

Bhumika Women's Collective Annual Report for the year of 2004-2005

Bhumika Women's Collective has been involved in different activities and programs concerning women's issues. The main flagship of the collective has been the publication of Bhumika magazine continuously for the last twelve years, starting in 1993. The first issue of Bhumika released in Jan 93.

Bhumika Magazine:

Bhumika has been continuing to reach out to the critical as well as general readership interested in women's studies, both research and women's issues. The serious women's studies articles are interspersed with the popular vein features, stories and poetry to reach out to the general readers also. In the year 2004 - 2005 five much appreciated issues of Bhumika were brought out. We are happy to inform that Bhumika will online with in a short period of time. The website is [www. bhumika..org](http://www.bhumika.org)

Issues during the year (Nov2003 – Feb05)

Nov 03 –Feb 04 (Telugu women writer's special issue)

Telugu Women writer's special issue of Bhumika was released in eve of March 8, International Women's day. The well-noted Telugu Writer Abburi Chayadevi released the issue. Almost all the Telugu writers contributed in this Mega issue of 190 pages. The selection criteria the bench marks the articles selected like encouraging rural based first time women writers etc. has been specifically mention. Feminist storywriter P. Satyavathi wrote an artist post-International women's years stories. Kondaveeti Satyavathi editor of Bhumika wrote an article about Bandaru Acchamambha. The fourth mother writer of Telugu literature and establish that Acchamambha was the first women Telugu Short Story Writer. The well-known critics of Telugu Literature Mrunalini, Katyayani Vidmahe wrote about Telugu Novel and the capacities of Telugu Speakers. The regular columnist of Bhumika shilalolita wrote about Feminist Poetry in Telugu Literature. Kondepudi Nirmala wrote on Women Magazines. Dr. Bhargavi Rao, A. Vijaya laxmi wrote about Telugu Dramas. Dr. Sunitha Rani about Women Columnist, J. Subhadra wrote about Dalit Women Literature, G. Vijayalaxmi wrote on OBC Women Literature and Shahajahana on Muslim Women Poetry.

We also published the good numbers of interviews of different literary people. We took much pain interviewing these people. All together we took nine interviews for the special issue. There is K. Lalitha, an activist and founder member and President of Anveshi Research Centre for Women. Gopi Bhagyalaxmi Tribal Writer, Vasireddy Seetadevi well

known Telugu Writer, Numburi Paripurna Dalit Writer. Yaddanapudi Sulochana Rani well noted popular writer, Dr. J. Bhagyalaxmi ,Writer and Journalist and Aravinda Telugu Writer. Well-known feminist writer Volga wrote an interesting a short story namely `Velugulo Chikati`.

The special issue on Telugu women writers was released in the International Women's day meeting attended by more than 2000 women at Nizam College Grounds at Hyderabad.

This special issue covers an interesting and sensitive area of feminism and literature. The response from the readers for the special issue is tremendous.

Mar 04 –June 04

This is a regular issue of the Magazine filled with half of the pages the positive response came from the readers about women writers' special issue.

In this issue we publish a novel interview of Pushpamala, previously Terracotta, Fiber Glass Artist. At present Pushpamala is experimenting with photography in different way. SriVatsan a member of Anveshi has taken the interview of Pushpamala.

We also publish a short story namely `Madhavi` by a Psychiatrist Dr. D.R. Indra. The specialty of this story is the main character of Madhavi belongs to epic of Mahabharata. The story was rewritten in present day circumstances.

The regular columnists Abburi Chayadevi, Shilalolitha, Dr. K. Sunitha Rani contributed their thoughtful articles in this issue also.

We also published the life experiences of the well-noted Activist, Writer Malladi Subbamma. We also published Book reviews and poetry. We also published the reports of International Women's Day Celebrations.

July 04 –Aug 04

(Women - Mental Health)

This is a special issue on "Women and Mental Health". We struggle a lot for collecting material for this Mental Health issue. The issues feature a well research articles by Mental Health Specialists and Psychiatrists. The special article namely `women's mental health feminist angle` was writer by Dr. Veena shatruguna, an Activist, Professor, Nutrition and founder member of "Anveshi Research Centre". In this article she focused on different angles of mental health and the attitudes of Government, Medical, Legal and social institutions. She insisted in this article on the importance of feminist angle in dealing women's mental health.

A well noted Psychiatrist and Counsellor Dr. Poornima A. Nagaraja wrote different articles on mental disorders such as Personality Disorder, Psychosomatic disorder,

Anorexia nervosa and Sexuality. She discussed deeply about all this psychological problems in her articles.

Geeta Ramaswamy, Director of Hyderabad Book Trust wrote interesting article and her personal experience on 'Depression'. Dr. U. Sandhya, prof of psychology, Andhra University wrote an article on women's mental health and the new attitude in psychology.

Jayasree Kalameel, Dr. Bhargavi Dhavar, Dr. G. Bharathi also contributed in this issue. Dr. N. Shailaja, an Alternative Healing Practitioner wrote a very interesting article on 'Alternative Healing System'.

We also published two interviews. One is V. Shandhya, an Activist, and President of "Progressive Organization of Women" in her interviews. She narrated her experiences in dealing a number of cases regarding Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence at work places, rape cases and dowry harassment cases.

Another interview published was Punyavathi, "State President of All India Democratic Women's Association". She also shared her experiences. We published book reviews poetry and reports of different activists.

Sep 04 –Oct 04

This is a regular issue. In this issue we published an interesting and painful life experiences of 'Nagamma'. Experiences of a born blind woman. Dalit writer J. Subhadra took the interview. Nagamma narrated in detail her personal experiences as a blind woman and how her own mother tried to kill her as a blind child. She has also narrated her own family affected her life. At present Nagamma is working with the organization and she works with physically challenged persons. She sings songs in Sangam meetings. Nagamma married and her husband left her in the end of the interviews. Nagamma cheerfully says that if any good-hearted person proposed her to marry. She will accept the proposal happily.

The regular columnist Abburi Chayadevi, Shilalolita, Dr. K. Sunitha Rani contributed their articles in this issue. We published three book reviews by P. Satyavathi, noted feminist writer and K. Satyavathi, editor of Bhimika. We published two reports on women in journalism a survey by Dr. J. Bhagyalaxmi. The report of a meeting with Naxalite leaders by J. Subhadra. We also published poetry.

Nov 04 – Feb 05 (Women-Political Empowerment and Panchayat Raj) Special issue

This issue is a special issue on "Women -Political Empowerment and Panchayat Raj". This issue was sponsored by "Centre for World Solidarity", Hyderabad. We took so many pains in collecting the material regarding women and Panchayat Raj. We contacted number of offices both Government and private and referred a good number of books regarding Panchayat Raj. In this issue we published nearly thirty case studies of outstanding women sarpanches, ward members etc. we also collected the stories of out

standing panchayats, which revolutionized entire village system and took up a number of development activities in the villages

Dr. Bidyut Mohanti, Head, Women Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, wrote an article about Panchayat Raj and Economic Empowerment. She discussed about self-help groups and their activities in the villages.

Devaki Jain, a well noted writer and social activist and founder member of the publication 'Kali for Women' wrote an article on how village women are trying to change the policies of government at grassroots level through panchayat raj. She discussed about the history of panchayat raj and how it was implemented in the beginning in Karnataka state. She also discussed in this article how rural women untidily fighting for issue and problems of entire village such as drinking water problem, alcoholism, domestic, education and health issues. She describes how these women work differently with a perspective to solve the village problems. She concluded an article with the positive note that women should participate actively in the process of power change in grassroots level and they have fight for political rights constitutently.

In another article Mahiphal wrote about the decades experiences of panchayat raj and the changes to be introduced in panchayat raj institutions The specialty of this special issue is that published the experiences of more than 30 women namely Hema kumari, Natho Begum, Gulbhasia Bai, Sukarni Das, Jamrudh Bibi, Chennamma and lined sarpanch Sudha Patel. Etc.

We also publish an article on 73th constitution Amendment which provided 33% reservation to women in Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Bhumika Documentation Center :

Bhumika is continuing with the documentation center activities and has been earnestly engaged in the compilation of resource material. Diverse assimilation of research material like paper clippings and write ups in Telugu have been sent to all the women kind groups for use of the field level activities in the rural areas. Bhumika is in the process of extracting material from the compiled documentation, is photocopying and sending to different groups. Various important women's issues, relating to women and law, women and economy women's rights, literacy and education women's health general health, nutrition and various health problems, social issues, labour issues, environmental degradation and pollution, macro economic issues like WTO agriculture & patents, famous women personalities, globalization, material from conferences relating Dalit & women issues etc. have been compiled as booklets and the documentation is a very good source for any research project. Many researchers, students, activists and others visit regularly and use the resource center.

Nirnaya Projects :

In the year 2004 Nirnaya Women's Trust supported Bhumika in conducting Two Short Term Studies. Which helped Bhumika build material resources in its research and documentation center.

The two short-term projects are

1. Domestic Violence –by K. Satyavathi

According to available statistics from around the globe, one out of every three women has experienced violence in an intimate relationship at some point in her life. This is an average based on available national surveys across industrialized and developing countries (World Health Organization 1997). Statistical evidence on the actual prevalence of domestic violence in India is scant however. The few studies available indicate that physical abuse of Indian women is quite high, ranging from 22 percent to 60 percent of women surveyed. Most of the available information consists of qualitative studies of very small sample size. The only large scale indicator of violence against women is the data relating to crimes against women published by the National Crimes Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. The records of the bureau reveal a shocking 71.5 percent increase in cases of torture and dowry deaths. IN 1995, torture of women constituted 29.2 percent of all reported crimes against women. Satyavathi conducted a small study on the issue of Domestic Violence and its effects on women.

2. Girl Child Health by - Rajyalaxmi

At an age when children babble with the sheer joy of being alive, there are millions of small girls struggling to survive the burdens of poverty, over work and ill health in India. Girls who are forced to endure childhood of extremely poor health. This physical and emotional well-being is a constant three fold risk due to their living conditions, the work they must do and the fact that they are female.

Most girls laborers in India live in sanitary slums or on payments in conditions which threaten their health. In rural areas, the environment does not become more conducive to a child laborer's health. When entire lives are geared towards survival, nutrition is an alien concept.

Rajyalaxmi studied three issues in her short-term project on girl child health.

Other Activities of Bhumika

Bhumika team attended a number of meetings and developed a good network with so many organizations. By attending these meetings we learn so many issues and we also collected material on different women issues for our documentation center and for Bhumika.

The meetings we attended

- Women and media organized by all India Democratic women association in the month of October 2004.
- Attended a meeting organized by Anveshi Research Center for women on women and law.
- Attended Anti War Meeting organized by Confederation of Voluntary Organisation. A number of national and International Anti war Activist attended this meeting.
- Attended a meeting organized by CWS on Panchayat Raj and women.
- Attended and participated in the workshop of violence against women in the eve of violence against women's day celebrations organized by different organization working on women issues.
- Attended a seminar on communalism and peace organized by Asmitha Resource Center for Women.
- Attended and participated a workshop on child rights and law organized by Disha center for social justice.
- Attended a two-day seminar on women and journalism organized by National Network of women journalist.
- We also attended a number of literary and book release functions.
- Bhumika organized a meeting with all Telugu women writers in the month of Feb 05. We also conducting competition for young feminist writers in short story and poetry. We have announced cash awards for the winning writers to encourage them. We are happy to inform you that all the Telugu Women Writers have organized themselves into a group namely Bhumika Women Writers Collective.

Future Activities of Bhumika

We are planning to reach a number of students by organizing campus meetings to introduce Bhumika.

We are happy to inform that we are planning to take out Bhumika every month. At present Bhumika is coming bi-monthly.

We are also planning to work with SPARROW, Sound and Picture Archives for Research on Women, a Mumbai based organization. Actually we started work already. The nature of work is we have to interview all most all the Telugu Women Writers both fiction and poetry. We identified nearly 100 women writers and started interviewing them. SPARROW will publish the interviews both in Telugu and in English. By doing this work we can collect material for our documentation center and for the magazine.

Bhumika is also approaching several organizations for monetary and other kinds of support.