



# RASHTRA MAHILA



7217735372

EMERGENCY HELPLINE FOR  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
(COVID19 RESPONSE)



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FOR COMPLAINTS & QUERIES



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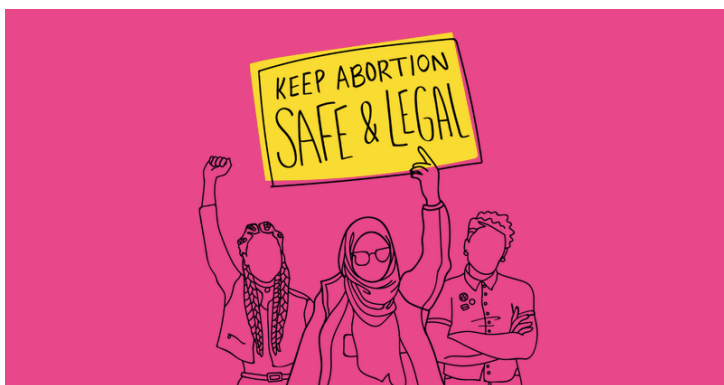
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### 1. WOMEN HEALTH & REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN INDIA

Women's health in India can be examined in terms of multiple indicators, which vary by geography, socio-economic reasons and culture. Intricate and multiple dimensions of wellbeing actions are analyzed in order to adequately improve the health of women in India. One such challenges in relation to women's health can be categorized by understanding the issues of unplanned pregnancies and safe abortion. According to World Health Organization, unsafe abortion accounts for 12 percent of all maternal, or pregnancy-related, deaths and claims the lives of 38,000 women each year. Factors adding to this number, in context to India are driven by poverty, exploitation and social stigma. Medical safe abortion is not accessible to the vast majority of women, partially because of unaware procedure, inaccessibility and affordability as well. Unplanned pregnancies are caused and have many repercussions. Many young girls and women die as a result of unsafe abortion, due to pregnancies at gestational age on the grounds of foetal abnormalities or pregnancies due to sexual violence faced by women. Research have also proven that the effect of sexual violence also incurs suffering of life-long disabilities, and in cases of survivors with pregnancy hampers the overall health condition of the survivors. To ensure reproductive and sexual health of women and to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality, one of the most achievable interventions is to ensure that safe abortion services must be put in place.

Women rights are human rights and that gender equality cannot be achieved without reproductive and sexual rights, including access to safe abortion. This year, India has taken a serious note of women's reproductive rights by proposing three legislative measures to create an environment to safeguards women's reproductive rights by addressing the changing social contexts and technological advances. These Bills are, Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation Bill 2020, Surrogacy Regulation Bill 2020, and the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Bill 2020. The Bills states regulations in practices which would fetch path breaking steps to protect women's reproductive rights in India. The need to regulate the services related to women's health is mainly to protect the affected women and the children from exploitation. By liberalizing restrictive abortion laws and allocating resources toward providing safe abortion services in India, the Government is trying to save the lives of many women, empowering them to obtain equitable access to reproductive services free of coercion, discrimination and violence, within a social justice framework. Through these Bills, the National Board, the State Boards, the National Registry and the State Registration Authorities respectively will regulate and supervise assisted reproductive technology Clinics and assisted reproductive technology banks. Consequently, the National Board will be constituted. The National Board shall lay down code of conduct to be observed by persons working at Clinics, to set the minimum standards of physical infrastructure, laboratory and diagnostic equipment and expert manpower to be employed by Clinics and banks. The States and Union Territories are instructed to constitute State Boards and State Authorities with immediate effect, to bring out the process of accountability and ethical practices in the health systems in supporting the said laws for women. These Bills also ensures for National Registry and Registration Authority to maintain a Central database and assist the National Board in its functioning. The Bill also proposes for a stringent punishment for those practising sex selections, sale of human embryos or gametes, running agencies / rackets / organizations for such unlawful practices.



An exclusive Facebook Live Session with Dr. Suchitra Dalvie was hosted by the National Commission for Women on August 7, in matters relating to access of safe abortion in India. Dr. Dalvie carried out the session by mapping the current status of women in relations to their reproductive rights challenges, the existing measures in health systems, and the way forward to protect and achieve women's sexual and reproductive rights. She shared the works of her organization, Asia Safe Abortion Partnership, that have been promoting access to comprehensive safe abortion services and by reducing unsafe abortion and its complications.

During the live session, she touched upon topics of, understanding the incidence of unwanted pregnancies, the incidence of abortions-natural and induced, explaining the ways in which a safe abortion can be obtained, the cause of unsafe abortions and complications, the current law around abortion in India and other myths and misconceptions prevailing in our society.

Dr. Dalvie also emphasized on the need to spread awareness within professionals through information of scientific research and education, and in turn must build the control to effectively communicate with patients and women in need of the service. She referred to building 'access' is the key to meet the objective. It involves professionals to reach out to vulnerable communities. Access refers to all its components, such as geographical, and financial. She also emphasized on enabling continuity of care including comprehensive services for pre-procedure counselling, understanding and communicating full range of safe and effective methods, post abortion care and contraception, as well as emergency referral services as needed.

With experience of working over 20 years in social sector and addressing women's reproductive health rights, Dr. Suchitra Dalvie and her team at Asia Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP), is committed to spread awareness and increase the availability of evidence based and scientific information on safe abortion, including medical abortion and to facilitate its dissemination and use among members and other relevant stakeholders, and also to promote technologies and service delivery systems (mainstream and alternative) for safer abortion access to rural masses and to increase visibility of a right based approach to safe abortion at local, regional and global forums.

With India passing the three historical Bills this year, civil based organization are also joining the mission in bettering the lives of women by expanding the synergy between the government and the capacities of the people's network to advocate and create access to safe abortion as a human right.

Dr. Suchitra Dalvie (MD, MRCOG) is a practicing gynaecologist who has been working in the development sector for over 20 years. She is the Co-Founder and Coordinator of the Asia Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP) which is a regional network with members in over 23 countries in Asia. The focus of her work has been on safe abortion rights advocacy, particularly from a gender and rights perspective. Follow her on Twitter @DDalvie / Facebook @AsiaSafeAbortionPartnership.

For ASAP, women's rights are human rights and that gender equality cannot be achieved without reproductive and sexual rights, including access to safe abortion. Therefore, ASAP goal is to promote, protect and advance women's sexual and reproductive rights and health in Asia, by promoting access to comprehensive safe abortion services and by reducing unsafe abortion and its complications. Follow ASAP on Twitter @asapasia

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3. UPDATES FROM COMPLAINT & INVESTIGATION CELL

Mode of Complaint	Complaints Received	Complaints Closed (Old+New)
Offline+Online	2128	932
WhatsApp	94	90

4. SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS OF C&I CELL

1. A complaint was forwarded from the office of Hon'ble Minister Women and Child development regarding a woman facing life threats from her husband in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh. The complainant is a mother of two children of age 10 years and 3 years old. The Commission took immediate action on the matter with concerned Police officials and arranged a rescue team along with Child Welfare Committee to secure the women and her children. The rescue team successfully bought the women and her children to her mother's house in Delhi and police protection was also given to them for ensuring their safety.

2. A case of domestic violence complaint was received from a brother on behalf of his sister living in Chennai. His sister was ruthlessly beaten and harassed by her husband during the lockdown. The matter was informed to the DCP Chennai. The Police paid visit to record the statement, but the women and the complainant did not wish to register formal complaint against the husband, so he was only warned by the Police not to repeat the violence. After few days, the Commission received information from the same complainant that the husband has started misbehaving, and with coordination of the Commission, the DCP Chennai made arrangement for the women to travel to her brother's house in Thrissur amid the lockdown situation.

5. UPDATES FROM NRI CELL

Mode of Complaint	Complaints Received	Complaints Closed (Old+New)
Online	40	4

## 6. UPDATE FROM SUO-MOTO CELL

Cases Taken-up	ATR Replies Received (Old+New)	Cases Closed (Old+New)
22	21	12

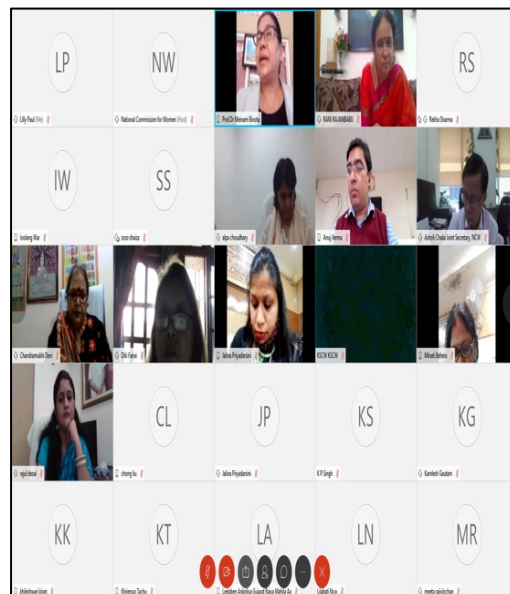
## 7. SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS AT SUO-MOTO CELL

1. The Commission took cognizance of a Twitter post enclosing a CCTV footage, where it clearly showed a specially-abled woman was mercilessly beaten by the Deputy Manager of Andhra Pradesh Tourism Department. It is also informed that a complaint has been filed in the matter, however, the Commission intervened against the matter and instructed for appropriate action by the state authority against the accused.

## 8. INTERACTIVE MEETING WITH STATE WOMEN COMMISSIONS

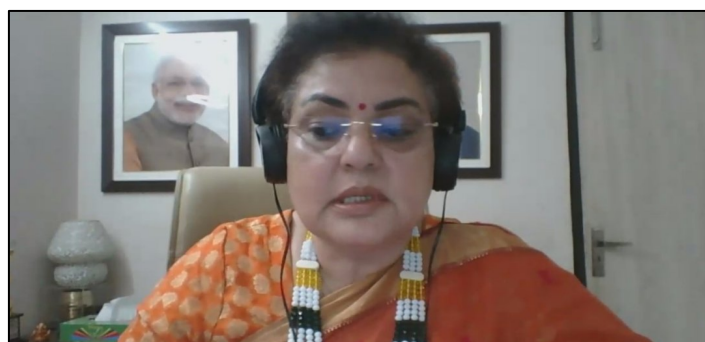
As a step towards augmenting good coordination between National Commission for Women and State Commissions for Women, the Commission work in close collaboration with State Commission for Women from other States, and organizes session of interactions, training and conducting programmes regularly to discuss on the issues relating to gender sensitization, rights of women, challenges faced by women and the initiatives by the State Commission in their respective States.

On August 26, 2020, an interactive meeting was held by the Commission with all Chairpersons and Members from State Commissions for Women via online video conferencing. The discussions were deliberated in context of ongoing lockdown at various states, effects of the lockdown on women, and the possibility of many cases of violence that may not be reported due to the existing situation. In an effort to define a common platform in addressing the grievance and violence related to women, the Commission instructed the incumbents of State Commissions to take help of the Complaints & Investigation Cell at NCW. The purpose was to strengthen collective effort in addressing women complaints and to deal in fast and effective manner by robust coordination between the Commissions. The process would also help to create a unified database through the Commission's portal, that will critically review and identify natures of crimes against women in India. The e-Meeting concluded with other State Commissions sharing their initiatives and good practices, with a view that others can also replicate and learn from each other's work.

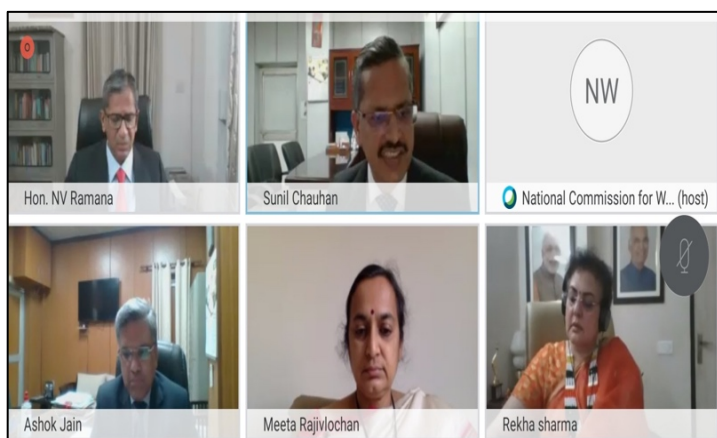


## 9. LAUNCH OF LEGAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME

Recognizing the need to impart Legal Awareness to young girls and women regarding their rights and legal provisions, the National Commission for Women have formulated a Legal Awareness Programme, and have been initiating throughout the country for years now. On August 15, 2020, on the occasion of India's Independence Day, the Legal Awareness Programme for the financial year 2020-2021 was launched in Amethi district, Uttar Pradesh. It was held in collaboration with National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and District Legal Service Authority (DLSA) of Sultanpur. With Amethi holding the 1st camp for the launch, the Legal Awareness Programme would also be launched in 8 States covering as many districts possible. The States selected this year are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Assam.



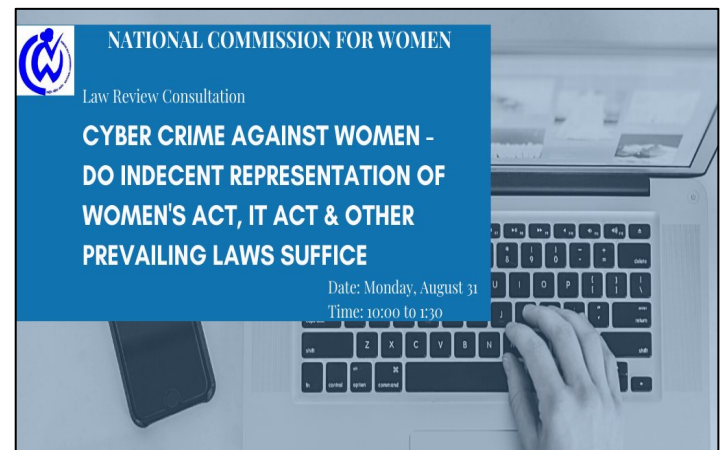
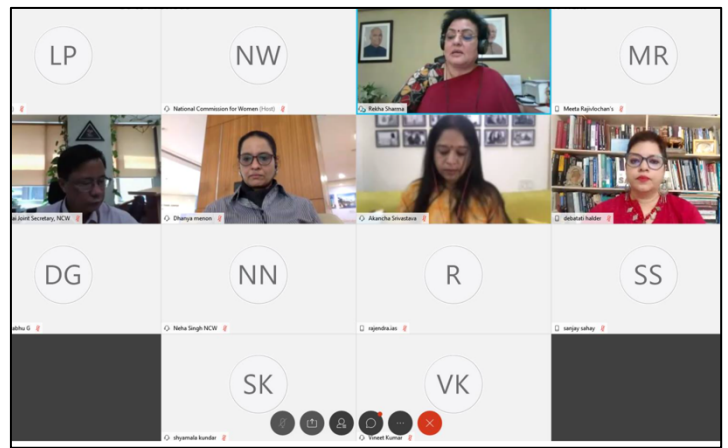
The Legal Awareness Programme will establish two camps per district and trainings will be conducted regularly with maximum number of participants restricted to 60 as per the guidelines issued towards health safety in regard to COVID 19 pandemic situation. During the launch, the handbook comprising of major laws related to women and women rights was inaugurated by Chairperson Smt. Rekha Sharma and Justice, Sh. N V Ramana, Supreme Court Judge & Executive Chairman of NALSA. The Programme's objective is to impart practical knowledge about the basic legal rights and remedies provided under various women related laws, thereby making them fit to face the challenges in real life situations. The Legal Awareness Programmes would lay strong emphasis on inculcating values of equality, inclusivity and diversity, all of which are essential for building a healthy society amongst young girls and women, as knowledge of the major laws of a country is crucial for balanced development of minds by formation of correct values, self-discipline and national spirit.



**10. WEBINAR ON “CYBERCRIMES AGAINST WOMEN”**

The Commission organized a webinar on ‘Cyber Crime against Women in India’ on August 31, 2020, with speakers from law enforcement agencies, lawyers, cyber activists, scholars and media. The webinar brought out key key issues related to security of women in cyberspace and the ineffective implementation of law that adds to the vulnerability of women online. The webinar was addressed on three session i). Cybercrime against Woman: Inadequacies of law or its ineffective implementation; ii). Making Cyberspace Safe for Women, and iii). Measures other than legal/law enforcement. NCW Chairperson, Smt. Rekha Sharma highlighted the need for strengthening the cyber law in India, and the Information Technology Act 2000 needs amendments to accommodate the changing scenarios of cybercrimes identified and especially in regard to women and privacy. She emphasized on the need to generate awareness about basic online conduct and redressal mechanisms to report cybercrimes in the country.

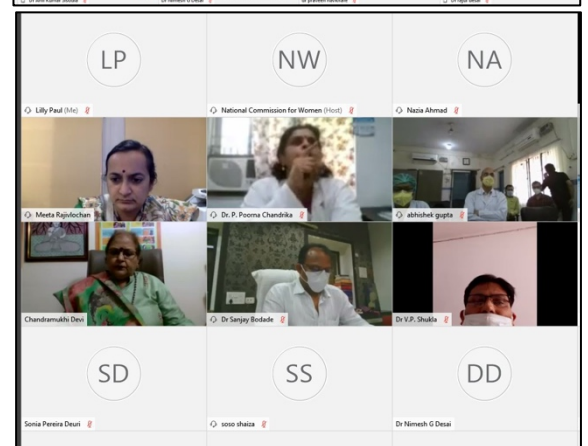
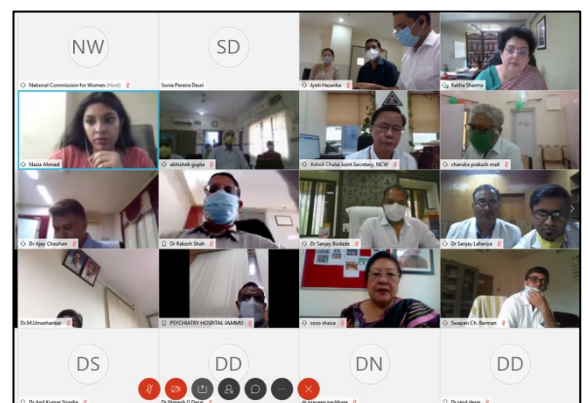
The Commission in the recent months had received many complaints in regards to cybercrimes, and it reveals that the present laws have not been able to completely reflect the ground realities of cybercrime committed against women. The deliberation in the webinar hence brought suggestions on how all netizens can collectively work towards combating cybercrimes, such as NGOs, Women Cells, government agencies as well as civil society organizations, media organizations and social media platforms for controlling criminal content and conduct against women are imperative, for changing the landscape of cyber safety. The deliberation highlighted the urgent need for setting up a quick redressal mechanism for redressal of cybercrimes and educating the future generation legally, ethically and morally so that they grow up to become responsible netizens.



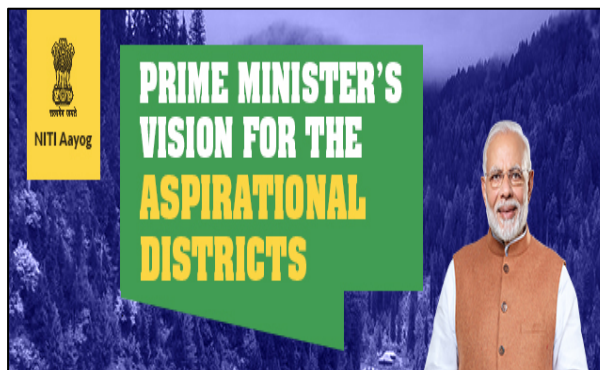
**11. e-MEETING HELD WITH DIRECTORS & MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENTS OF PSYCHIATRIC HOMES / CUSTODIAL HOMES**

The Commission organized a virtual meeting on August 20, 2020, with Superintendents and Directors of 26 Psychiatric Homes from the States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir. The virtual meeting was for assessment and routine updates of wellbeing and safety measures taken by the authorities to improve the living condition of the female patients in women wards of Psychiatric homes. The Commission instructed the authorities to take strict notice of social distancing and reduce overcrowding in wake of COVID pandemic, and also to keep check on hygiene requirements in the premise, including providing facilities of sanitary napkins, masks, hand sanitizer and soaps. The Directors and Medical Superintendents of Psychiatric homes apprised the Commission about routine of regular temperature check, and special attention to the patients found positive after COVID tests.

The Commission also inquired on the availability of adequate manpower, utilization of all the beds earmarked for female patients, mid-way home facility for helping patients transition to independent living, standard operating procedures for treatment of patients and ensuring privacy, dignity and rights of every female patients. From the discussions during the e-meeting, the Commission recommended the authority to fill up vacant positions of Clinical Psychologist, Psychiatric Social Worker and Medical Attendants with adequate representation of women workers. The Commission was apprised that Psychiatric homes conduct recreational activities and occupational opportunities for the inmates with the daily remuneration being paid directly to the bank accounts. Recreational therapy like yoga classes, stitching, language classes and entertainment were some of the activities undertaken by Psychiatric homes in these States.



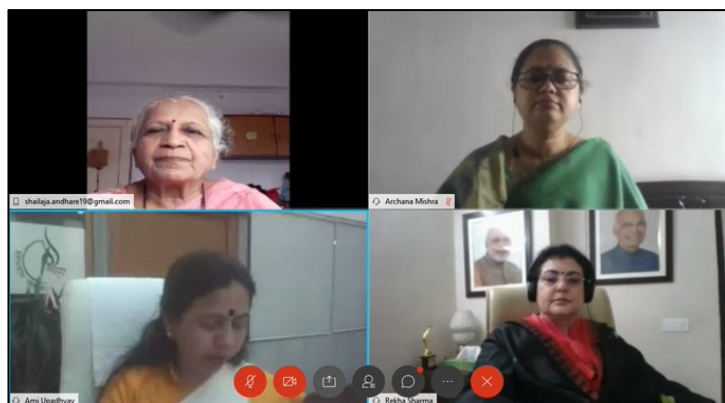
## 12. NCW'S REPORT ON 40 ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS SURVEYED



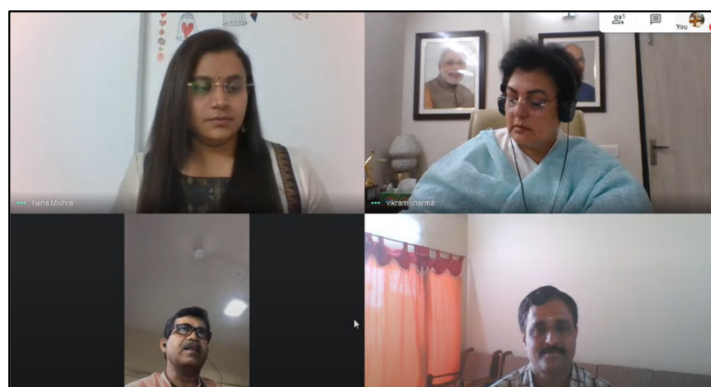
Last year, the Commission took the decision to assess and take stock of implementation of various women development schemes across 40 Aspirational Districts spread over 15 States in the country, i.e. Odisha, Rajasthan, Assam, Telangana, Manipur, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. The Reports from the inspection visits from September 2019 to February 2020 was finally consolidated into one single Report, bringing out all the initiatives taken up the State on implementation of various central/centrally sponsored and State Government Schemes. The objective of the survey was also to determine the best districts undertaking initiatives for women safety and support, and to further recommend for active measures necessary. The observations and recommendations made by the Commission are drafted in the Report.

## 13. HIGHLIGHTS OF CHAIRPERSON'S ENGAGEMENTS

1. NCW Chairperson Smt. Rekha Sharma was invited as Chief Guest to a webinar on, "Gender Bias: Challenge to Equality and Diversity" organized by MNLU Mumbai & UGC on August 4, 2020.
2. NCW Chairperson participated on a Tweet Chat with Plan India to endorse the campaign on "Stop the Setback: Girls and Gender-based Violence" on August 11, 2020.



3. NCW Chairperson was invited as Chief Guest by Army Institute of Education, Greater Noida, to inaugurate an online workshop and deliver key speech on, "Gender-based Violence & Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace" on August 13, 2020.
4. NCW Chairperson was invited as Chief Guest for a webinar on, "Gender Bias & Women's Empowerment: Issues & Solution" organized by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University on August 27, 2020.



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