

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day has been observed since in the early 1900's, a time of great expansion and turbulence in the industrialized world that saw booming population growth and the rise of radical ideologies. And several women gathered together and stood up for their rights. Their successes gradually moved across the country, and their struggle for empowerment became a worldwide movement in support of women that culminated in the annual observance of International Women's Day is marked on the **8th of March** every year. It is a major day of global celebration of women. In different regions the focus of the celebrations ranges from general celebration of respect, appreciation and love towards women to a celebration for women's economic, political and social achievements.



On occasion of 2010 International Women's Day the Gandhi Manav Kalyan Society is drawing attention to the condition of women and food security of women in tribal region. MKS has been celebrating International Women's Day since 1992 with a new theme from year to year. Theme of this year was "Food Security and Women in tribal region".



Total 1850 women participated which were from 110 villages of Jhadol and Gogunda block. They enjoyed a lot and also appreciate a lot because through this celebration they got a chance to meet with women of this region. The women enjoyed interacting and socializing with women of other region, and enjoyed sharing their different songs and dances during the cultural program.

The goal of this festival, as envisioned by GMKS, is to encourage women's empowerment and self-reliance by giving them a space to express themselves freely. In addition, by inviting outside individuals, GMKS hopes to create a dialogue between the village women and those from the outside regarding women's rights and empowerment. GMKS also organized games and cultural performances during the program. The festivities are not limited only to women, as MKS realizes that men also play a part in women's empowerment. If men realize their role in helping uplift the women in their household and in the entire region, everyone stands to benefit.



All of the participants were given the time of 11am to reach Ogna, the villagers from each zone marched to Ogna, led by the GMKS staff and group leaders. Everyone departed early in the morning from their homes to attend the ceremonies. As the participants marched to Ogna, they carried banners, chanted slogans, danced, and played musical instruments. They stopped traffic by marching on the main road, and descended on Ogna. The women were very enthusiastic and energetic, in anticipation of the main event. Therefore, although men and women marched together towards Ogna, women dominated the rally.

GMKS's team members welcomed the all women and men by tika. Many banners were hung around the tent, which were related to women's rights, food security, empowerment etc. The whole program was divided into three sessions, the guest of each session



welcomed by tika, moli and garland. The Honorable Guest of the program was Mr. Mangilal Garasiya – State Minister (Youth & Sports, Primary & Middle Education and Labour & Planning) and Mrs. Madhu Mehta – Zila Pramukh, Udaipur. Firstly they lightened the lamp in front of Goddess Saraswati. All new elected PRIs of this region, Pradhan, lecturers, person from ICDS, Agriculture, coordinator of CASA and Jean Bulton (trustee of WFI) were special guest. The women exhibited enthusiasm and interest for the theme and the outside speakers and guests spoke well regarding the theme.

### Summary of Speeches:

The program began with Mr. Madan Nagda (CEO of GMKS) extending warm welcome to guest as well as participants. The welcome address was also given by him. He briefed the condition of women in GMKS's working area. He told that in the very first year of celebration, only few women came but now the situation was changed. Now we have to control the gathering of women. He noted that 800-900 number of children stopped which were going at BT Cotton through GMKS efforts in the last year. He also has given some light on the yearly progress of GMKS. He discussed the Food Security Bill and suggested some points to Minister accordingly this region.



The speech of speakers emphasized that the new millennium has witnessed a significant change and attitudinal shift in both women's and society's thoughts about women's equality

and emancipation. With more women in the boardroom, greater equality in legislative rights, and an increased critical mass of women's visibility as impressive role models in every aspect of life, one could think that women have gained true equality. The unfortunate fact is that women are still not paid equally to that of their male counterparts, women still are not present in equal numbers in business or politics, and globally women's education, health and the violence against them is worse than that of men.

Women are the main strength of development so we have to do work in this direction. However, great improvements have been made. We do have female astronauts and prime ministers, school girls are welcomed into university, women can work and have a family, women have real choices. And so the tone and nature of Women Day has, for the past few years, moved from being a reminder about the negatives to a celebration of the positives. Annually on 8 March, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate achievements.

Mr. Mangilal Garasiya delivered his speech as a chief guest. He said that Food Security is the first right of poor community and it's the first priority of government also. In this regard, government will plan to do a survey of BPL families in a new manner within coming six



months and ensure the right of food for poor families. Mr. Garasiya emphasized on powerful implementation of NREGA in whole tribal prominent region, issue of right letter through camps to families whom lived in forest, and income generate through Self Help Groups. He also noticed the meaningless expenditure of men like on tobacco, alcohol, tea etc. Mrs. Madhu Mehta has given message in her speech that if women cannot be strong through mind and body, no development works. We have to send our

girl child to school and provide them a nutritive food which is making by local nutritive items. In the changing scenario, women lead home as well as outside of the home. Women have the advantage of 50% reservation but still the need of recognize of herself strength & rights. After that she leads the village and community with new inspiration.

### Cultural performances:

During the sessions, some performances have been given by Kada / Bagunda team. In the



night, they gave performance that consisted of songs, dances, dramas, and various

acrobatic feats. They thrilled the crowd with their performances, and also managed to send messages with respect to the importance of health, education, food security, water management, adolescents, early marriage and self help groups. As they conducted their performance in the local language, everyone was completely focused on both their message and their actions. This team has given fantastic performances and everyone was appreciative of their eagerness to attend the Women Day celebrations.

### **Games:**

After the first session, women played some games like chair race, mutka race, jalebi race and tug of war. The purpose behind conducting games for the women is to give them a space where they can freely enjoy themselves and play with other women. The friendly competitions are always enjoyed by both the participants and the spectators alike. Women



from each of the zones are selected to participate in the games. This year, the games section of Mahila Divas proceeded smoothly until the Tug of War game, when the rope broke. A winner was therefore chosen at random. In each of the other three games, the women showed tremendous enthusiasm and spirit, and enjoyed themselves thoroughly. In the third session, Mr. Dinesh Vyas and Mr Madan Nagda have distributed prizes to winners and runner-up.

### **Conclusion:**

International Women Day indicated that the program was, once again, a reverberating success. The women thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and the message of food security came across clearly. The programs and activities all ran smoothly and the guests expressed appreciation for being invited to the program. Although the crowd was substantially large, it remained manageable and under control.

GMKS has seen success over the past nineteen years in terms of raising awareness about women's issues, and this year will only add to the tradition. By selecting one day each year to focus solely on village women, GMKS has managed to highlight their unique roles, responsibilities, concerns, issues, and strength. Including men in the celebrations helps them understand their position with respect to women's rights. Food Security is the important objective of GMKS activities, and hopefully the theme of this year will carry through until the next year's celebration.

So make a difference, think globally and act locally!! Make everyday International Women's Day. Do your bit to ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe and rewarding.