



SHE CAN

...SHINE THROUGH



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FROM THE DESK OF GENERAL SECRETARY



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Education is the bedrock of progress, a catalyst for change, empowering individuals to break free from societal constraints towards full potential. This month, we delve into the abject influence of education on women's empowerment, and CBOA's resolute towards cultivating educational opportunities and awareness.

India has a rich history of women's education dating back centuries. Ancient Indian texts like the Vedas and Upanishads mention women scholars and philosophers. While the medieval period saw a decline in women's education, it resurfaced during the British colonial era.

India has a rich history of women's achievements in the educational field. From ancient times, women like Kalidasa's wife, Vasavadatta, were renowned for their intellect and learning.

Today, India boasts a growing number of women in STEM fields, academia, and leadership positions. From pioneering educationists like Savitribai Phule and Fatima Sheikh to renowned scholars like Asima Chatterjee and Indira Gandhi, Indian women have excelled in various academic disciplines.

CBOA has always been at the forefront in nurturing awareness and promoting leadership among women cadres. We consistently emphasized the importance of education in creating a more equitable and just society. Educated women are more likely to participate in the workforce, contribute to decision-making processes, and improve the overall well-being of their families.

CBOA remains committed to empowering women through education and awareness. We believe that by investing in women's education, we are investing in a brighter future for all.



*A woman's mind is a garden,
and knowledge is the seed.
When cultivated with care, it
blooms into a forest of
potential, capable of shaping
the world.*

K RAVI KUMAR

General Secretary



FINANCIAL FOCUS

GLOBAL RATE CUTS CHALLENGE RBI'S INFLATION-FOCUSED STRATEGY

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), under Governor Shaktikanta Das, remains focused on controlling inflation amidst a new challenge. Countries such as the US, UK, Canada, and other developed nations have begun easing their monetary policies, shifting from the aggressive rate hikes seen in recent years to cut rates in an effort to boost growth and counter rising economic uncertainties. This global pivot towards rate cuts presents a potential threat to India, complicating the RBI's focus on containing inflation at home.

GLOBAL RATE CUTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS



The Bank of England's recent decision to cut its interest rate to 5%, along with the European Central Bank (ECB) expected to follow with a cut of 0.5 percentage points, marks a clear signal of advanced economies moving towards an easing cycle. In contrast, the RBI continues to maintain its repo rate at 6.5%, firmly prioritizing inflation control. With India's inflation forecast for the current fiscal year at 4.5%, well above the 4% target, the central bank has little room to maneuver.

The divergence in policy between India and other advanced economies creates a complex set of challenges. A rate cut in these economies widens the interest rate differential with India, potentially attracting global capital inflows into the Indian economy. This could appreciate the rupee, making Indian exports more expensive and threatening India's trade competitiveness. While the RBI has tools to manage such currency fluctuations, the situation could strain the economy and complicate the central bank's already delicate balancing act.

RBI'S INFLATION FOCUS AMID GLOBAL TRENDS

Despite the global trend, Governor Shaktikanta Das has reiterated the RBI's commitment to its inflation target, particularly in the context of food inflation, which continues to shape public perceptions. "The public at large understands inflation more in terms of food inflation than the other components of headline inflation. Therefore, we cannot and should not become complacent merely because core inflation has fallen considerably," he noted.

While food inflation remains a pressing issue in India, advanced economies are experiencing the opposite, with lower food inflation but persistently high core inflation. This contrast highlights the unique economic landscape that India finds itself in, where inflation is driven by different factors compared to Western nations. This divergence makes it even more challenging for the RBI to follow the path of global rate cuts.

LOOKING FORWARD: AN UNCERTAIN PATH AHEAD

As the RBI holds its repo rate steady at 6.5%, it must navigate the complex interplay of global and domestic forces. Global rate cuts could trigger currency appreciation and make exports less competitive, while domestic inflation pressures continue to strain economic growth.

Experts predict that the RBI may only consider a rate cut in 2025, depending on how global and domestic factors evolve. The coming months will test the RBI's ability to respond to both domestic inflationary pressures and global economic shifts. As the world's major economies adjust their monetary policies, all eyes remain on the RBI and its next moves.

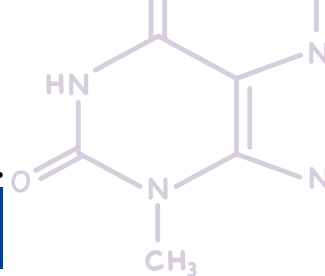
GLOBAL MONETARY SHIFTS: A TEST FOR RBI

The US Federal Reserve, considered the most influential central bank in the world, has cut interest rates by half a point, as fears of a recession and cooling labour markets grow. The Fed's current benchmark rate stands at 4.75%-5%, while the RBI's repo rate remains at 6.5%. Foreign investors upped the ante in Indian markets after the Fed's larger-than-expected interest rate cut, catapulting the benchmark Nifty 50 and Sensex indices to fresh highs. While certain sectors in India, like infrastructure and metals, stand to benefit from these policy shifts, the banking sector may face short-term challenges due to lower deposit interest rates, adding pressure on the RBI to consider its own monetary policy adjustments.



STATE FOCUS: KOLKATA

ASIMA CHATTERJEE



Asima Chatterjee (1917–2006) was a groundbreaking Indian scientist whose contributions to organic chemistry and pharmacology remain a testament to her intellectual rigor and dedication.

Born in Bengal, a land known for its rich cultural and intellectual heritage, she carved her own place in the annals of history as one of the first female scientists in India to achieve global recognition.

Early Life and Education:

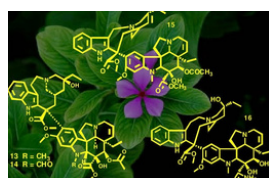
Her early life was Nurtured by Bengal's Intellectual Tradition.

Born into a middle-class Bengali family, Asima Chatterjee's father, Indra Narayan Mukherjee, was an advocate of education and a staunch supporter of women's empowerment, a somewhat rare stance in early 20th-century India. Bengal, during this period, was a hotbed of intellectual activity, social reform, and nationalist movements. It was against this backdrop that Asima Chatterjee pursued her education. She graduated with honors in chemistry from the University of Calcutta in 1936 and went on to complete her master's degree in 1938. Her academic brilliance earned her a Ph.D. in organic chemistry in 1944, becoming the first Indian woman to be conferred a doctorate in science by an Indian university.



Scientific Contributions: Expanding the Frontiers of Organic Chemistry

Asima Chatterjee's contributions primarily lie in the field of phytomedicine and organic chemistry. Her research focused on natural products chemistry, particularly plant alkaloids, which hold potential for medicinal purposes. Over her long career, Chatterjee worked extensively on anti-malarial and anti-epileptic drugs derived from plant sources.



Her pioneering work on the chemistry of vinca alkaloids—compounds derived from the Madagascar periwinkle—was notable for its implications in cancer treatment. Vinca alkaloids have since been used in chemotherapy for leukemia and Hodgkin's lymphoma. Her research also led to the development of the anti-epileptic drug Ayush-56 and various anti-malarial drugs, contributing significantly to public health in India and beyond.

Legacy and Impact on Bengal's Scientific Community



Asima Chatterjee's work is inextricably linked to Bengal's intellectual and scientific traditions. Bengal, home to luminaries like Jagadish Chandra Bose and Satyendra Nath Bose, has long been a nurturing ground for scientific talent. Chatterjee's contributions expanded this legacy, blending the traditional knowledge of India's plant-based medicines with modern scientific methods. Her work inspired generations of female scientists in India and abroad, proving that determination and passion could overcome institutional barriers.

In addition to her research, Chatterjee was a passionate educator. She established a research school at the University of Calcutta, where she mentored young scientists, particularly women, creating a supportive environment for the next generation of chemists. Her efforts as a professor helped cultivate an enduring legacy in both academic and scientific circles.

Overcoming Barriers: A Woman in a Male-Dominated Field



In an era when women's participation in science was limited, Asima Chatterjee navigated a path fraught with societal and institutional challenges. Despite the patriarchal structure of the academic world, she managed to establish a long and illustrious career. Her work, particularly in a male-dominated field like chemistry, broke new ground for women scientists in India. She became the first female scientist to be elected as the General President of the Indian Science Congress in 1975.

Honours and Recognition: A Lifetime of Achievement

Throughout her career, Asima Chatterjee received numerous awards and honors. In 1975, she was awarded the Padma Bhushan, one of India's highest civilian honors, for her contributions to science. In addition, she was a Fellow of the Indian National Science Academy, the Indian Chemical Society, and the Indian Pharmaceutical Society. Her work was internationally recognized, and she collaborated with scientists across the globe, further strengthening her reputation as a world-class chemist.

Asima Chatterjee's Enduring Influence

Prof. Asima Chatterjee's journey from a young student in Bengal to one of India's foremost scientists is a remarkable story of perseverance and intellectual brilliance. Her legacy is not just confined to her scientific discoveries, but also in her role as a mentor, educator, and trailblazer for women in science. Bengal's intellectual heritage, combined with Chatterjee's groundbreaking work, continues to inspire future generations of scientists, particularly women who, like her, seek to push the boundaries of knowledge and innovation.

Dr. Asima Chatterjee's life is a testimony to the enduring power of education, perseverance, and passion, and her contributions to science are a vital part of both Bengal's and India's rich legacy.



COURTROOM DRAMA

Supreme Court's Landmark Directive on Menstrual Hygiene: A Step Towards Equality



Introduction

In a significant stride towards gender equality and the right to education, the Supreme Court of India, in the case of *Jaya Thakur v. Union of India*, issued a landmark directive on menstrual hygiene management in schools. The Court mandated the development of a National Policy on Menstrual Hygiene, emphasizing the provision of free sanitary products and adequate infrastructure for school-going girls. This judgment underscores the Court's commitment to upholding fundamental rights, such as the Right to Education and the Right to Health and Dignity, as enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

The Legal Framework

The Supreme Court's directive finds its basis in the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Indian Constitution. Article 21A of the Constitution, which mandates the provision of education to children between the ages of 6 and 14, is directly relevant to this issue. Ensuring access to menstrual hygiene products is essential for enabling girls to attend school without interruption, thereby safeguarding their right to education. Furthermore, Article 21, which guarantees the right to life and liberty, has been interpreted to include the right to health and dignity. Access to menstrual hygiene products is crucial for maintaining bodily hygiene and dignity.

Addressing a critical issue

The Supreme Court's directive addresses a critical issue that has long affected girls' education. Many girls miss school during their menstrual cycle due to the lack of access to sanitary products or adequate facilities. This absence from school can have long-term consequences, including increased dropout rates and reduced educational attainment. By mandating the provision of free sanitary products and proper infrastructure, the Court seeks to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for girls in schools.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court's landmark judgment in *Jaya Thakur v. Union of India* is a significant step towards promoting gender equality and ensuring the right to education for girls. By directing the Central Government to develop a National Policy on Menstrual Hygiene, the Court has recognized the importance of addressing this often-overlooked issue. The implementation of this policy will play a crucial role in improving the educational outcomes of girls and promoting their overall well-being.



The Court's Directive

In its April 10, 2023, judgment, the Supreme Court directed State and Union Territory governments to install sanitary pad vending machines and set up disposal systems in schools with female students in upper primary and secondary levels. This was a significant step towards addressing the practical challenges faced by girls during their menstrual cycle. However, the Court recognized the need for a more comprehensive approach and instructed the Central Government to formulate a National Policy on Menstrual Hygiene. This policy would provide a uniform framework for implementing menstrual hygiene measures across the country, ensuring consistency and effectiveness.



CBOA'S COMPASSION IN ACTION

A LIFELINE FOR A GRIEVING FAMILY



Mrs. Poornima Marandi, the widow of Late Sushant Hansda got posted at Dumka branch under Dhanbad regional office on 28 June 2024 through compassionate appointment.

A heart wrenching loss

Mr Sushant Hansda, a dedicated officer was posted in ZI Mumbai in 2021. He was living in Mumbai with his eight month pregnant wife and a 2.5 years old kid. When the tragic incident happened where unfortunately, he has lost his life at a very young age of 34. He was the only bread winner for his family, and the heart attack left the whole family shattered and in grief.

A family's world turned upside down

Mr. Sushant Handa and his wife, Poornima Marandi were expecting their second child. The untimely and sudden demise of Mr Sushant Handa left her eight months pregnant wife and a 2.5 years son alone by affecting their life in every aspect. The absence of their beloved husband and father filled their life with darkness and sorrow.



GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

Overcoming with her emotions and with great courage, Mrs Poornima Marandi has expressed her heartfelt gratitude, " The demise of my husband was unbearable and unexpected, life without him was unimaginable, but my kids were my strength .. Future seemed dark, both economically and emotionally, and then a ray of hope came in my life in July 2024, when our respected Bank has given us a second chance to live by giving the compassionate appointment to me which made our hopes and dreams alive again.. Expressing my special gratitude to our respected organisation i.e.. CBOA and their tremendous leaders who were always there in my ups and downs throughout the process and guided me to achieve my ultimate goal.. I will always be indebted to our respected organisation CBOA for being with me and my kids in such a crucial time of my life".

A BEACH ON HOPE/ A BACKBONE OF SURVIVAL

Overburden with grief and carrying huge responsibility of raising two kids alone, Mrs Poornima Marandi was facing the most difficult time of her life, when our great and respected organisation CBOA has come into the picture and supported her with skin out in the process with timely and wise advises. Hand held her and left no stones unturned to make the result possible. The efforts of our organisation was well, generalised and aggressive, which resulted in achieving the ultimate goal i.e. The appointment on compassionate ground of Mrs Poornima Marandi.

Mrs. Poornima Marandi has conveyed her special gratitude to our respected General Secretary, Mr Ravi Kumar, the respected Vice President, Mr Shailesh Tripathi (Ranchi Circle), the respected Regional Secretary, Mr Anil Mallick (Dhanbad Region) who were and are always there for her in the process.



SHE CAN ...shine through



A BEACON IN THE STORM

CBOA'S COMPASSIONATE EMBRACE FOR A GRIEVING FAMILY



A Life Shattered: Mamta Kumari's Unbearable Loss

Mamta Kumari, a picture of resilience today, once stood on the precipice of despair. Her husband, Sanjay Kumar, a dedicated officer at the Canara Bank's Currency Chest in Bangalore, passed away unexpectedly on June 15th, 2022. The pain was compounded by the lingering effects of the pandemic lockdown, which had undoubtedly taken its toll on Sanjay's mental well-being. Just four days after moving into their new home, Mamta was left alone to navigate a future filled with uncertainty. The weight of a home loan and the daunting task of raising their six-year-old son seemed insurmountable.



From Darkness to Light: CBOA Steps In

In Mamta's darkest hour, a ray of hope emerged – the Canara Bank Officers' Association (CBOA). This union, exemplifying the very essence of its name, reached out with unwavering support. They not only ensured that Sanjay's final rites were conducted with dignity and respect for their cultural traditions, but also embarked on a mission to secure Mamta's future.

A Second Chance at Life: Compassionate Appointment

Through tireless efforts and unwavering empathy, CBOA secured Mamta a compassionate appointment within the bank on June 24th, 2024. This act of immense generosity wasn't just a job – it was a lifeline, a chance for Mamta to rebuild her life and provide for her son.

Overflowing Gratitude: A Heart Full of Thanks

Mamta's voice trembles with emotion as she expresses her profound gratitude: "When I lost my husband, the world seemed to crumble around me. But CBOA stepped in, held my hand, and continues to do so. This compassionate appointment is a second chance at life, a gift I can never repay. Words cannot express my appreciation for their unwavering support and empathy."

A Legacy of Compassion: Leading by Example

CBOA's actions resonate with the wisdom of Mother Teresa: "Give your hands to serve and your hearts to love." They serve as a testament that the true purpose of leadership lies in service and compassion. By extending a helping hand to Mamta and countless others, CBOA, and its General Secretary, Sri K. Ravi Kumar, have not just exemplified leadership but embodied the very essence of solidarity.

This story is a testament to the power of human kindness. It is a reminder that even in the face of immense tragedy, hope can bloom when compassion takes root.



DID YOU KNOW?



UN Women India, a part of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, plays a pivotal role in advancing gender equality and women's rights in India. One of its key initiatives is the promotion of second chance education for women, a program designed to provide educational opportunities to women who have been denied or delayed access to formal education.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION

Second chance education is crucial for women in India for several reasons:

- Economic Empowerment
- Social Inclusion
- Improved Health and Well-being

FUNDING TO THE "SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION"

UN Women's Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme enables women to re-enter formal education, access vocational training, learn entrepreneurial skills, and connects them to employment and business opportunities. With a budget of USD 3,834,800 for 2018 – 2022, the programme has reached out to more than 50,000 women across four states in India, and impacted more than 15,000 through education, training and entrepreneurship opportunities.

The programme in India is funded by the BHP Foundation, and implemented by Professional Assistance for Development Action (PRADAN) as the lead partner along with other implementing, consortium and state government partners, such as the Department for Skilling and Entrepreneurship Development in Maharashtra and the Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA).

REMARKABLE INFLUENCE

In July 2020, the Rajasthan State Women's Policy waived school fees for women returning to formal education. UN Women is also working with NSDC and one of the upcoming initiatives include gender responsive training sessions for 4,500 master trainers who will thereby deliver vocational training across the country.



EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH
SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION



UN WOMEN INDIA'S APPROACH THROUGH:

Partnerships: The organization collaborates with government agencies, NGOs, and private sector entities to develop and implement comprehensive education programs. These partnerships leverage resources and expertise to reach a wider range of women.

Curriculum Development: UN Women India supports the development of curriculum that is relevant to the needs and aspirations of women. This includes vocational training, life skills education, and gender awareness programs.

Infrastructure Development: The organization helps establish or improve educational infrastructure, such as classrooms, libraries, and computer labs, to facilitate learning opportunities for women.

Financial Assistance: UN Women India provides scholarships and financial aid to women who face economic barriers to education. This helps ensure that women from marginalized communities can access educational opportunities.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Despite the progress made, challenges remain in ensuring that all women have access to second chance education. These challenges include cultural barriers, lack of awareness, and limited resources. To address these challenges, UN Women India continues to work towards expanding its reach and deepening its impact. Future directions include strengthening partnerships, advocating for policy reforms, and exploring innovative approaches to deliver education to women in remote areas.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, UN Women India's commitment to second chance education is a crucial step towards achieving gender equality and empowering women in India. By providing educational opportunities to women who have been denied or delayed access to formal education, the organization is helping to create a more just and equitable society.

REVITALISE AND REJUVENATE

THE BRAIN is involved in everything we do, and, like any other part of the body, it needs to be cared for too. This can be done by incorporating a few simple brain exercises into their daily life.



BRAIN WORKOUTS

Keep your mind strong and sharp

Approaches to brain health include a well-balanced diet low in fat, low in cholesterol, and high in antioxidants. Foods high in antioxidants include nuts, fruits (especially berries), veggies, chocolate, and herbs and spices. In addition to good nutrition, regular exercise can promote vascular health to help protect brain tissue, few of them are mentioned below,

1. **Sudoku** – Engage in chess, Sudoku or any games that requires strategy. These games will improve logical thinking, memory and concentration offering a super mental workout.
2. **Crossword puzzle** – Stimulate your mind with puzzles and crosswords. They task memory, problem-solving abilities, keeping mind agile and boosting cognitive characteristic.
3. **Memory Games** – Play memory enhancing games to improve recall abilities. Games that test your short term memory assists to boost your neural connections and retention.
4. **Reading** – It actively engages your mind. It enhances vocabulary, comprehension and focus while stimulating creativity, strengthening neural pathways for super good brain fitness.

5. **Learning a New language** – This has overwhelmingly proven the many cognitive benefits of being able to speak more than one language. According to numerous studies, bilingualism can contribute to better memory, improved visual-spatial skills, and higher levels of creativity.

6. **Meditation** – Mindful meditation strengthens attention span, reduces stress and boosts intellectual readability. Regular practice helps in improving mind function and emotional control.

7. **Physical exercise** – Regular physical activity will increase blood flow to brain boosting its cognitive function enhancing memory, attention and overall mind fitness for long term mental energy.

"The brain wants to learn new things, so let it get what it wants"