

Decisive initiative towards empowerment of women

SAARC nations to set up data bank on good practices, network of Secretaries



TOGETHER WE WIN: Noeleen Heyzer, Director, UNIFEM, interacting with tribal women from Visakhapatnam in Hyderabad on Friday. - PHOTO: P.V. SIVAKUMAR

Special Correspondent

HYDERABAD: As part of the measures to empower women and share information on effective strategies, SAARC nations have decided to establish a data bank on good practices and network of Secretaries of the Women's Ministries.

The decision to set up the data bank and share information was taken at the fifth South Asia Regional Ministerial Conference, which concluded in Islamabad yesterday.

It was organised jointly by the United Nations Development for Women (UNIFEM) and the

Pakistan Government.

Talking to reporters after interacting with UNIFEM partners at a roundtable here on Friday, Noeleen Heyzer, Director of UNIFEM, said the conference decided to share good practices, develop a common understanding of the challenges ahead and create solidarity among the nations on a whole range of issues.

Indian initiative lauded

She lauded the steps taken by the Indian Government to empower women and added that real headway had been made on

several fronts, including gender budgets and political empowerment through the panchayats. However, more needed to be done on issues of inheritance, violence and inequities. She said the political empowerment should be up to the level of Parliament.

Dr. Heyzer said 2005 was a crucial year as it marked the 10th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing. There was much progress since then and as many as 120 countries had formulated gender policies, another 45 had enacted laws and 21 nations

were looking at the criminal justice system.

She said that UNIFEM was focussing on women's economic security and rights in the context of globalisation, ending violence against women, gender perspective in dealing with the problem of HIV/AIDS and political empowerment.

Earlier, at an interactive meeting, she listened to the experiences of NGOs whom UNIFEM was supporting. She cited how the income of gum workers in the State had doubled through UNIFEM-initiated Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP).

'Danger to dam system ruled out

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the locking/opening system of the dam on account of the

gation from all angles, including sabotage.

MRPS petitions Manmohan

NEW DELHI: The Madiga Reservation Porata Samiti (MRPS) on Monday petitioned the Centre to in-