

REFLECTIONS 2009



THE LIGHT OF LEADERSHIP
INTEGRATING GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

6-8 FEBRUARY 2009

THIRD
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 6-8, 2009



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 6-8, 2009





Dedicated to Vishalakshi Amma
Mother of His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
and to all Mothers



INTRODUCTION

The 3rd International Women's Conference was held at the Art of Living International Center in Bangalore, India February 6-8th, 2009. This year's theme, The Light of Leadership: Integrating Global Perspectives sparked lively discussions, thoughtful self-reflection and celebration amongst the 723 delegates from 70 countries. Women from every walk of life participated and united easily on the common bonds of spirituality, compassion, integrity, resilience, grace and determination.

Through the inspiring theme, The Light of Leadership, the issues of the global economic crisis, conflict resolution, the media portrayal of women, challenges of leadership due to geo political considerations and ethical leadership were thoughtfully and constructively deliberated with personal resolutions made by the delegates on how they can contribute to bringing about a positive transformation. Speakers repeatedly reinforced the impact of women leadership which is enhanced due to their innate potential and urged for action at both the individual and collective level.

World-renowned female entertainers graced the stage and through their passion for their art captivated the audience. Many women were honored for their selfless commitment to improving the world through their unique avenues. This gathering truly fostered the sharing of wisdom from the experienced to the fledgling in a congenial and genuine environment, with many new friendships made. The atmosphere balanced both, commitment and festivity, with attendees leaving inspired, rejuvenated and resolute to carry with them the Light of Leadership.





EXCERPTS FROM THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS
BY
HIS HOLINESS SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

I wonder why women never entered the military. Perhaps it is because women will never follow. Women are so independent by nature, it is impossible to have a colonel or major and have a group of women follow them. This is why this leadership quality in women which is inherent is pushed aside. There is an inborn leadership quality in women that needs to be nurtured and brought together.

Women are intellectually and emotionally gifted for planning and executing. When women head departments in their countries, those countries are much ahead of others. I have seen these inherent qualities in each of you.

Both rural and urban women have to be nurtured. I am glad we have chosen this topic leadership. It brings us to the biggest problem in third world countries corruption. Women do not fall to corruption as much as men because it pinches them. A corruption-free society can emerge from a society of women-folk. Again, we must look at leadership not just as a social cause but on a personal level too. Women can do a better job at building character and integrity.

Today the situation is such that it is akin to standing on a treadmill that is functioning. You have to run to stay in the same place. In this fast pace of life, we need to balance our inner beauty, ethical values and the challenges we face socially and internationally. You might have read in newspapers that 2,000 women stood up and pledged their children for suicide bombers. This sends a shock through your spine, women can never do such a thing. What can cause this? There is so much injustice, lack of understanding or opportunity. Recently we saw five or six girls schools bombed by extremists. Taliban said, 'No more education to girl children'. We cannot allow this type of tendency to grow anywhere in the world. It is all the more relevant for women all around the world to sit together and see that women lead the society to a more non-violent, free and fair society. Have this responsibility. In these three days, come up with action plans and deliberate and we are all there to support you and follow you in that regard.

Don't forget spirituality is the backbone of values and life. You are that spirit and you are the one to instill love, compassion, spirituality to those around you and in society. Wish you all the best and may God bless you.





SMT. BHANUMATHI NARASIMHAN
Chairperson,
International Womens Conference

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY SMT BHANUMATHI NARASIMHAN, CHAIRPERSON, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all here on this beautiful day of the third international women's conference.

Today, this conference stands tall with members from 70 countries across 7 continents-from panchayat leaders to members of parliament, medical students to neurosurgeons to Ayurveda experts, from scientists to stars and media experts. I am touched that inspite of the current economic situation, so many of you have come here honoring your commitment towards upliftment of society. This, itself, is a sign of true leadership.

Leadership can be motivational or inspirational. Motivation comes from an external source and lasts only for a short while but inspiration comes from within. You would have all seen the golden lotus symbol everywhere. A lotus shines with beauty and brilliance though it blossoms in muddy waters. A true leader also shines and inspires leadership around them, inspite of all the challenges.

In these coming three days, let us look into ourselves, find the source of inspiration from within and strengthen it. For me, my mother is my inspiration. She was a symbol of strength and love. This combination is really the stepping stone for blossoming in life. Let us extend this sensitivity and care of a mother, that is naturally in us, to the society and really bring a positive change on this planet.

Leadership is a choice and not a position. A leader is free. A leader is effective, compassionate and takes responsibility for transformation. So many of us are gathered here today with this same purpose. I encourage you all to share your ideas and experiences during the sessions and outside as well.

Let us be the torch bearers and carry forward this light of inspiration, light of love and compassion, light of wisdom, light of leadership with great honor, commitment and a sense of belongingness. Here, I would like to add that being the sister of His Holiness, I have this light of inspiration, love, peace, compassion and wisdom guiding me in every step of my life and it is my pleasure to share it with all of you.

Once again, a warm welcome to all of you to your own home! These three days – let us enjoy and also be a joy to the world!





अर्चना दत्ता (मुख्योपाध्याय)
विशेष कार्यधिकारी (जन सम्पर्क)

Archana Datta (Mukhopadhyay)
Officer on Special Duty (Public Relations)

राष्ट्रपति सचिवालय,
राष्ट्रपति भवन,
नई दिल्ली - 110004

President's Secretariat,
Rashtrapati Bhawan,
New Delhi - 110004

MESSAGE

The President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, is happy to know that the International Association for Human Values and the Art of Living along with the Ved Vignan Mahavidyapeeth are organising the 3rd International Women's Conference on "The Light of Leadership: Integrating Global Perspectives" at Bangalore.

The President extends her warm greetings and felicitations to the organisers and the participants and wishes the Conference every success.

A. Datta

Officer on Special Duty (PR)



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

MELISSA L. BEAN
8TH DISTRICT, IL-506

January 31, 2009

Dear Friends,

I am very sorry that I was not able to join you for this important occasion, when so many of you have gathered to attend the 3rd International Women's conference. Your theme, the Light of Leadership, the importance of women working together as women to create a positive change in society, is more relevant and necessary now than ever before. Here in the United States, we are celebrating the historic inauguration of my friend, President Barack Obama. He has called on each of us to work towards a stronger society and a better future. That struggle, which is the same struggle we all share across the world, will not be successful without the contributions of women.

I got involved in politics because of my children. I wanted to make the world better for them, and realized that I could only do so much as a mother and businesswoman. I believed a mother's perspective was vitally needed in Washington, and women's voices should be heard in all the world's capitals. As we empower more and more women to take on leadership roles, the whole world benefits.

Once again, congratulations to Art of Living Foundation and the International Association for Human Values for organizing this important conference.

Sincerely,

Melissa L. Bean
Member of Congress

DELIVERED BY MELISSA BEAN FOR CONGRESS

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE PARTNERS



IAHV The International Association for Human Values is a humanitarian , non profit, non governmental, charitable organisation working towards reviving human values and peace globally. It has special consultative status with the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the UN. (ECOSOC). It focuses on initiatives in areas of disaster and trauma relief, conflict resolution, education for the underprivileged, prisoner rehabilitation, youth and women empowerment and environmental awareness.

VED VIGNAN MAHA VIDYA PEETH (VVMVP) was established in the year 1981 as a Public Charitable Education Trust. VVMVP is committed to bringing about a scientific reappraisal of traditional knowledge and utilizing it for the benefit of human kind. Since its inception, the trust has executed various projects including education, women's empowerment, scientific research, environment and rural development to bring in a qualitative impact and change in the society.



VISTA India (Value Integrated Services for All Project). Established in 1985 in Urugapura, a small village in Karnataka, India, VISTA has transformed the lives of thousands of women and girls from over 30 villages. These women are trained in tailoring and other vocational skills thus providing them opportunity for employment. They can actively contribute to their families' earnings, which in turn leads to the social and economic development of their communities. They are also educated about hygiene and taught yoga and meditation.

Ministry Of Women and Child Development is a department of the Indian govt. concerned with promoting the welfare of women and children.



L'OFFICIEL
L'OFFICIEL

L'Officiel India is the Indian version of the leading French fashion bible. L'Officiel, is an unparalleled leader in luxury lifestyle, fashion and beauty in our country since seven years. India's first and only luxury magazine, L'Officiel brings the best of fashion and luxury for the discerning woman.



News X Clarity in a complex world

Kent - Water is the most precious gift of nature and Kent water purifiers make drinking water 100% safe & pure, with innovative technologies pioneered by Shri. Mahesh Gupta, Kent water purifiers are very popular and is a leading household brand in India.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



Ms. Carol Martin

Member of the Legislative Assembly for Kimberley in the Western Australian Parliament in 2001

“I have taken on a cultural commitment to make sure that the 14,000 children within my region are never made to feel like orphans. Every child deserves the best opportunity.”



Ms. Hema Malini

Member of Parliament, India

“Sri Sri has encouraged women to realize their great power, both here in India and abroad.”



Ms. Erna Schoepges-Hennicot

Christians Peoples Party, Belgium

“The culture and arts create the only real values in our lives. Let's promote art, dance and music as without words there is no conflict.”



Ms. Kalyanee Juggoo

Executive member of the Mauritius Labour Party

“A woman is a flowing fountain of invaluable resources and her need to assert herself has become urgent.”

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Ms. Takibat Makhmudova Alaudinovna
State Secretary Republic of Dagestan, Russia

“We have worked in cooperation with the Art of Living Foundation with prisoners and youth in universities and schools and seen how participants become more creative and enthusiastic whilst they reach their true potential.”



Ms. Motamma
Minister for Woman and Child Welfare, Karnataka, India

“All women are one and all our problems are one, so let us all take a pledge today and fight for this cause.”



Ms. Barbara Etter
Assistant Commissioner of Corruption Prevention and Investigation with the Western Australia Police (WAPOL)

“We need more of the right women at the highest levels of decision-making if we are to create a world that promotes values, mutual respect and harmony.”



Ms. Ana Teresa Dengo
Costa Rica's Ambassador to Austria & Permanent Representative to the United Nations
“To speak peace you must be at peace with yourself. Tap into your intuition and heart as well as your brain. Use your feminine side as your strength and keep Friendship and Tolerance as basic building blocks.”





Rev. Sister Concelia Mariam Pillai

Northern Province, Sri Lanka

“We need women of spirituality to give hope to the hopeless people. A woman's strength has to be both courageous and compassionate.”



Ms. Amanda Ellis

Senior Private Sector Development Specialist, World Bank

“Research shows that when more women are in power at their workplace there is better overall performance, but when men predominate, performance levels drop.”



Mrs. Kavitha Khanna

Legal and Financial Advisor, India

“If we are talking about the future, then change begins with me.”



Ruth Kwok

Industrialist, Hong Kong

“Tap into the inner abundance that you have and there is no crisis you cannot face.”

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INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

Abu Dhabi
Argentina
Australia
Bangladesh
Belarus
Belgium
Brazil
Bulgaria
Canada
China
Costa Rica
Croatia
Denmark
Dubai
Ecuador
Egypt
Estonia
Fiji
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Holland
Hong Kong

India
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq
Israel
Italy
Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Kuwait
Korea
Lithuania
Luxembetg
Malaysia
Mauritius
Mexico
Mongolia
Morocco
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Pakistan
Panama

Paraguay
Philippines
Poland
Qatar
Russia
Singapore
South Africa
South Korea
Slovenia
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sultanate of Oman
Suriname
Switzerland
Taiwan
Thailand
Turkey
United Kingdom
Uruguay
USA
Venezuela
Zimbabwe





Ms. Erika Mann

European Parliament Member, Germany

“Be the one you are and the one you want to be and live it. Make your work relevant- this is how you will climb the ladder into real politics.”



Ms. Karina Constantino-David

Chairperson of the Civil Service Commission, Indonesia

“We have a choice between the acceptance of powerlessness or the confidence that we bring with us if we know what our convictions are.”



Dr. Nafis Sadik

Author and Former Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General, Pakistan

“Real leadership means you have to have the courage to speak out when issues you don't agree with are discussed even if they are the norm. We have to make women see that they can change if they stand up for themselves.”



Ms. Zeyno Baran

Director, Center of Eurasian Policy (CEP), Turkey

“Women embody the truth. We need women who are true to themselves and just playing a role.”

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Ms. Elke Markopoulos

Artist and Designer- Greece

“Our duty is to care for and protect everything around us.”



Dr. Darja Piciga

Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Republic of Slovenia

“The decisions we make today for the future are determined by our perceptions of the present and our assumptions about the future.”



Ms. Hana Hertzman

Director General, Municipality of Holon, Israel

“We can achieve harmony with women as they become leaders of countries, especially in the Middle East. This is how we can achieve peace there.”



Dr. Suryani Sidik Motik

Principal, PT Indoprima Advisa Management, Indonesia

“By taking more responsibility, women are stronger.”





Ms. Vandana Shiva

Physicist, Environmental Activist and Author, India

“We must celebrate our diversity rather than being locked into our culture. We as women shape the future. Each of us is a center for a new future.”



Ms. Preetha Reddy

Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Group India

“When the 'We' works together, powerful things can be accomplished.”



Ms. Poonam Siddhu

Income Tax Head, Karnataka, India

“Women play an important role in nurturing the future generations.”



Ms. Smita Naram

Ayurvedic Physician, Pharmaceutical Herbalist and Nutritionist, India

“A woman is reborn during Teenage, Delivery of a child and Menopause.”

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The ' Strength of Womanhood- The Media Portrayal' session had eminent personalities like Smt. Sharmila Tagore, Actress, UN Goodwill Ambassador and Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), Ms.Lara Dutta, Model & Actress, Katherine Aspaas, journalist from Norway, Mayella Lloyd, member of Panama Commerce, Industries and Agriculture, Anuradha Sen Gupta, Senior Journalist, CNBC TV18 and Ami Patel, Fashion Director, L'Officiel. The session which was moderated by Smt. Kavita Khanna, Legal & Financial Advisor, had these panelists share their own experiences of hardships and personal growth.

The session which was an interactive one had members of the audience take an active part in the pragmatic discussions on the role of women at the global front.

These leaders urged women to take roles and responsibilities to create a better world. "We cannot wait to get roles, we have to take roles ourselves. We have to take responsibility of our own dreams and desires and believe in our own self", was the message which was given by one of the speakers.



**Hema Sardesai, composer & Singer of the
Theme song for IWC-2009**

Hema Sardesai is an Indian playback singer, best known for her Hindi songs.

During her career, Sardesai has sung playback songs for over 60 Bollywood films, has released several successful Indipop albums, and has performed numerous live stage shows in almost all the states of India and world tours in different countries around the globe.

Sardesai is the only Indian Singer to win the Grand Prix at the 16th International Pop Song Festival in Germany, and the only female singer other than Lata Mangeshkar to perform at the celebrations for the 50th year of India's Independence day.

Kavita Khanna
Legal & Financial consultant

She has extensive exposure to matters relating to finance, accounts, law and general business. She has been working for cross sectoral partnerships in the area of public health. Currently she is working on the elimination of Kala Azar from India and globally. She was also the Principal Co-coordinator and member of the team which conceptualized UTSAV, a youth campaign to Clean Inside, Clean Outside, first held in partnership with the World Alliance for Youth Empowerment, (WAYE), the state govt. of Maharashtra and the BMC. Subsequently 12 UTSAVs have been held by WAYE, with 35,000 youth all over India.



CELEBRATING JOY



CELEBRATING SERVICE

CELEBRATING SERVICE

"Real empowerment enables a woman to deal with any circumstance or situation with confidence and an unshakable smile".

Bhanumathi Narasimhan

This book is dedicated to the unsung heroins and shares glimpses of their dynamism in their service activities. The instances shared are only the tip of the iceberg compared to what the women of The Art of Living have really worked for.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



VISHALAKSHI AWARDS - 2009



Dr. Nisha Manikanthan
Sejal Thakker
Tanuja Limaye
Raji Ramachandran
Deepali Patel
Shabari Chowdhary
Rajashree Patel
Sangeeta Jani
Rita Katlawala
Neha Pendse
Rohini Oak
Atika Dhandhia
Falguni Nanavati
Meera Prasanth

Natalie Kaharick
Gabriella Savelli
Sarnarathi Kalai
Shailaja Vijaykumar
Sue Hindle
Ruweida Soni
Dr. Dafna Paz
Filiz Odabas-Geldiy
Frederique Lebelley
Kamal Khimji
Rugmani Prabhakar
M. Jayalaxmidevi
Savithri M. V.
Indu Sinha





Kaderna Yousuf Milluma

Dr. Divya Ramesh

Raji Rattan

Shalini S.

Jaya Esperenza

Vita Liao

Urmila Devi Aggarwal

Tatiana Supranova

Ruth Kuok

Regina Boensal

Ilonka Pawluk

Monika Debicka

Kim Tolani

Cecilia Angilini

Puja Handa

Beatriz Goyoaga

Sangita Kapur

Vinaya Hegde

Vasanthi Narayanan

Tripti Dhawan

Shobha Menon

Sonia Lakhiani

Raksha Patel

Vanika Gupta





Late Maj. Unnikrishnan

The most heart-warming moment of the conference was when the delegates gave a standing ovation to the parents of martyr Maj. Sandeep Unnikrishnan, who laid down his life to save thousands at the recent terrorist attack at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai. The delegates pledged, along with Major Unnikrishnan's father, to fight against terrorism and save lives.



“Gift of life”

Rajita Kulkarni Bagga,

Trustee, Ved Vignan Maha Vidya Peeth

Creativity sprung out in Rajita after the 26/11/08 attack on Taj Mumabai, **which she survived.** She started writing poems and her first book was released on the 8th of February 2009. She writes “I am not a writer or a poet. I am a grateful survivor. That fateful night of 26/11/2008, our life, like that of so many others came under brutal attack. My husband Ajay and I were trapped in the Taj, Mumbai for 13 hours before we were rescued the next morning. A harmless intention of dining with a German friend staying at the Taj, had turned into a full blown traumatic event.”



THE LIGHT OF LEADERSHIP: PRELUDE

As a prelude to the 3rd International Women's Conference, smaller conferences were organized in different places: Washington, New York, London and Germany in 2008. The theme of each was the same: the light of leadership.



International Women's Conference at London December 15th, 2008

Women leaders from across the country came together to share their stories and inspire a diverse audience of 42. The achievements highlighted by each vibrant speaker enthused, motivated and encouraged delegates to actively embrace the challenges they faced as women and rise to the forefront.

International Women's Conference at New York City January 22nd 2009

Women from the fields of management, marketing, business and philanthropy spoke about topics of relevance to today's woman: peace, stress, unity, education, women empowerment, value-based leadership and status in society. They shared their personal experiences and spoke about other organizations which are currently into community change.

International Women's Conference at Germany September 24th, 2008

Speakers from different corners of Europe deliberated on the leadership roles that women assume in different arenas of life. Besides sharing some heart-warming experiences, women strengthened their resolve to work for a positive transformation. They formed teams of experts in various fields and have outlined an action plan.



International Women's Conference at Washington November 9th, 2008

Over 100 women were uplifted and inspired at the end of the day-long conference in Washington DC. Women leaders from business, education and civil services spoke about solutions for a better world.





PERFORMANCES - 2009

Smt. Hema Malini

Hema Malini is a renowned Indian actress and Bharatanatyam dancer-choreographer, who starred in numerous successful Bollywood films in the 1970s. She is a member of India's Bharatiya Janata Party and represents the party in Rajya Sabha, the upper House of parliament in India.

Usha Uthup

Usha Uthup is a renowned Indian pop and film playback singer who sings in 15 India languages as well as several foreign languages. She started her illustrious career at the age of nine.



Ms. Zila Khan

Daughter of legendary sitar maestro Ustad Vilayat Khan, Zila Khan is a celebrated Sufi singer and the first woman performer from the world's oldest sitar gharana. Trained in both the classical and semi-classical styles of singing by her father, Zila was born in a family with formidable musical lineage - that goes back to seven generations of
f a m e d m u s i c i a n s .





Shobhana Chandrakumar

Shobhana Chandrakumar is a disciple of legendary Bharatanatyam dancer Smt. Chitra Visweswaran and branched out as an independent, actress, performer and choreographer in her twenties. She has recently been awarded the Padmasri for her contribution to Bharatanatyam and cinema. She has also won two national awards, three state and four Filmfare awards. She has recently been awarded the 'Natyacharya Award' in Chennai.

Yoko Mama

Yoko Mama is a Japanese illusionist, magician and dancer.



Rashmi Gopi Hegde

Rashmi Hegde Gopi, Rajyotsava Award recipient, is a renowned dancer who has won acclaim around the world through decades. She began training at the age of three, under the illustrious Gurus, Muthaiah Pillai and Kittappa Pillai of the Pandanallur School of Bharatanatyam. Rashmi has several dance ballets to her credit. Her choreography was the piece-de-resistance at the National Games of 1997 because of the dramatic manner in which she used five hundred tribal Yakshagana Kodava dancers.





Sister Jeanne Devos

Children's rights activist, Founder National Domestic Workers' Movement, Mumbai, India

"Spirituality is open to the divine and this reality allows us to be connected in compassion and peace."



Ms. Katrien Beeckman

Head of the Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values Department of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Geneva

"Two tools for ethical leadership are honesty and transparency."



Braema Mathiapparanam

Social Activist, Singapore

"The motivation to do your duty is not governed by anyone but yourself."



Dr. Pritika Chary

Neurophysician and Neurosurgeon, India

"Leadership should guarantee dignity."

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Ms. Latika Ramakissan

The Art of Living Foundation, Africa

“May we take the responsibility of practicing ethical leadership and encourage our leaders to do so.”



Ms. Sucharita Eashwar

Regional Director, NASSCOM, Karnataka, India

“A good leader has the power to create a system that translates the vision into reality and unleashes the potential of the people who are part of the organization.”



Ms. Jan Schakowsky

Congress woman, Illinois

“I congratulate the Art of Living and International Association for Human Values (IAHV) for bringing together so many women leaders from so many countries to bring positive change to our communities.”



Ms. Elizabeth Coffey

Founder, Spark Leadership

“It is critical that as women, we stand up for ourselves, own the strengths that we have, believe in ourselves and have self confidence.”





Mr. TN Seshan

*Former Chief Election Commissioner, India
Faculty, Great Lakes Institute of Management*

“Do not worry to establish that women are a good alternative, women are the thing to be.”



Ms. Jija Harisingh

Director, IPS, Karnataka, India

“Either you are a person of integrity or you are not.”



Ms. Dia Mirza

Miss Asia Pacific 2000, Actress, Model, India

“The best thing God has given women is the ability to feel for herself and others. This is a gift we need to celebrate, be grateful for and use.”



Ms. Hema Hari

Conceptualizer, Bharat Gyan & Associate Director, Strategic Technology Services and office of Innovation, CSC India

“The property obtained by a woman through inheritance, through purchase, partition, seizure and finding is her law maker, her law giver for Indian civilization.”

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Dr Chitra Phadnis,

CEO, Madhura Pharma & Research Laboratories, India

"Women need to possess sustainability in crisis; humility and the Knowledge to sustain in the face of any adversity whatsoever."



GIFT A SMILE

P. Anushree

The International Women's Conference continued its journey towards spreading the 'Light of Leadership' when it pledged support for the education of Miss. Anushree P. Her father is a security guard now but was earlier running a small tea shop on the roadside with very meager earnings. She and her parents dreamed of a medical education for her but they did not have enough finances for this. Now, She is on her way to fulfilling her dream of graduating as an Ayurvedic Doctor, with the support of the participants of IWC 2009. The cost of her entire education will be taken care of. As Anushree and her father came on the dais, the tears of happiness and gratefulness expressed more than words could have.



INDIAN CIVILIZATION

When people talk about Indian civilization, they usually refer to the Hindu religion and the caste system. The Hindu religion is one of the oldest religions in the world, and the caste system is a social hierarchy that has existed for thousands of years.

The Hindu religion is based on the belief that there are four main castes: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. Brahmins are the highest caste, and they are the priests and scholars. Kshatriyas are the warriors and rulers. Vaishyas are the farmers and merchants. Shudras are the lowest caste, and they are the laborers.

In addition to the Hindu religion, there are many other religions in India, including Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. Each of these religions has its own unique beliefs and practices, and they have all contributed to the rich and diverse culture of India.

India is a country of great beauty and diversity. It has a long and rich history, and it is a country that has inspired many people around the world. India is a country that is full of life and hope, and it is a country that is worth knowing and loving.



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Women through the Ages
The Art of Living Foundation



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Women through the Ages
The Art of Living Foundation

NATIVE AMERICAN CIVILIZATION



Women through the Ages
The Art of Living Foundation

The people of the Americas have a rich and diverse history. They have lived in this continent for thousands of years, and they have developed a unique culture and way of life. The people of the Americas are a people of great strength and resilience, and they have overcome many challenges over the centuries.



PERSIAN CIVILIZATION

Persian civilization is one of the most ancient and influential in the world. It was founded by the Persian Empire, which was one of the largest and most powerful empires in history. The Persian Empire was known for its art, architecture, and literature, and it has left a lasting legacy on the world.

Women through the Ages
The Art of Living Foundation



India is a country of great beauty and diversity. It has a long and rich history, and it is a country that has inspired many people around the world. India is a country that is full of life and hope, and it is a country that is worth knowing and loving.

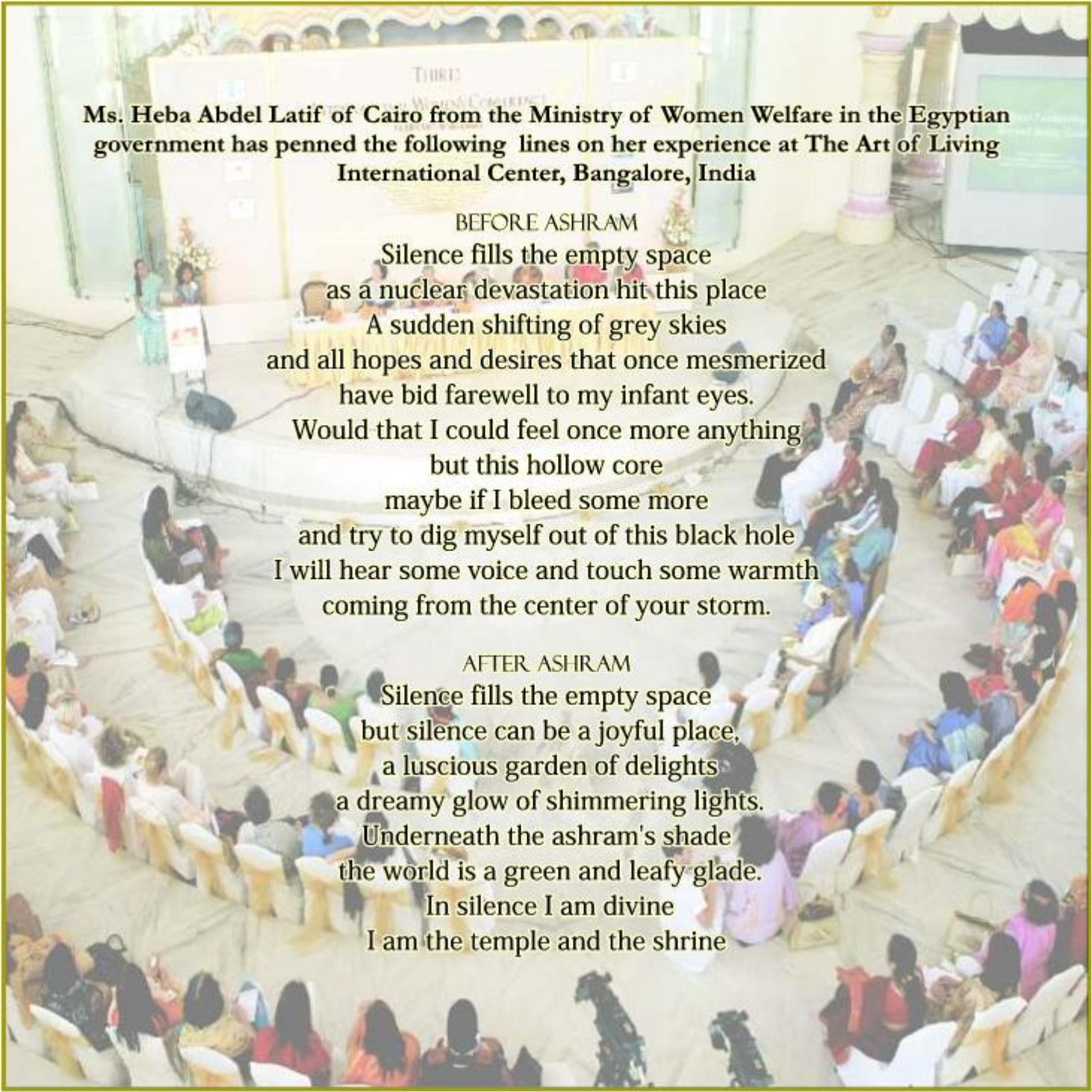




CONFERENCE ANGELS

Chinky Sen	Mawahib Shaibani	Aman Gohal	Vinaya Hegde	Kaveri
Kamlesh Bharwal	Kamal Khimji	Poonam Tandon	Sangeeta Gujarati	Mallika Krishna
Bharathy Harish	Rugmani Prabhakar	Nalini Singh	Ashima Whorra	Mythili
Jaina Desai	Vani	Rekha Kodialbal	Rashmi Paliwal	Vaishali
Darshana Mathur	Sangeeta Kapur	Vidyut Udiavar	Dilraj Bedi	Padmini Unni
Resha Desai	Usha Gangaramani	Stanislav	Vandna Adesh	Sharada Dwivedi
Nirali Desai	Raksha Patel	Tatiana Supernova	Anita Dalmia	Anju Narain
Priyadarshini	Dr Shanti Medhi	Puja Handa	Mrs Suri	Tanu Narain
Reshma Ganesh	Nandini Sharma	Kapil Mathur	Radhika Hoon	Rekha
Namrata Gautier	Guha Sekaran	Jaymini Chouhan	Tripta Dhawan	Sunaina Choudhary
Anju Bhatia	Pramilla Vassen	Farnaaz Sharief	Susham Mongia	Smita Mathur
Jayashree Kanavi	Ruweida Soni	Rashmi Bhatia	Sumati Kakkar	Sunita Sibbal
Radhika	Bhamini Chouhan	Haya Ramon	Sarita Kakkar	Falguni Nanavati
Santhanakrishnan	Leela Oogarah	Dalit Laufer	Renu Dua	Hima
Mamta Ravi	Versha Pragji	Sonia Lakhiani	Chitra Roy	Sejal
Regina Boensel	Cecilia Angelini	Rhea Paes	Prama Bhandari	Radhika Rai
Susanne Kamp	Ruth Kuok	Dalu Malani	Mamta Kachwaha	Shalini Singh
Jurga Piekute	Durga	Nandita Store	Rashmi Prasad	Vandy
Natalie Schaller	Lavinia Scott Sellars	Puravi Hegde	Shashi Naulakha	Rekha Kunteta
Jaya Esparenza	Neela Srinidhi	Ami Patel	Vibha Kejriwal	Seema Sharma
Beatriz Lulini	Manhu	Neema Kamdar	Bharti Ganguli	Ritu Kharbanda
Sylvie Dunand	Shailaja Vijaykumar	Prajakti Deshmukh	Sharmila Murarka	Indu Sinha
Deepali Patel	Radha Vijaykumar	Jay Khanna	Aradhana Bhartia	Monica Bansal
Stephane Ayault	Vita Liao	Sangeeta Jani	Bharathi Rao	Dr.Sobha Srivastav
Lubna	Beatriz Goyoaga	Tina Hazra	Rekha Prasad	Meera Nair
Manal Karrara	Vanessa Chen	Lara Dutta	Yashoda	Gauri
Aleksandra	Filiz Odabas Gelday	Alka Vishwas	Akhila Srinivasan	Gaytri



A large indoor gathering of people, mostly women, are seated in a circle on a light-colored floor. They are facing a stage area where a speaker is standing. The room has a high ceiling and decorative elements. A large screen is visible on the right side of the stage.

Ms. Heba Abdel Latif of Cairo from the Ministry of Women Welfare in the Egyptian government has penned the following lines on her experience at The Art of Living International Center, Bangalore, India

BEFORE ASHRAM

Silence fills the empty space
as a nuclear devastation hit this place
A sudden shifting of grey skies
and all hopes and desires that once mesmerized
have bid farewell to my infant eyes.
Would that I could feel once more anything
but this hollow core
maybe if I bled some more
and try to dig myself out of this black hole
I will hear some voice and touch some warmth
coming from the center of your storm.

AFTER ASHRAM

Silence fills the empty space
but silence can be a joyful place,
a luscious garden of delights
a dreamy glow of shimmering lights.
Underneath the ashram's shade
the world is a green and leafy glade.
In silence I am divine
I am the temple and the shrine

CONFERENCE REVIEW

Will shine sublime

Posted by TDI Bureau On February - 9 - 2009

By Leella Rani Dondapati

Primordial energy is always feminine...this collective power can and should hange the course of the planet was the message that came out emphatically at the 'Third International Women's Conference', organized by The Art of Living International Foundation at its Kanakpaura ashram in Bangalore, INDIA. A stream of global thought processes and perspectives came in the forefront, for an insightful integration and execution.

Sri Sri Ravishankar of Art of Living inaugurated the conference and distinguished guests at the inauguration were Carol Martin, Member of Legislative Assembly, Australia, Erica Mann, European Parliament Member, Germany and Shobha Karandlaje, Women and Child Welfare Minister of Karnataka.

THE DAILY INDIAN attempted to get the sense on that measure...

Enter for the complete report! Why is there a disparity, financial mess in the world at present? Is there considerable, responsible leadership at the helm of affairs...? When women are adept at spinning out win-win situation in any point in time, are they the first level negotiators? Many such questions/perspectives found a patient listening.

'Smart Economics' is the need of the hour. Deliberating on the role of the women in the Global Financial Crisis, "What can we do together to this world... to ring in a tangible difference into this environment?" inquired Ms Amenda Ellis, Lead Development Specialist, World Bank Group, USA who also works on the gender issues in private sector development. She divulged that World Bank had allocated 20 million \$ for the Women Economic Empowerment.

Be the Change!

In ancient India rituals were performed to beget a daughter. Is the same situation reflected in this day and age...? Needless to say, education and especially to the girl child can affect the whole dynamics...! Indeed there is a need for intelligent thinking at the POLICY LEVEL - AGENCY LEVEL and the INSTITUTION LEVEL across the globe. Educating on the social inclusive collaboration that would enable women to execute the job required of them, Dr Chitra Phadnis, CEO Madhura Pharma & Research Laboratories, observed, "Women need to posses sustainability in crisis; humility and the Knowledge to sustain in the face of any adversity whatsoever." The same zeal is reflective in her company which is standing at a turn over of 20 plus crore in the last fiscal year. Ms Kavitha Khanna, moderator of the conference deliberations reiterated, "to change the course of the planet the change must begin with in ourselves." The harmonious living and balancing act go together from every cell to the cosmos.

Be the change you want to be...have courage and integrity in doing small things. There is no peace with out equality and rights. Many a time lack of responsible stewardship is leading to terrible confusion and dilemma in the world. Debugging that, can women play a sensible role? Ofcourse it is possible says this visionary. As a Mumbaikar, she is working relentlessly for a section of underdogs. With 92 million domestic workers in India, Sister Jeanne Devos, founder National Domestic Workers Movement in Mumbai says, " she would soon leverage a Domestic Workers Bill to be passed in the parliament." A light at the end of the tunnel!

Matter meets the Spirit!

A beacon of hope addresses the loopholes in the system to thwart further decay in the ecosystem. Persuading farmers in the Vidharbha, Maharashtra to do agriculture of life, Ms Vandhana Shiva, an eminent environmentalist regretted, "the present financial crisis made evident of the fact that the representation of the wealth that went out of balance from the real wealth. Nothing can be build out of fiction." At a time of war against the life at the genetic level nevertheless the agriculture will continue to be the important means of livelihood, she shared. Is it like 'matter meeting the spirit'.

Deconstructing the core of the theme of this conference, Ms Farida Irani a practitioner of the Alternative Therapies and the Ayurveda from Australia shared, "Ayurveda is the principle and the Yoga as the Art of Being which is convincingly and beautifully blended in the Art of Living." Leadership is a sense of responsibility that motivates one to do certain thing because it is right and not out of self-interest.

"Look with in to resolve the conflicts, find out creative ways to reach across the conflict polarizing the world ", felt Dr Darja Piciga, an analyst, expert in developing knowledge-based society in the Republic of Slovenia. With new paradigms replacing the old paradigms we need to mobilize people to what they want to do? Dr Katrein Beeckman, International Federation of Red Cross and red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Geneva endorsed that there is an imminent need to bring in spirituality into leadership, sharing that she had always been a learner, learning on the steep curve through the trial and error, respecting diversity. Care, connect, for the self-development and happiness of the humanity. In the midst of all this one observation from Sri Sri Ravi Shankar stands out distinct, "Ideal Leadership is one that has long-term vision with short term goals with total transparency, integrity and truth." A multi-dimensional shift in the mind-set and thinking is warranted for an ethical society as the improved leadership will create more sustainable models in the society. No matter the financial turmoil the world is in at the moment Ms Sucharita Eshwar, Regional Director, NASSCOM who is empowering women in the Information Technology Industry strongly feels behind every break down there is break through, a new beginning. "A leader should have clarity in the vision beyond self-interest, integrity and the ability to mobilize the creativity into reality, to build sustainable organizations, society." Transactional Analysis vital!

TN Seshan, a former Chief-Election Commissioner of India gave away the Vishalakshi awards. He reflected, to find answers to the impossible, like handling the terror needs handling of the mind / heart, a thorough transactional analysis. Though men created life, women are the one who sustain that, he maintained.

Concluding session of the Conference

It was knowledge, knowledge and knowledge - a feast for mind and soul.

Many Rishikas trickled in steadily to the event for an intelligent listening! Around 700 hundred delegates from across the globe gathered here, shared, reflected and deliberated the emerging global perspectives, how to integrate them for a Ethical Global Leadership. As a prelude to the conference of this grandeur in Bangalore one-day conferences were held at Germany, London, New York and Washington in the fag end of the 2008.

Smt. Bhanumathi Narasimhan, the Chairperson, International Women's

Conference, IWC - THE LIGHT OF LEADERSHIP observed, " We are fortunate as educated women to hold so many uplifting and challenging positions all over the world, contributing towards a positive change. It is our prerogative to provide opportunities for other women and girl children in the society who are deprived of the same due to lack of education. We must educate the girl child and educate every woman. Human Values, compassion, caring are part of spirituality and through his conference let us all take these values to every corner of the globe for a harmonious and peaceful world."

A re-invigorating musical concert by Ms Usha Uthup, scintillating and gripping performances to the packed audience by Smt. Hema Malini on Radha Krishna, Shobhana Chandra Kumar and Ms Zila Khan, noted Sufi singer Yoko Mama, Japan and Reshmi Hegde Gopi kept the audience glued to their seats late in the evening on three days of this Intl. conference from February 6 - 8, 2009. Block your dates for next such conference in 2011.



WOMEN POWER

Vytautas Landsbergis, *Former President of Lithuania, Member of European Parliament*

Contemplated at the Conference "The Light of Leadership"

Bangalore, 6-8 February 2009



The Third International Women's Conference in Bangalore, Art of Living Ashram, gave me a lot of beautiful impressions, as well as insights and suggestions.

Women power can and must become the turning point of great significance to counter-balance the concepts and approaches shaped by men. When a question was addressed to this prevailing female audience – what picture and role of woman you would prefer in the media – I caught myself on a possible blunt response. As a person who belongs to that worse gender, I felt absolutely convinced that my preference was to gaze at and listen to Miss Universe. But yet this was not all. At the same time I was excited to sit among hundreds of pretty women all smiling, happy and self-confident in the awareness of their public and family roles. This was wonderful indeed and gave the impression, fantastic, but not utopian, about the forthcoming international female leadership. So much wisdom, joy and good humour was concentrated here, in the Ashram, for three days. And so few men were present to share them.

Then I recalled some remembrances about a definition coming from the beginnings of Christianity: wisdom of heart. Really, women are called for that and blessed by all the gods worshipped anywhere. Women do not need to speculate and calculate for that wisdom, only to feel it.

How this could be turned into a real power the world needs so much?

The ability of women to feel and state what is good and what is wrong would be extremely valued in that latter case, if expressed publicly – softly and convincingly. – You are wrong, my President – so often, it would be enough to prevent a gross moral mistake. Mon general, you are wrong with this bombing of a village. You, great banker, were deeply wrong by taking the irresponsible hazardous risk and turning so many people into losers of their savings. You, crazy suicidal bomber, are totally wrong when going to kill dozens of innocents in the market, accidental passers-by or those little girls in Taliban-forbidden schools. Say this, my ladies, everywhere to everyone who appears to be wrong thus presenting the wisdom of your hearts. Certainly, don't hesitate also to tell this: my lord husband, your idea and your behaviour is just wrong, stop it.

There is the greatest women power, not yet exploited to save this world of men. Being poisoned by doctrines, affected by empty ambitions and hatred, it is still possible and worthy to save. Really, you can!



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

MEDIA



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

BANGALORE MIRROR

'Successful women make men insecure'



NBT

नवभारत टाइम्स

महाराष्ट्र टाइम्स

Aol's world women's meet from Feb 6

Jackpot

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

ವಿಜಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

ಶಬ್ದಾಂಶ

ಶಬ್ದಾಂಶ

NBT

नवभारत टाइम्स

MID DAY

PEOPLE

Guru's day out

मिलाप

हिन्दुस्तान

ವಿಜಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯ ಸುಧಾ: ಸ್ವಯಂವರ ಸಾಧ

expresso

ಪ್ರಜೆ ವಾಣಿ

men are born leaders'



VED VIGNAN MAHA VIDYA PEETH (VVMVP) was established in the year 1981 as a Public Charitable Education Trust. VVMVP is committed to bringing about a scientific reappraisal of traditional knowledge and utilizing it for the benefit of human kind. Since its inception, the trust has executed various projects including education, women's empowerment, scientific research, environment and rural development to bring in a qualitative impact and change in the society. All the efforts of the trust aim at achieving the following objectives.

- ❑ Scientific study and research of Vedic literature and practices
- ❑ Organizing programs to promote physical, mental and spiritual health of individual across all sections of the society and hence creating a harmonious society
- ❑ To spread literacy, impart vocational skills and promote empowerment of Rural India
- ❑ To carry on social service and relief work for upliftment of the poor and disabled
- ❑ Conduct drug de-addiction and rehabilitation programs for addicts
- ❑ To preserve and protect environment globally

For more information on contribution towards the projects, contact :

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