

STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

(Registered under Trade Unions Act 1926-Regd. No. 6908)

1, STRAND ROAD, KOLKATA-700 001.

Phone: 2213-0663, 2213-0154, 2213-0665 (after 5.30 P.M.), Fax : (033) 2210-1684



e-mail: sbioabengalcircle@gmail.com
www.sbioabengal.com

IP No. 500077

Circular No. 33/2018

Date : 19.03.2018

To All Members (Please Circulate)

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

SBIOA (Bengal Circle) observed the International Women's Day at Jeevandeep Building, 2nd Floor, on the 17th March, 2018 in a befitting manner. The program was attended by over 175 lady members from the city and districts. The hall was splendidly decorated with posters and banners depicting the historical significance of Women's Day starting from the women's protest against working conditions on 28th February, 1909. The program started off with a melodious rendition by Com Sumana Banerjee.

Com Debarshi Chowdhury, who adroitly anchored the program proceeded to call on stage eminent social and women's right activist, Smt. Anchita Ghatak. Incidentally, Smt Anchita works for the rights of women domestic workers and has been associated with various social organizations such as the Centre for Health and Social Justice and Kolkata Initiative. She has also penned the English translation of 'Lajja' by Taslima Nasreen and worked with the 'Maitri Sangbad' as well.

The next renowned personality to be called on stage was Smt. Srabasti Majumdar, who works for the equal rights of the transgenders & LBT community. The panel on stage comprised of DGM (Agricultural Business Unit), Smt. Ranjana Bose, DGM (B&O), Kolkata Module, Shri Niraj Prasad and DGM & CDO, Kolkata Circle, Smt. Suranjana Datta. Before the actual discussion went forward, Com Anindita Dam, who is also a cancer survivor, was called upon stage and she narrated her battle for survival, fighting through the various stages of cancer to returning to normal work-life that left everyone present overwhelmed with emotion. The main discussion then commenced with some valuable, yet, thought-provoking inputs from Smt. Anchita Ghatak who stated about the recent scenario of females in the workforce. She highlighted facts from the World Bank Report that suggested a shocking decline of women in the professional field from 34.8% in the year 2004-05 to 27% in 2012 with almost 19.6 million females walking out of the workforce in India over the past few years. Furthermore, she also enlightened about the fact that amongst the G20 countries, when it comes to the employment of women, India is just above Saudi Arabia in the list, thus lagging behind all the other countries. And as she pointed out, it was indeed a grave state of affairs, although as far as education or academic field is concerned, females are faring far better than their male counterparts. The reason behind the decreasing number of working women of late, according to her, is due to rising pressures from family and society that continuously question about the work timings, schedules, locations and the like. Unable to cope with such mounting pressures, women are forced to resign from various professional fields as it is always the family that comes first for them. In fact, it has also been noticed that a mindset of not recruiting women also prevails in certain sectors. This can well be backed by evidence as the India's Skill Report points out that India's Telecom Sector is having 84% male workforce followed by banking having 79% thereby clearly showing a stark difference between the number of male and female employees. Smt. Ranjana Bose, DGM (ABU), spoke next stating that banking is a comparatively privileged workforce with women-centric facilities such as sabbatical leave, maternity leave and the like, available for the female employees. She also advised to spread the word of banking more amongst the women masses so that the women, who are usually hesitant to go to the bank and deal with financial matters, feel at ease to come to bank. In particular, she urged the participants to help the SHG groups to promote empowerment. The discussion proceeded then with Shri Niraj Prasad, DGM (B&O), Kolkata Module talking about women empowerment in banks but at the same time, asking not to become complacent and keep upgrading new skills so that the women can increasingly lead from the front. "A woman is not born but she is made", as stated by the next speaker, Smt. Srabasti Majumdar, who stressed upon the freedom of choice of gender with specific mention of the transgender community, more because she closely works with them. In this connection, she mentioned about the NALSA Judgement 2014 and The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2016 that had played a key role in ensuring the freedom of gender choice in India. The undersigned also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the escalating difficulties faced by the female employees of the Bank and stressed upon the need for gender sensitivity at our workplace. Smt. Suranjana Datta, DGM & CDO, Kolkata Circle, put forth her points next stating that women should not take everything for granted but rather fight on the basis of her merits. The discussion then was made open and an interactive session followed with the other participants of the program raising pertinent questions and equally contributing with their inputs.

Thereafter, Smt Suranjana Dutta, DGM & CDO, handed over a cheque for Rs.8,000/- to Smt Anchita Ghatak on behalf of the Circle Association, for the aid of Women Domestic Workers.

The program concluded with a spectacular skit, performed by our very own staff members. The theme was the present situation of women in family and workplace, the struggle of the lady to maintain a balancing act between the two.

We look forward to many such initiatives in the days to come.

We place on record our appreciation to SBIOA AZC Kolkata and SBIOA Mid-Corporate Module for shouldering the responsibility of organizing the event. We also like to congratulate other AZCs, for participation of members in large numbers, in particular from South 24 Pgs.

With greetings,

Soumya Datta
(General Secretary)

Soumya Datta
General Secretary
Mobile : 9830044737