her choice of policy to the CP within one week.

The work allocation of M.S/J.S, would be decided by CP subsequently after discussion with the officers.

4. **Political empowerment of women** - CP suggested that a meeting of the active members of the Political Core Group should be held in which, inter alia, the recent statement of CEC on the amendment to the Representation of the People's Act would be discussed.

Member (SSH) was asked to furnish names for the meeting.

5. **Feed back by CP on the meeting of the Committee of Status of Women (New York) and the meeting of the Commonwealth Ministers for Women's Affairs (New Delhi)** - CP offered to give the feedback but Members felt that this could be done some time later, as the meeting had already been a long one.
6. **Training programme for the Members** - It was tentatively decided to schedule the programme in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May, 2000, subject to the confirmation from the LBS Academy, Mussoorie. JS would write to the Academy to finalise the dates.

*[Handwritten signature]*

- 11 -

Items suggested for inclusion in the module were – diary and file maintenance, time management, ethics and behavioural norms, specifics regarding NCW(e.g. PMLA), follow up, framing of tour reports, jail visits, the NCW Act- its mandate, and the philosophy behind it. It was requested that any further ideas may be sent to JS.

7. **Logo of NCW** - On a query of Member (V. Daksh), CP said she had spoken to Ms. Bindiya Thapar, who had agreed to work on an alternative logo.

8. **Inquiry Reports** - Member (V. Daksh) submitted the following two reports for the consideration and approval of the Commission.

a) Report on the gang rape of a 12 year old girl in Meerut – in this case, it was decided that she should write to the CM for compensation, demand the suspension of the police officer concerned, demand that a disciplinary enquiry be initiated against him, and his immediate transfer out of the district pending such disciplinary enquiry.

b) Report on the atrocities in Kolar, Karnataka.  
Members were requested to read the reports and approve in circulation.

9. **Proposal for Public hearings for dalit women** - Member (V. Daksh) was asked to identify NGOs and locations for the public hearings.

10. **Adoption of the Voice of the Voiceless – A Report on Minority Women** - Although the report had been informally approved by Members and also released to the Press, the Commission formally approved the adoption of the report along with its recommendations.

It was also decided that the Report would need to be translated in both Hindi and Urdu. The Hindi translation was already under way. For the Urdu translation, approved rates would be ascertained by administration. The name of a suitable translator may be provided by Member (S.S.Hameed).

10. **Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women**

a) Members were requested to send their responses on the corrections to the proceedings sent by Lok Sabha Sectt.

*S.S.Hameed*



- b) A draft reply to the List of Points (Questionnaire) sent by the Committee, had been circulated. Members were requested for their early comments.
12. **Regarding atrocities on anganwadi workers at Goa** - Member (S.S.Hameed) brought the incident to the notice of NCW, in which the members of the Goa State Commission for Women was also harassed. She suggested that NCW could contact with Ms. Sujata Manohar, Member, NHRC, to initiate joint action.
13. **Gang rape on minority women in Tripura** - Member(S.S.Hameed) would circulate the Tripura Women Commission's report.
14. **Study Report on the empowerment of women of weaker sections of the U.P Hill area** - It had been decided earlier that the report needs very careful editorial and other inputs. M(V. Daksh) was advised to seek guidance and direction from experienced people. Since this had not yet been done CP asked Members to suggest names for the same.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

*S.S.Hameed*