

AIMS AND OBJECTS PROGRAMME CONSTITUTION

Of

All India Democratic Women's Association



**Adopted at the first Conference of the All India Democratic Women's
Association held at Madras on 10-12 March 1981**

***(With amendments adopted at the Fifth National Conference held at Bangalore on 11-14
June, 1999; the Seventh National Conference held at Bhubaneswar on 18-21 November,
2004 and the Tenth National Conference held at Bodh Gaya on 22-25 November, 2013)***

New Delhi

NAME

The name of the organisation shall be

ALL INDIA DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

The All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) takes upon itself the task organising the masses of women in town and villages of India and of building a powerful broad based women's movement for the uplift and betterment of the lot of the women as a whole, to remove all discrimination between man and woman, to fight for democracy, equal rights and emancipation of women, in a society free from exploitation.

More than half a century has passed since we have achieved our independence, but very little has been done for the women. Despite the progress made by a few women in some fields, Indian women lag behind in every sphere - health, education, employment and cultural pursuits. Though the Constitution of India made provision for women, these have remained mere formal rights, and the vast majority of women, economically dependent, socially and culturally backward as they are, are not in a position to make any use of those formal rights, nor did the Government of India take ample measures to implement them.

Even atrocities and social injustice against women - rape, dowry killings, forced marriage, polygamy, child marriage etc. are common practices of present day society. Moreover, due to extreme poverty and misery a large number of women are compelled to take to prostitution to the utter indignity of womanhood.

As the oppression of Indian women is an integral part of the exploitation of the Indian people in general, and the struggle for women's emancipation is inseparably connected with the struggles of the workers, peasants, youth and all other sections of oppressed toiling masses of the people waged for their common interests and to bring about a radical change in our socio-economic set-up, the All India Democratic Women's Association extends its full co-operation with all these progressive and democratic sections of the people.

The women of India, drawn from various strata of society, have glorious traditions in struggles for National Independence and against social injustice. The All India Democratic Women's Association pledges to carry forward the glorious tradition of those martyrs and wage a common struggle for democratic rights and a social order where there will be no place for gender discrimination and exploitation of women.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

1. To strive for the social, cultural, educational and mental upliftment of women so that women can develop as responsible and democratically conscious citizens capable of providing leadership in all fields.
2. To struggle for the implementation of all legal and constitutional rights for women and to ensure that the struggle for equality covers all fields - social, economic, educational, familial and cultural.
3. To fight against all forms of social evils and feudal legacies such as dowry, child marriage, polygamy etc.
4. To fight for equal rights in free choice in marriage, divorce and implementation of the law in relation to monogamy.
5. To strive to free women from the evils of casteism, untouchability, religious superstition and obscurantism and to work towards inculcation of ideals of democracy, secularism and socialism amongst women.
6. To struggle for security, rights and proper working conditions for working class, peasant and all other sections of working women.
7. To fight against the present decadent trends in various cultural forms where women are depicted as sex objects and for the development of culture free from such evils.
8. To strive for the protection of all children and struggle for the provision of avenues of development for them.
9. To express our solidarity with and strive for united actions with all other women's organisations who stand for the struggle against social injustice, for equal rights and for economic independence for women.
10. To express solidarity with working class, peasants, youth and students and other sections of the people who are struggling for their legitimate rights.

11. To express solidarity with the people and especially women, who are struggling all over the world against every kind of exploitation, for world peace, against imperialism and neocolonialism and for National Liberation.
12. To fight in co-operation with all other organisations for the improvement of the living and working conditions of the people.
13. To fight for national integration, communal harmony and to mobilise all sections of women against communalism, separatism on the basis of language or region and all of these reactionary tendencies.
14. To struggle for the preservation and extension of all democratic rights including the right of freedom of speech, right to publish, right of freedom of association, right to strike etc.
15. To defend the freedom and sovereignty of the country and fight against imperialist exploitation and penetration in the political, economic cultural spheres of life in our country.

PROGRAMME

To realise the above aims and objects the AIDWA will organise the masses of women and launch a sustained and continuous propaganda, campaign and struggle amongst them in the perspective stated above.

1. To launch campaigns and struggles against social evils like the dowry system, polygamy, child marriage etc. and against all obstacles which prevent the implementation and improvements of the existing legislation pertaining to the above subjects.
2. To launch campaigns and struggle for the freedom of choice in marriage, equal rights in divorce, the rights of women to property and inheritance, equal rights for peasant women to the land they cultivate, etc.

3. To struggle against the increasing atrocities against women, and to rouse women to raise their voice against such crimes, in defence of women.
4. To initiate struggles for the implementation of protective legislation and for the improvement of all such legislation towards full protection of working women including the right of equal pay for equal work, job security, proper working conditions, maternity leave for four months, provision of creches, and appropriate medical and housing facilities.
5. To organise and participate in the struggle against unemployment and for unemployment relief and in particular to struggle for more employment opportunities for women in all fields, including peasant women so as to draw wider and wider sections of women out of their narrow domestic periphery and engage them in socially useful productive labour.
6. To initiate and participate in struggles to make education upto the secondary level universal and free with special attention to prevent the high drop-out rate among girls students, for special courses of vocational and technical education for women in all sectors and for job-oriented and adult education for women in both urban and rural areas.
7. To conduct schools and educational camps to fight illiteracy among women and to rouse the consciousness of women.
8. To organise campaigns towards eliminating superstitions and antiquated practices as well as the legacies of decadent feudal and imperialist culture.
9. To organise discussions, symposiums and study circles on different socio-economic subjects with a view to widening the perspective of women.
10. To struggle for the widespread establishment of maternity homes and child care centres in urban and particularly rural areas and for training expectant mothers in self and child care by qualified physicians.
11. To work for proper housing and relief for destitute women and to demand corrective steps to end trafficking in women and the exploitation of women through prostitution by creating employment opportunities for them and steps to rehabilitate them in society.

12. To establish clubs, libraries, cultural institutions etc. to aid the mental and cultural development of women.
13. To organise institutions for physical culture for women and girls.
14. To actively participate in relief and rehabilitation programmes necessitated by natural calamities, epidemics etc. and to associate with the work of social welfare organisations in this connection.
15. To initiate and participate in movements for the elimination of obstacles in the way of social, economic, political, scientific and cultural progress and for basic land reforms and for the nationalisation of foreign and monopoly capital.
16. To conduct and participate in solidarity actions and campaigns in support of working class, peasantry, students, youth and other sections of the democratic movement.
17. To strive to unite women and widen their participation in the struggles against authoritarianism, communalism, separatism and other divisive forces and for democracy, secularism and national integration.
18. To actively work for the sovereignty and independence of our country against all imperialist designs.
19. To make continued and sustained efforts so that the mass of women can imbibe and spread the ideals of independence, democracy and socialism and also to propagate the achievements of the socialist world with particular reference to the position of women, so as to inspire our women.
20. To establish and widen relations with our women's organisations within the country so as to build up a broad and united movement on common demands.
21. To establish contacts with women of other countries and to extend solidarity with them in their struggles for women's emancipation and freedom and with all anti-imperialist, anti-apartheid, national liberation struggles of different countries and peoples.

22. To undertake the publication of literature such as journals, leaflets, pamphlets, bulletins etc, to further the aims and objects of the AIDWA.

CONSTITUTION

FLAG

The length of the flag shall be one and a half time of its breadth. On a ground of white surrounded by a red border, shall be inscribed a red five-point star, on the upper right hand corner, and in the middle shall be inscribed the image of a women with raised fist. And beneath shall be inscribed the motto of the AIDWA.

DEMOCRACY EQUALITY EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

Article 1 : Branches

- (a) AIDWA shall be of federal character.
- (b) It shall have branches in the States and in the Indian Territories.
- (c) All Branches will be governed by one constitution and will have the same name, that is All India Democratic Women's Association or its equivalent, with existing State variations. In Hindi, it will be known as Akhil Bharatiya Janavadi Mahila Samiti.

Article 2 : Affiliates

- (a) AIDWA may grant affiliation to any All-India Women's Organization or to any women's organisation in any State or Union Territory which accepts its aims, objectives, programme and constitution.

Article 3 : Constitution of Affiliates and Branches

Any affiliate may have its own constitution provided it does not conflict with the constitution of AIDWA.

Article 4 : *Membership*

- (a) Members of the branches and affiliates are ipso facto members of the AIDWA.
- (b) The branches shall collect a uniform sum as membership fee which may be revised from time to time by the CEC in consultation with the State committee to be ratified by the national conference. A fee for each member on its roll will be paid by the branch and affiliates to AIDWA. The sum will be decided by the CEC in consultation with the State Committees, to be ratified by the national conference.

Article 5 : *Rights of Membership*

- (a) Every member shall have the right to place her opinion before the Central Executive Committee of the AIDWA.
- (b) Every member shall implement the programme adopted at the Conference of the AIDWA and decisions taken by her own and higher committees and shall propagate its objectives.
- (c) Every member shall have the right to resign if and when ever she wishes to do so.

Article 6 : *Structure*

- (a) All India Conference
- (b) Central Executive Committee

- (c) Central Secretariat
- (d) Branches and Affiliates

Article 7 : Conference

- (a) The All India Conference shall be held normally once in three years.
- (b) The number of delegates fixed by the C.E.C. and elected by the branches or affiliated bodies shall attend the All India Conference. The C.E.C. members shall be the ex-officio delegates to the Conference. The C.E.C. shall fix the delegation fee for the Conference.
- (c) The Conference shall elect the steering committee and the presidium for conducting the work of the Conference.
- (d) The Conference shall review the actives of AIDWA for the period between the two Conferences and shall decide the future programme of action.
- (e) The report of the work carried out in the said period and the yearly accounts shall be placed before the Conference.
- (f) The Conference shall elect the Central Executive Committee, the number of which shall be fixed by the Conference. The nature of voting shall be decided by the Conference.
- (g) The Conference shall have the power to prepare, amend and change the Constitution of AIDWA.

Article 8 : *Central Executive Committee*

- (a) The term of the Central Executive Committee (CEC) shall be for the period between two Conferences. In between two Conferences, CEC shall be the highest body. CEC shall execute the decisions of the Conference.
- (b) The CEC shall elect, from among its members the following office bearers and announce it in the Conference
 - i. One President, One General Secretary, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries One Treasurer.
The CEC if necessary may elect Assistant Secretaries (*Explanation: This is an enabling provision valid for the CEC and State Committees only*).
 - ii. If considered necessary the CEC may elect a Working President.
(*Explanation: This provision is an enabling clause valid for the CEC and State Committees but not below the State Committee level*).
 - iii. The CEC, or the State Committee, may also nominate a panel of Patrons who will be ex-officio members of the CEC or the State Committee respectively. (*Explanation- this is an enabling clause valid for the CEC and State Committees only*)
- (c) The CEC shall meet at least thrice in a year and the notice, along with the agenda shall be circulated at least 15 days before the meeting. If one third members of the CEC demand a meeting, it shall have to be called within two months. An emergency meeting of the CEC shall be convened by the General Secretary on a notice of at least 15 days.
- (d) The quorum of CEC meetings shall be one third of its membership, whereas for requisition meetings it shall be half of its membership.
- (e) If any seat falls vacant due to resignation and/or other reasons, the vacant seat/seats

shall be filled up by CEC by co-option. The CEC shall have the power to nominate alternate members during temporary vacancy for any reason, but as soon as the said member comes back, the membership of the alternate member of CEC shall terminate.

- (f) CEC shall formulate different programmes and make necessary rules in conformity with the aims and objects of AIDWA to carry on its daily activities. It shall, if necessary, form sub-committees to carry out its work.
- (g) CEC shall have the right to set up organising or preparatory committees in States, Union Territories or certain areas for building up the organisation where it does not exist.
- (h) CEC shall form the Central Secretariat with the office bearers of CEC. It may include other members of the CEC, if necessary.
- (i) CEC shall employ office secretary and other office assistants as necessary.
- (j) The President, or in the absence of the President, any one of the Vice Presidents shall conduct the meeting of the CEC.
- (k) The All India Conference shall be convened by the decision of the CEC.

Article 9 : Central Secretariat

- (a) The office bearers of the CEC and such members as elected by CEC shall constitute the Secretariat.
- (b) The Secretariat shall carry out the activities of the CEC for the period between two meetings of CEC.
- (c) The Secretariat shall meet at least once in two months.

- (d) The Secretariat shall run the Central office, maintain accounts, draft reports and place the same before the CEC and the Conference.
- (e) All Bank Accounts shall be maintained in the name of AIDWA. The Accounts shall be under the signature of the President, General Secretary and Treasurer and shall be operated by any two of them.

Article 10 : *Terms of Office-Bearers*

- (a) The tenure of the President, General Secretary and Treasurer at all levels of the organisation will not exceed three full terms. An extension may be granted only in exceptional circumstances which the CEC will have to record in a formal resolution. Other Committees will have to take prior permission from the next higher committee.
- (b) Disciplinary action may be taken against any member if that member's activities are against the interests of the constitution of the organisation by the duly constituted committee under whose jurisdiction the member is enrolled. The member or unit facing such charges has the right to explain her conduct to the committee initiating action.
- (c) Expulsion of a member has to be approved by the next higher committee and a member expelled has the right to appeal to the higher committee and subsequently to the CEC.
- (d) The CEC can disaffiliate any unit under it for not conforming to the interests of the organisation or acting against the aims and objectives of the organisation. The CEC in case of necessity shall have the right to dissolve and reorganise any lower level committee in consultation with the State Committee concerned. State bodies have similar powers *vis-a-vis* units under them. In such a case, the right of appeal for the unit lies with the CEC.
- (e) In case of disaffiliation or reorganisation of any State Committee by the CEC, the decision must be placed for approval at the next All India Conference.

Article 11 : *Change in Constitution*

- (a) Only the All India Conference shall be entitled to amend or make any change in the Constitution of AIDWA.
- (b) Any proposal for amendment or change in the Constitution by any member / unit shall be sent to the CEC at least one month before the All India Conference. The CEC, if it proposes to initiate any amendment or change in the Constitution, shall circulate them to the State Units at least one month before the All India Conference.
- (c) All amendments or changes in the Constitution shall be passed by at least 2/3 of the total number of delegates attending the Conference.

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