



REFLECTIONS

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

The Circle of Life

Passion | Compassion | Dispassion

9th International Women's Conference

February 14th - 16th, 2020 | Bangalore





“You need Passion, Compassion and Dispassion in life. Breathing in is Passion, Breathing out is Dispassion and in between the two is Compassion.”

- Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar



OUR INSPIRATION



The Circle of Life

Passion | Compassion | Dispassion

From starting a movement to reverse the sex ratio in Punjab to putting Latvian folk culture on the global cultural map to changing the laws of Nepal to bring in more representation of women in parliament to passionately serving the Delhi Police as the first Indian IPS officer and more - the pioneering speakers at the 9th International Women Conference were a force to reckon with!

The International Women's Conference 2020 brought together 400 global women leaders from various fields to celebrate womanhood by learning and building each other up, as they delved deeper into the theme of the conference - The Circle of life: Passion, Dispassion and Compassion and its reflection in one's social and personal pursuits.

Smt. Bhanumathi Narasimhan, Chairperson, International Women's Conference and Director of The Art of Living, set the context of the conference in her opening remarks.

“When we are passionate about something, it truly shows in the work we do. When we have a goal, and along with it, faith in a higher power, we say that let this or anything better than this happen, we gain the power to let go, the power of dispassion. Compassion is about seeing the bigger picture... how we are interconnected.”

The speakers included Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Hon. Union Cabinet Minister; Justice Gita Mittal, Hon. Judge of the High Court, J&K; Dr. Kiran Bedi, Hon. Governor, Puducherry; Lauren Von Der Pool, celebrity chef and cookbook author from USA; Luke Coutinho, renowned lifestyle expert; Ms. Ndileka Mandela, CEO & Founder, Thembekile Mandela Foundation; South Africa, Ms. Dace Melbarde, Member of European Parliament, Latvia; H.E Ms. Baby Rani Maurya, Governor of Uttarakhand; Hon. Justice Sapana Pradhan Malla, Supreme Court Judge, Nepal and Mr. Nicolas Hulot, French Journalist and Environmentalist, Former Minister of Ecology, among others.

The conference witnessed an insightful conversation between Vishen Lakhiani, CEO, Mindvalley and global humanitarian Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar on enlightenment, love, compassion, ways to make relationships work and the art of effortless meditation. The event included sessions on themes ranging from creative approaches of using social media tools for positive change to attitudes that shape achievers who are making positive contributions to insights on lifestyles that promote health, well-being and happiness while protecting the environment to deliberations on the various perspectives that cultures offer that celebrate harmony in diversity.

Recipients of the prestigious Vishalakshi Awards instituted for valuable and inclusive contribution to the field of arts and culture included Kannada Actor, Malashri Mangalji, Bharatnatyam exponent, Ms. Uma Thilak, Kuchupudi proponent, Ms. Vanaja Uday, notable choreographer and Indian classical dance expert, Ms. Saroja Vaidyanathan and Indian dance research scholar, performer Methil Devika.

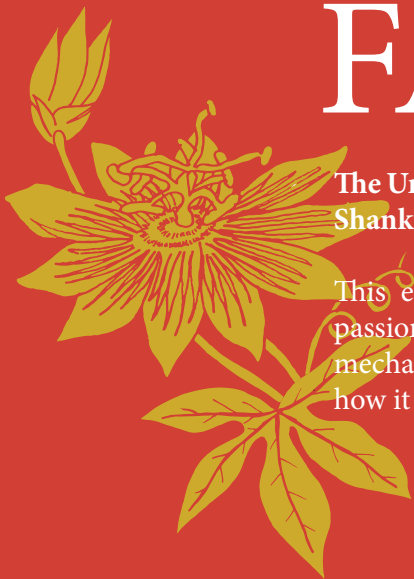
The Acharya Ratnananda Awards for outstanding work in the field of literature and humanitarian service were conferred on Dr. Surendra Krishna Shenoy, wellness expert, Mr. Ranganath Prasad, sustainable agriculturist and Mr. Sanjay Kumar, social activist and reformer. The legacy of the paperless conference was Mission Green Earth 2020, where all the delegates took a pledge to plant and nurture 10 million trees in five years. The conference also supports the Art of Living's Gift a Smile Project that is giving a value based, holistic education to over 100,000 kids in 1262 free schools in underserved areas. Some of the children shared the experience of the power of education in their own lives.



THE UNKNOWN FACTOR

The Unknown Factor: an interactive session with Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar moderated by Vishen Lakhiani, Founder, Mindvalley

This engaging and enlightening dialogue dwelt on the dynamics of passion-compassion-dispassion, various aspects of consciousness, the mechanics of meditation and its practical utility in day to day life and how it helps in managing one's mind among other topics about life.





THE UNKNOWN FACTOR

Could you talk about the act of surrendering ?

Every night when you hit the pillow, what do you do? You simply let go. Let sleep take over. You breathe in. How long can you hold it? You have to let go.

While passion is like breathing in, dispassion is like breathing out. Unless we let go, passion will turn into depression. Our society is clogged with two major issues today. On one hand there is aggression. You see around the world, there are demonstrations and mindlessness. On the other hand you have depression. Depression is the result of not being able to let go.

Dispassion may appear like a big philosophical idea. It is an inherent quality in human life to let go. If you have heard something, and seen something and you are unable to let go, you know what that is called? Trauma. In some sense we are all traumatized. All these qualities which you pray for, you yourself are putting a block to it.

At the end of the day the curtain is going to fall, and the show will be finished. We must be aware of this. Just now someone asked me about the midlife crisis. I said it is the intermission of the movie. The most thrilling part is coming now. What comes from now, is what is going to determine whether your life is going to be a tragedy or comedy.

What does dispassion look like in our lives?

You want to do a lot, yes. At the same time remember, your life, your energy is limited. If we don't have this context that my life and my energy are limited then you lose sight of your whole plan. You get lost in work. You can't do it alone. You have to gather everyone. When you have this attention that we all have to do this together- that very sense will relax you. It will make you friendly and compassionate towards everyone.

How can you develop compassion?

This is not something you can force on yourself. You need to work on yourself. Clarity in mind, purity in heart. When you have very little needs, you have more clarity. When you have very little needs, you will see that compassion and love are already there. A lit candle doesn't need to do something to push the light. It's already lit. The rays are already going out.

Can we truly have compassion for culprits?

Inside every culprit, there is a victim crying for help. You broaden your vision. You see someone as a culprit. See beyond their words and actions. See the state of their mind. Why would someone commit a crime if there is no anger or hatred in the mind? A psychologist doesn't just skim on the surface. You go to the root cause of any crime, you see the beautiful being there who is hurt and suffering.

Compassion for people closest to you?

I would say, don't expect a rosy day all your life. Thorny days do come. Accept that. Differences of opinion come. My way or the highway doesn't happen in a marriage. Take turns being upset, do not be upset at the same time.

Your advice to two people who want to make a relationship work?

I would give you an analogy of two parallel lines. If two lines are moving in parallel, they will go to infinity. If they focus on each other, they will cross and move away. You should have a common goal. If you focus on each other one day you will be honey, and the next day you will be bitter. In the past, parents had one goal- their children. Both put their 100% to make their family work. Though they complained about each other, they would make the family work. It does not work when people are fighting- instead of thinking how I can contribute in this relationship, they are thinking about what they can get in this relationship.

Let us go deeper into the Unknown. Can you please talk about Intuition?

It's easy. We have a workshop for that. Adults' minds are clogged with cravings and aversions. We are so opinionated. This opinionated mind cannot access the intuitive ability that our spirit has. It is the spirit or the energy in us that can show us many dimensions. There's research going on by

several institutions. Children are able to access another part of our brain which we normally don't use. How is it possible? The consciousness is that which experiences everything. It can experience something in a dimension which is unknown. Meditation is the way to access it. It accesses the fourth dimension.

Today we have more than 80000 children who can do this. This is going to revolutionize education for the coming generation.

What is the ultimate game plan for you? Where would you like to see humanity going?

There is a bigger intelligence managing the whole world. And it's doing its job perfectly. I have nothing to give, nor to advise that big intelligence. We don't advise God. We give ideas as though we know better than God.

What is the true meaning of education according to you?

Today with technology, information is spreading very fast. Education is not just stuffing information into the child. It's developing their personality. Their ability to take criticism, their ability to connect with people of any generation, of any culture, seeing beyond prejudice. We need to develop a prejudice -free mind.



I witnessed a girl able to move objects with her mind.

Certain things we have to wonder about. The world has many wonders. We fail to recognize them. We try to understand everything through our intellect and so we get stuck. Sometimes incidents like this shock us and take us beyond our logical, rational mind. Your logic is limited. Why? Because your knowledge is limited. Nobody can claim to have all the knowledge. Your logic is connected to what you already know. From what you know you try to move into the unknown. It's not always possible through the unknown. Logic is within the circle of knowing.

Today 2 billion people are meditating around the world. This wasn't the case 40 years ago. Our paradigms are changing. The coming generation will take to spirituality like fish to water!

From meditation, mindfulness is another term that has come in. Mindfulness is like the portico of a house. But there is so much more beyond mindfulness. If you practice mindfulness too much, you lose the ability to relax and to be with the unknown. Spirituality is authentic in the sense when it is also authenticated by thousands of documents about it. Scriptural evidence is there. You don't know whether it's hallucination, mood making. That's where I'd say you need authentic meditation techniques rooted in ancient scriptures.



In the path of spirituality, how important are rituals of Puja and lighting the lamp etc., as compared to doing Yoga and meditation?

Puja is a ceremony where you thank God for giving you whatever your 5 senses enjoy in this world. You take light around the deity. Let the light of my life go around you, and not away from you. I'd suggest a few minutes of asanas, pranayama and meditation is most important. A little bit of ritual is to create a nice environment. You light the lamp at home. A little ceremony creates a positive atmosphere. A little bit of ritual is always good. It can create that positive energy. Meditation is the real thing. Essence of all the rituals. Rituals are preparation to go deeper in meditation.



Is artificial intelligence a threat?

I don't see any danger to society because of artificial intelligence. When we were young we had to calculate using our brain. Today nobody puts in so much effort. Now people take that little plastic box and press numbers. We had to mug multiplication tables. From that angle, artificial intelligence has already begun. I'm confident that it's not going to bring a disaster to society.

Once we improve the meditation (using the 3 elements of I want nothing, I do nothing and I am nothing), does it help us get closer to tapping the unknown or does it help us expand our logic or both?

Meditation improves our energy field. We're all a mass of energy. We radiate energy. Positive, negative. Meditation harnesses our energy. Second, it makes our mind very sharp and clear. Our emotions are soft and strong. Meditation brings the balance between sensitivity and sensibility. It opens the door for your intuitive ability.



What is surrender?

This word surrender has been used and misused so many times. It gives a wrong connotation. Why do you have to surrender? Who is surrendering? Why bother to surrender? Just wake up and see, there is nothing. This is a path of knowledge. When you wake up and see nothing is yours. Even this body is not yours. What is there to surrender? For those who are not on the path of knowledge, who are more emotional- for them it is said, you surrender. Surrender is simply letting go. It is simply a feeling that the mother is home. Just to give you the confidence that all is happening as per plan. A word is used. Surrender. Let go.

You can simply say, nobody will ask you to surrender the positive qualities you have. Nobody asks you to surrender love, compassion. You are asked to surrender your anxiety, your tension- only those negative things which can't be managed by you. You are feeling sad, morose about it. Then the Master says, surrender. Let go. If you can't let go of negative things, then it is a problem. There is someone to take care of me, you let go.

There are 3 conditions if you want to meditate.

First is, "I want nothing." Can you say, for the next 10 minutes, I want nothing. Not even a glass of water. I'm okay. Can you just be doing nothing for the next 10 minutes? Let the mind drift. I want nothing. Second is, "I do nothing." Third is, "I am nothing." You have to let go of all the labels you have. I'm a teacher, I'm a Guru, I'm an industrialist. These 3 basic principles free your mind from the outer stimuli which it has been engaging in, day in and day out. The mind goes to its source. then it becomes no mind. Whatever you feel, it's okay.



THE

WELCOME
ADDRESS



Bhanumathi Narasimhan

Chairperson

With the blessings of Param Poojya Gurudev, we begin the 9th edition of our International Women's Conference, a very warm welcome to all of you.

As you all know, this conference is called, "Circle of Life: Passion, Compassion, and Dispassion."

Are you all happy with this? We do have women from over 50 countries and many are watching us through the internet. I welcome you to your own home.

Whatever we do with passion, it shows in our work. We love what we do and our passion helps us differentiate the best from the rest. We are all here together and that shows how we want to make a positive difference to humanity and shows the importance of compassion in our choices. When we have a goal and along with it, faith in the higher power, we gain the power to let go and the power of dispassion.

Compassion for me is not about seeing everything as mine but as seeing everything from a bigger picture, how we have a larger community that we are connected to. When I realized that I am connected to everyone, I am connected to the farmers giving me food, the person who built the house we live in, we feel the gratitude in us and compassion grows.



In the circle of life, we are all connected and support each other. We lead sometimes from the front and sometimes from the back. Compassion is what helps us set apart efficient managers from inspirational leaders. We have so many inspirational leaders sitting here. In the next 3 days, we will be listening to everyone.

I just wanted to share an anecdote with you. A few days ago, I invited a young mother with a 2-year-old son to be a model. We have a fashion show on the third day to benefit our school. Her eyes lit up. She said I will support him from the back. This really got me thinking that the natural instinct of a woman is to push others forward and it is a reflection of deep confidence that does not seek any attention. So like flowers in the forest that go unnoticed, there are women who share, not for recognition but because it is their innate nature.



As our scriptures say, this powerful space emerges when you find a balance in the qualities that complete the Circle Of Life: passion, compassion, and dispassion. Passion for your goals, compassion in your actions towards humanity and dispassion to the results when you have given your best.

Our conference provides a platform for both rural and urban women to come together and learn from each other. Yesterday, I was speaking to Honorable Mr. Nicolas. He said did they mistake my identity by inviting me for a women's conference? No, we want you to be here. What makes our conferences different is the spiritual touch which makes us rise above the gender and feel the strength of humanity which is all-inclusive, this is what we have learned from Gurudev. I'm sure over these three days, the dialogues and the deliberations will stimulate our minds, will fill our hearts and we will continue to be torchbearers of love, service, and wisdom on this planet.

Welcome to all the dignitaries and to all the wonderful leaders sitting here. We want to learn more from you.

Thank you so much for coming.



SPEAKERS

DAY 1 THEME
PASSION

DAY 1 PASSION

The Seed of Continuum



Hon. Ms. Harsimrat Kaur Badal

Minister of Food Processing, India

Spirituality is there inside everybody. You just need somebody to ignite that spirituality in you. I believe that a life of spirituality is a life where your passion is directed in the right direction: in the direction where our creator wanted us to direct it.



H.E. Dr. Kiran Bedi

Governor, Puducherry, India

The passion for me as a woman was to be self-reliant. At no stage, do I say I need something. I will be a giver in my life, and not be a taker. This is how my passion evolved.



H.E. Ms. Baby Rani Maurya

*Cabinet Minister, Government of Uttar Pradesh &
Former Governor of Uttarakhand*

At every place, family, society, office or whichever is her work area, she fulfills her responsibilities and gives evidence at every moment that she is capable and can do everything.

DAY 1 PASSION

The Seed of Continuum



Hon. Ms. Dace Melbarde

Member of European Parliament, Latvia

It is like a voice of the mother that calls all the children back and maintains the sense of belonging. For me, as a woman, singing is a means to express my emotions, manage my emotions, cope psychologically with life's difficulties, lighten my workload, and meditate, calm down or sometimes viceversa, to boost my energy.

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Ms. Mridula Sinha

Former Governor, Goa, India

I see that every generation has one passion at least, whether or not they pursue the passion for their career or not. But passion is passion. According to that, whatever was my grandmother's passion, came into me too, it transformed into me. Much like how we inherit many hereditary traits, same way we inherit passion too

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Hon. Justice Sapana Pradhan Malla

Supreme Court Judge, Nepal

Passion does not come or form overnight. It is a gradual process. A progressive self realization accompanied by life's experiences and learning that comes from compassion. However, it is not enough to merely recognize your passion and do nothing about it. Passion is more than spiritual finding, it is a commitment, it is an action

DAY 1 PASSION

The Seed of Continuum



Justice Gita Mittal

High Court Judge, J&K, India

Now I was speaking to the masses through my judgements and orders. I was to serve as the interface between the law and litigant before me. I wanted to speak to every woman and man in the street. In delivering justice for the masses, I knew I had to invoke every bit of law, national and international, yet not lose sight of the one before me. Because it is said the law after all is born from the despair of human nature.



Mr. Nicolas Hulot

*Journalist and Environmentalist,
Former Minister of Ecology, France*

My passion is also to do everything that I can so that the future will be what I decide, not what time will decide.



PANEL

DAY 1 PASSION
The Seed of Continuum

DAY 1 Plenary Session: Positive Impression For The Millennials



Ms. Zoe Modgill

Founder and Instructor, Studio 60

I realised my body could do things I never thought it could do. That gave me confidence. Fitness is not about how you look, but about how you feel.



Mr. DhruPAD Karwa

Co-founder and CEO, HaikuJAM, India

People need to step back and re-design. They need to rethink business models. Design for empathy, then empathy will flow. Technology should be designed to bring out the best out of people. Not to harness our worst instincts.



Ms. Lauren Von Der Pool

Founder/CEO, Von Der Pool Gourmet Inc; USA

Positivity is one of the main cornerstones to health and wellness. It is not just what you are eating but how you are feeling. Gratitude is one of the most powerful tools we have for health.

DAY 1 Plenary Session: Positive Impression For The Millennials



Mr. Juan Guillon

Osteopath, Argentina

Students are much smarter in relation to social media. Their social intelligence incorporates social media much more and much more naturally than it was for me, and that, for me, was very impressive.



SPEAKERS

DAY 2 THEME
COMPASSION

DAY 2 Plenary Session: Service Beyond Boundaries



Ms. Ndelika Mandela

Founder CEO, Thembekile Mandela Foundation, South Africa

We can't only elevate the girl child on her own, because then we leave the boys behind. We have to elevate both of them together.



Ms. Maithree Wickramasinghe

Professor, University of Kelania, Sri Lanka

I find that there are a lot more dynamic, articulate, versatile women who have taken the ball and run. There are many more aware women who are doing a lot of good work.



Dr. Aghadheer Jweihan

*General Trustee, EWA & Director of the Office of HRH
Princess Taghrid Mohammad*

It is the most beautiful thing to uplift yourself and reach a point where you will see that all the materialistic things in our life means nothing. The light in the eyes of my girls is the most beautiful thing that I see, believe me. So, love and giving is the happiness of our life.



PANEL

DAY 2 PASSION
The Seed of Continuum

DAY 2 Service in Action: Showcase of Service Projects



Ms Sumathi Jayaraman

*Director for Strategy and Innovation
at the United Nations Development Program*

Individual peace is the start of world peace. Only when I am stress-free from within, only when I have economic independence personally, while I take care of the planet, and my rights nobody has to give them to me - I already have them and I have the freedom to express them - then society, community, national peace can happen.



Ms. Indu Sinha

Senior Art of living faculty and Apex Member

Translated from Hindi: Do not live like a flower that gets wilted on the side in the forest, live like a stone that can be sculpted into a beautiful idol of the divine, of God.



Ms. Kristin Kagetsu

CEO Saathipads

We didn't want to be providing a product that would actually have a negative impact on the environment... and actually, if we use all natural materials, it is also better for our health.

DAY 2 Service in Action: Showcase of Service Projects



Ms. Filiz Odabas Geldiay

Director, International Association for Human Values, USA

Growing up as a little girl, my idol was a cartoon character called Golden Hearted Neal. I was mesmerized with her compassionate heart as she rushed to rescue a little kitten drowning in a lake or fought flames to help an elderly woman in a burning house. And I longed to become like her when I grow up and help people.

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Dr. Prabhakar Rao

Trustee, Sri Sri Institute Of Agricultural Science & Technology Trust

Mission Green Earth is about a project that is so holistic, it replicates the one teacher that man can never compete with, that teacher is mother nature. Mission Green Earth would do, through the involvement of a human being, what nature does and has been doing successfully for millions of years on this planet.

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DAY 2 Plenary Session: Nature and the Healing Touch



Mr. Luke Coutinho

Holistic Lifestyle Coach, India

Your mind is being influenced by what you see and what you hear and that is why meditation, the path that you are on, teaches you to look inside and find your own answer.



Ms. Trupti Doshi

Co-founder & Principal Architect, The Auroma Group, India

We do not need to do what the West has done. We can follow our own principles and our own inherent wisdom, but in a cutting edge and modern context. Such that we can show to the world that we can develop differently, we can develop sustainably.



Ms Hema Hari

Founder, Bharat Gyan, India

So today we are economically viable and ecologically friendly. That is the jargon we use. Earlier we were ecologically viable and economically friendly. The moment you change that perception, then you can arrive at a right balance between ecology and economy.

DAY 2 Plenary Session: Nature and the Healing Touch



Mr. DK Hari

Founder, Bharat Gyan, India

Economy is for 2 decades, 3 decades, 5 decades. That is the industry life cycle you know. Whereas ecology goes on for centuries, millenia. We have to decide as mankind, whether we want to be a virus, or an elephant, do we want to be ecologically focused and economically friendly or ecologically friendly.

DAY 2 Complete Wellness: Taking care of yourself in a holistic way



Dr. Nisha Manikantan

Ayurveda Doctor & Advance Meditation course Teacher

Dynamic expression of life is being spontaneous, being enthusiastic, being energetic, being joyful, being passionate, being target oriented and at the same time being full, being centered, and helping others, being supportive. All this put together is called the dynamic expression of life.



Ms Gina Preziosa

VP of Sales and Marketing for Shankara

And, what is really beautiful, that today across the world, people realised that you don't have to look one particular way, and that everybody is beautiful exactly the way they are.



Dr. Spandan Katti

Dentist, Osteopath, CranioSacral therapist

When we talk about a non-medicinal intervention, and helping people to orient to reservoirs of health in their body, and find improved energy levels and improved quality of life, the most important thing that comes across is breath.

DAY 2 Complete Wellness: Taking care of yourself in a holistic way



Ms Kaushani Desai

Art of Living faculty and Ayurvedic Chef

We need to eat different varieties of grains, dals, vegetables and fruits, and not restrict ourselves with what we like only, because that brings the imbalance in the body. And spices play a vital role, because it gives flavour, and spices are also a kind of medicine, which helps us to balance our body.

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Dr. Shradha Singtamkar

Director, Spine Care , Art of Living

When we walk, we walk in different ways, and as we age, we tend to put our heel with the outer border of the foot. And that is how all the problems start. So whenever we walk, we walk with a heel and foot walk, first place the heel on the floor and then the whole foot, heel and foot- and that itself solves many health issues.

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SPEAKERS

DAY 3 THEME
DISPASSION

DAY 3 Plenary Session: On the Pathless Path



Ms. Hohoko Asami

Best Selling Author and Designer, Japan

I have the power to change the world in and around me.



Pravrajika Divyanandaprana

Sarada Mission, India

An untrained mind creates divisions, creates all kinds of differences. But a mind which sees the reality of our own being, can't see too much of a difference anywhere. It can only unite.

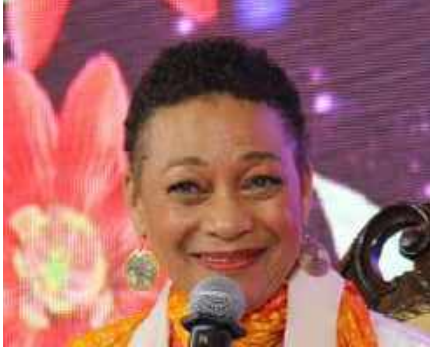


Ms. Manjeet Hirani

Senior Commander and Trainer, Air India, India

All of us are here again for a reason, and wherever we are and however we are, it's meant to be.

DAY 3 Plenary Session: On the Pathless Path



Rev. Cynthia James

Life Coach, USA

I started visioning myself as international. Started visioning myself working with people, especially women - to remember who they are and how powerful they are.



Ms. Ronnie Newman

*Director of Health Promotion and Education at
Art of Living, USA*

We can use science to calm the heads of people so that they can open their hearts once again to spirituality.



PANEL

DAY 3 DISPASSION

DAY 3 Plenary Session: Deepening The Roots



Ms. Rukmini Vijayakumar

Bharatnatyam Dancer & Actress, Founder of Raadha Kalpa Dance Company, India

My joy cannot depend on whether someone likes my dance or not.
The work speaks for itself.



Ms. Anita Lal

Founder and Creative Director, Good Earth, India

Passion is the source of creation. It is my ruling star for creation.
But dispassion is important to not get attached to your creations.
Once you create work, it's not yours anymore and then it's gone.
This is why it's important to create boundaries.



Mr. Gaurang Shah

Fashion Designer, India

Nature is traditional, contemporary, and modern at the same time!
What I have done in 19 years is 1% of the colour palette that nature offers us.

DAY 3 Plenary Session:
Deepening The Roots



Ms. Mrunal Khimji

Fashion Designer and Consultant, Mrunal's Boutique

To me, dispassion is like letting your bird fly the nest.

MODERATORS



Ms. Kavita Khanna

*Barrister; Economist (LSE); Public health, animal rights activist;
& Director, International Association of Human Values*



Ms. Srividya Varchaswi

Director, World Forum for Art and Culture



Ms. Rajita Kulkarni Bagga

*President, Sri Sri University; & President World Forum for
Ethics in Business*



Ms. Jaina Desai

*Trustee, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Vidhya Mandir Trust & Senior
International Faculty, The Art of Living*

MODERATORS



Ms. Divya Kanchibhotla

Executive Director, Sri Sri Institute for Advanced Research



Ms. Kamlesh Barwal

Global Head, Sri Sri Yoga; & Secretary General at Indian Yoga Association



Ms. Bharathy Harish

Head, Madhurya; Meditation Teacher, The Art of Living



Ms. Chinky Sen

Director, International Association of Human Values; & Member of Organising Committee, International Women's Conference



SERVICE IN ACTION

Showcase of Service Projects



Service is not just a part of life, but is life for service warriors. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is an epitome of selfless service with a strong foundation of spirituality. His example has inspired thousands of service warriors to take up missions that have transformed the lives of many millions. His 'methodology' of sustainable service, if we can call it that, is "Only a lit candle can light another" and that compassion is not an external attribute, compassion is who you are.

450 million people in the world are suffering from some kind of mental health or neurological disorder. It is estimated that in the next few years, the cost of mental health will be 16 trillion dollars for the economy. The typical approach in organisations like the UN is of getting people jobs, finding them resources and getting everyone equal access to basic standards of living thereby leading to world peace. However the traditional model is completely turned on its head with the Art of Living model of overall well-being - individual peace is the start of world peace. Only when people are stress free from within, can they have economic independence and take care of the planet.

The conversation shared the ground level challenges to get basic rights like education in certain remote parts of India and the world, where there are no roads, no water to drink and where there is no electricity. In some places there are also security risks; yet despite all these hurdles, there are over 1096 such schools under the 'Gift a Smile' program inspired by Ms. Bhanumathi Narasimhan and there has been immense work in bringing these communities into the mainstream.



There are unique problems in different parts of the world – the panel touched upon the problem of feminine hygiene – providing sustainable access to sanitary pads. There were multiple design considerations – it had to be something that didn't have a negative impact on the environment, not cause trash in the local surroundings, something that was biodegradable and not cause any disruptions in their daily lifestyle. The result was a sanitary pad that had all these qualities – eco-friendly, completely compostable from banana tree fiber and good for the body, the community and the environment.

They also employed only women in the manufacturing facilities and bringing much needed economic empowerment to them. With the elimination of plastic, the amount of CO2 emissions was also reduced.

The discussion also touched on the aspect of integration of powerful social initiatives with other agencies and partners like governmental bodies, educational institutions and so on. There was agreement that the foundation for this was authentic service and building the credibility of any social program first. In one example, Mexican governmental officials told the Art of Living organizers that they would drive an Art of Living SKY program in public schools whether or not the Art of Living extended their support: this was a strong expression of the degree of ownership that they felt about it because of the benefits they had seen.



The dialogue culminated with painting the bigger canvas of Mission Green Earth. It is not another tree planting program: it is something far beyond encompassing passion, compassion and dispassion. A holistic project, it replicates the one teacher that man can never compete with, Mother Nature. Mission Green Earth would do, through the involvement of a human being, what nature does and has been doing successfully for millions of years on this planet. It would plant forests the way nature would plant forests. It would plant grassland and forests to interact with each other, because that is the holistic ecosystem, one cannot just do tree planting and not be compassionate towards the grazing animals, the cattle, the livelihood of the villagers who stay around there.



COMPLETE WELLNESS

Taking care of yourself in a Holistic way



Complete Wellness was discussed at length by the panel from different viewpoints, each bringing perspectives that built on the foundation of Gurudev's statement about Health and Wellness – "Health is not the mere absence of disease, but it is the dynamic expression of life".

"Dynamic expression of life" is being spontaneous, being enthusiastic, being energetic, joyful, passionate, target oriented and at the same time being full, centred, and helping others, being supportive - All this put together is the dynamic expression of life. Wellness is recognising inner and outer beauty – how everybody is beautiful exactly the way they are.

Proper breathing better helps with better digestion, better energy absorption, leading to a better quality of life. The Vagus Nerve, which is the connection between the brain and the gut and is strongly influenced by the way one breathes. Equalising the breath in the stomach and the chest, can be a key to improving sleep, balancing one's actions, and creating a calming influence in one's environment.

Our posture, movements and the condition of our spine contributes to health and energy levels. The spine is like a tower of bones, and any small misalignment leads to disruption of energy everywhere. There were interesting tips shared for spine health, for example: the correct way of walking by putting the heel first and then the whole foot.

Principles of Ayurveda like Satvik food, following the body clock, and then the practice of Pranayama, Meditation and most importantly Sudarshan Kriya can bring holistic wellness into everyone's lives. Including a variety of vegetables, fruits and grains in our diet for proper nutrition and balance. And how spices not only add to the taste but also reduce the imbalance that is there in the grains or vegetables.

And finally, Yoga, meditation, Sudarshan Kriya, right way of cooking, the right kind of food, proper sleep and breathing right, correct posture and gait, having a self care regime - spend time outside in natural light, and use natural products for the skin and body - all together can create complete wellness and lead us to our true nature. As a result, when we are natural, we are beautiful, we feel more connected with everyone around, and we become capable of creating a society full of love and harmony.



SELF ILLUMINED

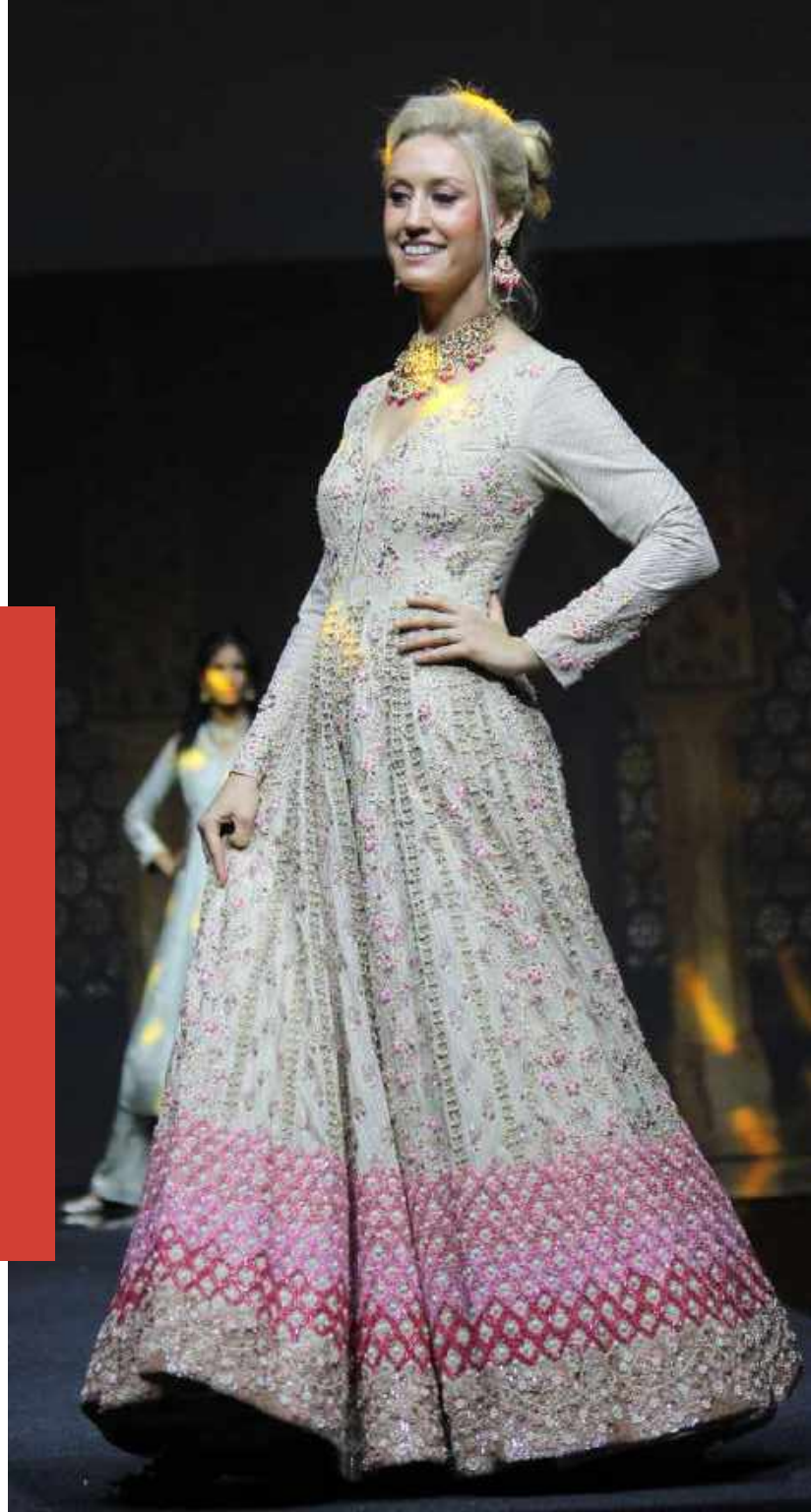
A Fashion Show - Fashion for a Cause

Fashion for a Cause: An Auction

Fashion lets us display our inner richness and benevolence. The event 'Self Illumined', a fashion show, linked inner brilliance and external style while supporting girls' education. Fashion served as the canvas, embodying fullness and kindness.

With captivating performances, the stage transformed into a radiant runway, showcasing outfits from revered Indian designers.

The event passionately advocated for underprivileged girls' empowerment through education.



Contributors

Abu Jani
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Manish Malhotra
Osaa by Adarsh
Rahul Mishra
Raw Mango
Ritu Kumar
Rohit Bal
Sri Sri Tattva
Sakshi K. Nowlakha
Saaksha & Kinni
Sabyasachi Mukherjee
Shyamal & Bhumika
Tarun Tahiliani
Varun Bahl
Vineet Bahl
Vikram Phadnis











NAMASTASYAI NAMO NAMAH

A showcase of achievements of remarkable women who have left an enduring impact across various domains, including spirituality, government, education, science, and more. Embark on an engaging journey through time, uncovering the lives of these inspiring women from around the world. Their contributions have significantly improved our world, leaving us inspired even today.



Namastasyai

We bow down to *Her*



Remembering our Foremothers

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar often says one of the qualities of a good leader is the ability to lead from behind. Our foremothers who walked shoulder to shoulder with our forefathers were living examples of this kind of leadership - of leading by example, caring for the people and placing the society, people or the cause before their own personal interests.

The history of mankind is replete with tales of great women who, through their courage, wisdom and compassion, have left an indelible mark in all fields of life including spirituality, government, scholarship, education, science and even the battlefield.

We at the International Women's Conference invite you on this fascinating time travel to revisit the lives of some of the most inspirational heroes from the past. The numerous ways in which they have made the world a better place continue to inspire us to this day.



Gargi Vachaknavi

(PRE 700 AD) INDIA



Gargi Vachaknavi (born around 700 BCE) was the daughter of a great seer *Vachaknavi*. She was a renowned scholar also known for her significant contributions to the *Rig Veda*. She was one among the *Navaratnas* (9 Gems) in the court of *King Janaka*. In the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (largest of all the *Upanishads*), she has been credited for having drawn forth from philosophers some of the most profound reflections of *Vedanta* - the nature of the Soul and the origins of the universe - during a public debate with the greatest *Vedic* seer of his times, *Sage Yajnavalkya*. *Gargi* was instrumental in expounding the *Vedic* notion of *Atman* (Individual Soul) and *Brahman* (Universe).



Namastasyai

We bow down to *Her*



Maitreyi

(PRE 700 AD) INDIA

Maitreyi (The Friendly One) was a renowned philosopher who lived during the later Vedic period (8th century BCE). In ancient Sanskrit literature, she is known as a *Brahmavadini* (an expounder of the *Veda*). Ten hymns in the *Rig Veda* are attributed to *Maitreyi*. She explored the Vedic concept of *Atman* (individual soul) in a dialogue with Sage *Yajnavalkya* which finds a mention in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. According to this dialogue, it was the Self or *Atma* that made a person dear to another and which was the basis of all existence. *Maitreyi* showed the way to attain the highest state of Being by practising the Vedic path. *Maitreyi* is often cited as an example of the educational opportunities available to women in Vedic India and their philosophical achievements. An educational institution is named in her honour in New Delhi.

Namastasyai
We bow down to Her

Mata Anusuya

(PRE 700 AD) INDIA

Anusuya, literally means "the one free from envy and jealousy. She was the wife of *Rishi Attri* and an influential figure who was revered as one of the most holy sages of the land. With her devotion and austerity, she attained several supernatural powers during her lifetime. In *Ramayana* when Lord *Rama* and *Devi Sita* visited the hut of *Mata Anusuya*, she gifted *Sita* special ornaments to maintain her beauty eternally. She also imparted to *Sita* lessons on the role and responsibilities of a married woman. During a severe famine in *Chitrakuta* area, she saved people by getting the trees to bear vegetables and fruits and making the parched *Ganges* river to flow again through the power of her *tapas* (penance). Several Indian films have been made on the life of *Mata Anusuya*.



Namastasyai
We bow down to Her



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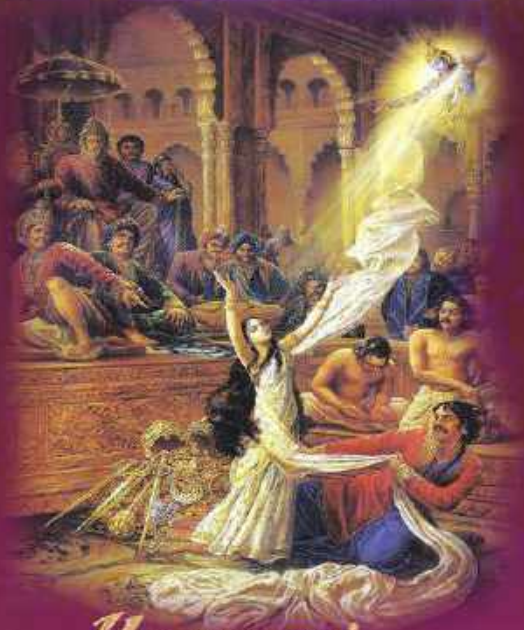
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Namastasyai
We bow down to Her



Yagyaseni

Draupadi

(PRE 700 AD) INDIA

Draupadi is mentioned in the *Mahabharata*, as the wife of the five *Pandava* princes and occupies a central figure. She was considered an exceptionally strong woman and an exemplary wife. Her ability to overcome adversity in a venerable manner set her apart from her contemporaries. She swore revenge for the humiliation she faced in the court of *Kauravas* and brought upon the great war of the *Mahabharata*, in which 1.8 million people were killed.

Despite suffering intense pain and humiliation, she demonstrated extraordinary strength and forgave *Ashwathama*, the killer of her sons and her brothers, rising high above all, battling for her rights and pride till the very end. She demonstrated how a traditionally devoted wife can also be powerfully assertive.

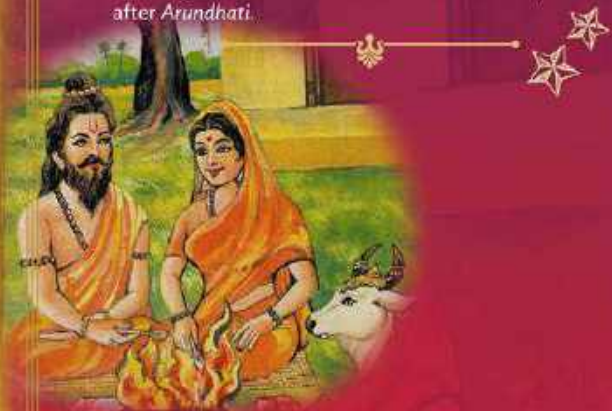
Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*

Arundhati

(PRE 700 AD) INDIA

Arundhati was the wife of *Maharishi Vashishtha*, one of the celebrated seven sages (*Saptarshis*) depicted in the *Saptarshi* constellation (also known as *Ursa Major*). She is accorded the same status as the seven seers and is worshipped with them. She was extraordinary and renowned for her loyalty and devotion. In the Hindu marriage ceremony, the bride and the groom are shown the *Arundhati-Vasishtha* (*Mizar-Alcor*) twin stars which symbolize how a perfect couple complement each other. In most twin star systems one star is stationary in the middle and the other revolves around the central star. However, in the *Arundhati-Vashishta* constellation, they revolve around each other.

The *Mahabharata* describes *Arundhati* as an ascetic who used to give discourses to even the seven sages. Due to its faintness, the *Arundhati* star used to be shown in steps, first showing the brighter stars, and then relative to that, the faint *Arundhati* star is directed. The maxim in *Sanskrit* called the *Arundhatidarshananyāya*, used in the meaning of inferring the unknown from that which is known, is named after *Arundhati*.



Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*



Saint Andal

(725-755 AD) INDIA

Andal is a poet saint who lived in the 8th century in Tamil Nadu and whose love for the Lord reached exalted heights. Andal is believed to have been discovered under a Tulsi (basil) plant in the temple garden of Srivilliputhur which is 74 km south of Madurai in Tamil Nadu by a person named Vishnu Chitta who became in later years one of the most revered saints, Periyalwar.

As a young woman, she fell in love with Lord Vishnu and refused to wed any mortal man. Andal's unwavering love for the Lord and her outpourings of longing and devotion are recorded for posterity in her unparalleled poetic works (30 verses) and Nocturnal Tirumozhi (143 verses) in Tamil. These compositions of love and longing for the Divine are recited by devotees in the holy winter month called Marghazhi in Tamil Nadu even to this day.

Namastasyai
We bow down to Her

Ubhaya Bharati

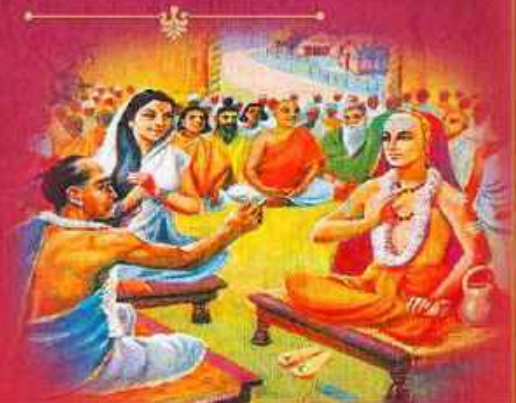
(788-820 AD) INDIA

Ubhaya-Bharati is famous for her brilliant debate with Adi Shankaracharya, the sage from the 8th Century CE, and father of Advaita Vedanta as known today. When Adi Shankara set out on a tour of India to propagate Advaita, he met Mandana Mishra, a great Vedic scholar and follower of Karma Siddhanta (the path of action). They wanted to have a philosophical debate and chose Mandana Mishra's wife, Ubhaya Bharati a renowned scholar in her own right, as the judge. It is said that both men were exceptionally brilliant, but the garland around Mishra's neck started to wither, for his body was getting agitated and angry since he had not internalised wisdom.

Bharati then challenged Adi Shankara to debate her, on the grounds that since she and her husband were one person, he would have to defeat both of them in order to win the debate. Adi Shankara accepted her challenge. The debate went well for Adi Shankara until Ubhaya-Bharati began posing intricate questions on the science of erotics. Adi Shankara ended up satisfactorily answering the questions on eroticism, and Ubhaya-Bharati accepted her defeat. Mandana Mishra and Ubhaya Bharati took to Sanyasa and became Shankara's disciples.

Later Ubhaya Bharati established her own Ashram to which only women were admitted as disciples. She is worshipped as Sharadhambal (a form of Saraswati) in Sringeri Mutt.

This led Bharati to declare Shankaracharya as the victor over her husband. However, Ubhaya-



Namastasyai
We bow down to Her

Rudrama Devi

(1245-1289) INDIA

Rudrama Devi was the first woman ruler of the Andhra region. A legendary queen of the Kakatiya dynasty, Rudrama Devi epitomized the essence of indomitable courage after taking charge of Telangana in the 13th century. She had inherited the kingdom from her father Ganapati Deva, who chose her as his heir over other male members of his extended family. He brought her up to be a ruler, training her in all the requisite skills. Rudrama was formally designated as a son through the ancient *Puṅk* ceremony and given the male name of Rudradeva. When she was only fourteen years old, Rani Rudamma Devi succeeded her father.

As a monarch she suppressed many military threats, commanded the respect of her subjects, lived for the people whom she led – and died for them. She ruled for 40 years and presided over the golden age of the Kakatiyas.

Through the incessant warfare with enemy kings, she worked on many projects. Rudrama Devi completed the construction of the nearly impregnable Warangal fort which had been built by her father Ganapati. The still preserved fortifications consist of concentric circular walls.

During her rule large tracts of land were brought under cultivation which greatly increased the revenue of her kingdom. The Kakatiyas and their feudatories built more than 3000 reservoirs or tanks by damming small streams. Most of these tanks are still in use today. Despite the continuous warfare, her kingdom was tremendously rich, not least because it was the only known source of diamond production in the world. Marco Polo, who visited India in the 13th century, talks in his travelogue of an inland kingdom ruled by queen Rudrama Devi, "which produced all the diamonds in the world".



Namastasyai
We bow down to Her

Meera Bai

(1245-1289) INDIA

Meera was a queen of Rajasthan. She is celebrated as a saint and is well-known for her extensive devotional poetry and songs dedicated to Lord Krishna. She was married at the age of 13. From an early age she showed more interest in religious devotions than to her worldly responsibilities. It is said that she neglected her marital responsibilities. When queried about it, she said that it was impossible for her to be married to the king when she was already married to Lord Krishna.

A major change in her life occurred at the time of the death of her husband. It was customary in those days for a wife to commit *Sati*.

Sati is the self immolation upon the husband's funeral pyre. She refused to comply, whereupon her in-laws began harassing her. She then left the palace and began wandering throughout Rajasthan, preaching and gaining followers. Meera is known for the many bhajans (sacred songs) that she left behind. Some 1,300 padas (poems) are attributed to her. These are popular throughout India and have been translated and published worldwide.

In most of her poems, she describes her unconditional love for her Lord Krishna and promotes devotion to the Divine as the best way of life.



Namastasyai
We bow down to Her



Amrita Devi

(1730 AD) INDIA

Amrita Devi was the first Eco-Warrior of India and probably the world. She and her three young daughters laid down their lives to protect the sacred *Khadir* (*Prosopis cineraria*) trees that were ordered to be cut down by the King of *Jodhpur* to build a new palace. This inspired other members of the community and a total of 363 people sacrificed their lives trying to save the trees by hugging them while the king's men chopped their bodies with axes. The 'martyrs' belonged to the *Bishnoi* community.

When word about this mass killing reached the king's ears he was full of remorse and stopped his men.

Soon afterwards, the *maharajah* designated the *Bishnoi* state as a protected area, forbidding harm to trees and animals. This legislation exists to this day in the region. In the 1970s, this sacrifice became the inspiration behind the famous *Chipko* Movement, an organized resistance to the destruction of forests in *Uttarakhand* (in the foothills of *Himalayas*).

The Governments of *Rajasthan* and *Madhya Pradesh* have started the prestigious state level *Amrita Devi Bishnoi Smriti Award* for excellent contribution to the protection and conservation of wild animals.

Namastasyai
We bow down to Her



Rani Abbakka Chowta

(1525 - 1570 AD) INDIA

Rani Abbakka is the only woman in history who fought and repeatedly defeated the Portuguese for four decades. She was the ruler of the *Ullal* kingdom in the coastal region of *Karnataka*. The Portuguese always wanted to take control over the coastal part of India since it facilitated the trade from India to other countries. *Ullal* was a very prosperous city and was the hub for spices trade to Arab countries. After the Portuguese Inquisition of *Goa* in the 1520's, they wanted to occupy coastal *Karnataka*. Portuguese made a total of 6 attempts to attack *Abbakka* and *Ullal* kingdom. But every attempt failed as *Abbakka* was a master strategist in war tricks. She fought every war with bravery

and courage. The Portuguese were defeated 6 times by *Rani Abbakka*.

Before the British came to set up East India company, it was the Portuguese who came to capture several parts of India. *Queen Abbakka* is thus regarded as the first woman freedom fighter of India who defended her kingdom, *Ullal*, for more than 40 years. Even today the people of *Mangalore* celebrate "Veeru *Rani Abbakka Utsava*" in memory of *Rani Abbakka* who gave her life protecting the Nation. In 2003, Indian Post issued a special stamp dedicated to *Rani Abbakka* while in 2015, the Indian Navy acknowledged her naval heroics by naming a patrol vessel after her.

Namastasyai
We bow down to Her



Queen Zubeida

(702 - 831 AD) IRAQ

Zubaidah bint Jafar al Mansur, wife of the ninth century Caliph, Harun Al-Rashid, is remembered for constructing Al-Kufi pilgrimage route that runs from Kufa in Iraq to Makkah-Saudi Arabia. The route known as Darb-e-Zubaida, stretches for over 1,400 km. She also built wells, pools and dams along the route which provided water to pilgrims and made significant improvements in the life of the people living in the region.

On her fifth pilgrimage to Mecca she was saddened by the plight of drought affected population and the struggle of the pilgrims for water. She convened a meeting of engineers and experts from different parts of the world to resolve the crisis. After surveying the area, it was decided to build a canal from the Valley of Hutain, where a water spring fulfilled all the needs of its residents. However, the land was rocky and barren and it was not possible to build a canal on

the surface of the land. The engineers decided to build through a tunnel (aqueduct) with water stations at different intervals, from where people could meet their water needs.

Zubaidah bought the entire valley so that its water resources could be used to the fullest. Great engineering skills, enormous funds, and manpower were required to bring water from the mountains. With Queen Zubaida's determination and several years of hard work, the canal was extended to Jabal-e-Rahmah in Anfat and then to Mina and Muzdalifah, providing ease to both locals and pilgrims.

The entire cost was incurred by Queen Zubaidah herself. The 35 km long Nehr-e-Zubaida or Zubaida Canal is a remarkable feat in engineering and construction and has served the pilgrims for a thousand years.

Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*



Empress Himiko

(PRE-700 AD) JAPAN

Regarded as Japan's first-ever recorded monarch, Queen Himiko is a figure widely celebrated in Japan despite being shrouded in mystery. Ancient Chinese chronicles describe Himiko as the priestess-queen who was chosen as ruler and spiritual leader of Yamataikoku kingdom - an amalgamation of clans which eventually became the first known unified version of Japan. Her enthronement put an end to long years of confusion, wars and disturbances. She is said to have established the imperial throne, built diplomatic and trade relations with China and ruled over her people with the aid of supernatural divine powers. She was seldom seen in public and was guarded by "one thousand women attendants, but only one man". The Chinese thought of her as a ruler with extraordinary power.

When Himiko passed away, a mound of more than 100 meters was raised. Over a hundred men and women attendants followed her to the grave. Her death was followed by a reign of chaos and violence.

The ancient queen continues to appeal to the imagination of the wider Japanese public and is the most recognisable name in history for the majority of Japanese school children. She also recently became the subject of the new Tomb Raider game which sees Lara Croft stranded on Yamatai which is portrayed as a mythical island off the south coast of Japan. With regional beauty contests being held in her name, tarot cards featuring her image, and manga comics starring the queen in various guises ranging from an erotic character to a symbol of female rulership, the legend of Himiko lives on.

Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*



Joan of Arc

(1412–1430) FRANCE

Joan of Arc, the patron saint of France, inspired a French revolt against the occupation of the English. From an early age, Joan displayed a sensitive and religious temperament. From the age of twelve, she began to have mystical visions in which she felt the voice of God commanding her to renew the French nation.

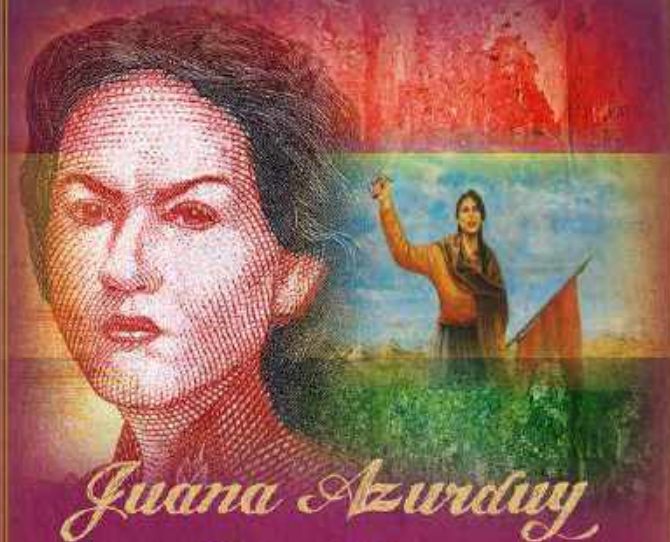
In May 1428 the divine messages urged her to seek an audience with Charles de Bourbon, currently an ineffective and weak leader of the French. When Joan of Arc came to the court she made a strong impression on Charles with her passion and conviction. As a consequence, the 17-year-old peasant girl was given charge of an army and allowed to lead them into battle. Within a year Joan of Arc had led the French army to victories at Orléans, Patay and Troyes. Many other towns were also

liberated from English control and it led to a triumphant entry into Dauphin for the coronation of King Charles VII on 17 July 1429.

However a year later Joan was captured by the Burgundian forces allied with the English and sold to the latter. The English clergy decided to put her on trial for witchcraft. On May 29, 1431, the tribunal announced Joan of Arc was guilty of heresy. She was taken to the marketplace in Rouen and burned at the stake, before an estimated crowd of 10,000 people. She was 19 nineteen years old.

Twenty-six years later the English were finally driven from Rouen and in a later inquiry Joan was declared to be officially innocent and was designated to be a martyr. She was canonised a saint in 1920 and remains the patron saint of France.

Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*



Juana Azurduy de Padilla

(1760–1826) BOLIVIA

Juana Azurduy was one of Latin America's most significant revolutionary war heroes. In a six-year period, she fought in 23 battles across Bolivia, Peru and Argentina that helped to liberate the region from the Spanish at great personal cost, losing her husband and all of her children in war. Born into a wealthy mixed-race family in what is now Sucre, Bolivia, she enjoyed a comfortable upbringing and fostered a great love of Bolivia's indigenous cultures. At age 17, her rebellious spirit led to her expulsion from the convent she joined as a young girl and she committed herself to improve the treatment of indigenous communities and the cause of independence from the Spanish crown. Juana fought in the Chuquisaca Revolutionary uprising which ended in 1810 with defeat by the royalist troops. Not to be deterred, in 1816, Juana led a force that captured the Cerro Rico of Potosí, a vital source of silver for the

Spanish crown; and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. In the Battle of La Laguna Juana fought while pregnant to rescue her captured children, all of whom were eventually killed. She went on to give birth to another daughter during a battle in Northern Argentina, returning to the fight shortly after the child had been born.

After the Independence Wars, Juana's efforts and sacrifice were largely forgotten. In 1825, when Simon Bolivar visited her, he was embarrassed by the conditions she was living in and promoted her to the rank of Colonel with an army pension. He remarked, "This country should not be named Bolivia in my honour, but Padilla or Azurduy because it was them who made it free". Juana died in poverty and obscurity, but hundreds of years on, she has been granted posthumous honours by the Bolivian and Argentinian governments.

Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*



Marie Curie

(1867-1934) POLAND/France

Marie Curie was one of the most revolutionary scientists in history. In 1903, she became the first woman to win a Nobel Prize. She was also the first person to be honored with two Nobel Prizes, and she remains both the only woman to win twice and the only person to win in multiple sciences.

Her scientific achievements include formulation of a scientific theory of radioactivity. Curie was able to show that the radiation was not the outcome of the interaction of molecules, but came from the atom itself. She used the electrometer, a device for measuring electrical charge, to determine that the activity of uranium compounds only depends on the quantity of the uranium.

She developed techniques for isolating radioactive isotopes. She isolated two hitherto unknown elements, polonium in 1898 and pure metallic radium in 1910.

During World War I, Curie recognized the need for field radiological centers near the front and developed mobile x-ray and radiography units. She helped to equip ambulances with x-ray equipment, which she herself drove to the front lines. It is estimated that over one million wounded soldiers were treated between the mobile units and the 200 radiological units at field hospitals. Curie devoted her life to advancing science, dying in 1934 from her long-term exposure to radiation.

Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*



Mother Meng

(PRE 700 AD) CHINA

Mother Meng (372-289 BC) was the mother of Mencius (Mèng sān qiān), the philosopher who is the most famous Confucian after Confucius himself. Mencius's mother also known by her maiden name Zhang Shi is often held up to the present time as a model of what a mother should be.

There's a famous Chinese saying that goes "meng mu san qian" which means "mother of Mencius moved three times." This saying refers to the legend that after being widowed Mencius's mother moved houses three times before finding a location that she felt was suitable for the child's upbringing. The tale goes, when Mencius was young, Zhang Shi wanted to give him the best environment to grow up in. Their first home was near a cemetery, and

she noticed that little Mencius was imitating the actions of the funeral-makers.

She decided to move the family to a house near an open market. Here, Mencius was learning the language and actions of the butchers and sellers. Seeing this, Mother Mencius decided to uproot the family again, this time close to a school. Here, she noticed that Mencius was imitating the behavior of the scholars, and she decided to settle here. Mencius began to learn the rites of ceremony and courtesy, and grew up to be a learned sage and Mother Mencius became a model for parents throughout China. The tales of wisdom, sacrifice and patience with which Mother Meng raised her son are still taught in schools throughout China.

Namastasyai
We bow down to *Her*



St Catherine of Siena

(1347 – 1380) ITALY

St. Catherine of Siena ranks high among mystics and spiritual writers and was one of the first two women to be honored with the title "Doctor of the Church." Although she only lived to the age of thirty-three, her religious and political accomplishments as a woman in the 14th century are unparalleled.

As a young girl she cut off her hair to protest being urged to marry until her parents had to relent to her absolute refusal to marry. By the time she was 30, Catherine had become so widely known for her personal holiness and asceticism that she attracted a group of spiritual disciples—priests and laymen, men and women. She visited Pope Gregory XI at Avignon in France, and convinced him to move the seat of the papacy back to Rome, as the papacy had moved to France in 1307, largely

because of the unruly mob violence endemic to central Italy.

Catherine later founded an Italian monastery, known for its particularly strict observances. She wrote works of great theological insight, including "The Dialogue of Divine Providence." More than 300 of her letters and 36 of her prayers survived, now treasured by scholars. She died on April 29, 1380, at age 33. The devotion around Catherine of Siena developed rapidly after her death. She was canonized in 1461, declared patron saint of Rome in 1866, and of Italy (together with Francis of Assisi) in 1939. She was the first woman (along with Teresa of Avila) to be declared a "doctor of the Church," on 4 October 1970 by Pope Paul VI. She was also proclaimed patron saint of Europe in 1993 by Pope John Paul II.



Namastasyai

We bow down to *Her*

Heads of State



1960s

Sri Lanka - Sirimavo Bandaranaike, 1960
India - Indira Gandhi, 1966
Israel - Golda Meir, 1969

1970s

Argentina - Isabel Peron, 1974
Central African Republic - Elisabeth Domitien, 1975
Portugal - Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo, 1979
United Kingdom - Margaret Thatcher, 1979

1980s

Dominica - Eugenia Charles, 1980
Iceland - Vigdis Finnbogadóttir, 1980
Norway - Gro Harlem Brundtland, 1981
Malta - Agatha Barbara, 1982
Philippines - Corason Aquino, 1986
Pakistan - Benazir Bhutto, 1988

1990s

Ireland - Mary Robinson, 1990
Liechtenstein - Franziska Durst Pfenninger, 1990
Nicaragua - Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, 1990
Bangladesh - Khaleda Zia, 1991
France - Edith Cresson, 1991
Poland - Hanna Suchocka, 1992
Burundi - Sylvie Kinigi, 1993
Canada - Kim Campbell, 1993
Rwanda - Agathe Uwilingiyimana, 1993
Turkey - Tansu Çiller, 1993
Haiti - Claudette Werleight, 1995
Guyana - Janet Rumberidze, 1997
New Zealand - Jenny Shipley, 1997
Latvia - Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, 1999
Panama - Mirya Elisa Moscoso Rodríguez, 1999
Switzerland - Ruth Dreifuss, 1999

2000s

Finland - Tarja Halonen, 2001
Indonesia - Megawati Sukarnoputri, 2001
Senegal - Aminata Maïté Boye, 2001
São Tomé and Príncipe - Maria das Neves, 2002
Fiji - Beatrix Mera, 2003
Macau - Auñón Chacón, 2003
Madagascar - Ravelomanantsoa, 2004

Argentina - Cristina Fernandez, 2007
Mozambique - Lucio D'Algo, 2004
Germany - Angela Merkel, 2005
Ukraine - Yulia Tymoshenko, 2005
Chile - Michelle Bachelet, 2006
Jamaica - Patsy Simpson-Miller, 2006
Liberia - Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, 2006
South Korea - Han Myeong-Sook, 2006
Moldova - Zinaida Greceanii, 2008
Croatia - Jadranka Kosic, 2009

2010s

Australia - Julia Gillard, 2010
Costa Rica - Laura Chinchilla, 2010
Kyrgyzstan - Roza Otunbayeva, 2010
Slovakia - Ivetta Radicová, 2010
Trinidad and Tobago - Kamie Persad-Bissessar, 2010
Denmark - Helle Thorning-Schmidt, 2011
Kosovo - Atifete Jahjaga, 2011
Maldives - Gayumoon Kaidumua Saeed, 2011
Thailand - Yingluck Shinawatra, 2011
Malawi - Joyce Banda, 2012
Slovenia - Anka Bratkovic, 2013
Brazil - Dilma Rousseff, 2014
Mauritius - Anandrah Fookus Gurth-Foam, 2015
Namibia - Hage Geingob, 2015
Nepal - Bidhya Devi Bhandari, 2015
Poland - Beata Szydlo, 2015
Transnistria - Tatiana Zinanskaya, 2015
Marshall Islands - Hilda Heine, 2016
Myanmar - Aung San Suu Kyi, 2016
Tanzania - Taki Mdina, 2016
United Kingdom - Theresa May, 2016
Estonia - Kersti Kaljulaid, 2016
Serbia - Ana Brnabic, 2017
Singapore - Halimah Yacob, 2017
New Zealand - Jacinda Ardern, 2017
Iceland - Katrín Jakobsdóttir, 2017
Romania - Klauka Dăncuș, 2018
Trinidad and Tobago - Paula-Mae Weekes, 2018
Vietnam - Dang Thi Ngoc Thien, 2018
Ethiopia - Sahle-Work Zewde, 2018
Georgina - Salome Zourabichvili, 2018
Austria - Brigitte Bierlein, 2019
Moldova - Maia Sandu, 2019
Slovakia - Zuzana Caputová, 2019
Denmark - Mette Frederiksen, 2019
Belgium - Sophie Wilmès, 2019
Bosnia - Jasmina Anand, 2019
Finland - Sanna Marin, 2019
Greece - Katerina Sakellariou, 2020



Namastasyai

We bow down to *Her*

MISSION GREEN EARTH

The Mission Green Earth exhibition highlighted the vital role of trees as Earth's guardians and life-supporting entities. Explore our informative exhibition that sheds light on indigenous trees and ways to regreen our planet and protect our environment.



BODHI TREE

Peepal Tree/ Ficus religiosa



The Bodhi Tree (*Ficus religiosa*) or Peepal Tree ("tree of awakening") is a large and ancient sacred fig tree under which Gautam Buddha is said to have attained enlightenment or Bodhi.

In religious iconography, the Bodhi Tree is recognizable by its heart-shaped leaves, which are usually prominently displayed. It is also known as the pipplal tree, peepal tree, peepal tree or ashwamba tree. It is used in traditional medicine for about 50 types of disorders. Farmers in North India also cultivate it for its fig fruit.



MISSION GREEN EARTH

2020

PLANT MORE TREES.
PROTECT OUR PLANET.

SAKURA

Japanese Cherry Blossom



The Japanese cherry, *Prunus serrulata*, which is commonly called sakura, is considered the national flower of Japan. All varieties of cherry blossom trees produce small, unpalatable fruit or edible cherries. Cherry blossom is known for its rich anti-oxidant levels and soothing properties. Rich in essential fatty acids, it repairs the skin's natural barriers to promote smooth, supple skin. Sakura is ideal for a mature complexion, therapeutically regenerative it's anti-aging, whitening.



MISSION GREEN EARTH

2020

PLANT MORE TREES.
PROTECT OUR PLANET.

BANYAN TREE

Ficus Benghalensis



Ficus benghalensis. The Banyan is one of more than 750 species of fig trees, each of which is pollinated only by its own species of tiny wasps that breed only inside the figs of their partner trees. The wildest banyan tree in the world is the Great Banyan Tree is over 250 years old and covers about 3.5 acres in the Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Botanical Garden near Kolkata. The Banyan Tree is the national tree of India.

The leaves are used to relieve chronic diarrhoea and dysentery. The roots of the tree are used to clean teeth and protect gums. Medicines made using the roots help in relieving female sterility and relieves arthritis. The fruit of the tree aids in stress reduction and prevents anxiety and depression.



MISSION GREEN EARTH

2020

PLANT MORE TREES.
PROTECT OUR PLANET.

COCONUT TREE

Cocos Nucifera



The coconut tree (*Cocos nucifera*) is a member of the palm tree family. The coconut tree has been used for many purposes since prehistoric times. Every part has a use, including the fruits, wood, root and leaves. Coconuts' versatility is sometimes noted in its naming. In Sanskrit, it is kalpa vriksha ("the tree which provides all the necessities of life"). In the Malay language, it is pokok seribu guna ("the tree of a thousand uses"). In the Philippines, the coconut is commonly called the "tree of life".



MISSION GREEN EARTH

2020

PLANT MORE TREES.
PROTECT OUR PLANET.

AUSTRALIAN EUCALYPTUS TREE

Myrtaceae



Eucalyptus is a genus of over seven hundred species of flowering trees, shrubs or mallee in the myrtle family. Most species of Eucalyptus are native to Australia. Wildfire is a feature of the Australian landscape and many eucalypt species are adapted to fire, and resprout after fire or have seeds which survive fire. They are fast growing and have valuable timber, or can be used for pulpwood, for honey production or essential oils. As an ingredient in many products, it is used to reduce symptoms of coughs, colds, and congestion. It also features in creams and ointments aimed at relieving muscle and joint pain.



MISSION GREEN EARTH
2020 PLANT MORE TREES.
PROTECT OUR PLANET.

EUROPEAN OAK TREE

Quercus Robur



The European Oak Tree (*Quercus robur*) is native to most of Europe west of the Caucasus. The tree is widely cultivated in temperate regions and has escaped into the wild in scattered parts of China and North America. European White Oak is one of the most important hardwoods and is mainly used for furniture and flooring. It is also used for stairs, windows and doors and also for external panelling.



MISSION GREEN EARTH
2020 PLANT MORE TREES.
PROTECT OUR PLANET.



AWARDS AND HONOURS

The Vishalakshi Award is a special award given in the memory of the mother of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankarji. It is a tribute to the exemplary contribution of women across different spheres. The Vishalakshi Award has been presented since the first women's conference in 2005. The award is an honor, given not only to a person but also to the principles that the awardee embodies - the principles of human values, love, compassion, selfless service, a sense of duty and belongingness that extends beyond the layers of caste, creed, and religion.

Acharya Ratnananda Award is instituted and awarded in honor and fond memory of Acharya Ratnananda, the father of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. He was learned in the scriptures, a father of Ayurveda and medical astrology. His passion to serve the poor was remarkable. He is the founding member of the Ved Vigyan Maha Vidya Peeth - an educational non-profit institution and of Vista India, Value integrated service to all, supporting the education and empowerment of 1000s of women. The Acharya Ratnananda Award recognizes the outstanding commitment of individuals in the field of literature and humanitarian service.

Vishalakshi Award



Guru. Smt. Saroja Vaidhyanathan

For her contribution to Bharatha Nrityam, Bharatanatyam and also for the choreography of 1800 Bharatanatyam exponents in the World Culture Festival in 2016.



Dr. Vanaja Uday

For her contribution to dance and workshops, and also for the choreography of over 2000 artists of Kuchipudi in the World Culture Festival 2016



Guru Smt. Uma Tilak

For her contribution to dance, teaching and choreography

Vishalakshi Award



Mata Shri Mangala Devi

For her contribution to the poor and needy and establishment of hospitals



Mrs. Dilraj Bedi

For her commitment to human values and a big supporting role with the IAHV



Dr. Methil Devika

For her contribution to dance and research

Acharya Ratnananda Award



Dr. Surendra Krishna Shenoy

For his commitment and contribution to the field of preventive medicines and promoting wellness



Mr. Ranganath Prasad

For his contribution to the field of agriculture in combining modern methods with traditional methods of organic and sustainable farming

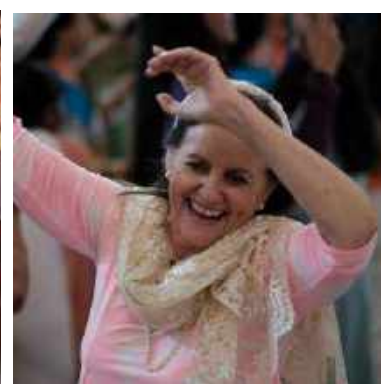


Mr. Sanjay Kumar

For his contribution to Conflict Resolution and Nation-building projects in the most difficult regions of the Indian subcontinent



MEMORABLE MOMENTS





DELEGATE EXPERIENCES

Any gathering for change is as strong, inspired and successful as those who have gathered. We cherish the laughter and the learning. We rise in a wave of beautiful nostalgia as we leave you with words shared by delegates on their experience of the conference.

This not only reflects on the success of the IWC in bringing together amazing women from different walks of life, but bears testimony to the oneness we all share that equips us to make a difference through our collective strength and resolve.

Iman Mutlaq - Jordan

Learning techniques to live a better life. Learning from the powerful women in attendance, and learning ways to give back to our communities!of the Indian subcontinent.

Beatriz V. Goyoaga - Argentina

The very presence of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravishankar!

Man Hu - China

The ability to feel connected with all participants. To know that deep down, we are all one. This is what IWC means to me.

Annette Beddow - Zimbabwe

Peace and tranquility that the Ashram offers, the company of amazing women, and the fashion.

Sangeeta Kapoor - UAE

The many brilliant initiatives that have manifested under Bhanu Didi's guidance. Moreover, the connection between the delegates to share, learn is immense!

Namrata Shah - Kenya

My contribution in being able to represent the highlights and strengths of my country and its people.

Veronica Gonzalez - Argentina

Spending memorable moments in the presence of passionate social activists and learning from inspiring scholars.

Rajneel Ritnesh Pratap - Fiji

Meeting people from diverse cultures, religions and ages who share the same goal of uplifting humanity.

Cecilia Yang Angelini - Seoul, Korea

Meeting many great women, being a part of the One World Family!

Kavita Thulasidas - Singapore

The love and bonding we share with people from around the world, reveling in our sameness!

Neeva Mathema Pradhan - Nepal

The extremely informative sessions, and inspiring personal interactions.

Yazmeen M Lakhiani - Indonesia

An atmosphere full of spontaneity, fun and laughter!

Brahmcharini Vandana Daftari - Kashmir

Listening to inspiring stories of extraordinary people having overcome formidable challenges with equanimity and succeeded!

Anat Bernstein-Reich - Israel

The morning walks towards the meditation hall on the hill, through the cold and crisp Ashram air, transcending the physical to an amazing spiritual experience.

Neelam Madaik Gupta - USA

The cultural m lange and beauty on display at the fashion shows!

Sonia C Lakhiani - Indonesia

Listening to powerful women share their experiences of triumph in adverse situations is indeed momentous!



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Peeking beyond the boundaries

Posted By **This Week India**
on Mar 02,2020



Bangalore



When women come together to discuss, exchange notes, contemplate on life and beyond, the outcome is unlikely to be mundane, run of the mill. And if these women also happen to be the movers and shakers, each having left their indelible mark in the fields they have forayed, the ensuing take away of such an interaction is bound to be monumental.

This is precisely what transpired during the recent three day International Women's Conference hosted by the Art of Living, which brought together women leaders, scientists, artists, social workers, writers from across the world. The discussions amongst the women panellists hailing from diverse fields proved to be not only informative and engaging, but opened up vistas hitherto never visited or contemplated.

The theme opted for the conference was incidentally Circle of Life, taking the multiple discussions through various segments of life and lifestyle that are sparsely explored, deliberated, with some of the deliberations moving thence to the finer lines that are much more meaningful and fill with wonder, yet are scarcely pondered over or even paid heed.

It is all vibrations

An interesting statement emerged from celebrity chef Lauren Von Der Pool who championed the cause of vegan diet, with a best-selling book on the same, "Not many are aware of sound acting as a therapy, the vibrations of words having both negative and positive effects. This is especially clearly perceived in water, in the manner in which the water molecules transform to the vibrations of negative and positive words. Our body is made up primarily of water and the food and liquids we consume has water. Keeping the vibrations positive while preparing food is hence vital as it directly impacts the body."

The state of mental health has become a serious issue world over, with cases of depression climbing steadily year after year. "Over 450 million across the world are suffering from some form of mental health issue and the cost of treating them is US \$ 16 trillion. Unfortunately the pharmaceutical industry is looking at this as a business opportunity. The way to circumvent this serious situation is to work on individual peace as that is the beginning of individual mental health and in turn world peace", contended Sumathi Jayaraman, Director, Strategy and Innovation, UNDP.

Nicolas Hulot, French journalist and environmentalist, expressed similar sentiments. "Cultural and economic factors destroy nature even when man is aware of the destruction. This is chiefly due to the lack of short term grinding where one experiences serious malfunctions that prompt action. The long term always appears far away, lulling people into a false sense of security, removing the urgency to act or even be aware to take the initiative. We need to alter this mind set and view ourselves as one world family and initiate change."

Stating that nature has a mind and intelligence of its own just as even a single cell amoeba has the intelligence to forage food, Nicolas added, "yoga makes people connect with nature better as it settles the mind and calms the senses." Resonating similar view was Luke Coutinho, Holistic Lifestyle Coach, who pointed that the internal environment of each individual impacts their external environment. "We feel refreshed when being amidst nature as it alters the energy levels and the manner in which the hormones connect. Our mind can heal when positive and this applies to food we eat too where it breaks down faster when consumed with happiness and positivity."

Being ecologically viable

An interesting analysis on the current modes of thinking and approach was offered by Architect Trupti Doshi using the example of an elephant's eating habits and its habitat. "There is a subtle difference between the manner in which an elephant consumes food and a human consumes food. While the quantum that an elephant consumes is humongous, its approach to finding its food is extensive, where it would never leave any patch of its habitat barren by foraging through it. But a human's approach to living is intensive, where several swathes of forest land could be cleared to meet his consumption needs."

Trupti further pointed that our forefathers focused on ensuring that our footprints were ecologically viable while being economically friendly and "this sustained nature and our planet. But now we focus on ensuring economic viability while being ecologically friendly and this approach has impacted nature deeply."

Recognising the urgency of addressing the ecology of our planet and reversing the adverse effects of climate change globally, the conference launched Mission Green Earth where it was proposed to plant 10 million trees by 2025 across the globe, with each person attending the conference taking the pledge to contribute in this venture. As a run up to the conference, the students of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Vidya Mandir had planted 1,10,000 trees across the country. Art of Living, over the last four decades has planted over 81 million trees across the country and overseas. During the rainy season this year, it proposes to plant 5000 saplings.

Nandhini Sundar

Art of Living's International Women's Conference 2020 Comes Full Circle

(08:24 Hrs. IST)

Speakers At The Conference Included Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Puducherry Gov. Kiran Bedi, Chief Justice of J& K, Wellness Expert Luke Coutinho, Ndelika Mandela, Granddaughter of Nelson Mandela, Among Others

BANGALORE, Feb. 17, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- From starting a movement to reversing the sex ratio in Punjab; to putting Latvian folk culture on the global cultural map; to changing the laws of Nepal to bring in more representation of women in parliament, inheritance, and social justice; to passionately serving the Delhi Police as the first Indian IPS officer, from dancing up a revolution to being vegan celeb chefs-the women speakers at the 9th International Women's Conference were a force to reckon with.



The International Women's Conference 2020 was where over 400 global women leaders from various fields came together to celebrate womanhood by learning and building each other up, as they delved deeper into the theme of the conference 'The Circle of life: Passion, Dispassion and Compassion' and its reflection in one's social and personal pursuits.

Some of the speakers at the conference included Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Hon. Union Cabinet Minister; Justice Gita Mittal, Hon. Judge of the High Court, J & K; Dr. Kiran Bedi, Hon. Governor, Puducherry; Lauren Von Der Pool, Plant-based celebrity chef and cookbook author from USA; Luke Coutinho, renowned lifestyle expert; Ms. Ndileka Mandela, CEO & Founder, Thembekile Mandela Foundation; South Africa, Ms. Dace Melbarde, Member of European Parliament, Latvia; H.E Ms. Baby Rani Maurya, Governor of Uttarakhand; Hon. Justice Sapna Pradhan Malla, Supreme Court Judge, Nepal; and Mr. Nicola Hulot, French Journalist and Environmentalist, Former Minister of Ecology, among others.

Smt. Bhanumathi Narasimhan, Chairperson, International Women's Conference and director of 'The Art of Living, set the context of the conference in her opening remarks, "When we are passionate about something, it truly shows in the work we do. When we have a goal, and along with it faith in a higher power, we say that let this or anything better than this happen, we gain the power to let go, the power of dispassion. Compassion is about seeing the bigger picture...how we are interconnected."

Union Minister Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal, spoke about the richness and equality in the relatively young Sikh faith, "Spirituality is there inside everybody." Kaur said, "You just need somebody to ignite it in you...a spiritual life is where your passion is channeled in the right direction. When you have a Guru in your life, life is stress free." Dr. Kiran Bedi spoke about the first time she learnt she was passionate about justice, when at the age of 9, she held a man from beating his wife. She also shared how she learned to never complain about what she was passionate about. Talking about justice, Hon. Justice Gita Mittal, Chief Justice of the J&K High Court, said, "We need to rise over all our prejudices and dispassionately evaluate facts and then place a judgment. Ms. Ndileka Mandela spoke about the weight of being Nelson Mandela's granddaughter, the lack of ethical and moral leaders today and the need to elevate the girl children along with the boys in the society." Prominent lifestyle coach, Luke Coutinho in an interesting address, spoke about the role of the mind in healing terminal illnesses and the ideal spiritual approach to chemotherapies. He also spoke about how the relationship with food should be.

The conference witnessed an insightful conversation between Vishen Lakhiani, CEO, Mindvalley and global humanitarian Gurudev Sri Sri RaviShankar, on enlightenment, love, compassion, ways to make relationships work and the art of effortless meditation.

I was 16 when I first met my grandfather: Ndileka Mandela

Who would have thought a Mandela can get raped? And yet I was.



Published: 19th February 2020 06:43 AM | Last Updated: 19th February 2020 06:43 AM

| A+ A A-



By [Simran Ahuja](#)

Express News Service

BENGALURU: Who would have thought a Mandela can get raped? And yet I was. In my own home, by my own partner, while my grandfather was alive," said Ndileka Mandela, who is the granddaughter of the former president of South Africa, the late Nelson Mandela. In town for the International Women's Conference held at The Art of Living International Centre, Ndileka spoke to CE about the weight of carrying her famous surname, which she said is definitely easy. "People think you have money and don't suffer from hardships but that's not true," she said, pointing out how her grandfather suffered in prison.

In her recently released memoir, titled I Am Ndileka: More Than My Surname, the social activist and former nurse, who was the eldest grandchild of Nelson Mandela, talks about the many highs and lows she faced in life, including dealing with death in her family, patriarchy, motherhood, depression, being homeless and surviving rape and abuse. "We aren't immune to suffering. Yes, it has its advantages – I

could walk to any country and have an audience there. But it's a double-edged sword too," she told CE.

Currently, in her 50s, Ndileka was 16 the first time she met her grandfather in prison. "Rules needed you to be a certain age to visit inmates," she explained as she recalled one of two of her "memorable moments" with him. Despite having to make contact with him through a window, the instance left an indelible mark on her and she still remembers the first question he asked her: 'Have you got a pap smear yet?' Having had a strict upbringing with her grandmother, the query left the teenager red-faced but was enough to break the ice.

Her second favourite memory of him comes from time they spent together in 2012, just before the prominent politician passed away in 2013. The two were watching a film together, which, interestingly, was a documentary on him. "I always watched to watch a movie with him but I never got to do it much because, in some sense, he became everybody's grandfather," she said with a small smile. "But if I could, I would freeze that moment I had with him."

Ndileka was one of the speakers at the conference and was all praise for the session that Nepali Supreme Court Judge Sapna Pradhan Malla was a part of. The judge spoke about her passion for bringing about legal changes and how it has benefitted the women of the country. Calling her speech a huge takeaway, Ndileka said, "The topic was close to my heart because of what I had to endure. I hope the sexual violence laws in my country change too."

আন্তর্জাতিক মহিলা অধিবেশনের মূল বিষয় ছিল ‘জীবনচক্র’ উৎসাহ, করুণা ও বৈরাগ্য



অজয় মুখোপাধ্যায়

কলকাতা, ১০ ফেব্রুয়ারি— একটি আন্তর্জাতিক আয়োজিত নবম আন্তর্জাতিক মহিলা অধিবেশন অনুষ্ঠিত হল। অধিবেশনে দেশবিশ্বের বিভিন্ন দেশের প্রায় ১০০ মহিলা অধিবেশন করে যুক্ত হয়ে একটি আন্তর্জাতিক জীবনচক্র তৈরি করে। অধিবেশনের প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে অজয় মুখোপাধ্যায় উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

অধিবেশনের উদ্বোধনী রীতি।

এই আন্তর্জাতিক মহিলা অধিবেশনে দেশের বিভিন্ন অঞ্চলের উৎসাহ, করুণা ও বৈরাগ্য সম্পর্কে আলোচনা করা হয়েছে। অধিবেশনে অজয় মুখোপাধ্যায় প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে অংশগ্রহণ করে যুক্ত হয়ে একটি আন্তর্জাতিক জীবনচক্র তৈরি করে। অধিবেশনের প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে অজয় মুখোপাধ্যায় উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

অন্য অধিবেশনে একটি মহিলা অধিবেশনে

এই আন্তর্জাতিক মহিলা অধিবেশনে দেশের বিভিন্ন অঞ্চলের উৎসাহ, করুণা ও বৈরাগ্য সম্পর্কে আলোচনা করা হয়েছে। অধিবেশনে অজয় মুখোপাধ্যায় প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে অংশগ্রহণ করে যুক্ত হয়ে একটি আন্তর্জাতিক জীবনচক্র তৈরি করে।

রাষ্ট্রীয় শিক্ষক শিক্ষণ পরিষদে সংস্থার প্রাপ্ত

এক দফায় মন্ত্রণালয় এবং রাষ্ট্রীয় শিক্ষণ পরিষদে রাষ্ট্রীয় শিক্ষক শিক্ষণ পরিষদের প্রাপ্তি ঘটিয়েছে। রাষ্ট্রীয় শিক্ষক শিক্ষণ পরিষদের প্রাপ্তি ঘটিয়েছে। রাষ্ট্রীয় শিক্ষক শিক্ষণ পরিষদের প্রাপ্তি ঘটিয়েছে। রাষ্ট্রীয় শিক্ষক শিক্ষণ পরিষদের প্রাপ্তি ঘটিয়েছে।



অনুষ্ঠিত হল আর্ট অফ লিভিং এর দ্বারা আয়োজিত নবম আন্তর্জাতিক মহিলা অধিবেশন

অজয় মুখোপাধ্যায়। নবমমাস। এই অধিবেশন এ দেশবিশ্বের প্রায় ১০০ মহিলা নেত্রী এক মঞ্চে উপস্থিত ছিলেন। অধিবেশনে এর বিশেষ বক্তা হিসেবে কেন্দ্রীয় মন্ত্রী হরশিমত কৌর বাদল, পুন্ডুচেরি রাজ্যপাল কিরণ বেদি, অশ্বিনী কান্তীর এর জড় গীতা মিশ্রাল, জিবন শেইলির বিশেষজ্ঞা লিউক কাউন্টি হো, নেলসন ম্যাঙ্কেলার নাটকিন মিস নিদেলিকা ম্যাঙ্কেলা, ইউরোপিয়ান সংসদ সদস্য ডে স মেলরডে, নেপালের সুপ্রিম কোর্টের জজ জাস্টিস রুপা প্রখা, ফ্রাঞ্চ সাংবাদিক ও পর্যাবর নবিন মিস্টার নিকোল ছলেট সহ অনেকে উপস্থিত ছিলেন।



আন্তর্জাতিক মহিলা অধিবেশন এর সভাপতি অনুমতি নিম্মমহা বনেম, জিবন চক্র কে পূর্ণ করতে হলে করুনা, বৈরাগ্য ও উৎসাহ প্রয়োজন। তিনি বলেন, আমরা যখন কোনো কাজ কে নিয়ে অনেক উৎসাহিত হই তখন এই উৎসাহ আমাদের এই সকল কাজ দেখা যায় যা আমরা

করি। এটা আমাদের অন্য কাজে তে এবং সর্ব শ্রেষ্ঠ কাজেতে ভিন্নতা করতে সাহায্য করে। যখন আমাদের একটি লক্ষ্য থাকে ও তার সাথে পরম শক্তিতে বিশ্বাস হয়। তখন আমরা বনি যা কিছুই হোক আগের থেকে যেন ভালো হয়। যা হবার থাকে। এই সময় আমাদের ছেড়ে দেওয়ার শক্তি, বৈরাগ্যের শক্তি অর্জন হয়। ভারতের প্রথম আইপিএস মহিলা কিরণ বেদি বলেন, দু বছর আগে আমি এক পুরনো বাবা দিয়ে ছিলাম তার কে হজ্য করার হাত থেকে। তখন আমি ন্যায় বিচার নিয়ে অনেক উৎসাহিত ছিলাম। মিস নিদেলিকা ম্যাঙ্কেলা তার দাদু নেলসন ম্যাঙ্কেলা র নাটকিন হোওয়ার গুরুত্ব বিয়া এ বলেন। এই অধিবেশনে এ মুখ্য আকর্ষণ ছিল মিশন প্রিন আর্থ ২০২০। প্রতিনিধিরা সবলে শপথ নেন আগামী পাঁচ বছরে ১০ লাখ গাছ লাগাবে ও তাদের শোধন করবে।



WONDER THEME SONG

WONDER

By Bhanumathi Narsimhan

As I gaze upon the misty mountains

Far away and beyond

What secrets do they hold

In their peaks

What wisdom, what songs?

I wonder...

As the waves rise from the oceans free yet

a part of the seas

What secrets ... do they wish

To share,

What treasures, what peace?

I wonder...

Oh! Do you have the time to look up?

Do you have the time to see?

I wonder ... I wonder ... I wonder ...

Within me



*Like the passion flower so perfect
Like the patterns of the stars
What secrets illumine their hearts?
Is it Compassion, dispassion, oh what power?
Oh! Do you have time to look there?
Do you have the eyes to see?
I wonder ... I wonder ... I wonder ... Within me
Life moves in a circle
Look up, look around
Feel free every moment
Hold the skies in your palms
Does your heart long to connect?
Does it long to feel free
Amidst commitments, like the wind through
the trees Or the tides on the shores
I wonder ...
But do you have the time to look up?
Do you have the time to see?
I wonder ... I wonder ... I wonder ...
Within me
Beyond your woes and worries
Beyond your phone screens
I wonder ... I wonder ... I wonder ... within me
I wonder ... I wonder ... I wonder ... within me*





“Passion when you work, dispassion when you turn inward and compassion at all times, is the key to a fulfilled life”

- Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

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