

CII Foundation Woman Exemplar Awards 2014

PRESS COVERAGE

पंजाब केसरी

Punjab Kesari - Delhi; 27 March 2014; Page : 8

♦ व्यावसायिक नजर



नई दिल्ली में बुधवार को सीआईआई के राष्ट्रीय सम्मेलन के दौरान वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री आनंद शर्मा महिला अनुकरणीय पुरस्कार विजेता महिलाओं के साथ।
(छाया: प्रैट्र.)

THE ASIAN AGE

Asian Age - Delhi, Mumbai & Kolkata; 27th March 2014 ; Page : 16, 14 & 10



LAUDING TALENT

Union minister for commerce and industry Anand Sharma (centre) with recipients of the Women Exemplar Awards 2014 during the CII National Conference and annual session in New Delhi on Wednesday. CII president S. Gopalakrishnan (extreme right) is also seen.

— PTI

Business Line

Business Line - Mumbai & Bangalore; Thu, 27 Mar-14; Page :

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CII awards women who broke their shackles

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, March 26

Walking long distances to get water for her family was the biggest strain for Devti Baiga, a widowed tribal woman in her 60s, who lives in a village on the fringes of the Bandhavgarh National Park in Madhya Pradesh, until she joined a self-help group.

In a project promoted by Royal Bank of Scotland, Baiga got a loan of ₹20,000 at an interest rate of 8 per cent.

"I decided that I will get a well bored near my dwelling, for which I paid ₹13,000 and then bought a motor pump for ₹ 6,000. Now I have started growing kakdis (cucumber used in salads) and big green chillies," she said at a CII event

here on Wednesday. Baiga says she has repaid part of the loan and now plans to expand her work and start growing herbal plants along with a group of 15 villagers. "The entire herbal produce will be bought by a Chhattisgarh-based company," she adds. Baiga, along with Lata Mane, a former sex worker from Ghatkopar, and Kalpana Roxy Gardekar, who is using theatre to transform lives of nomadic communities in Gujarat, were awarded CII's Exemplar Women awards this year by Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce & Industry.

"I was sold by my husband for ₹40,000 in 1994 and forced into the flesh trade. But, once I had two daughters I decide to move away, but there was no

support till an organisation working on HIV helped me," Lata Mane said. Soon she started selling cooked chapati-bhaji for ₹10. Once other sex workers joined her, the self-help group expanded and has started making trinkets, perfume and distributing condoms.

"Our group's aim now is to do something for 35-40 year-old sex-workers who have no means of livelihood once they start ageing. I don't want them to die on the streets," says Mane.

The awards, given by CII Foundation with Bajaj group as presenting partner and HSBC as contributing partner, seeks to promote women's empowerment at the community level. So far, 30 women have been awarded, a CII release said.



The Indian **EXPRESS**

Indian Express - Pune; Thu, 27 Mar-14; Page : 14



Commerce minister Anand Sharma presents the Women Exemplar Award 2014 in the field of Micro-Enterprise to Devi Baiga during CII National Conference in New Delhi on Wednesday.

PURUSHOTTAM SHARMA

Deccan Chronicle - Bangalore; Thu, 27 Mar-14 ; Page : 11



Union minister of commerce and industry Anand Sharma (centre) with recipients of the Women Exemplar Awards 2014 during CII National Conference and Annual Session 2014 in New Delhi on Wednesday. CII president S. Gopalakrishnan (extreme right) is also seen. — PTI

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HINDUSTAN TIMES, NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 02, 2014

They are beacons of hope

TRAILBLAZERS Meet these unconventional women who fought all odds to create a better future not just for themselves but for entire communities. Learn more about the organisations they work for and their commitment to social change

Breaking social taboos, empowering women



■ Lata Mane

Harini Sriram

■ harini.sriram@hindustantimes.com

It would be an understatement to say that Lata Mane has had a tough life. A recipient of the CII Woman Exemplar Award 2014 in the field of health, Mane has been working towards restoring the dignity of female sex workers, besides creating awareness about HIV-AIDS in the slums of Ghatkopar in Mumbai. She, however, had to fight social stigma herself when she was forced to become a sex worker around two decades ago.

"My husband sold me for ₹40,000 sometime in 1994 in Mumbai," she says. "I had two girls and I had to sustain a living and show them a brighter future. I started off as a sex worker, because I had no other choice, but somewhere along the way, I got engaged in working for Vijay Krida Mandal (VKM), an NGO involved in creating awareness about HIV,

VIJAY KRIDA MANDAL

VKM was set up in Mumbai in 1979 and has since then, been working towards empowering and creating opportunities for marginalised communities. They have set up balwadis (nursery schools) and organised medical camps across Maharashtra. To know more, log on to <http://www.vkmindia.org/>

among others." She joined them as peer educator and has, over the years, reached out to more than 500 female sex workers.

When her daughter turned five, Mane was determined to leave her past behind. "My children could not study because of my background as the stigma associated with sex workers is hard to shake off. Thanks to some well wishers from VKM, I managed to put my children in school," she says. She has, since then, been helping other female sex workers find good schools for their children. Mane is now an outreach worker with VKM and has been instrumental in mobilising female sex workers to form close to 20 self help groups (SHGs) in the community. "We train them in jewellery making, perfume making and other income-generating activities such as preparing and selling food," she says.

Mane is associated with the Clean Mumbai Project and works closely with the municipal corporation, besides heading awareness campaigns.



■ Devi Baiga

Towards a sustainable and secure future

From struggling to make ends meet in the harsh heartland of Madhya Pradesh to transforming the lives of tribes in the forest belt, Devi Baiga has come a long way. Part of the Baiga tribe in the Bandhavgarh National Park region, she and her family struggled to survive. "There was no water in the area, and the land was parched. It was almost like the region was under a perennial spell of drought," she says.

Cultivation was impossible due to the weather and landscape, and the tribes in the neighbouring villages had little or no water. Baiga's repeated attempts to meet the authorities and get them to understand the magnitude of the problem proved futile. She got the tribes organised into self help groups and pooled in resources to adopt the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method to facilitate organic cultivation of a variety of cash crops, becoming the first farmer in the region to use this tech-

INDIAN GRAMEEN SERVICES

IGS, set up in 1987, is engaged in livelihood promotion through capacity building, research and development. It has also been promoting strategies and solutions to promote a large number of sustainable livelihoods. To know more, visit <http://igsindia.org.in/>

nique. She also sought financial assistance and set up her own micro-financing project besides making villagers aware of public welfare schemes.

Thanks to her efforts, around 700 households in across six villages in the tribal belt have been able to breathe easy. She was nominated by Indian Grameen Services, an NGO, for the CII Exemplar Award in micro-finance.



■ Kalpana Gagdekar

Transforming lives through theatre

Although it has been over 60 years since India's independence, the denotified tribes (DNT) of the country continued to fight for their freedom long after August 15, 1947. Kalpana Gagdekar is from one such tribe. She became aware of the problems of her community as she grew older. "I realised that all DNT members were regarded as criminals, and were punished for no reason under the Criminal Tribes Act. In fact, my community was branded criminal by law since the days of British rule," she says.

In 1998, when Budhan Theatre was established to create awareness about the condition of these tribes, Gagdekar joined them in their mission. Her family resisted but her husband supported her in this endeavour. "I got married when I was in Class 10," she says. "But my husband motivated me to complete my education, so I graduated in social work and devoted my time to my theatre group."

Through Budhan, Gagdekar was able to reach out to people across all sections of society and make them understand the importance of education, women, besides highlighting police atrocities against DNT members and the condition of tribal women and children. "I believe that theatre has

BUDHAN THEATRE

Founded on August 31, 1998, the Budhan Theatre has been working towards raising awareness about the denotified tribes of India, besides highlighting a number of issues concerning women, children, environment and teaching children to use theatre as a medium for empowerment. For more details, visit <http://budhantheatre.org/>

the power to change people's mindsets and sensitise them to the issues we face," she says. Thanks to her efforts, tribal children in Gujarat were allowed to continue with their education, through a Supreme Court ruling.

Gagdekar has acted in various plays across a stream of issues, but her first ever play on the real life of Budhan Sabar, a tribal who was murdered in West Bengal, is close to her heart. "That play is popular even today," she says. "We have done over 800 shows across the country." Gagdekar, who also teaches children about arts and their impact at Budhan Theatre, is a recipient of the CII Exemplar Award in the field of education.

कल्पना को अवार्ड

अहमदाबाद, कन्फेडरेशन ऑफ



कल्पना गगडेकर

इंडियन इंडस्ट्री (सीआईआई) की वार्षिक सभा के दौरान अहमदाबाद की कल्पना गगडेकर को शिक्षा श्रेणी में सीआईआई फाउंडेशन वूमन एक्सम्प्लर अवार्ड प्रदान किया गया।

नई दिल्ली में बुधवार को

आयोजित समारोह में केंद्रीय वाणिज्य व उद्योग मंत्री आनंद शर्मा ने यह अवार्ड प्रदान किया। कल्पना को यह अवार्ड समाज के उपेक्षित वर्ग को मुख्य धारा में लाने के लिए दिया गया। उन्होंने इस कार्य के लिए थियेटर्स को हथियार के तौर पर चुना और दर्शकों के हृदय को परिवर्तित करने का बीड़ा उठाया।

उन्होंने अहमदाबाद के मणिनगर में आदिवासी बच्चों को शिक्षा के अधिकार निरंतर प्राप्त करवाने के लिए उच्चतम न्यायालय से जीत हासिल की। वे बच्चों को बुधान थियेटर में कला से जीवन परिवर्तन के बारे में शिक्षित करती हैं। गुजरात की टीवी व थियेटर कलाकार होने के बावजूद कल्पना उपेक्षित आदिवासियों को भरोसा व प्रतिष्ठा दिलाने के लिए कार्यरत हैं।

Hindustan Times

HT Edge - Hindustan Times - Delhi; Fri, 04 Apr-14; Page : 6

CII WOMAN EXEMPLAR AWARDEES 2014

THEY ARE BEACONS OF HOPE

TRAILBLAZERS They went against all odds to create a better future for themselves and society

Breaking social taboos,
empowering women



■ Lata Mane from Maharashtra was awarded in the category for health HT

Harini Sriram

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Towards a sustainable and secure future for grassroots

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23 March 2014, Page- 6

How sex worker who had to drink sewage water bagged BMC sanitation project

Empowerment Scheme Rehabilitates Self-Help Group Of 10 Gritty Women

Bhavika Jain | TNN

Mumbai: In a heartening case, a self-help group of 10 women, who earlier operated as commercial sex workers in Nityanand Nagar, Ghatkopar, succeeded in bagging a BMC slum sanitation contract in the locality last year.

These women were given a chance at rehabilitation under the Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), a Central government scheme for women's empowerment. It has been implemented by the BMC in the city since 1997.

The Ghatkopar self-help

group was started by one Lata Mane in 2007. The 38-year-old had been sold to a Kamatipura brothel in 1965 by her husband. She had wanted to escape the profession ever since one of



her two daughters saw her with a client and was so shocked by it that she cried for two days.

Mane's family got her married when she was just 14 and her husband sold her to a brothel within two years of her

Women's micro-enterprise scheme to be history?

The scheme that has helped more than 2,000 below-poverty-line women start their own micro-enterprises is likely to be discontinued. Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) is a Central government scheme that came to effect in 1997. It had helped scores form self-help groups and get subsidies for their small-scale businesses.

From April 1, though, this scheme is likely to be replaced with another—National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM). More than 1,000 women's self-help groups protested at Azad Maidan on Friday against the changeover. Mayor Sunil Prabhu has written to the governor asking for a review of the new policy.

Activists and civic officials warn this move will adversely impact "women's empowerment" in the city. Under the scheme, the government can give a

"marriage" after she delivered a boy "There were days when I had to drink sewage water and

beg outside temples for food. There were times when the men beat me up. I didn't know

subsidy of 35% for a project; a bank loan can be raised for up to 60% of the project cost; and 5% is to be borne by the group.

The subsidy was considered a bank guarantee against which project loan was sanctioned. Under NULM, this provision has been scrapped. "If the government doesn't give subsidies, no bank will give us loans. If NULM comes into effect, it will have an adverse impact on women's empowerment movement in the city," said Mangal Londe, who runs a self-help group in Bhandup.

Under NULM, a maximum of Rs 10,000 can be given to these groups as a start-up fund; it was Rs 20,000 under SJSRY. "Considering the high inflation rate, the government should have increased the start-up fund rather than reducing it," another civic official said. **Bhavika Jain** | TNN

if I could get away," said Mane, pointing to a deep gash on an arm and burn injury marks.

Today, Mane herself employs four men to clean the drains—a requirement in the sanitation contract. She talks confidently, has a bank account and has sent her daughters to a boarding school.

It wasn't an easy start for her, though. Mane first enrolled herself as a 'peer' worker with a local NGO called Vijay Krida Mandal (VKM), which educated her about HIV and health safety. She used to go back to her locality and spread the word.

"Originally, there were 25 women in the self-help group; 15 dropped out and went back to prostitution as they were unsure whether the business would work. But 10 stayed on and are reaping the fruits of their hard work today," said

Bhuvaneshwari Shedule, coordinator of VKM.

They underwent skill training under SJSRY. They first started out by making jewellery and paper lamps (*kandil*), but the sale did not meet their expectations, due to inadequate marketing. Then, through VKM, they were trained in creating perfumes. That's when they finally tasted success. After setting up stalls at several fairs and festivals, the group even managed to repay their Rs 1.5 lakh bank loan.

In 2013, they went on to bag the slum sanitation project at Nityanand Nagar for 16 units. Each woman is paid Rs 4,600 a month for sweeping the roads, cleaning garbage and keeping public toilets clean. That apart, they pay Rs 5,600 each to

the four men who clean the drains.

Now, they are eyeing bigger projects and slum sanitation is their chance to get assimilated with the city's working class.

"But even today, when we go to pick up garbage, men in these homes call us names and refuse to let us do our job. Yet, we keep going back, as this is our only chance to change our lives," said another woman from the group.

"If society wants prostitutes to reform, it should give them a helping hand. It also needs to change its perception towards sex workers," said Mane.

She will receive a Confederation of Indian Industry award next week for "exemplary work".

संडे नवभारत टाइम्स

23 मार्च 2014

देह व्यापार के दलदल से निकली, अब सैकड़ों का सहारा



34 वर्षीय लता माने ने लहरों के विपरीत तैरने की हिम्मत दिखाई। देह व्यापार के 'दलदल' से निकलकर अपनी दो बेटियों को पढ़ाया-लिखाया और 'दिशा महिला मंडल' नामक बचत गट की स्थापना की जिससे उन जैसी सैकड़ों और अन्य महिलाओं को रोजगार मिला। इन सबके बीच अपनी मेहनत और लगन के बल पर घाटकोपर में झोपड़पट्टियों की सफाई का ठेका हासिल किया। माने को इन उपलब्धियों के सम्मान में सीआईआई (कांफडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन इंडस्ट्री) के 'सीआईआई फाउंडेशन वुमेन एक्जैम्प्लरी अवॉर्ड' से नवाजा जाएगा। उन्हें 26 मार्च को यह अवॉर्ड दिल्ली में दिया जाने वाला है। इस तरह का राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर पुरस्कार पानेवाली वे संभवतः इस तरह की पहली महिला होंगी।

देह व्यापार के दलदल से खुद निकलकर लता माने ने न सिर्फ अपनी दोनों बेटियों को उबारा, बल्कि सैकड़ों औरतों को रोजगार देकर उन्हें भी उनके पांवों पर खड़ा करने में मदद की। सीआईआई फाउंडेशन के 'वुमेन एक्जैम्प्लरी अवॉर्ड' से सम्मानित इस साहसी महिला की प्रेरक कहानी सुना रहे हैं

लक्ष्मण सिंह

Sunday Special

जिस स्वर्ण जयंती शहरी रोजगार योजना के माध्यम से लता माने अपने पैरों पर खड़ी होने में कामयाब हुई हैं उसे केंद्र सरकार ने बंद करने का फैसला किया है। सरकार के इस फैसले महिला बचत गट में काम करनेवाली महिलाओं को के रोजगार पर संकट आ गया है।

छोटी-छोटी कोशिशों ने की राह आसान

1995 में माने को सिर्फ 16 साल की उम्र में उनका पति ग्रंट रोड के कमाठीपुरा में 40,000 रुपये में बेचकर चला गया। हर दिन तिल-तिल के मरना पड़ता था। वे बताती हैं कि एक दिन अपने घर में ही वह 'गलत काम' कर रही थी कि अचानक उनकी दोनों बेटियां स्कूल से जल्दी आ गईं और मां को इस स्थिति में देखकर रोने लगीं। माने कहती हैं, 'इस घटना के बाद मैंने ठान लिया की इस दलदल से बाहर निकलकर अब इज्जत की जिंदगी गुजारने की कोशिश करूंगी।' इस नारकीय स्थिति में करीब सात साल तक रहने के बाद अचानक एक संस्था की मदद मिली। घाटकोपर (वेस्ट) के नित्यानंद नगर में विजय क्रीड़ा मंडल काफी सालों से देह व्यापार में फंकी महिलाओं को मुख्यधारा में लाने के लिए कोशिश कर रहा है। इसी मंडल की मदद से माने ने 2002 में छोटे-छोटे धरेलू काम करने के बाद 2007 में महिला बचत गट की स्थापना की। जिस स्वर्ण जयंती शहरी रोजगार योजना (एसजेएसआरवाय) को सरकार बंद कर रही है उसी की सहायता से माने ने अपने महिला बचत गट (दिशा महिला मंडल) के माध्यम से बैंक से लोन लेकर मोमबत्ती और परफ्यूम बनाकर बेचने का छोटा व्यवसाय शुरू किया। अपने इस व्यवसाय में उन्होंने देह व्यापार करनेवाली 10 महिलाओं को जोड़ा। धीरे-धीरे ये महिलाएं भी माने की बदौलत अंधेरी दुनिया को छोड़कर मुख्यधारा में आ गईं। विजय क्रीड़ा मंडल की को-ऑर्डिनेटर भुवनेश्वरी ने बताया कि पिछले साल उन्होंने बीएमसी की ओर से बस्तियों में सफाई के लिए 'स्वच्छता अभियान' का टेंडर निकाला। भुवनेश्वर के अनुसार माने ने एक साल के लिए घाटकोपर में सफाई का ठेका प्राप्त कर लिया। आज उनकी संस्था 16 यूनिट में सफाई का जिम्मा संभाल रही है। 26 सफाई कर्मचारियों के दल में 10 महिलाएं हैं।

'इज्जतदारों' की दुनिया का काला सच

अपनी मेहनत और लगन से ये महिलाएं समाज की मुख्यधारा में शामिल हैं और अपने परिवार का पालन-पोषण कर रही हैं। हालांकि, वे आज भी कुछ लोगों की घटिया सोच का शिकार हो जाती हैं। माने ने बताया, 'हम नालियों, गटरों की सफाई कर इज्जत की रोटी कमाते हैं, लेकिन यहां रहनेवाले लोग कई बार गालियां देने लगते हैं।' माने कहती हैं, 'लोगों के मन में हमारी छवि आज भी देह व्यापार करनेवाली महिला की बनी है। वे हमें अछूत मानते हैं।' शिकायत भरे लहजे में माने कहती हैं, 'न ही कोई नेता यहां हमारा दुख-दर्द जानने आता है, न ही प्रशासन की ओर से कोई मदद मिलती है। बल्कि जो चीजें बनी हुई हैं उन्हें बिगाड़ते रहते हैं।' विजय क्रीड़ा मंडल की भुवनेश्वरी ने बताया कि घाटकोपर के नित्यानंद नगर में देह व्यापार करनेवाली महिलाओं के 23 घर हैं। एक दिन अचानक पुलिस वहां पहुंच गई और इनमें रहनेवाली 100 से ज्यादा लोगों को एक घंटे में जबरन अपने घर से बाहर कर दिया। इन्हीं महिलाओं को माने और भुवनेश्वरी अपनी संस्था की टाफ में देह शहरी रोजगार योजना में शामिल करती हैं।

सकाळ

बुधवार, २६ मार्च २०१४

‘अंधाच्या’ वस्तीत प्रबोधनाची नांदी

देहविक्रय सोडून घाटकोपरच्या महिला जगताहेत स्वाभिमानाचे जिणे

सकाळ वृत्तसेवा

मुंबई, ता. २५ : घाटकोपर पश्चिमेला रेल्वे रुळांना लागून ‘त्यांची वस्ती आहे... कोणाला रक्ताच्या नाल्यांनी तर कोणाला नवऱ्यानेच दलदलीत ढकललेले... पोटाची खळगी भरण्यासाठी नाइलाजास्तव त्या शरीर विकू लागल्या... परंतु अनेक दशकांपासून अंधारलेल्या या बदनाम वस्तीत नव्याने ‘प्रबोधना’ची पहाट उजाडली आहे. जनावरांहून भयंकर आयुष्य जगणाऱ्या या महिलांनी रोजची हेटाळणी झुगारून आता उपजीविकेचे साधन म्हणून हातात झाडू घेतली आहे. लोकांचे टोमणे, शेरेंबाजी ऐकणाऱ्या या महिला आता स्वाभिमानाने भाकरी मिळवू लागल्या आहेत.

घाटकोपर पश्चिमेला शरीरविक्रय करणाऱ्या बियांची २३ घरांची वस्ती आहे. अनेक दशकांपासूनच्या अस्तित्वात असलेल्या या वस्तीत



लता माने

२००७ मध्ये पहिला बदल घडला. लता माने या महिलेच्या पुढाकाराने येथील २० महिलांनी एकत्र येऊन ‘दिशा महिला बचत गटा’ची स्थापना केली. अनेक संकटे आली, काही जणी पुन्हा जुन्या मार्गावर वळल्या; परंतु दहा महिलांनी धीर सोडला नाही. कृत्रिम दागिने बनविणे, परंप्रयुक्त तयार करणे, खानावळ चालविणे आदी विविध मार्गांनी त्यांनी जीवनासोबतचा आपला संघर्ष सुरूच ठेवला. त्या वेळी काम करण्याची तयारी होती; परंतु माल खपत नसल्याने हातात पैसा येत नव्हता. त्यामुळे आयुष्य कठीणच होते. रोजची भाकरी मिळणेही अवघड झाले होते, अशी खत माने यांनी बोलून दाखविली.

पालिकेच्या स्वच्छ मुंबई प्रबोधन योजनेअंतर्गत महिलांच्या बचत गटाने निविदा भरल्या. त्यात त्यांना कंत्राटही मिळाले. कधी काळी अंधाच्या गल्ल्यांमध्ये स्वतःची आणि मुलांच्या पोटाची खळगी भरण्यासाठी ग्राहकांची वाट पाहत राहणाऱ्या या महिला आता दिवसाउजेडी हातात झाडू घेऊन त्यांच्या वस्तीला खेदून उभ्या असलेल्या नित्यानंदनारच्या गल्ल्यांमध्ये साफसफाई करू लागल्या. असे असले तरी बदनामी त्यांची पाठ सोडायला तयार नव्हती. सुरुवातीचे काही दिवस त्यांना अश्लील शेरेंबाजी ऐकवीच लागली. यात रक्षक असलेले पोलिसही मागे नव्हते. याकडे दुर्लक्ष करून दहा महिलांनी त्यांचे काम सुरूच ठेवले. आज त्या मानाची भाकरी कमवत आहेत. लढा येथेच संपलेला नाही. वस्तीतील महिलांच्या अनेक समस्या आहेत. त्यांवर नक्कीच मार्ग काढू, असा आशावाद माने व्यक्ता करतात.