

**II M.A HISTORY**  
**WOMEN STUDIES**  
**Code No. 18KP3HELH3**

**UNIT - III**

**Pandit Rama Bai**

The foremost among them was Pandita Rama Bai (1858 – 1922). She came from a learned Brahmin family in Karnataka. She was a great scholar of Sanskrit and addressed many learned groups in different parts of the country and was given the title of “Pandita” and “Saraswat”, for her deep knowledge of Sanskrit. A little later in 1880 she married a Bengali pleader of a lower caste. Thus, even at that time she was bold enough to marry a man of a different caste and different language. After the death of her husband two years later she returned to Pune and started the Arya Mahila Samaj with the help of leaders like Ranade and Bhandarkar.

In 1882, she gave evidence before the Hunter Commission who were very happy to see 300 women being educated in the Samaj. In 1883, she went to England and was baptized as a Christian. She went to America in 1886. On her return to Bombay in 1889, she started in Sharada Sadan to provide home for the destitute high caste widows again with the help of Ranade, Bhandarkar and others. In the institute many Hindus were converted to Christianity. So, a strong protest came from Tilak and others.

As a result of this even, liberal leaders like Ranade and Bhandarkar had to give up their connection with the Sadan. After this, she shifted to Khedgoan near Poona and established a Mukti Sadan. Soon there were 2000 children and women. Training was given from kindergarten to the teacher and the industrial section. In spite of the criticism against her, she was able to give general education and vocational training to several thousand women, who were able to become self-independent.

Mrs. Annie Besant:

Annie Besant started Home Rule Movement not only for the emancipation of India, but also for the emancipation for women. When she was interned by the British, the Indian women led processions to temples to offer their prayers for her release. Then in the same year she was elected as the President of the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress. In it she emphasised right to franchise and eligibility to all elective bodies concerned with the Local Government and Education for women.

After the Jallianwalabagh massacre in 1919, when hundreds of men, women and children were killed, a large contingent of women delegates, nearly 200, attend the Congress session at Nagpur. This was a striking evidence of the political awakening of the Indian women.

## **Margret Cousin**

Margaret Elizabeth Cousin, nee Gillespie, also known as Gretta Cousin (7 November 1878 – 11 March 1954) was an Irish-Indian educationist, suffragist and theosophist, who established All India Women's Conference (AIWS) in 1927. She was the wife of poet and literary critic James Cousin, with whom she moved to India in 1951. She is credited with composing the tune for the Indian National Anthem Jana Gana Mana in February 1919, during Rabindranath Tagore's visit to the Madanapalle College.

Margaret Gillespie, from an Irish Protestant family, was born at Boyle, County Roscommon, and educated locally and in Derry. She studied music at the Royal University of Ireland in Dublin, graduating in 1902, and became a teacher. As a student she had met the poet and literary critic James Cousin, and she married him in 1903. The pair explored socialism, vegetarianism, and psychical research together. In 1906, after attending a National Conference of women meeting in Manchester, Cousin joined the Irish branch of NCW. In 1907 she and her husband attended the London Convention of the Theosophical Society, and she made contacts with suffragettes, vegetarians, anti-vivisectionists, and occultists in London.

In 1910 she was one of six Dublin women attending the Parliament of Women, which attempted to march to the House of Commons to hand resolution to the Prime Minister. After 119 women marching to the House of Commons had been arrested, 50 requiring medical treatment, the women decided to break the windows of the houses of cabinet Ministers. Cousin was arrested and sentenced to a month in Holloway Prison.

In 1913, she and her husband moved to Liverpool, where James Cousin worked in a vegetarian food factory. In 1915 they moved to India. James Cousin initially worked for a New India, the newspaper founded by Annie Besant; after Besant was forced to dismiss him for an article praising the Easter Uprising, she appointed him Vice-principal of the new Madanapalle College, where Margaret taught English.

In 1917 Cousin co-founded the Women's Indian Association with Annie Besant and Dorothy Jinarajadasa. She edited the WIA's journal, *Stri Dharma*. In 1919-20 Cousin was the first head of the National Girls' school at Mangalore. In 1922, she became the first woman magistrate in India. In 1927, she co-founded the All India Women's Conference, serving as its President in 1936.

In 1932, she was arrested and jailed for speaking against the Emergency Measures. By the late 1930s she felt conscious of the need to give way to indigenous Indian feminists:

A stroke left Cousin paralysed from 1944 onwards. She received financial support from the Madras government, and later Jawaharlal Nehru, in recognition of her services to India. She died in 1954. Her manuscripts are dispersed in various collections across the World.

## **Sarojini Naidu**

Sarojini Chattopadhyay Naidu (nee Chattopadhyay 13 February 1879 – 2 March 1949) was an Indian political activist and poet. A proponent of civil rights, women's emancipation, and anti-imperialistic ideas, she was an important figure in India's struggle for independence from colonial rule. Naidu's work as a poet earned her the sobriquet

‘Nightingale of India’ by Mahatma Gandhi. She was called ‘Bharat Kokila’ by Rabindranath Tagore.

Born in a Bengali family in Hyderabad. Naidu was educated in Madras. London and Cambridge.

She was appointed the president of the Indian National Congress in 1925 and later became the Governor of the United Provinces in 1947, becoming the first woman to hold the office of Governor in the Dominion of India.

She was married to Govindarajulu Naidu, a general physician, and had five children with him. She died of a cardiac arrest on 2 March 1949.

In 1895, H.E.H. the Nizam’s Charitable Trust founded by the 6<sup>th</sup> Nizam. Mahbub Ali Khangave her a chance to study in England, first at King’s college, London and later at Girton College, Cambridge.

The couples had five children. Their daughter paidipati Padmaja also joined the independence movement and was part of the Quit India Movement. She was appointed the Governor of the State of Uttar Pradesh. Soon after Indian independence.

#### Early work

Sarojini Naidu (extreme right) with Mahatma Gandhi during Salt Satyagraha. 1930 Naidu joined the Indian independence movement in the wake of partition of Bengal in 1905. She soon met other such leaders as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and was inspired to work towards attaining freedom from the colonial regime and social reform. Between 1915 and 1918, Naidu travelled to different regions in India delivering lectures on social welfare, emancipation of women and nationalism. She also helped to establish the Women’s Indian Association (WIA) in 1917. Later in 1917, Naidu also accompanied her colleague Annie Besant, who was the president of Home Rule League and Women’s Indian Association, to present the advocate universal suffrage in front of the Joint Select Committee in London, United Kingdom. Naidu again went to London in 1919 as a part of the All India Home Rule League as a part her continued efforts to advocate for freedom from the British rule. Upon return to India in 1920, she joined Gandhi’s Satyagraha Movement.

### **Ambujammal**

Ambujammal was born on 8 January 1899 to S.Srinivasa Iyengar and his wife Ranganayaki. Srinivasa Iyengar was one of the foremost leaders of the Indian National Congress in the Madras Presidency and had served as the President of the Swaraj Party. Ambujammal’s maternal grandfather was Sir V.Bhashyam Aiyangar, the first native Indian to be appointed Advocate-General of the Madras Presidency. Ambujammal married S.Desikachari, and advocate from Kumbakonam, in 1910.

Early on in her life, she was fascinated by Mahatma Gandhi’s ideas, especially his constructive socio-economic program. This interest was fanned by her contact with Sister Subbalakshmi, Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy, and Margaret Cousins. Ambujammal qualified as a teacher and taught at Sarada Vidyalaya girls school part-time. She was a committee member of Sarada Ladies Union from 1929 to 1936. She worked very closely with Sister

Subbalakshmi. In 1929, she was nominated Treasurer of the Women's Swadeshi League, Madras.

#### Career and political activism

Her entry into political life was in 1930, during the civil disobedience movement. She joined with several women who donated their jewelry to support the national movement – on Gandhi's request. She was a strong proponent on Swadeshi, and embraced Khadi. She joined the Salt Satyagraha, and courted arrest. In 1932, she was hailed as the "Third Dictator" of the Congress, and led the Satyagrahis to boycott foreign cloth. A thorough Congresswoman, she was part of the Managing Committee of the Hindi Prachar Sabha from 1934 to 1938. She did a lot of propaganda work for Hindi.

She was a significant part of the Women's India Association (WIA), taking the post of Secretary from 1939 to 1942 and that of Treasurer from 1939 to 1947. With the WIA, the issues she worked were Abolition of Child Marriage, Polygamy, and the Devadasi system, and bringing about legislation to protect the rights of women and their property rights. On behalf of the WIA, she was nominated to the Madras Corporation. In 1947, during the All India Women's Conference in Madras, she was nominated as the Chairperson of the reception committee. She was the Vice-President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee from 1957 to 1962 and the chairman of the State Social Welfare Board from 1957 to 1964.

#### Contribution

Ambujammal actively participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement and boycotted foreign goods and clothes – she was even imprisoned twice for six months in 1932. She dedicated her life to the cause of India's freedom and inspired several women to do the same. She set up the Srinivasa Gandhi Nilayam in 1948 at Teynampet where free milk, medicines and kanji (gruel) were given to the needy.

Alongside that, she also helped especially in supporting the Mahila Ashram, a school for women that helped to teach Self-Respect through education. She helped support the cause alongside Gandhi (whose ideas were being taught there) by donating much of her jewelry. She was a notable scholar in Hindi and Tamil. She has written three books about Gandhi in Tamil. In 1964 Ambujammal won the Padma Shri award.

### **Dr.Muthulekshmi Reddy (1886 – 1968)**

Dr.Muthulekshmi Reddy was one of the remarkable women social reformers of 20<sup>th</sup> century in India. She was born in Pudukkottai on 30<sup>th</sup> July, 1886, as the eldest daughter of S.Narayanaswamy Ayyar and Chandrammal, Narayanaswamy. She decorated the chair of Maharaja College as the Principal. I like her father, Muthulekshmi was also sincere and hardworker.

She joined the Maharaja college in 1903 for higher education as the first female student. Then she joined the Madras medical college in 1907 as its first female student.

When she was in Madras, she got an opportunity to maintain close association with various political leaders, social reformers and doctors. She was also specialized in gynecology – maternity.

She started her medical profession after her permanent stay at Madras. In 1914, she married Dr.Sundara Reddy, F.R.C.S. and became his partner.

Though she was doctor by profession, she showed keen interest in other fields also. She also deeply involved in politics. In 1926, she was nominated to the Madras legislative council and also elected its Vice-President. But she resigned this post in 1930, with a view to protest the imprisonment of Gandhiji.

Dr.Muthulekshmi Reddy was a full time social worker. She dedicated her whole life for the welfare of women and children. Owing to her work, she earned world-wide reputation. She acted as Vice-President and President of All India Woman's Association. She was more concerned about the welfare of the children. For their benefit, she established a children hospital at Madras. She also directed to introduce compulsory medical inspection in schools. Various child welfare centres were opened in many places sufficient women doctors were appointed in these centres.

She founded "Avvai house" for the destitute women. She also demanded adult franchise and common electorate.

She opened a number of girl's schools in certain important centres in Tamilnadu. For the benefit of girl student separate hostels were started. She also tried hard for the introduction of government scholarship for Harijan girl students.

Muthulelshmi was a good writer and an excellent orator. She wrote three books namely, "Autobiography", "My experience as a legislature", and "Demand for devadasi legislation in 1929". She also served as an editor of the journal, "Sridharma"

She was inspired by the ideas of Vivekanannada and Gandhiji. She met Gandhiji in 1927, when he visited Tamilnadu. Gandhiji was inspired by her social welfare-schemes and published her ideas in the magazine- 'young India'. Government recognized the services of Muthulekshmi and appointed her as the first women chair person of the State Social Welfare Advisory Board. She served in this board from 1954 to 1959. In recognition of her services, the government of India honoured Muthulekshmi with the title, 'Padmabushan'.

## **Aruna Asaf Ali**

Aruna Asaf Ali (Ganguly) (16 July 1909 – 29 July 1996) was an Indian educator, political activist, and publisher. An active participant in the Indian independence movement, she is widely remembered for hoisting the Indian National flag at the Gowalia Tank maidan, Bombay during a Quit India Movement in 1942. Post-independence, she remained active in politics, becoming Delhi's first Mayor

### **Early association with Indian independence movement**

Aruna Asaf Ali became a member of Indian National Congress after marrying Asaf Ali and participated in public processions during the Salt Satyagraha. She was arrested on the charge that she was a vagrant and hence not released in 1931 under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact which stipulated release of all political prisoners. Other women co-prisoners refused to leave the premises unless she was also released and gave in only after Mohandas K. Gandhi intervened. A public agitation secured her release. In 1932, she was held prisoner at the Tihar jail where she protested the indifferent treatment of political prisoners by launching a

hunger strike. Her efforts resulted in an improvement of conditions in the Tihar jail but she was moved to Ambala and was subjected to solitary confinement. She was politically not very active after her release, but at the ending of 1942, she took part in the underground movement. She was active in it.

### **Rise to prominence during the Quit India movement**

On 8 August 1942, the All India Congress Committee passed the Quit India resolution at the Bombay session. The government responded by arresting the major leaders and all members of the Congress Working Committee and thus tried to pre-empt the movement from success. Young Aruna Asaf Ali presided over the remainder of the session at 9 August and hoisted the Congress flag at the Gowalia Tank Maidan. This marked the commencement of the movement. The police fired upon the assembly at the session. Aruna was dubbed the Heroine of the 1942 movement for her bravery in the face of danger and was called Grand Old Lady of the Independence movement in her later years. Leaders such as Jayaprakash Narayan and Aruna Asaf Ali were described as “the political children of Gandhi but recent students of Karl Marx. The government announced a reward of 5,000 rupees for her capture. She fell ill and was for a period hiding in Dr Joshi’s Hospital in Karol Bagh in Delhi.

### **Post-Independence, mayorship, and career in publishing**

She was a member of the Congress Socialist Party, a caucus within the Congress party for activists with socialist leanings. Disillusioned with the progress of the congress party on socialism she joined a new party, socialist party in 1948. She, however, left that party along with Edatata Narayanan and they visited Moscow along with Rajani Palme Dutt. Both of them joined the Communist Party of India in the early 1950s. on the personal front, she was bereaved when Asaf Ali died in 1953.

In 1954, she helped form the National Federation of Indian Women, the women’s wing of CPI but left the party in 1956 following Nikita Khrushchev’s disowning of Stalin. In 1958, she was elected the first Mayor of Delhi. She and Narayanan started Link publishing house and published a daily newspaper, Patriot and a weekly, Link the same year. The publication became prestigious due to the patronage of leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Krishna Menon and Biju Patnaik. She remained close to Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. She died in New Delhi on 29 July 1996, aged 87.

## **Sucheta Kripalani**

Sucheta Kripalani (nee Mazumdar), (26 June 1908 – 1 December 1974) was an Indian freedom fighter and politician. She was India’s first woman Chief Minister, serving as the head of the Uttar Pradesh government from 1963 to 1967.

### **Early life**

She was born in Ambala, Punjab (now in Haryana) into a Bengali Brahmo family. Her father Surendranath Majumdar, worked as a medical officer, a job that required many transfers. As a result, she attended a number of schools, her final degree is a Master’s in History from St. Stephen’s College, Delhi.

Both Sucheta and her sister Sulekha were desperate to join India’s burgeoning Independence movement. There is one particularly fascinating incident which Sucheta

narrates in her book. After the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the prince of Wales had visited Delhi. Girls from her school were taken to stand near the Kudsia Garden to honour the Prince of Wales, Despite wanting to refuse, both the sisters couldn't, and that left them bitterly outraged at their apparent cowardice.

Later, while a student of Kinnaird College in Lahore, her Bible class teacher had said some disparaging things about Hinduism. Furious, Sucheta and her sister went home and asked their father to help them out. He coached them on some religious teachings and the next day, the girls confronted their teacher with quotes from the Bhagavad Gita. The teacher never referred to Hinduism in class ever against. She studied at Indraprastha College and Punjab University before becoming a Professor of Constitutional History at Banaras Hindu University. In 1936, she married J.B.Kripalani, a prominent figure of the Indian National Congress, who was twenty years her senior. The marriage was opposed by both families, as well as by Gandhi himself, although he eventually relented.

She was one of the few women who were elected to the Constituent Assembly of India. She was elected as the first woman CM of state of Uttar Pradesh from the Kanpur constituency, and was part of the subcommittee that drafted the Indian Constitution. She became a part of the subcommittee that laid down the charter for the constitution of India. On 14 August 1947, she sang Vanda Mataram in the Independence Session of the Constituent Assembly a few minutes before Nehru delivered his famous "Tryst with Destiny Speech". She was also the founder of the All India Mahilla Congress, established in 1940.

After Independence she remained involved with politics. For the first Lok Sabha elections in 1952, she contested from New Delhi on a KMPP ticket: she had joined the short-lived party founded by her husband the year before. She defeated the Congress candidate Menmohini Sahgal. Five years later, she was reelected from the same constituency, but this time as the Congress candidate. She was elected one last time to the Lok Sabha in 1967, from Gonda constituency in Uttar Pradesh.

Meanwhile, she had also become a member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly. From 1960 to 1963, she served as Minister of Labour, Community Development and Industry in the UP government. In October 1963, she became the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the first woman to hold that position in any Indian state. When Congress split in 1969, she left the party with Morarji Desai faction to form NCO. She lost 1971 election as NCO candidate from Faizabad (Lok Sabha constituency). She retired from politics in 1971 and remained in seclusion till her death in 1974.

## **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit**

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit (18 August 1900 – 1 December 1990) was an Indian diplomat and politician who was elected as the first female president of the United Nations General Assembly. Hailing from a prominent political family, her brother Jawaharlal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of Independent India, her niece Indira Gandhi the first female Prime Minister of India and her grand-nephew Rajiv Gandhi was the sixth Prime Minister of India. Pandit was sent to London as India's most important diplomat after serving as Nehru's envoy to the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Nations. Her time in London offers insights into the wider context of changes in Indo-British relations.

### **Political career**

## Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit in 1936

Pandit was the first Indian woman to hold a cabinet post in pre-independent India. In 1937, she was elected to the provincial legislature of the United Provinces and was designated minister of local self-government and public health. She held the latter post until 1938 and again from 1946 to 1947. In 1946, she was elected to the Constituent Assembly from the United Provinces.

Following India's freedom from British occupation in 1947 she entered the diplomatic service and became India's ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1947 to 1949, the United States and Mexico from 1949 to 1951, Ireland from 1955 to 1961 (during which time she was also the Indian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom), and Spain from 1958 to 1961. Between 1946 and 1968, she headed the Indian delegation to the United Nations, in 1953, she became the first woman President of the United Nations General Assembly (she was inducted as an honorary member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority in 1978 for this accomplishment).

Hon. Members that Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit has resigned her seat in the House with effect from 17 December 1954. In India, she served as Governor of Maharashtra from 1962 to 1964, after which she was elected to the Indian parliament's lower house, Lok Sabha, from Phulpur, her brother's former constituency from 1964 to 1968. Pandit was a harsh critic of Indira Gandhi's years as Prime Minister especially after her niece had declared the emergency.

Pandit retired from active politics after relations between them soured. On retiring, she moved to Dehradun in the Doon Valley in the Himalayan foothills. She came out of retirement in 1977 to campaign against Indira Gandhi and helped the Janata Party win the 1977 election. She was reported to have considered running for the presidency, but Neelam Sanjiva Reddy eventually ran and won the election unopposed. In 1979, she appointed the Indian representative to the UN Human Rights Commission, after which she retired from public life.

## Indira Gandhi

**Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi** (Hindi: [listen](#)); *née* **Nehru**; 19 November 1917 – 31 October 1984) was an Indian politician and a central figure of the Indian National Congress.<sup>[2]</sup> She was the first and, to date, only female Prime Minister of India. Indira Gandhi was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India. She served as prime minister from January 1966 to March 1977 and again from January 1980 until her assassination in October 1984, making her the second longest-serving Indian prime minister after her father.<sup>[3]</sup> During Nehru's time as Prime Minister of India from 1947 to 1964, Gandhi was considered a key assistant and accompanied him on his numerous foreign trips.<sup>[4]</sup> She was elected President of the Indian National Congress in 1959. Upon her father's death in 1964, she was appointed as a member of the Rajya Sabha (upper house) and became a member of Lal Bahadur Shastri's cabinet as Minister of Information and Broadcasting.<sup>[5]</sup> In the Congress Party's parliamentary leadership election held in early 1966 (upon the death of Shastri), she defeated her rival Morarji Desai to become leader, and thus succeeded Shastri as Prime Minister of India.

As prime minister, Gandhi was known for her political intransigency and unprecedented centralisation of power. She went to war with Pakistan in support of the independence movement and war of independence in East Pakistan, which resulted in an



Indian victory and the creation of Bangladesh, as well as increasing India's influence to the point where it became the sole regional power of South Asia. Citing separatist tendencies, and in response to a call for revolution, Gandhi instituted a state of emergency from 1975 to 1977 where basic civil liberties were suspended and the press was censored. Widespread atrocities were carried out during the emergency.<sup>[6]</sup> In 1980, she returned to power after free and fair elections. After Gandhi ordered military action in the Golden Temple in Operation Blue Star, her own bodyguards and Sikh nationalists assassinated her on 31 October 1984. In 1999, Indira Gandhi was named "Woman of the Millennium" in an online poll organised by the BBC.<sup>[7]</sup> In 2020 Gandhi was named by the Time magazine among world's 100 powerful women who defined the last century.

### **Social reform**

The principle of equal pay for equal work for both men and women was enshrined in the Indian Constitution under the Gandhi administration.<sup>[200]</sup> Gandhi questioned the continued existence of a privy purse for former rulers of princely states. She argued the case for abolition based on equal rights for all citizens and the need to reduce the government's revenue deficit. The nobility responded by rallying around the Jana Sangh and other right-wing parties that stood in opposition to Gandhi's attempts to abolish royal privileges.<sup>[167]</sup> The motion to abolish privy purses, and the official recognition of the titles, was originally brought before the Parliament in 1970. It was passed in the Lok Sabha but fell short of the two-thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha by a single vote.<sup>[201]</sup> Gandhi responded by having a Presidential proclamation issued; de-recognising the princes; with this withdrawal of recognition, their claims to privy purses were also legally lost.<sup>[201]</sup> However, the proclamation was struck down by the Supreme Court of India.<sup>[201]</sup> In 1971, Gandhi again motioned to abolish the privy purse. This time, it was passed successfully as the 26th Amendment to the Constitution of India.<sup>[167]</sup> Many royals tried to protest the abolition of the privy purse, primarily through campaigns to contest seats in elections. However, they received a final setback when many of them were defeated by huge margins.

Gandhi claimed that only "clear vision, iron will and the strictest discipline" can remove poverty.<sup>[167]</sup> She justified the imposition of the state of emergency in 1975 in the name of the socialist mission of the Congress.<sup>[167]</sup> Armed with the power to rule by decree and without constitutional constraints, Gandhi embarked on a massive redistribution program.<sup>[167]</sup> The provisions included rapid enforcement of land ceilings, housing for landless labourers, the abolition of bonded labour and a moratorium on the debts of the poor.<sup>[167]</sup> North India was at the centre of the reforms. millions of acres of land were acquired and redistributed.<sup>[167]</sup> The government was also successful in procuring houses for landless labourers; According to Francine Frankel, three-fourths of the targeted four million houses was achieved in 1975 alone.<sup>[167]</sup> Nevertheless, others have disputed the success of the program and criticised Gandhi for not doing enough to reform land ownership. The political economist, Jyotindra Das Gupta, cryptically questioned "...whether or not the real supporters of land-holders were in jail or in power? Critics also accused Gandhi of choosing to "talk left and act right", referring to her concurrent pro-business decisions and endeavours.<sup>[167]</sup> J. Barkley Rosser Jr. wrote that "some have even seen the declaration of emergency rule in 1975 as a move to suppress dissent against Gandhi's policy shift to the right."<sup>[45]</sup> Regardless of the controversy over the nature of the reforms, the long-term effects of the social changes gave rise to the prominence of middle-ranking farmers from intermediate and lower castes in North India.<sup>[167]</sup> The rise of these newly empowered social classes challenged the political establishment of the Hindi Belt in the years to come.

## Mother Teresa

### Early Life

Mother Teresa was born Anjezë Gonxhe (or Gonxha) Bojaxhiu (Albanian: *Anjezë* is cognate of "Agnes"; *Gonxhe* means "rosebud" or "little flower" in Albanian) on 26 August 1910 into a Kosovar Albanian family<sup>[11][12][13]</sup> in Skopje, Ottoman Empire (now the capital of North Macedonia).<sup>[14][15]</sup> She was baptised in Skopje, the day after her birth.<sup>[10][page needed]</sup> She later considered 27 August, the day she was baptised, her "true birthday".<sup>[14]</sup> She was the youngest child of Nikollë and Dranfile Bojaxhiu (Bernai).<sup>[16]</sup> Her father, who was involved in Albanian-community politics in Ottoman Macedonia, died in 1919 when she was eight years old.<sup>[14][17]</sup> He was born in Prizren (today in Kosovo), however, his family was from Mirdita (present-day Albania).<sup>[18][19]</sup> Her mother may have been from a village near Gjakova.<sup>[20]</sup>

According to a biography by Joan Graff Clucas, Teresa was in her early years when she was fascinated by stories of the lives of missionaries and their service in Bengal; by age 12, she was convinced that she should commit herself to religious life.<sup>[21]</sup> Her resolve strengthened on 15 August 1928 as she prayed at the shrine of the Black Madonna of Vitina-Letnice, where she often went on pilgrimages.<sup>[22]</sup> Teresa left home in 1928 at age 18 to join the Sisters of Loreto at Loreto Abbey in Rathfarnham, Ireland, to learn English with the intent of becoming a missionary; English was the language of instruction of the Sisters of Loreto in India.<sup>[23]</sup> She neither saw her mother, nor her sister again.<sup>[24]</sup> Her family lived in Skopje until 1934, when they moved to Tirana.<sup>[25]</sup> She arrived in India in 1929<sup>[26]</sup> and began her novitiate in Darjeeling, in the lower Himalayas,<sup>[27]</sup> where she learned Bengali and taught at St. Teresa's School near her convent.<sup>[28]</sup> Teresa took her first religious vows on 24 May 1931. She chose to be named after Thérèse de Lisieux, the patron saint of missionaries;<sup>[29][30]</sup> because a nun in the convent had already chosen that name, she opted for its Spanish spelling (Teresa).<sup>[31]</sup>

Teresa took her solemn vows on 14 May 1937 while she was a teacher at the Loreto convent school in Entally, eastern Calcutta.<sup>[14][32][33]</sup> She served there for nearly twenty years and was appointed its headmistress in 1944.<sup>[34]</sup> Although Teresa enjoyed teaching at the school, she was increasingly disturbed by the poverty surrounding her in Calcutta.<sup>[35]</sup> The Bengal famine of 1943 brought misery and death to the city, and the August 1946 Direct Action Day began a period of Muslim-Hindu violence.<sup>[36]</sup> During this visit to Darjeeling by train, she heard the call of her inner conscious. She felt that she should serve the poor by staying with them. She left the school. In 1950 she founded 'Missionaries of Charity'. She went out to serve humanity with two saris with a blue border.<sup>[37]</sup>

### Missionaries of Charity

On 10 September 1946, Teresa experienced what she later described as "the call within the call" when she traveled by train to the Loreto convent in Darjeeling from Calcutta for her annual retreat. "I was to leave the convent and help the poor while living among them. It was an order. To fail would have been to break the faith."<sup>[38]</sup> Joseph Langford later wrote, "Though no one knew it at the time, Sister Teresa had just become *Mother Teresa*".<sup>[39]</sup> She began missionary work with the poor in 1948,<sup>[26]</sup> replacing her traditional Loreto habit with a simple, white cotton sari with a blue border. Teresa adopted Indian citizenship, spent several months in Patna to receive basic medical training at Holy Family Hospital and ventured into the slums.<sup>[40][41]</sup> She founded a school in Motijhil, Kolkata, before she began tending to the poor and hungry.<sup>[42]</sup> At the beginning of 1949 Teresa was joined in her effort by a group of young women, and she laid the foundation for a

new religious community helping the "poorest among the poor".<sup>[43]</sup> Her efforts quickly caught the attention of Indian officials, including the prime minister.<sup>[44]</sup> Teresa wrote in her diary that her first year was fraught with difficulty. With no income, she begged for food and supplies and experienced doubt, loneliness and the temptation to return to the comfort of convent life during these early months: Our Lord wants me to be a free nun covered with the poverty of the cross. Today, I learned a good lesson. The poverty of the poor must be so hard for them. While looking for a home I walked and walked till my arms and legs ached. I thought how much they must ache in body and soul, looking for a home, food and health. Then, the comfort of Loreto [her former congregation] came to tempt me. "You have only to say the word and all that will be yours again", the Tempter kept on saying. ... Of free choice, my God, and out of love for you, I desire to remain and do whatever be your Holy will in my regard. I did not let a single tear come.<sup>[45]</sup>

### **Missionaries of Charity in traditional saris**

On 7 October 1950, Teresa received Vatican permission for the diocesan congregation, which would become the Missionaries of Charity.<sup>[46]</sup> In her words, it would care for "the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone".<sup>[47]</sup> In 1952, Teresa opened her first hospice with help from Calcutta officials. She converted an abandoned Hindu temple into the Kalighat Home for the Dying, free for the poor, and renamed it Kalighat, the Home of the Pure Heart (Nirmal Hriday).<sup>[48]</sup> Those brought to the home received medical attention and the opportunity to die with dignity in accordance with their faith: Muslims were read the Quran, Hindus received water from the Ganges, and Catholics received extreme unction.<sup>[49]</sup> "A beautiful death", Teresa said, "is for people who lived like animals to die like angels—loved and wanted."<sup>[49]</sup>

### **Nirmal Hriday, Mother Teresa's Calcutta hospice, in 2007**

She opened a hospice for those with leprosy, calling it Shanti Nagar (City of Peace).<sup>[50]</sup> The Missionaries of Charity established leprosy-outreach clinics throughout Calcutta, providing medication, dressings and food.<sup>[51]</sup> The Missionaries of Charity took in an increasing number of homeless children; in 1955 Teresa opened Nirmala Shishu Bhavan, the Children's Home of the Immaculate Heart, as a haven for orphans and homeless youth.<sup>[52]</sup> The congregation began to attract recruits and donations, and by the 1960s it had opened hospices, orphanages and leper houses throughout India. Teresa then expanded the congregation abroad, opening a house in Venezuela in 1965 with five sisters.<sup>[53]</sup> Houses followed in Italy (Rome), Tanzania and Austria in 1968, and during the 1970s the congregation opened houses and foundations in the United States and dozens of countries in Asia, Africa and Europe.<sup>[54]</sup> The Missionaries of Charity Brothers was founded in 1963, and a contemplative branch of the Sisters followed in 1976. Lay Catholics and non-Catholics were enrolled in the Co-Workers of Mother Teresa, the Sick and Suffering Co-Workers, and the Lay Missionaries of Charity. Responding to requests by many priests, in 1981 Mother Teresa founded the Corpus Christi Movement for Priests<sup>[55]</sup> and with Joseph Langford the Missionaries of Charity Fathers in 1984, to combine the vocational aims of the Missionaries of Charity with the resources of the priesthood.<sup>[56]</sup> By 1997, the 13-member Calcutta congregation had grown to more than 4,000 sisters who managed orphanages, AIDS hospices and charity centers worldwide, caring for refugees, the blind, disabled, aged, alcoholics, the poor and homeless and victims of floods, epidemics and famine.<sup>[57]</sup> By 2007, the Missionaries of Charity numbered about 450 brothers and 5,000 sisters worldwide, operating 600 missions, schools and shelters in 120 countries.<sup>[58]</sup>

## **International charity**

Teresa said, "By blood, I am Albanian. By citizenship, an Indian. By faith, I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the world. As to my heart, I belong entirely to the Heart of Jesus."<sup>[4]</sup> Fluent in five languages – Bengali,<sup>[59]</sup> Albanian, Serbian, English and Hindi – she made occasional trips outside India for humanitarian reasons.<sup>[60]</sup> At the height of the Siege of Beirut in 1982, Teresa rescued 37 children trapped in a front-line hospital by brokering a temporary cease-fire between the Israeli army and Palestinian guerrillas.<sup>[61]</sup> Accompanied by Red Cross workers, she travelled through the war zone to the hospital to evacuate the young patients.<sup>[62]</sup> When Eastern Europe experienced increased openness in the late 1980s, Teresa expanded her efforts to Communist countries which had rejected the Missionaries of Charity. She began dozens of projects, undeterred by criticism of her stands against abortion and divorce: "No matter who says what, you should accept it with a smile and do your own work." She visited Armenia after the 1988 earthquake<sup>[63]</sup> and met with Nikolai Ryzhkov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers.<sup>[64]</sup> Teresa travelled to assist the hungry in Ethiopia, radiation victims at Chernobyl and earthquake victims in Armenia.<sup>[65][66][67]</sup> In 1991 she returned to Albania for the first time, opening a Missionaries of Charity Brothers home in Tirana.<sup>[68]</sup> By 1996, Teresa operated 517 missions in over 100 countries.<sup>[69]</sup> Her Missionaries of Charity grew from twelve to thousands, serving the "poorest of the poor" in 450 centres worldwide. The first Missionaries of Charity home in the United States was established in the South Bronx area of New York City, and by 1984 the congregation operated 19 establishments throughout the country.<sup>[70]</sup>

## **Declining health and death**

Teresa had a heart attack in Rome in 1983 while she was visiting Pope John Paul II. Following a second attack in 1989, she received an artificial pacemaker. In 1991, after a bout of pneumonia in Mexico, she had additional heart problems. Although Teresa offered to resign as head of the Missionaries of Charity, in a secret ballot the sisters of the congregation voted for her to stay and she agreed to continue.<sup>[71]</sup> In April 1996 she fell, breaking her collarbone, and four months later she had malaria and heart failure. Although Teresa had heart surgery, her health was clearly declining. According to Archbishop of Calcutta Henry Sebastian D'Souza, he ordered a priest to perform an exorcism (with her permission) when she was first hospitalized with cardiac problems because he thought she might be under attack by the devil.<sup>[72]</sup> On 13 March 1997 Teresa resigned as head of the Missionaries of Charity, and she died on 5 September.<sup>[73]</sup> At the time of her death, the Missionaries of Charity had over 4,000 sisters and an associated brotherhood of 300 members operating 610 missions in 123 countries.<sup>[74]</sup> These included hospices and homes for people with HIV/AIDS, leprosy and tuberculosis, soup kitchens, children's- and family-counselling programmes, orphanages and schools. The Missionaries of Charity were aided by co-workers numbering over one million by the 1990s.<sup>[75]</sup> Teresa lay in repose in an open casket in St Thomas, Calcutta, for a week before her funeral. She received a state funeral from the Indian government in gratitude for her service to the poor of all religions in the country.<sup>[76]</sup> Assisted by five priests, Cardinal Secretary of State Angelo Sodano, the Pope's representative, performed the last rites.<sup>[77]</sup> Teresa's death was mourned in the secular and religious communities. Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif called her "a rare and unique individual who lived long for higher purposes. Her life-long devotion to the care of the poor, the sick, and the disadvantaged was one of the highest examples of service to our humanity."<sup>[78]</sup> According to former U.N. Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, "She is the United Nations. She is peace in the world."<sup>[78]</sup>

## UNIT - IV

### Women Indian Association

1917

Empowerment of women for the many organization formed. It is important of the “Women’s Indian Association” (1917). This organization of the full supported to the Indian women. Women Indian Association the understand the Women Right to the development of Women Education. They are many organization formation to Indian women joining to the work.

‘Mrs. Margaret Cousins’ and others founded ‘Women’s Indian Association’ in Chennai Adaiyar in 1917. Women’s Indian Association Women’s Indian – Society whose President Dr. Annie Besant was chosen of the first Women’s Indian Association President. She was service to the (17) seventeen years.

After her followed by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy to continue to the service of Women Indian Association. This Association of 1917 to 1937 function to the 20<sup>th</sup> years Development of 33 Branches formed. This is Association full supported to the all women so this Association.

- ❖ Importance of women education.
- ❖ Political of service of women to entired.

They are supported to the Three Members of the Indian Women Association

Margret cousins, Annie Besant, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy

This Association fight to the women Right given to all

1. Women Right
2. Give to Franchise to women

The women right to Franchise of the Right of voting.

Social of women and Development of education – so full efforted to the invalid

So eligiable to Franchise in 1936.

Next, Equal to all men (or) women. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy selected to the “Leader of Chennai Legislature’ council in 1927.

- ❖ Next Muthu L.R. Best contributions of ‘Abolition of Devadasi System’ passed to Resolution of Legislature.

She is participated of All India Women Conference at Paris in 1926. So she formed to the Journal of the ‘Three Dharma’. (Three language of multi) published. She is first Gragrabe of medical Metanit medical Hospital formed to Chennai.

1917 established for Indian Women Association Branches to Two Organisation.

1. All India Women’s Conference
2. National council of Women in India to formed in 1925.

This Amendment Act of Prohibition of Child marriage. Another important social legislation in pre-independent India was against child marriage. That is act of child marriage Restraint Act was passed in 1929. So, the child marriage Restraint Act 1929 popularly known as the Sarda Act, after its sponsor Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarda to the British India Legislature in India was passed on 28 september 1929.

This act fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 years and boys at 18 years. It came into effect six months later on April 1, 1930 and it applies to all off British India.

#### The Sharda Act-1929

Many social reformer formed to the some organization and Act. That is one of the Act of Sharta Act. In 1891, The Hindu age of content bill was passed. In spite of this, The evil persisted in the society. So, In 1927 Harbilas Sharada introduced a bill before the legislature to regulate marriage among the Hindus, so that is name of Sharada Act was passed.

It fixed the minimum age of marriage for girls at 14 years and for boys at 18 years. So Sharada Act of benefit of the Indian society. After Hindu marriage age of fixed of 'Amendment Act' on 1976. As a result of Amendment Act of compulsory of Registration for the Hindu marriage.

### **The All India Women's Conference**

The **All India Women's Conference (AIWC)** is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in Delhi. It was founded in 1927 by Margaret Cousins in order to improve educational efforts for women and children and has expanded its scope to also tackle other women's rights issues. The organisation is one of the oldest women's groups in India and has branches throughout the country.

#### **History**

The All India Women's Conference (AIWC) was founded in 1927 in Pune in order to promote women and children's education and social welfare.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> Margaret Cousins had called for the creation of an organisation as early as late 1925 by writing to other women's groups and to friends to come together to discuss education for women.<sup>[4]</sup> The first meeting held in Poona saw 2,000 attendees who met at the Fergusson College Hall on Poona University.<sup>[4]</sup> Most of the attendees were observers, but others were women that Cousins had brought together to help create the AIWC.<sup>[5]</sup> Amrit Kaur was one of the founding members of AIWC.<sup>[6]</sup> One of the first secretaries of AIWC was Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay.<sup>[7]</sup> Beginning in 1928, AIWC began to raise money to open the Lady Irwin College of Domestic Science.<sup>[4]</sup> Also in 1928, the AIWC recognized that women's education couldn't be addressed properly without dealing with "harmful social customs."<sup>[8]</sup> Women of the AIWC set up a committee to "watch and report on the progress of the Child Marriage Bill," and to also lobby politicians relating to the practice of child marriage.<sup>[9]</sup> Other issues that were tackled included giving women the right to divorce, to inherit and to vote.<sup>[10]</sup>

AIWC was registered in 1930 under the Societies Registration Act, XXI of 1860. (No. 558 of 1930).<sup>[11]</sup> AIWC created a journal, *Roshni*, in 1941 which was published in both English and Hindi.<sup>[12][13]</sup> The organisation was involved in lobbying Parliament to pass new laws to protect women in India and also to help expand voting rights.<sup>[14][15]</sup> A central office for AIWC was set up in 1946.<sup>[12]</sup> Also in 1946, a "Skippo Committee" was set up to help provide villages with medical treatment.<sup>[16]</sup> When India was fighting for independence,

many more radical members left the organisation in order to become "nationalist agitators."<sup>[4]</sup> The organisation also expelled members who were associated with Communist groups in 1948.<sup>[17]</sup>

### **Activities and programmes**

One of the initial main objectives of the AIWC was education of women, and it remains a primary concern today. The organisation's literacy campaign was intensified in 1996 by initiating non-formal education programmes for school drop outs and literacy programmes for adult woman with craft training through its branches.<sup>[18][19]</sup> AIWC also operates microcredit schemes and energy development for rural women.<sup>[10]</sup> AIWC has trained women in the use of solar driers for hygienically storing food.<sup>[20]</sup> They also help women find employment, are involved in health issues and the prevention of human trafficking.

## **Women's National Council**

**Women's National Council** (Czech: *Ženská národní rada (ŽNR)* (1923-1942) was the only women's umbrella organization in Czechoslovakia and only official women's collective which existed in the country until after 1990. As such, it was the most significant feminist organization in the interwar period. Founded by Františka Plamínková, its members strove for reform of marriage laws and employment restrictions of women, which they believed had been promised by the equality mandate in the new constitution.

### **History**

After the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 and passage of its constitution in 1920,<sup>[1]</sup> Františka Plamínková, a politician who recognized the need for an effective lobbying group for women's issues, established the Women's National Council (ŽNR) in 1923.<sup>[2]</sup> Throughout the life of the organization, Plamínková served as the president.<sup>[1]</sup> The governing documents of the ŽNR were approved by the Ministry of the Interior on 24 February 1923,<sup>[3]</sup> and soon after its formation joined the International Council of Women and the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. The organization was established as an umbrella organization to unite other women's organizations in gaining political and civic equality for women.<sup>[2]</sup> Established in Prague, with a branch office in Brno,<sup>[1]</sup> by 1935, they had fifty affiliated organizations and some 2,200 members<sup>[3]</sup> without regard to creed, nationality or political affiliation.<sup>[2]</sup> Most of the affiliated organizations were professional organizations of civil servants, social workers and teachers, with membership among the educated middle class. Because the organization focused on Czech women and meetings and correspondence was in the Czech language women identifying as German or Slovak rarely joined, though the Slovak network, Živena and several German and Jewish organizations were members.<sup>[4]</sup> The organization's leadership was staunchly anti-clerical, which often precluded Catholic women's organizations from participating. Politically, the membership included members of the Agrarian Party, Communist Party, National Socialist Party and Social Democratic Party, but most of the executive were aligned with the conservative National Democrats.<sup>[5]</sup>

The ŽNR worked to educate women about their rights, as well as to mold public opinion. To that end, they worked to establish a library of materials about women both from

within Czechoslovakia and abroad. The organization collected women's literature, and specifically tried to obtain information on reforms, draft laws, and pending legislation which might impact women's equality. Members were encouraged to contact legislative members, trade unions and libraries in other jurisdictions to expand the information ŽNR could offer for study to members, public officials and journalists. They also established a journal, *Ženská rada* (Women's advice) which was published from 1925 to 1938 and edited by Plamínková.<sup>[3]</sup> Developing a number of departments, the organization focused on women's civil status as wives and employees, educational opportunities, family matters and parenting, legal status, morality, pacifism, personal freedom, and societal improvement.<sup>[1]</sup> Members like Milada Horáková, Marie Svozilová and Hana Vichová devoted speeches and articles to criticize the government's failure to implement laws for equality which was constitutionally guaranteed. They demanded an end to employment discrimination on the basis of sex and insisted that equal pay for employment based on education and skill be upheld.<sup>[3][6]</sup> Because the civil code designated the man as head of the household, women by law were legal dependents having the same position as children, with decision-making authority over their economic life or guardianship concerns for their children.<sup>[7]</sup> ŽNR drafted a new civil code which called for equality of spouses as well as for their mutual care of dependents and each other. Each spouse should have the right to work and the responsibility for care of the family with equal decision-making authority, and for domestic maintenance. There should be equality in division of assets, the right of spouses to choose their legal name, the right of divorce and equal alimony regardless to the sex of the lower earning partner.<sup>[8]</sup> Their suggestions were rejected and though the law was revised in 1931, men still maintained authority over children, property and their wives;<sup>[9]</sup> the only substantive change being that marriage would henceforward be a civil partnership, rather than a religious rite.<sup>[10]</sup>

With the advent of the Great Depression and austerity measures put in place at that time, ŽNR pressed for relief programs that provided assistance to the unemployed, rather than the mass dismissal of women workers.<sup>[3]</sup> The women also worked for assistance programs for the disabled, illegitimate children and orphans, a juvenile court system, protections for women prisoners, and a comprehensive reform of unemployment schemes, specifically for the establishment of a women's unemployment fund.<sup>[7]</sup> When the Nazi occupation began in 1938, women lost ground. Implementation of programs outlawing all political parties except the state-sponsored party, which women could not join, effectively silenced the ŽNR's ability to engage politically. State-sponsored paternalism ensured that the women's choices were curtailed and President Emil Hácha took over the appointment of the women who were to serve on the ŽNR board, some of whom were not members of the organization. The intent was to subvert the concerns of women from women's issues and point them toward state-approved activities which would benefit the state. In 1942, the organization was outlawed.

### **Hindu Women's Right to Property (1937)**

One of the most important enactments of give better rights to women with regard to property was the Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, (1937) passed mainly due to the efforts of Deshmukh. The Act provided a powerful weapon in the hands of the progressive forces of Hindu society and had struck a powerful blow to the traditional authoritarian male dominated Hindu social edifice and marked a new phase in the history of women's struggle for equality with men in Hindu society.



Thus in the pre-independence era a series of acts as mentioned above were promulgated for women's upliftment.

Many Laws have been passed by the Indian Parliament to uplift the status of women in India. Notable among these are the following:

1. Hindu Married Women's Right to separate Residence and Maintenance Act, 1946.
2. Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
3. Hindu Succession Acts, 1956
4. Hindu Adoptions, and Maintenance Act, 1956
5. Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956
6. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.

Hindu Married Women's Rights to separate Residence and Maintenance Act 1946.

The Act empowers the Hindu married women to claim for maintenance while residing separate from their husbands on the following conditions:

1. In case the husband is suffering from some loathsome disease not contracted from the wife.
2. In case husband behaves inhumanly and the stay of wife with her husband is dangerous or harmful.
3. If the husband deserts her without her willingness.
4. In case the husband adopts some other religion.
5. In case the husband keeps some concubine.
6. Any other cause justifiable for separate residence.

But a woman found guilty of adultery or religious changes cannot claim the above stated right according to this Act.

The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955

This Act has introduced following changes in the life of the Hindus.

1. Classification of Hindu Marriages as void, voidable and valid.
2. Determination of Marriagable Age : According to the Act the lower age limit for girl is 18 years and whereas for a boy is 21 years.
3. Provision for Monogamy: Section 5 and Clause 1 of the Act declares monogamy as the form of Hindu marriages.
4. Mother's Guardianship: After the death of the father, mother will be the guardian of a minor son or daughter.
5. Provision for divorce: According to the Hindu Marriage Act, wife as well as the husband has been allowed to seek divorce in certain conditions.

The Hindu Succession Act, 1956

This Act entitles the female children to share the property of their father along with their brothers. The women have the right to use, sell, mortgage or dispose of the inherited property in the way they like.

The Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956

No husband can adopt a child without taking permission from his wife. The rights of adoption is available to issueless widows also.

No adoption can be legal unless it fulfills the following conditions:

- a. After the death of her husband every widow with sound mind has the right to adopt or even give her child for adoption.
- b. Every husband of sound-mind with the consent of his wife can adopt a child.
- c. The unmarried adult woman has the right to adopt a child.
- d. The adopted person shall be less than 15 years old and should be unmarried unless the custom of child marriage is in prevalence in his community.

As regards to the maintenance the following provisions have been made:

- a. The Hindu wife during the life time of her husband will have the right of maintenance.
- b. The widowed daughter-in-law or and daughter-in-law will also have the right of maintenance.
- c. The widow or unmarried daughter will have the right for maintenance upon her father.
- d. The minor children, if they are illegitimate will have their right for maintenance from parents, up to the time they remain minor.

#### Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956

With regard to guardianship, the following have been made by this Act:

- a. A child will remain under the guardianship of mother till the age of 5 years and after that the father can claim for guardian ship. After the death of the father, the child will again be under the guardianship of the mother till he does not become adult.
- b. In case of unmarried daughter or illegitimate son, till the mother is alive, the right of guardianship shall be with her.
- c. The legal guardians will have the right to do such thing as are considered necessary and in the interests of the child.
- d. For the purposes of this Act, the age of minor is upto 18 years.

#### Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

The cruel practice of dowry has become a deep-rooted social malady leading to the economic exploitation of women. Due to the materialist approach towards life and westernization, the demand for dowry has become rampant and too much exacting. Too dowry system has indeed made great inroads with the budget of the poor and middle class families while people of higher strata of society can cushion the pressure of dowry demand. Hence the Congress Government passed this Act in 1961 making the giver as well receiver of the dowry punishable.

According to this Act the demands for Dowry has been prohibited and provision is made for severe punishment for such demands.

Thus this custom was legally abolished but in the absence of sufficient awareness and favourable social attitude, the law remains ineffective.

#### **Effects**

Above mentioned legislations have introduced the following changes in the life of Indian women:

1. Equal right of male and female has ended the subjugation of women and also their subordination.
2. End of domination: Hindu family life is no more arbitrarily a male dominated family.
3. Abolition of polygamy: Polygamy has been abolished Monogamy has been introduced.
4. Restriction on child marriages: With the increase of the marriageable ages the evil of child marriages has been abolished.
5. Women have given the right to inheritance in parents property.
6. Women have been awarded equal rights of guardianship.
7. With the provisions for the old age, disablement maintenances of life has improved in the Hindu society.

## **Rape and sexual harassment**

**Sexual assault** is an act in which a person intentionally sexually touches another person without that person's consent, or coerces or physically forces a person to engage in a sexual act against their will.<sup>[1]</sup> It is a form of sexual violence, which includes child sexual abuse, groping, rape (forced vaginal, anal, or oral penetration or a drug facilitated sexual assault), or the torture of the person in a sexual manner.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

### **Child sexual abuse**

Child sexual abuse is a form of child abuse in which an adult or older adolescent abuses a child for sexual stimulation.<sup>[6][7]</sup> Forms of child sexual abuse include asking or pressuring a child to engage in sexual activities (regardless of the outcome), indecent exposure of the genitals to a child, displaying pornography to a child, actual sexual contact against a child, physical contact with the child's genitals, viewing of the child's genitalia without physical contact, or using a child to produce child pornography,<sup>[6][8][9]</sup> including live streaming sexual abuse.<sup>[10]</sup> The effects of child sexual abuse include depression,<sup>[11]</sup> post-traumatic stress disorder,<sup>[12]</sup> anxiety,<sup>[13]</sup> propensity to revictimization in adulthood,<sup>[14]</sup> physical injury to the child, and increased risk for future interpersonal violence perpetration among males, among other problems.<sup>[15][16]</sup> Sexual abuse by a family member is a form of incest. It is more common than other forms of sexual assault on a child and can result in more serious and long-term psychological trauma, especially in the case of parental incest.

Approximately 15 to 25 percent of women and 5 to 15 percent of men were sexually abused when they were children.<sup>[18][19][20][21][22][23]</sup> Most sexual abuse offenders are acquainted with their victims. Approximately 30 percent of the perpetrators are relatives of the child - most often brothers, fathers, mothers, sisters and uncles or cousins. Around 60 percent are other acquaintances such as friends of the family, babysitters, or neighbors. Strangers are the offenders in approximately 10 percent of child sexual abuse cases.<sup>[18]</sup> Studies have shown that the psychological damage is particularly severe when sexual assault is committed by parents against children due to the incestuous nature of the assault.<sup>[17]</sup> Incest between a child or adolescent and a related adult has been identified as the most widespread form of child sexual

abuse with a huge capacity for damage to a child.<sup>[17]</sup> Often, sexual assault on a child is not reported by the child for several of the following reasons:

- children are too young to recognize their victimization or put it into words
- they were threatened or bribed by the abuser
- they feel confused by fearing the abuser
- they are afraid no one will believe them
- they blame themselves or believe the abuse is a punishment
- they feel guilty for consequences to the perpetrator<sup>[24]</sup>

Many states have criminalized sexual contact between teachers or school administrators and students, even if the student is over the age of consent.<sup>[25]</sup>

### **Domestic violence**

Domestic violence is violence or other abuse by one person against another in a domestic setting, such as in marriage or cohabitation. It is strongly correlated with sexual assault. Not only can domestic abuse be emotional, physical, psychological and financial, but it can be sexual. Some of the signs of sexual abuse are similar to those of domestic violence.<sup>[26]</sup>

### **Elderly sexual assault**

About 30 percent of people age 65 or older who are sexually assaulted in the U.S. report it to the police.<sup>[27]</sup> Assailants may include strangers, caretakers, adult children, spouses and fellow facility residents.<sup>[27]</sup>

### **Groping**

The term *groping* is used to define the touching or fondling of another person in a sexual way without the person's consent. Groping may occur under or over clothing.

### **Rape**

Outside of law, the term *rape* (sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual penetration carried out against a person without that person's consent) is often used interchangeably with sexual assault.<sup>[28][29]</sup> Although closely related, the two terms are technically distinct in most jurisdictions. Sexual assault typically includes rape and other forms of non-consensual sexual activity.<sup>[4][30]</sup> Abbey *et al.* state that female victims are much more likely to be assaulted by an acquaintance, such as a friend or co-worker, a dating partner, an ex-boyfriend or a husband or other intimate partner than by a complete stranger.<sup>[31]</sup> In a study of hospital emergency room treatments for rape, Kaufman *et al.* stated that the male victims as a group sustained more physical trauma and were more likely to have been a victim of multiple assaults from multiple assailants. It was also stated that male victims were more likely to have been held captive longer.<sup>[32]</sup>

In the U.S., rape is a crime committed primarily against youth.<sup>[33]</sup> A national telephone survey on violence against women conducted by the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 18% of women surveyed had experienced a completed or attempted rape at some time in their lives. Of these,

22% were younger than 12 years and 32% were between 12 and 17 years old when they were first raped.<sup>[34][23]</sup> In the U.K., attempted rape under the Criminal Attempts Act 1981 is a 'sexual offence' within section 31(1) of the Criminal Justice Act 1991.<sup>[35]</sup> The removal of a condom during intercourse without the consent of the sex partner, known as stealthing, may be treated as a sexual assault or rape.<sup>[36]</sup>

### **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is intimidation, bullying or coercion of a sexual nature. It may also be defined as the unwelcome or inappropriate promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favors.<sup>[37]</sup> The legal and social definition of what constitutes sexual harassment differ widely by culture. Sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviors from seemingly mild transgressions to serious forms of abuse. Some forms of sexual harassment overlap with sexual assault.<sup>[38]</sup>

In the United States, sexual harassment is a form of discrimination which violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC): "Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment."<sup>[39]</sup>

## UNIT - IV

### International Women's Year

**International Women's Year (IWY)** was the name given to 1975 by the United Nations. Since that year March 8 has been celebrated as International Women's Day, and the United Nations Decade for Women, from 1976 to 1985, was also established.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

#### History

After years of work by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to adopt a declaration to eliminate discrimination against women, in 1965, CSW began working in earnest to obtain passage of a declaration to secure women's human rights. Collating responses covering education, employment, inheritance, penal reform, and other issues, from government actors, NGO representatives and UN staff, CSW delegates drafted the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (DEDAW), which was passed by the General Assembly on 7 November 1967.<sup>[3]</sup> Once support had been garnered for the declaration, the next step was to prepare it to become a Convention. Though there were delays, by 1972, when the United States Congress passed Title IX, eliminating discrimination in education for any institution receiving federal funding, hope that passage could be secured surged.<sup>[4]</sup> In the meantime, members of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) had long been pressing for an international women's year and conference to address women's inequality. As WIDF was designated as an observer and not a member of the CSW, they could not propose the event directly but drafted a proposal.

Persuading the Romanian delegate of CSW to present their proposal, it was seconded by Finland. In turn, CSW approved the proposal and submitted it to the General Assembly, which proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year on 18 December 1972.<sup>[5]</sup> The date was significant because it would take place on the thirtieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations.<sup>[6]</sup> But there were problems with the conference. Initially, Soviet women rejected the call for a conference and filibustered the negotiations, preferring to host their own conference in East Berlin that would not be subject to the UN structure.<sup>[7][8]</sup> As part of the Cold War politics, the United States then proposed that the conference not be limited to women, but should be gender-neutral, because an all-woman conference would not be taken seriously.<sup>[9]</sup> Finally, Mexico City agreed to host the conference, and CSW set about the tasks to prepare the "machinery" necessary to secure passage of CEDAW.<sup>[8]</sup> Helvi Sipilä, was selected as the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and placed in charge of organizing events for the year.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### Mexico City

The first UN World Conference on Women was held in Mexico City from 19 June to 2 July.<sup>[2]</sup> The 1975 conference led to the adoption of the World Plan of Action, as well as the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace.<sup>[10]</sup> It led to the establishment of monitoring mechanisms such as, International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and set in motion plans for follow-up conferences, the first of which would be held in 1980 in Copenhagen. It established the period of 1975 to 1985 as the UN Decade for Women, to enable progress and failures to be evaluated and resulted in urging that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) be quickly ratified.<sup>[11][12]</sup> The 1985 third conference in Nairobi, Kenya, not only closed the decade of women but set a series of

member state schedules for removal of legislated gender discrimination in national laws by the year 2000. The 1975 Mexico City Conference was attended by over a thousand delegates. Prominent attendees included Elizabeth Reid and Margaret Whitlam of Australia. The *International Women's Year Tribune* was also organised and attended by 4,000 women in 1975.

### **East Berlin**

The World Congress of Women was held in East Berlin as a part of IWY soon after the Mexico City event. It idealized women's equality as the "true embodiment of the socialist conception of human rights".<sup>[21]</sup> The Working Group on Equal Rights, composed of experts on government and law from the East German Academy of Sciences, Humboldt University and Socialist United Party Central Committee rejected the notion that women's rights should fall under a separate area designated by gender, but instead should be governed by the United Nations Human Right's position.<sup>[22]</sup> Angela Davis was one of the key guests at the conference, as was Hortensia Bussi de Allende, former First Lady of Chile.<sup>[23]</sup> The state-sponsored program advocated women's solidarity in the national struggles to free women from oppression based on class, race and gender through state socialism.

### **Brussels**

The International Tribunal on the Crimes Against Women was planned as an event for IWY but was not held until 4 to 8 March 1976 in Brussels, Belgium. Limited by funding strictures, the conference hosted 2000 women from forty countries. Speakers addressed economic exploitation and violence against women in its many forms. The most significant development to come out of the conference was the International Feminist Network.<sup>[25]</sup>

### **Australia**

A conference on 'Women and Politics' was held in September,<sup>[20]</sup> attended by 700 women.

### **Canada**

The events of IWY in Canada as a whole raised awareness with Canadian women as well as the general public on a wide range of women's issues and accomplishments. It spurred the creation of the Ontario Women and the Law Association and the Service, Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada (SORWUC) and offered funding for many to participate in educational and artistic endeavors aimed at presenting women's perspectives. One such effort was a petition to the National Film Board of Canada which led to the creation of Studio D. The University of Guelph hosted a conference in September dedicated to Nellie McClung and the reform issues which had been important to her.<sup>[30]</sup>

### **New Zealand**

In June a United Women's Convention was held in Wellington.

### **United States of America**

Events in support of IWY were held throughout the United States by private organizations and NGOs, such as those held in Connecticut, 11–12 June 1977 and the *Greater Cleveland Congress*, October.<sup>[32][33]</sup> One of the most significant US events, because it was funded by the US government, was held in Houston, Texas and though planned as an IWY event, did not take place until 1977. The 1977 National Women's Conference included women from each state in the United States and developed a National Plan of Action, mirroring many of the points of the World Plan of Action.

## The United Nations Decade for Women

The **United Nations Decade for Women** was a period from 1975 to 1985 focused on the policies and issues that impact women, such as pay equity, gendered violence, land holding, and other human rights. It was adopted December 15, 1975, by the United Nations General Assembly by Resolution 31/136.<sup>[1]</sup> The Decade formally consisted of three international meetings and conferences in Mexico City for "consciousness raising", Copenhagen for creating "networks", and Nairobi for "the solidarity of women world-wide" along with several regional meetings with specific UN agencies (UNESCO, WHO, ECLA, EEC) and nongovernmental organizations (YWCA, World Council of Churches, National Association of Women).

### History

The first UN Women's Conference was held in Mexico City in 1975. There it was declared that the UN Decade for Women would begin in 1976 due particularly to the efforts of Letitia Shahani and U Thant.<sup>[1][2]</sup> Members of the UN, aimed to increase literacy, vocational training, education, and employment opportunities for women. They also planned to improve health education and services, family planning education, and welfare services for women.<sup>[3]</sup> The Conference's Declaration, formally titled the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace, was made to promote the wellbeing of women of all socioeconomic statuses, though there was a particular focus on the protections and outreach to colonized countries. It called for an institution of a New International Economic Order. The Declaration made 30 principles that called for specific measures and areas to focus on for the development of women's rights. Many of these focus on the care for children and family life, access to education and communication, economic independence, rights to political engagement, choice in marriage, sexual autonomy and right to not be assaulted, and more. The inclusion of provisions for the elimination of Zionism was very controversial.<sup>[why?][3]</sup> In December 1975, the UN's General Assembly committed to the Plan of Action and Declaration. With this, they established a United Nations Voluntary Fund for the Decade on Women (UNIFEM) and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.<sup>[3]</sup> In 1979, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

### UN Women's Conferences

*Main article: World Conference on Women, 1980*

This conference was used to reflect on progress made since the 1975 conference in Mexico.

As the organization began to reflect upon the progress that had been made so far, some issues that prevented the advancement of women were noted, including:

- Lack of sufficient involvement of men in improving women's role in society;
- Insufficient political will;
- Lack of recognition of the value of women's contributions to society;
- Lack of attention to the particular needs of women in planning;
- A shortage of women in decision-making positions;
- Insufficient services to support the role of women in national life, such as co-operatives, day-care centres and credit facilities;
- Overall lack of necessary financial resources;
- Lack of awareness among women about the opportunities available to them.<sup>[4]</sup>



Controversially, delegates from a variety of colonized countries elaborated on subjects regarding the domination of the countries they represented by countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom. They condemned the international actions and rulings in favor of colonialism, racism, apartheid, hegemonism, and Zionism. When the representatives demanded an elaboration on the texts regarding the opposition and protect of women from the effects of these issues, dozens of the governments of world powers opposed and abstained.<sup>[3]</sup> In response, a "Programme of Action" was produced to promote women's ownership and control of property and inheritance, child custody, and loss of nationality. In addition, delegates at the Conference spoke out against stereotyped attitudes towards women.<sup>[4]</sup> It was adopted with a vote of 94 to 4. The four countries opposed were Australia, Canada, Israel, and the United States. The US and Canada criticized the Plan, saying that it went beyond the scope of issues they considered to be pertinent to women, as there was a focus on political disputes.<sup>[3]</sup> It has since been determined by the UN that countries in conflict are especially harmful to women in the regions.<sup>[5]</sup> In the end, the conference adopted 45 resolutions on matters on the role of women in development, health, education, employment, and more. The Holy See, of the Catholic Church, was opposed to the texts that included family planning as a human right.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **Nairobi, Kenya 1985**

This conference was gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of the decade, but also to establish an agenda that would continue the efforts of the issues facing women beyond 1985. A document titled "The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women" was created.<sup>[6]</sup> In 1995, a conference was held in Beijing, China to accelerate the implementation of the initiatives outlined in the document.<sup>[1]</sup> In drafting the Forward Looking Strategies document, representatives and supporters of Palestine wanted to add Zionism as a form of oppression to be condemned alongside of neo-colonialism, the arms race, and more. After a three-hour diplomatic lobbying, all parties decided to use the broader terms of "racism and racial discrimination".<sup>[2]</sup> At the event, over 160 groups attended the forum of Non-Governmental Organizations and sponsored over 2000 workshops. Women headed 106 of the 160 delegations from as many countries. More than 4000 women came to Kenya during the 2.5 weeks of meetings.<sup>[2]</sup> Because of this conference, the UN made the UNIFEM an autonomous organization with the UN Development Program.<sup>[1]</sup>

### **Legacy**

The focus on women during the decade brought about a lot of changes in policies impacting women.<sup>[3]</sup> A year after the conference in Nairobi, the UN published the first *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*.<sup>[3]</sup> To do the reporting every year, governments had to establish "women's departments", appoint cabinet ministers for women's affairs, and begin considering the roles and statuses of women in their countries.<sup>[2]</sup> Prior to these appointments and specific studies, women often went "invisible" in global economic reports, as their labor is typically unpaid.<sup>[2][7]</sup>

Many UN programs and funds were created in the duration of the decade that have remained active such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (which 170 countries ratified by 1985),<sup>[2]</sup> the Commission on the Status of Women, and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.<sup>[1]</sup>

The UN Economic Council for Africa appointed a women's officer to study the effects of development policies on women.

## Women's National Commission -1969

The **Women's National Commission (WNC)** was an advisory non-departmental public body set up in 1969 to advise the United Kingdom's government on women's views, and to act as an umbrella body for UK-based women's groups in their dealings with government. Until the 1990s, it was run by an executive, as voted for by its 'partners'. These were women's groups that had applied for and gained formal membership, the number of groups allowed to become members was limited to fifty. The government appointed a co-chair to manage the body, together with the elected chair.<sup>[1]</sup> After a review of the organisation in the late 1990s, it was relaunched as an NDPB. The government gave up its permanent co-chair position and removed the limit on the number of partner organisations it could have affiliated. Partners then ceased to have a formal role in running the body. The Minister for Women then became responsible for appointing a board of Commissioners and a Chair, who would represent all partners and the wider women's movement. In July 2007, Harriet Harman the newly appointed Minister for Women, announced that it would have a new role in consulting with women, to discover what they felt she should be doing as Minister. In October 2010, it was announced that the WNC would close on 31 December 2010 as part of the review of all NDPBs by the UK Government.<sup>[2]</sup> It has now closed. A "legacy document" has been published to show the work that it had undertaken.

## The National Commission for Women-1992

The **National Commission for Women (NCW)** is the statutory body of the Government of India, generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women. It was established in 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian Constitution,<sup>[1]</sup> as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act.<sup>[2]</sup> The first head of the commission was Jayanti Patnaik. As of 30 November 2018, Rekha Sharma is the chairperson.<sup>[3]</sup>

### Activities

The objective of the NCW is to represent the rights of women in India and to provide a voice for their issues and concerns. The subjects of their campaigns have included dowry, politics, religion, equal representation for women in jobs, and the exploitation of women for labour. They have also discussed police abuses against women.<sup>[4]</sup> The commission regularly publishes a monthly newsletter, *Rashtra Mahila*, in both Hindi and English.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Controversies

#### Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code

In December 2006 and January 2007, the NCW found itself at the center of a minor controversy over its insistence that Section 497<sup>[6]</sup> of the Indian Penal Code not be changed to make adulterous wives equally prosecutable by their husbands. But the grounds on which Ms. Vyas resists the logic of making this a criminal offence — particularly for women, as often recommended — are not as encouraging. She is averse to holding the adulterous woman equally culpable as the adulterous man because women, she believes, are never offenders. They are always the victims.<sup>[7]</sup>

The NCW has demanded that women should not be punished for adultery, as a woman is "the victim and not an offender" in such cases. They have also advocated the

amendment of Section 198 of the CrPC to allow women to file complaints against unfaithful husbands and prosecute them for their promiscuous behaviour. This was in response to "loopholes" in the Indian Penal Code that allowed men to file adultery charges against other men who have engaged in illicit relations but did not allow women to file charges against their husbands.<sup>[8]</sup> The Commission has also worked to guarantee women security in unconventional relationships.<sup>[7]</sup>

### **Mangalore pub attack controversy**[edit]

The NCW came under sharp criticism for their response to the attack by forty male members of the Hindu right-wing Sri Ram Sena on eight women in a bar in Mangalore in late January 2009. Video from the attack shows the women were punched, pulled by their hair, and thrown out of the pub.<sup>[9][10]</sup> NCW member Nirmala Venkatesh was sent to assess the situation, and said in an interview that the pub did not have adequate security and that the women should have protected themselves. Venkatesh said, "If the girls feel they were not doing anything wrong why are they afraid to come forward and give a statement?"<sup>[11]</sup> On 6 February, the NCW said they decided not to accept Venkatesh's report but would not be sending a new team to Mangalore. On 27 February, the Prime Minister's Office approved the removal of Nirmala Venkatesh on disciplinary grounds.<sup>[12]</sup>

### **Guwahati molestation controversy**[edit]

The NCW came under fire again after the molestation of a 17-year-old girl by a gang of men outside a pub in Guwahati on 9 July 2012. NCW member Alka Lamba was accused of leaking the name of the minor victim to the media, and was subsequently removed from the fact-finding committee, though she remains a member of the commission.<sup>[13]</sup> The following week, NCW chairperson Mamta Sharma made comments suggesting that women "be careful how you dress", which invited criticism that she was guilty of victim blaming. The controversy led activists to call for a restructuring of the commission.

## **TAMIL NADU STATE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**

In the year **1993**, the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women, which is a statutory body was constituted to deal with the cases related to crime against women. A chairperson and 9 members have been appointed.

The Women Commission investigates specific problems of women and takes up studies related to women issues. The Women Commission is also vested with sufficient powers to safeguard women's rights and to ensure equality and protection for women against all forms of harassment and problems faced within the families and the community various steps are also taken by the Commission to create awareness among the public regarding the legislations related to women.

The objectives of the Commission are:-

- To provide protection and ensure welfare of women.
- To address the gender issues.
- To recommend to the Government on various issues related to women.

## **THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN COMMISSION**

1. Adherence to the Provisions and Protections provided under the Constitution and

legislation for women are taken care of by the Commission.

1. Report to Government when the protective measures for women are not effectively implemented by various agencies.
2. Recommends amendments in the provisions of law when it fails to impart justice to Women.
3. Takes up issues related to violation of rights of women and follow-up action with the concerned authorities.

Women who have complaints of violation of their rights and non-implementation of their protective measures guaranteed under the Constitution of India can directly approach Women Commission for redressal.

### **The Women's Studies Center**

The Women's Studies Center is an independent non-profit and non-government organization in Belgrade, Serbia. Its mission is to create and promote alternative education opportunities through a variety of teaching, research, and publishing programs. The aim of these programs is to explore social practices of discrimination and exclusion based on gender, nationality, sexuality, color, class, religion, etc., to theoretically consider potential models of resistance to oppression and exclusion and to celebrate difference.

After many negotiations, the University of Belgrade at the Faculty of Political Sciences officially recognized and accredited a set of the Center's programs, which enabled the establishment of the Center for Gender and Politics, an institution founded to further promote gender studies. The Women's Studies Center continues to have a long-term goal of further institutionalization by formally establishing and institutionalizing a Women's Studies program at the University of Belgrade.

#### Founding and history

Belgrade Women's Studies Center was initiated by a feminist activist group Women and Society in 1992. The first experimental one-semester course started symbolically on March 8, 1992. It was conceptualized at the beginning of the 90s as a peacetime endeavor. From its inception and throughout the first decade of its history, the Center worked against the backdrop of the wars fought between 1991-1999 as an alternative to the mainstream education of the time. It was founded an anti-war and anti-nationalist educational enlightenment project, grounded in and supported by feminist activism.

### **Women's Universities**

**SNDT Women's University**, also called by its full name **Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University**, is a women's university in the city of Mumbai, India. The university headquarters are at Churchgate in South Mumbai, while the main campus is at Churchgate there are two other campuses one in Santacruz–Juhu area of Mumbai and another at Pune. The university has affiliated colleges in Maharashtra, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Surat and Goa, as well.<sup>[2]</sup> Since there are many colleges also making themselves popular, people do not understand difference of SNDTWU with SNDT Colleges. The University is a Public

University-based out of Maharashtra whereas Colleges are managed by local Management. University is a Government institution that controls and guides colleges conducted/affiliated by it.

## **History**

The year 1896 marked the beginning of a new era in women's education in India when Dhondo Keshav Karve established an ashram for widows and helpless women at Hingne near Pune. He realized that to make these women self-sufficient, -reliant and -confident, schooling was essential. Karve launched a programme of schooling there, which became a regular school for girls and women. In a society governed by age-old customs and conservative attitudes towards women, the school was bound to face social and economic difficulties.

He had a dream of establishing a women's university. His friends sent him a booklet on the Japan Women's University in Tokyo. In December 1915 Karve, in his presidential address to the National Social Reform Congress in Bombay, announced his decision to shape his dream into reality. On 2 July 1916 the first college started with the enrollment of five students; it gradually took shape as a women's university. Karve did not wait for the government permission for funds. In 1920 the university was named Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University. Mr. Vitthal Das Thakarsey donated ₹1500000 at that time in the memories of his beloved mother Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thakarsey, and so the name SNTU was given to the university.<sup>[3]</sup>

In 1936, the headquarters was shifted to Bombay. The university continued to grow, providing higher education to more and more women. In 1951, the university was granted statutory recognition and was renamed Shrimati Nathibai Thackersey Women's University now popularly known as SNTU Women's University. The recognition came along with rare privilege of having a jurisdiction across the country. On 5 July 2016 the university marked completion of 100 years of its existence. It was the first women's university in India and South East Asia.

## **Profile**

Today, the university has an enrolment of over 70,000 students. It has three campuses at Churchgate, Santacruz-Juhu, Pune.<sup>[4]</sup> The university has 39 university departments, 15 faculties. There are 174 undergraduate colleges and 8 institutions recognized for PhD degree. The university continues to manage three secondary schools for girls, which it inherited. The university is actively involved in teaching, research and extension. SNTU is the first university in Maharashtra to obtain a five-star rating from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) of India in the year 2000 and was reaccredited with A grade in 2015.

## **Collaborations**

The university has collaborated with state and central governments, industry, national and international organisations to develop and conduct academic programmes, undertake research and work with the community. The partners include the government of Maharashtra, ministries of the government of India, University Grants Commission, UNICEF, British Council, Association of Commonwealth Universities and Swedish International Development Agency.

**Mother Teresa Women's University**, a state university of the Government of Tamil Nadu, is situated at Kodaikanal, in the Palani hills of South India. It was established in the

year 1984 by the enactment of Tamil Nadu Act 15. This university aims to extend its service to women students of all communities. It strives for Academic Excellence and Personality Development and gives equal importance for promotion of employment prospects to young girls. It monitors and offers consultancy services and research in Women's Studies. The university offers distance education courses. The School of Distance Education of Mother Teresa Women's University was started in 1988 at Kodaikanal.