

## Sanchi Trust Takes Lead in Promoting Women Entrepreneurship

Written by Nina Rai - Last Updated Wednesday, 02 February 2011 17:03

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Businesses owned by women entrepreneurs are on the rise in almost all countries of the world. This is due to the fact that the hidden potential of women entrepreneurs are now coming to the forefront, with growing sensitivity towards their role and economic status in society. Education, knowledge, belief in oneself, capability, multi-tasking skills, flexibility, adaptability etc are some of the key factors responsible for women's inroads into business ventures, which hitherto have remained a male domain.

A 'Women Entrepreneur' today is a self opinionated individual, willing to take on major challenges for achieving her personal growth along with becoming economically self-reliant. An insatiable thirst within to do something constructive not only for oneself but also for societal good is the hallmark of a women entrepreneur, in today's times.

Almost all the age-old barriers are falling apart, with the contemporary women now populating almost any line of business right from home based pickle business to paper-bag manufacturing, to flying aero planes, to heading power cables ventures.

Against this backdrop, a women entrepreneur's special meet was held by Sanchi Trust, Mangalore for women entrepreneurs at St. Aloysius College Auditorium in Mangalore, Sanchi Trust is one social organisation which has always been in the forefront of women's empowerment. On the occasion, A. Shakuntala, Deputy Director, Women and Child Welfare Dept. DK., stressed on the need for the country to have women employers and entrepreneurs, who can make a dual contribution to both the family and economy. According to her society as a whole must encourage potential women entrepreneurs by creating opportunities and also help them in breaking free from family shackles. Moreover, she felt that women's empowerment can only be achieved by educating women and improving their economic status.

The Director urged the various trusts in the State to organise women empowerment programmes, so that women entrepreneurs are identified and recognised within society as self made entrepreneurs. She pointed out that government too on its part, is providing various facilities to women to start their own small scale industries. She therefore urged women to avail of these opportunities and co-operate with the government, as it is for their own betterment. She mentioned that her Department had an active plan of setting up a Stree Shakti Bhavan in every taluka in the State and in the City. This will be coming up shortly on a 5-cents plot adjacent to

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Bharath Mall, she revealed.

While the top storey will house various marketing facilities, to enable selling of homemade products produced by Stree Shakti Self Help Groups (SHGs), the second storey will consist of a training centre, she added. Shakuntala also informed the audience of two schemes viz 'Asare' and 'Udyogini' which are being aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs to set up their own small enterprises. As of date, she declared, the department is in the process of setting up a training centre for women entrepreneurs at Chilimbi, within Mangalore city limits.

Udaya Kumar Holla, Lead District Manager of Syndicate Bank, who presided over the meet, in his address besieged both family members as well as society to encourage women entrepreneurs who are willing to work hard and make a mark in their chosen field of expertise. Each one in society has to co-operate with hard-work in building the industry and help others to be independent in society, he advised. Merlyn Martis, Director, Sanchi Trust, in the course of her speech informed the gathering that the Beedi industry in the DK and Udupi Districts provides livelihood to nearly 7 lakh Beedi rollers. She brought to the forefront the sad realities of the sector by mentioning that earlier the Beedi rollers used to get six-day stocks of raw materials in a week from Beedi Companies.

But currently this time limit has come down to two days, thereby threatening the very livelihood of the rural masses. Keeping in view, the Directives of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), jobless Beedi rollers will be trained in other trades and professions, since it will sustain their future, she resolved. Sanchi Trust has taken an active interest in helping the Beedi workers to get loans from banks for setting up their own small enterprises, besides imparting to them basic training as well, she further informed.

At the special meet other dignitaries on the dais were Jyoti Laxmi, President, Sanchi Trust, Padmini, Director of 'Disha' (a self employment unit of Dakshina Kannada District) and another office bearer Jose Veigas and other women entrepreneurs.