

# REPORTS

## UJJAIN First Of its Kind

In the sleazy backstreets of Ujjain's redlight area, there has been a revolution. Shakuntala Devi, a middle-aged prostitute who is responsible for creating the first registered association of prostitutes in the country, says: "This society has made us what we are and now they tell us we have no right to live."

There is, nothing beautiful about the whorehouses of Ujjain and nothing romantic about the lives of its inhabitants. Most of them came either as widows, orphans, or after being "spoiled" by landlords in their villages. The little hovels in Pinjarwadi are where they will live and die. The narrow alleys stink of urine; diseased dogs lie beside open drains. Haggard old women and equally haggard young girls peer out from behind tattered curtains and hide when they see the camera.

The story of the fight-back begins with Munki Bai, one of the few women who managed to give up prostitution without the protection of a man. She lived with her two children in a little room on the local temple premises and acted as its priestess. After eight years, some righteous residents decided that a prostitute's presence in the temple was "destroying its sanctity." About 300 people got together and appointed their own priest to run the temple. As a result

of the tussle, the local administration was forced to take over the temple. The agitators then started a campaign to have the redlight area removed from Pinjarwadi. For several weeks, anti-prostitute placards were posted all over the area and processions were taken through the streets.

Though the agitation fizzled out, the prostitutes realized the need to get organized in self-defence.

The Vaishya Kalyan Sangh is at the moment a small organization which plans to look after children and old prostitutes. There are 21 permanent members paying Rs 11 a year. They are helped by a man because none of the members are literate. The association is the first of its kind in India and contains the seed of what could be a unique new women's movement. It is also concerned with the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act, 1956 (SITA), which is a powerful weapon in the hands of the police, against women. According to the act, red-light areas, brothels, pimps, and soliciting are all illegal. So it is for the police to decide who is a dancing girl and who a prostitute! To quote a police spokesman in Delhi: "We turn a blind eye to the fact that redlight areas exist. We allow dancing girls and their establishments on the basis that they are cultural activities."

The women point out that their children have highly placed and "respectable" fathers who will never acknowledge them. In fact many of these men would if necessary join the



—Kathe Kollwitz

campaign, to throw the women out of the city. They say: "It is for our children that we are living, and society will not allow us to do even that. They want to throw us out of the society." They also feel that education will solve all problems: "If we had been able to read and write, we wouldn't have to sit in this bazar. We will teach our daughters to earn two rotis a day by some other means."

—extracted from Tavleen Singh's report in "Sunday"

## VARANASI The Agony Of Mental Rape

I want to report an experience which many of us sisters may have gone through, but may have kept to ourselves for fear of social censure.

This is the experience of K, an MA final student of Banaras Hindu University, and a resident of Jyotikunj women's hostel on the university campus. On August 3, 1981, she went to visit her local guardian. She got delayed and when she returned at nine pm, she

found the hostel gates closed according to rule. The watchman refused to break the rule and open the gate. Also, the key was not with him. K grew frightened. She saw some hordes of boys approaching and we can imagine how upset she must have been. She did not know where to go. Finally, she managed to reach Kasturba girls hostel which is some distance from the campus, and stayed the night there with a friend.

When she returned to her hostel in the morning she was trembling and seemed to be mentally unsettled. She began to ask some of her friends what they thought of her for having spent the night outside. Over the next few days she struggled to remain calm but on the night of August 13, she fell into a hysterical fit and kept talking about that terrible night. The warden sent for K's local guardian who is a doctor, but K refused to meet him. She appeared terrorized and refused to step out of the hostel. She was given tranquilizing injections but day by day her condition continued to deteriorate. Her parents, who are in Rourkela, were sent for. By the time they arrived, K had stopped eating and drinking, and was in a near delirious state. It seemed that she had suffered something which she could not speak about, and she was suffocating under the weight of that silence. She would keep asking the other girls: "Why are you all so worried about me? Because of all that has happened to me, isn't it so?" Then she would start crying and whenever she saw a woman she knew, she would cling to her and plead: "Please will you look after me? Please say yes, please say" Sometimes she would say: "All places in this world are false, everyone is false, I want to go to god. Please send me to god. Only god is true."

When her parents arrived on the 16th, she began to scream and ask her mother: "Why have you come? Why are you worried about me? What have I done?" and when she heard that her father had also come, she began to scream even louder and refused to come out of her room, saying: "Papa is also a man. I won't meet him. Tell him to go away from the hostel." When some of the girls forcibly took her to her father, she broke away and ran back to her room, saying:

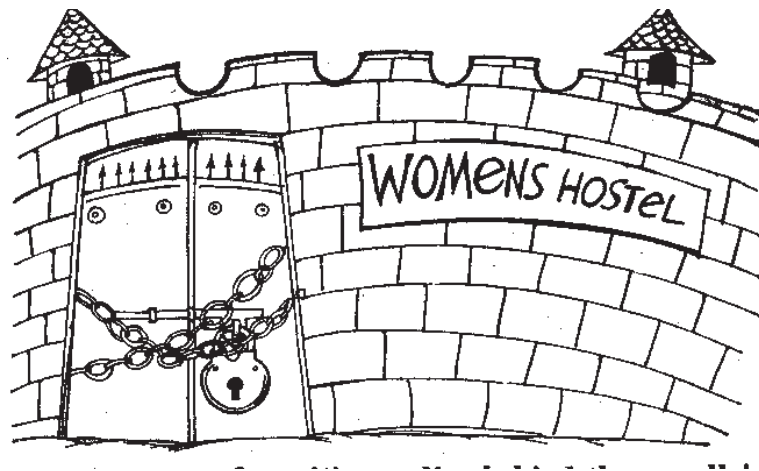
"I have a lot of work to do, I am going to my room. God is there, I feel peaceful here. I stayed in Kasturba hostel that night. What are you all thinking about me? Have I done something so very bad?" And she would burst into tears as if she were absolutely helpless against the accusations of guilt. Finally, after a lot of difficulty, they managed to take her out of the hostel and back to Rourkela.

By this time, every girl in Jyotikunj hostel had one question in her mind: Had K been raped?

The case was being discussed throughout the city. Some hostelers felt that it was necessary to investigate the

was locked, and had fallen ill due to the after-effects of anti-malaria drugs she had taken some days before. The warden categorically forbade any kind of action around this case and threatened some of the girls who had taken the initiative in raising it. She seemed to be far more worried about the hostel's reputation than about K's reputation.

The next day, about 25 girls went to the rector to get the key from him. Though K's case was well known by this time, and had even been reported in a local paper, he behaved as if he knew nothing about it and showed surprise at the students' perturbation. However, after the key was obtained, most of the girls lost



**Believe it or not, free citizens live behind these walls!**

case and raise their voices in protest, because silence would mean that the same thing could happen to other girls in future. A meeting was arranged in the hostel and a resolution was passed that if any student returns late to the hostel, she should be allowed in, even if she is severely punished the next day. It was suggested that the key of the gate be kept with the watchman, but the warden objected to this. So it was agreed that the key should be kept with the warden who lives a short distance from the hostel, but not, as formerly, with the principal of the women's college, who used to refuse to give the key to anyone at night. The warden lectured the girls and told them they should not publicize this case as it would damage K's reputation and marriage chances. So it would be better to hush up the case. She insisted that K had not been raped. She had just got panicky because the gate

enthusiasm for further action. Perhaps they were afraid of the warden's threats. The few students who had taken the initiative, wanted to carry the agitation further but could not do so due to lack of support.

After this, some male students of the Orissa Association who heard that K was an Oriya girl, went to meet her parents. K's mother assured them of her full support in any action they might undertake but K's father violently opposed the idea of any such action. He insisted that nothing had happened to K. She was merely terrified at the thought of what people must be thinking of her. He said that if she stayed at home, she would recover, and after she was married off, her psychological problems would all disappear. Therefore no action should be undertaken, because it might prove an obstacle to her marriage. The students had to return, disappointed. All

concerned have conspired to hush up the matter, but students still discuss it, though they have not protested.

The overnight change in K's mental state in the only indication that something untoward did happen to her. Is it possible that a girl should go insane just by spending a night in another women's hostel? Would any girl become hysterical just on seeing a group of boys? Can anti-malaria drugs induce such abnormal behaviour? And finally, the question that troubles me is : Is this not a case of mental, if not physical rape? If so, would it be an exaggeration to call it an atrocity?

—Renu Dewan  
( translated from Hindi)

## **KARNATAKA** **Women and Toilers Unite**

Recently, the people of Belthangady, South Kanara district, came together to protest against the alleged rape of a young woman teacher Theresa by a local politician Kottiyappa Poojary, also known as P. K Perady.

The local people have many complaints against this man, who is supposed to enjoy the patronage of Gangadhar Gowda, Karnataka minister for information and youth services. It is alleged that Perady had promised to get a job for Theresa who comes from a poor family and has been unemployed for six years. Pretending that he would take her to meet the minister, Perady took her to a hotel room gagged her and repeatedly raped her. He also threatened her with dire consequences if she refused to become his mistress. Theresa managed to escape, and later submitted appeals to the minister and to local officials — all in vain.

Members of Stree Jagrathi, leaders of the church, and local people united to protest. An organizing committee was formed, posters were put up, handbills distributed. Theresa also helped make posters and took an active part in the protest march. About 2,000 people joined the protest march and public meeting at Naravi where Perady lives, and about 1,500 at Arwa where Theresa lives.

Women and men spoke at the public meetings, condemning Perady and other

such brutes, and emphasizing the need for women to unitedly struggle with other oppressed sections, against those who perpetrate such exploitation. The meetings concluded with a street play "Women and toilers, come on, unite !" put up by Stree Jagrathi, in collaboration with local women.

Rallies and public meetings are being planned in neighbouring areas to intensify the struggle.

—Stree Jagrathi

## **CHANDIGARH** **No Women Is Safe**

Four year old Ginny\*used to be happy and playful, but over the last few months, had started crying constantly. Her mother discovered that the child's genitals, were swollen and aching. Upon questioning, Ginny revealed that she had been raped by their 17 year old neighbour. He and his family members all used to play with Ginny. One afternoon he took her up to the terrace and raped her. He did this several times after that. Her parents thought he had as usual taken her to the park or the market on his cycle or she was playing with his sisters. He used to gag Ginny and threaten to kill her if she told anyone.

When Ginny's father confronted the boy, he tacitly admitted the facts. Ultimately, he was dismissed from his job and forced to vacate the flat. But Ginny's parents did not report to the police. They want to hush up the matter because they are afraid that the life of their son may be endangered if the rapist's family wishes to take revenge. The father also feels that their daughter's "chastity" is lost now and cannot be got back. The parents feel that they are disgraced in society because of what happened to their daughter.

—Bhavana Mathur

\*Her name has been changed to protect her identity

## **DELHI** **The New Savitri**

In mid-October, Mahila Dakshata Samiti held an exhibition in Hindi on "Evils of Dowry." It was called "The New

Savitri" In memory of Savitribai Phule who started a school for women in 1848, thus challenging the stereotype of the mythological Savitri who followed her husband even after his death, and wished to have only sons.

The exhibition, though small, was visually striking. The photographs of women protesting against dowry were especially strong. There were pamphlets and posters exhorting young brides not to suffer in silence: "Are you suffering because of dowry? Take your mother into confidence. Don't struggle alone. Write letters to your mother or to friends, so that you will have evidence. Get in touch with women's organizations, who will try to bring about a reconciliation, if possible."

There was also a poster demanding changes in law, such as registration of marriage, a financial limit on expenditure at the time of marriage, and on gifts, dowry to be made a cognisable offence. Another poster listed the various "rates" of bridegrooms—a doctor is worth three and a half lakhs and even a failed matriculate can get Rs 10,000. Another interesting exhibit was a mirror with the slogan: "Are you for sale?"

It was disappointing that there seemed to be more male than female visitors. Also, the booklet brought out on the occasion, while having some positive statements like "Teach your daughter to exert herself and demand equal status in society" had an editorial entitled "Women are their own enemy," Perhaps we as women need to think more carefully before perpetuating the myth that our oppression is our own fault. The exhibition could have been more effective if it had been shown more widely in residential areas where women would have had easier access to it.

—Kusum Kohli, Cath

## **Women Students Win**

In September 1981, the students of Bharati Mahila College protested against the negligent and authoritarian behaviour of the principal. Like the majority of Delhi University colleges, their college also had a dull and dead atmosphere with no activities and no group life. The students' union and other



societies were inactive and were kept under the control of the principal. Even the union funds were controlled by the principal.

This year, the newly elected union members wanted to fulfil the students long-standing demands for activities in college, but felt hampered at every step by the administration. The college is housed in a building belonging to Delhi administration, and the facilities available to students are highly inadequate. Students and teachers felt very insecure in college premises which were used as a thoroughfare to a cinema and to two boys' schools situated behind the college. Groups of men used to follow the girls, and on two occasions even slapped a girl in the college. However, the principal appeared indifferent to these problems, and said that it was for Delhi administration to rectify the situation. She also suggested that girls must have done something to provoke sexual harassment. According to her, girls should never speak to boys.

Matters came to a head in August, when some girls wanted to go on a holiday tour arranged by a youth organization, and asked the principal to sign travel concession forms. She refused, on the ground that it was not safe for girls to go on such tours. She also telephoned their parents and complained against the girls, saying they were becoming "unnecessarily active" in college, were being influenced by outsiders, and were neglecting their studies. This action angered all the students, and they went on a two-day strike in protest.

On the second day, they demonstrated on the road outside the college, shouted slogans against the principal's authoritarianism and stopped buses. They presented a charter of demands which included: provision of a union room, rendering of union fund accounts with arrears of past years, allocation of funds to cultural societies, appointment of a staff adviser to the union, student participation in college functioning, and an explanation from the principal for having telephoned some girls' parents.

The strike was called off only when the staff council appointed a committee

of six teachers, and assured the students their case would be fairly examined. Finally, on the insistence of the committee, the principal apologized and the students' demands were all accepted.

## MAHARASHTRA

### People Pressurize For Justice

Chandra Sindhwi of Ner Parsopant, district Yawatmal, was married to Ramesh Chauradia of Arvi on June 15, 1981. Five days after her marriage, she was burnt to



death. The local Arvi police registered it as a case of suicide but the Sindhwi family registered a murder case against the Chauradias at Amravati. However, the Amravati police were very negligent in following up the case. They wasted two days before sealing the murder site and seizing the burnt articles. This delay led to destruction of evidence.

A team of 18 young people, of whom five were women, went to Arvi to investigate. All of us belonged to different organizations, such as Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini, Sahjivan and Dahej Virodhi Samiti. We wanted to put up a street play on women's issues but found that section 37 (1) had been declared in the city, so it was not possible to hold any public demonstration. However, we had a discussion with many young men of Arvi, and afterwards sang a collective song: "We want a society based on equality. We want women to be as free as men are." We also spoke to Chandra's in-laws. According to them, Chandra was making tea in the kitchen when her sari caught fire, and she had given a dying statement to this effect.

But this story is full of loop-holes. Firstly, the kitchen is on the ground floor but Chandra died in bathroom on the top floor. How is it that she ran all the

way upstairs instead of going to the bathroom on the ground floor or to the other family members who were sitting in a room adjoining the kitchen? How is it that no family member heard her screams or went to her aid? It was people on the road outside who heard her screaming from the bathroom, and rushed through the back door to help her. How is it that signs of burning are visible only in the bathroom, and not in the corridor or on the stairway which she must have crossed if she caught fire in the kitchen?

Further, why is it that instead of getting medical aid, the in-laws first called the police and hastily took a dying statement from her? Also, according to law, only the magistrate, doctor and police are supposed to be present when a dying statement is taken, but in this case many others were present, and the local MLA's signature was unnecessarily appended to the statement. But the statement was not signed by Chandra!

Why was she taken to the 100 kms distant Amravati hospital rather than to the big hospitals at Wardha which are only 60 kms away? Also, she was given an injection at Arvi which put her to sleep so that no statement could be taken at Amravati. According to the postmortem report, though Chandra died of 90 per cent burns, her body was not uniformly burnt. Her chest was burnt at several places due to sprinkling of some inflammable substance. The report also says that the 12 green marks on Chandra's back were caused by blows of some heavy object, whereas her in-laws claim they are due to green polish on her bed.

The Balatkar Virodhi Manch of Nagpur mobilized around this case and demanded that it be handed over to the CBI. A silent protest march was organized at Yawatmal, in which for the first time, people of the Marwari community participated in large numbers. Women and men from several nearby villages joined the demonstration. The chief minister agreed to hand over the case to the CBI and to complete investigation in 15 days. 34 days after Chandra's death, her father-in-law and his eldest son were arrested. The Chauradia family had not made any dowry demands at the time of marriage. They had said: "We only want

a beautiful flower-like girl, which we have got." Why then their mysterious behaviour after the marriage? It is necessary to maintain public pressure around this case until the investigation is completed and judgement passed.

—*Shobhana, Maya Deshpande*  
(translated from Hindi)

### **One Woman Every Day**

On August 12, the body of a burnt and charred woman was brought to Mulund hospital. She was Rita Lala, 20 years old, married to Haresh Lala only a year and a half ago. The in-law who brought her said she had died of electric shock but the police found the characteristic smell of kerosene on her body. They searched the house and found an empty kerosene tin in the lavatory. The in-laws then maintained that she had committed suicide but Rita's parents filed a murder case. The mother-in-law and sister-in-law were taken into custody and later released on bail. The husband was supposedly out of town.

Rita's parents say that her in-laws continually harassed her to get more dowry, although Rs 50,000 had already been given. She had complained of harassment and beatings by the in-laws. How many more women will be killed in their homes? At least one woman dies every day in India because of dowry.

—*Forum Against Oppression of Women, Bombay*

### **KANPUR Women Protest, Lawyers Withdraw**

As a result of a 300-strong women's demonstration on September 12 against the lawyers defending the accused in a dowry murder case in the chief metropolitan magistrate's court, Kanpur, the leading criminal lawyer, Sonkar Nath Dubey, withdrew from the case, followed by the other defence lawyers. On the demand of the demonstrating women, contained in their memorandum, the Youth Bar Association president P. Saini, has announced that members of the association would appear for the prosecution without charging fees.—*from "Voice of the Working Woman"*

### **DELHI Who Burnt Basanti Devi ?**

Basanti Devi is a 34 year old woman who has been separated from her husband for several years, and lives in Shakurpur resettlement colony. She works as a midwife at the clinic of Dr Vats, whose family has been in Shakurpur village for generations. Since 1976, Basanti has been politically active in the Janata Party. She conducts literacy classes for women, helps pregnant women to the hospital, and involves herself in community welfare work. She belongs to the local prohibition committee. She is the vice-president of the women's wing of Punjabi Bagh Bharatiya Janta Party and has fought police excesses and corruption in the area. This has earned her the wrath of the local police. Two former chowki-in-charges have filed cases of breach of peace against her, because she opposed the black marketeering of one and the forcible occupation of a harijan's house by the other.

Basanti Devi's neighbour is a single woman, Bashu Sharma. She was being harassed by a young man called Arjun Singh who refused to vacate her house. Basanti and Dr Vats tried to help Bashu, whereupon the police sided with Arjun. Arjun then filed a case against Bashu claiming that her house belonged to him. Basanti and Dr Vats were charged with having threatened Arjun. On June 30, 1981, both of them were taken to the police chowki.

There Basanti was searched and then taken into a closed room by the SI. He ordered her to strip slapped her and threatened her. She was made to go round the room naked, to do sit-ups holding her ears, during which he kicked her on the hips. She was then made to lie down and he applied a lit *biri* to her lower abdomen. He threatened to do worse if she screamed loudly, and to blacken her face if she dared report what had happened.

That night she and Dr Vats were kept in separate lock-ups. Basanti repeatedly asked the guard to call the SHO as she was in great pain, but the SHO refused to come. Next morning P.K. Chandla of BJP came to see her. She told him about the torture. Basanti was then sent to the police hospital, examined and treated. But the SHO insisted she was lying and tried to make her withdraw her charge.

The Punjabi Bagh police would not register the complaint and the FIR could be filed only the next day.

The DCP West Delhi, Kiran Bedi, insisted that Basanti's story was a "blatant lie" and the police would proceed against her for her "false and concocted complaint." The police prepared a history-sheet on July 1 to prove that Basanti was a known bad character. They also put up her photograph in the chowki with photos of criminals. The police insinuate that Basanti inflicted the burn injuries on herself. The SI claims that he was busy controlling the crowd all along and was never alone with Basanti in any room. However, Jai Devi who had searched Basanti said she had found nothing on her. How then could she have burnt herself while in police custody?

Home minister Zail Singh admitted that keeping Basanti over-night in the police lock-up without a woman guard was against the directive of his ministry. She should have been released on bail or sent to judicial custody or to a women's home. It is noteworthy that the only witness the police have been able to get against Basanti are the police bailiff, Arjun Singh, and his lawyer.

I saw many people of the colony coming to greet Basanti with love and respect. The police on the other hand have acted in unseemly haste, contradicted each other, violated a home ministry directive by keeping Basanti overnight in the lock-up, and have also no satisfactory explanation as to how Basanti could have inflicted burn injuries on herself.

Therefore PUDR recommends withdrawal of all the cases pending against Basanti Devi, immediate suspension or transfer of the police personnel involved directly or indirectly in the torture case, that is the DCP, ACP, SHO and the SI, and the institution of a judicial enquiry which should come up with its findings within a month.

—*summarized from the report by*  
*Modhumita Mojumdar, secretary,*  
*People's Union for Democratic Rights*

### **Decreeing Our Dress**

On August 19, the chief justice of India, Y.V. Chandrachud, asked Adesh Lata Jaspal to leave his courtroom in the supreme court, because she was wearing jeans. Adesh Lata is a law student and works as the clerk of an advocate. The chief justice said jeans were not a “decent dress”, and she should return to the court only if she was dressed in a sari. He also said he was sure saris were still available in the market. Adesh Lata enquired whether the chief justice was making a suggestion or giving a directive. If he was making a suggestion, she was prepared to wear a salwar-kamiz, but if it was a directive, she would file a writ. The chief justice then said it was only a suggestion whereupon she complied with it.

Newspapers the next day gave the incident front-page coverage, with headlines such as “Jeans are just ruled out” and “Judgment on jeans.” One paper even printed Adesh’s photograph on the front page. Since then, the incident has been used by the media to mock at woman and to trivialize the actual issues involved. One “progressive” Hindi weekly from Rajasthan went so far as to publish a lengthy diatribe against women under the title “Why not jeans” ? The writer of the article purports to be a henpecked husband whose wife is a leader of the women’s movement and intends to make the judiciary “committed” to women’s right to wear jeans, as well as to campaign only for the parliamentary candidate who will uphold this right. The article was illustrated by an obscene cartoon.

While the issue may appear trivial, it actually symbolizes the all-pervasive double standards of our society, which are most obvious in those so-called shrines of justice —the courts. On what grounds did the chief justice decree that the sari was the only “decent dress” for women? If “Indian origin” is to be the criteria for “decency” then surely he and all other men in court should start wearing dhoti-kurta. What is so “Indian” about the garb of lawyers and judges, which are grotesque remnants of colonial rule?

*In fact, indecency lies not in any particular dress but in men’s attitude to women— saris certainly do not protect*

*us from men’s indecent looks, gestures, comments and assaults.* But the real reason why men are such strong advocates and admirers of the sari (rather than for instance, the salwar-Kamiz) is that the sari effectively inhibits free movement of our limbs, and forces us to be “graceful”— just as the walk of women with bound feet in China was once acclaimed as most “graceful” and considered an essential pre-requisite for marriage. Women’s dress and ornamentation in all cultures has been designed to keep us vulnerable, immobile and constantly worried about appearance (is the pallav or dupatta falling off, is the skirt rising too high ?) That is why men feel so threatened when women start wearing any kind of sturdier, more and practical clothing which not present us as fragile and delicate dolls for male approval.

### **Women Against Price-Rise**

Over 400 women courted arrest at Vijay Chowk near the Lok Sabha on August 5, 1981, to protest against price-rise. Earlier, about 700 women belonging to 12 organisations, had assembled near Gurudwara Rakabganj and marched in procession to Vijay Chowk, shouting slogans, hanging empty tins and waving rolling pins.

The 11-point memorandum suggested the setting up of women’s vigilance committees in every area, since this experiment has proved successful in other states ; withdrawal of the recent hike in ‘petrol, diesel, gas and other petroleum products prices ; government take-over of all essential commodities’ stocks; a ban on export of all food articles.

The following women’s organizations participated in the protest action : All India Democratic Women’s Association. National Federation of India Women, Mahila Dakshata Samiti, Congress (U) Mahila Front, Mahila wing of the Lok Dal, Janta Mahila Vibhag, Delhi Coordination Committee of Working Women, Delhi State Janwadi Mahila Samiti, Delhi State Mahila Federation, Manushi, Indian Federation of Consumers’ Organizations and the Delhi INTUC Women’s Front.

### **Two Women’s Centres**

#### **SAHELI**

On Sunday, August 9, 1981 Saheli—a women’s information and referral centre, was inaugurated in a garage at 10 Nizamuddin East with 14 volunteers, gifts and donations from friends. It is open on week days from 10 to 12 in the morning and 6 to 8 in the evening, and on Sundays from 11 to 1.

Over the past few years, women in Delhi and other cities have raised their voices in protest against violence and harassment of women. Some of us who have been actively involved in demonstrations and campaigns, felt the need to lend help and support to individual women at a personal level. We felt a need to reach out to a wider spectrum of women who are suffering violence and oppression in their lives.

Saheli is a place where women come to talk about their problems. We have a list of sympathetic lawyers and doctors to whom we refer women who need some advice. Not only women with problems come to Saheli, but also those involved with the women’s cause, who want to organize discussions. Saheli is open to all women and to sympathetic men.

—Saheli

### **JIGYASA**

The institute of social studies trust, founded in 1964 to undertake studies relevant to the elimination of poverty, and which is also concerned with women’s development issues, has recently opened a read room cum documentation centre called Jigyasa, This centre is run by a group of women and men. It has literature and documents specially relevant to women, the poor, and action agencies,

They visualize Jigyasa growing into a forum which will link women in need according to their requirements, whether in immediate crisis situations such as rape and dowry deaths or in day to day problems faced by women. To begin with they will make available the reading room and documentation facilities.

Address: 5 Deendayal Upadhyaya Marg.

Timings : Weekdays 10 am to 5 pm

Saturday 10 am to 1 pm

Sunday closed

— from the Jigyasa pamphlet