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Press Release

Seminar Series on Elimination of Violence against Women

Government of Tamil Nadu in association with UN Women and UNICEF conducted a 6 day Seminar Series marking 16 days of activism advocated by the UN for elimination of Violence against Women, from the International Day of Elimination of Violence against Women on 25th November to 10th December the International Day for Human Rights. The theme for the year 2020 is “Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, and Collect!”

The UN Secretary-General’s call for “UNiTE to End Violence against Women” campaign, a multi-year effort aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls, focuses on amplifying the call for global action to bridge funding gaps, ensure essential services for survivors of violence during the COVID-19 crisis, focus on prevention, and collection of data that can improve life-saving services for women and girls.

In response to the global call, the Government of Tamil Nadu, which has taken pioneering action on the issue of violence against women, endorsing its commitment, organized the **seminar series as a six day event commencing on 2nd December 2020**. The six day events focused on ending violence against women. The seminar series was inaugurated by **Thiru C.Ponnaiyan, Hon’ble Vice Chairman, State Development Policy Council**. The Seminar Series was a Multi-departmental effort of the Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal department, Home (Police, in particular), Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, Health and Family Welfare and Planning and Development Departments of Government of Tamil Nadu, partnering along with UN agencies, UN Women and UNICEF. The Seminar Series, provided a platform for - voices from the field, Panchayat and Self help group representatives, views from experts, Non-Governmental Organizations, key policy makers and field implementers, so as to bring together Stakeholders from various fields, to UNiTE and take action to address the issues and challenges to eliminate violence against women.

The first Technical session focused on the Gendered perspective of Violence Against Women. The Second day’s events (05.12.2020) focused on Violence against Women- Domestic Violence – the silent and shadow pandemic. The third day’s event (07.12.2020) focused on Crisis Response, Rescue and Rehabilitation of women affected by violence against them. Technical Session on Day 4 (08.12.2020) concentrated on the Resource Efficiency and Data Sharing. The Technical Session on day 5 (09.12.2020) looked at Capacity Building and Awareness Creation. The final day session coincided with the

International Human Rights Day on 10.12.2020, for emphasizing that Women's rights are Human Rights, and working to UNiTE for convergent action. This day brought together key points for further action, the essence from the Seminar series, to the highest levels in Government. The Seminar series is aimed to make Tamil Nadu a violence free, women friendly State and model for others to emulate.

In his presidential address on the concluding day, **Thiru. O. Pannerselvam, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister** explained key welfare schemes implemented by the Tamil Nadu Government of Hon'ble Amma, Former Chief Minister Dr. J. Jayalalithaa for the empowerment and welfare of the Women and Children. He also specially mentioned the special attention given by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma for safety of women and children i.e 16 point charter recommendations in the wake of Nirbhaya case for advocating stringent action against the culprits.

Dr. V. Saroja, Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare and Noon Meal Programme, delivered the key note address. She elaborated the significance and relationship between SDGs and ending violence against women and girl children. She also spoke about the important welfare measures and services implemented by the Government of Tamil Nadu. She also advocated the need for the joint efforts of the society and institutions for ending violence against women and children.

Thiru P.M. Nair, IPS (Retd), Chairperson, Tata Institute of Social Sciences emphasized the need for research to understand the different dimensions of the violence. He suggested forming anti trafficking unit at College level and Panchayat level. He suggested a new mantra for empowering people for eliminating violence as "Spot it; Speak it; Act on it; Stop it."

Ms. Susan Ferguson, the country representative for India, United Nation Women India, through web, expressed her appreciation for implementing various kind of welfare schemes for women and children and initiatives for ending violence against women and children by the Government of Tamil Nadu. She mentioned the commitment of Tamil Nadu Government in organizing this event in grand manner which is reflected by the presence of high political dignitaries.

The Report of the 5 days of the seminar was presented by Tmt. Jayashree Raghunandan, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Planning and Development Department. Thiru Hans Raj Varma, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department

expressed his commitment for ensuring that the Department would through the Self Help Groups and Panchayat Presidents ensure the issues are addressed. Tmt. S. Madumathi, I.A.S., Secretary to Government, Social Welfare and Noon Meal Programme Department stressed the need for “Building stronger networks to curb Gender based violence”. The recommendations and outcomes of the six day event will be summarized and shared with relevant departments for follow up action.

ADDITIONAL CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.

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