

Galileo A. Fernandes
pro@incentgoa.com

Need for advocacy, change and action in policies towards women

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There is a need for advocacy, change and action in policies towards women; was the unanimous resolution made at a public panel discussion on “Violence Against Women – Role and Responses from State and the Civil Society” recently held at The International Centre Goa (ICG). The programme, jointly organised by The International Centre Goa and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, India; was part of the ongoing series of seminars and talks organised by ICG on issues related to empowerment of women. The discussion was moderated by Damyanty Sridharan, Senior Adviser, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, India. Speaking on the panel were Dr. Sabina Martins – Founder Member, Bailancho Saad, Goa; Mr. Arunendra Pandey – President, ARZ (Anyay Rahit Zindagi), Goa; Ms Renuka - Director, Centre for Women Development and Research, Chennai; and Dr. Vibhuti Patel - Head, Dept of Economics, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai.

Dr. Sabina Martins raised issues with respect to situations in Goa. She emphasized on the need for interventions at all levels especially at the family level. She advised a bottom to top approach to deal with the same. She said that policies need to be framed depending on situations on ground. She also said that there needs to be change and action for which advocacy is very important.

Arunendra Pandey accentuated on the need for preventive measures against human trafficking; and urged that work needs to be done at the source from where it takes place. He said that imposes huge responsibility for the state and effective rehabilitation measures have to be in place.

Ms. Renuka spoke about issues in terms of violence against domestic workers. She urged that organised workers should organise themselves and there is a need for advocacy with relevant institutions and state government in this regard.

Dr. Vibhuti Patel gave an overview on the issues of violence against women, right from the 1970 Mathura rape case to the recent 2012 Nirbhaya case. She said that women's movements have seen various dimensions and responses from civil society and have played constructive roles in laws to respond to situations on the ground.

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