



IAPPD Newsletter

A Quarterly Newsletter of Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development



Violence against Women and Children

July 24, 2019, New Delhi

The Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD), the nodal parliamentarians' association to deliberate upon population and development issues, organized a Women Parliamentarians' Meet on 'Violence against Women and Children' on July 24, 2019 at the Parliament Annexe, New Delhi. The objective of the meet was to deliberate upon the issue in detail and discuss the way out to make India a safe place for its women and children.

Around 35 Parliamentarians from both the Houses of the Parliament and across all political parties participated in the discussion. Efforts towards addressing women issues and women empowerment also require the participation of men and consequently, few men Parliamentarians also participated in the discussion. The Chief Guest of the meet was Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, the Hon'ble Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Government of India. Former Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha and the Chairperson of IAPPD, Prof. P.J. Kurien, chaired the discussion.

Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, IAPPD, welcomed the Hon'ble Minister and all the Parliamentarians attending the discussion.

The Vice-chair of IAPPD, Ms. Viplov Thakur, MP, too welcomed the Hon'ble Minister and all Parliamentarians. In her welcome remarks, she said that Hon'ble Minister is an epitome of women empowerment in India.

Ms. Thakur shared her apprehensions and concerns over the unprecedented rise in the crime against women and children despite the strong legislations in the State - including Dowry Prohibition Act, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act and the legislation against female foeticide. She hoped that the "one-to-one" interaction and the deliberation with

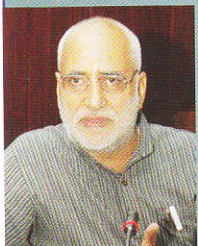


Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, Hon'ble Union Minister for Women and Child Development, addressing the participants.

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Group photo of the participants.



Enjoyment of women's human rights is constrained by violence against them everywhere. As we all know that it is an expression of power and control and an instrument to maintain gender inequalities, disrupting the health, survival, safety and freedom of women and their families around the world. To end violence against women, girls and children, we must ensure their full empowerment, promote and protect their rights, including access to justice and support services, and end the discrimination they face in all aspects of their lives.

Priority for government, communities and families must be towards zero tolerance for violence against women and children. In India, much has been done by the government over the past few decades, for legal and policy reforms, extension of services to support and protect women and children from domestic and sexual violence. Also, preventive efforts have focused on advocacy and campaigns that have brought the issue into public consciousness.

Parliamentarians, being the policy makers of the country, have an onus of eradicating this social evil. Also, involvement of socializing institutions such as educational institutions, religious groups and organizations, popular film stars and sports personalities surely help prevention of violence against women and children.

Against this backdrop, IAPPD, the nodal parliamentarians' association to deliberate upon population and development issues, organized a Parliamentarians' meet on "Violence against Women and Children" on 24th July 2019 at Parliament Annexe. The objective of the meet was to deliberate upon the issue in detail and discuss the way out to make India a safe place for its women and children.

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During the discussion, it was felt that restricting and ending violence requires coordination and convergence within different ministries and not in isolation with the Ministry of Women and Child Development as well as with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It requires a coordinated response and efforts beyond the two Ministries beyond judicial and legal protection. There is a need to involve Ministries like finance and employment, small enterprise, housing, transport, urban planning in its ambit. The Hon'ble Minister strongly holds the opinion that the proactive attitude of the Members of the Parliament and their inclination to take responsibilities and initiatives brings about great changes at ground level.

Manmohan Sharma
Secretary, IAPPD

the Ministry would enable the enthusiastic women Parliamentarians to effectively address the issue of violence against women and children.

A thematic presentation on 'Status of violence against women – Issues, myths and challenges' was made by UNFPA.

The Hon'ble Minister of Women and Child Development, Mrs. Sriti Zubin Irani opined that such type of forum is important where the Members of Parliament come voluntarily without any party whip; and share their views and deliberate upon important social issues. About queries related to the strengthening of the schematic interventions in the respective constituencies of the parliamentarians, the Minister gave certain suggestions. She strongly holds the opinion that the proactive attitude of the Members of the Parliament and their inclination to take responsibilities and initiatives brings about great changes at ground level. In order to curtail the violence against women, the Minister suggested certain interventions.

The Minister assured the Parliamentarians that she is always available as the Minister of Women and Child Development and is ready to provide whatever infrastructural requirements are needed. But, she requested the Parliamentarians that they need to assert their role on the ground as they know the best

at grass-root level and the same can be communicated to the minister for necessary interventions.

Mr. Avinash Rai Khanna, former-MP; Vice President, Bhartiya Janta Party; Vice Chair, Indian Red Cross Society, shared instances from grass root level and highlighted that family is the first place where the girl starts facing discrimination and injustice.

During discussion session, one of the parliamentarians expressed her concerns over the way one-stop centers have been working. She particularly highlighted lack of infrastructure - both manpower and physical - and urged for the need to equip these centers for its proper functioning. She suggested that the Ministry should formulate and implement some monitoring mechanisms. Steps should also be taken to increase the visibility of these centers.

A similar concern is also shared by another parliamentarian from Assam. She said that there is only one One-Stop-Centre operational in Assam and that too is working in deplorable condition. The situation of women in Assam demands some more operational One-Stop-Centers in the state. The situation of the Remand Houses and State Homes is no less good. Given such a scenario, the parliamentarian wanted the support of the Ministry so that she could work on the same. The Hon'ble Minister informed that she is going to write a letter about the implementation of POCSO



Participants sharing their views during the Meet.

Amendment Act and other acts soon. This would enable the parliamentarians to seek information on POCSO related cases from the District Superintendent of Police and District Magistrate during the DISHA meetings (The Centre formed District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee to be named as "Disha" for effective development coordination of almost all the programmes of Central Government). This will be done concerning the One-Stop-Centres also and the letter would enable the law-makers to strengthen the scheme in their region.

Another Parliamentarian shared her apprehension towards the lack of sensitivity and unresponsive behaviour of the personnel posted at the Helpline as well as of Mahila Police Stations. She suggested the need for creating awareness and sensitizing the personnel.

A parliamentarian from Odisha shared about the lack of awareness not only among the common people but also among the law-makers about these schemes in their state, especially in tribal areas. The authority should create awareness among the lawmakers on the same. Additionally, the Ministry should also assist and help the law-makers to have access to state-wise contact numbers and details of one-stop-centers.

Another parliamentarian suggested that one policy would not cater to the needs of diverse women



Hon'ble Minister sharing her views.

population in the country. The issues and challenges of women in different geographical region and rural and urban areas are very different. Different strategies and schemes are required to mitigate these challenges and issues.

A parliamentarian from Andhra Pradesh said that there is lack of awareness among various stakeholders (including legislatures) about various government schemes and programmes to stop violence against women and to help women suffering from violence. She seeks the suggestions and guidance from the Ministry for creating awareness not only in her constituency but also in others.

Another parliamentarian believed that property/house ownership by women also protects women against violence. Formulating, introducing and implementing schemes emphasizing or on inclusion of property ownership by women or including such provisions



in the existing schemes like in the BBBP Programme (*Beti Bacho Beti Padho*) should be taken into consideration to curtail and eliminate violence against women. However, the Minister cautioned that such an initiative would be highly misused.

One of the women parliamentarians, who is a professional medical practitioner, believes in prevention is better than cure. She suggested that the government should make it mandatory to include moral science within the curriculum and strengthen it. Moral science or moral education inculcates in our children good values that have been part of our rich culture. She further added that the ideas and values that the children get in their childhood remain throughout their lives. It is a period where the child's behaviour can be reformed and moulded.

There was also a suggestion from a parliamentarian to separate women call centers from police stations as women often restrict themselves from going to police station as they conceive them as unfriendly and insensitive towards their issues.

While giving an account of the Mahila Suraksha Abhiyan that was conducted in Odisha in the year 2018, a parliamentarian shared that each woman was given the charge of three parliamentary constituencies.



Despite such initiatives, the crime rate against women and children continues to be alarmingly high. The Ministry should take stringent steps and take initiatives for the effective operations of the programme.

The discussion ended with the vote of thanks and hopes that these suggestions and advice would be carried forward.

The concluding speech was given by Prof. P.J. Kurien. He said that there is a need to bring about attitudinal change in men. He lends his support that the school curriculum should have moral science/lesson right from the primary and foundational level. The education system should teach them the relation between girls and boys.



Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting on Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls

July 4-5, 2019, Vientiane, Lao PDR

To mark the 25th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), APDA in association with the National Assembly of Lao PDR and with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), organized the Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting on Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls on July 4-5, 2019 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The meeting provided the participants an invaluable platform to identify priority policy interventions to address the issue of violence against women and girls in the Asia-Pacific region, to share experiences from each other and reaffirm the ICPD Programme of Action to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and ensure that no one is left behind.

Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP; Mrs. Chhaya Verma, MP; and Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, IAPPD, participated in the meeting.



Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP, addressing the participants.

In her presentation on 'Sharing of Good Practices in Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls and Male Engagement', Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP, said that the principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution. She presented the constitutional provision for women. She also briefed the participants about the legal provisions for women in India and national initiatives to curb the gender violence viz. National Commission for Women, Reservation for Women in Local Self-government, National Plan of Action for the Girl Child, National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, and National Mission for Empowerment of Women.



Mrs. Chhaya Verma, MP, during the meeting.

At the end, all the participants felt that the governments, civil society and support agencies would benefit from the information and be guided by the field experiences and findings shared in the meeting.



Group photo of the participants.

National Workshop on ICPD@25 – Leveraging Partnership World Population Day

July 11, 2019, New Delhi

Let us work towards not losing any pregnant woman and child to preventable causes - Dr. Harsh Vardhan on World Population Day Appeals to NGOs for dedicating one month every year towards the cause of Population Stabilization.

“Let us work towards not losing any pregnant woman and child to preventable causes”. This was stated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare at the inauguration of National Workshop on International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)@ 25 years – Leveraging Partnerships’ on the occasion of World Population Day 2019, that also marks the 25 years since the landmark ICPD held at Cairo in 1994. Dr. Harsh Vardhan further said that the country, under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, shall witness a New India by 2022 where health is a positive determinant of development. “The Government is committed to addressing the health issues, improving the scale and ensuring accessibility of quality services for everyone,” he added. Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare was also present at the function.

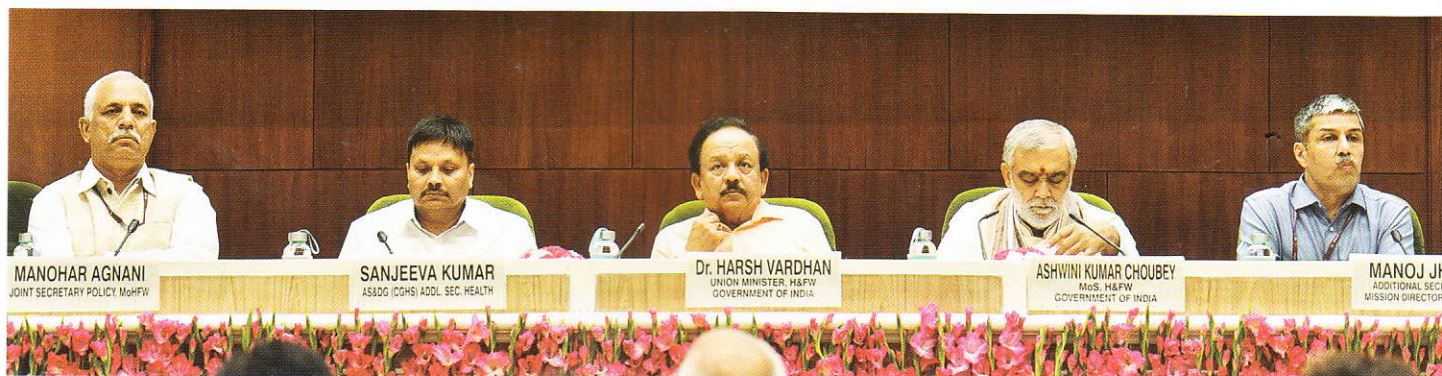


Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare addressing the participants.

Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Hon'ble Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare addressing the participants.

Speaking at the function, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare stressed on the need for generating awareness about family planning and population stabilization. He stated that population and health form the crux of the development process of any nation and Family Planning acts as a very crucial determinant.

Also present at the function were Dr. S. Venkatesh, Director General of Health Services; Shri Sanjeeva Kumar, AS & DG (CGHS); Shri Manoj Jhalani, Additional Secretary & Mission Director (NHM), and Dr. Manohar Agnani, Joint Secretary along with other senior officers of the Ministry and representatives of development partners. Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, represented IAPPD in this workshop.



Dignitaries on the dias.

Asian and African Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development for ICPD+25

August 5-8, 2019, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

With the objective to provide a platform for deepening regional Parliamentarians' understanding of the UNFPA's work and its Nairobi Summit on ICPD 25 and equipping parliamentarians with knowledge and skills to take concrete measures to advance the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and SDGs, the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) organized this meeting.

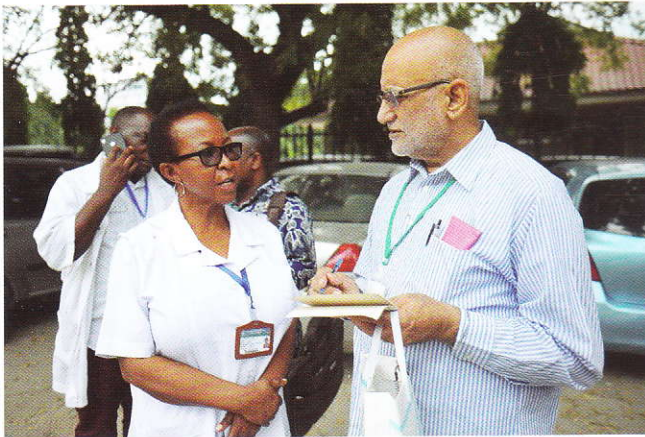


Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP; and Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, IAPPD attended this meeting.

During the meeting, a presentation on 'Parliamentarians' Actions toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' was made by Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP. In her presentation, she reaffirmed India's commitment to SDGs. She

Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP, during the discussion.

said that the constitution of India has laid down road maps for the socio-economic development of the nation which gets reflected in several SDG goals and their targets. The Government of India is strongly committed to the SDGs as evidenced by the statements of the Hon'ble Prime Minister and other senior ministers of India. India is playing a leading role in determining the success of the SDGs globally.



Mr. Manmohan Sharma interacting with the medical staff during field visit.

At the end of the meeting, a Declaration of Commitment was adopted. The parliamentarians ensured stronger political commitment to actualize full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and use their role as Parliamentarians to keep Governments accountable to the commitments made in Cairo and for achieving the SDGs by 2030.



Group photo of the participants.

Arab and Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development for ICPD+25 – Moving Forward the Unfinished Business of the ICPD

September 18-20, 2019, Kingdom of Morocco

The Arab and Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development for ICPD+25 – 'Moving Forward the Unfinished Business of the ICPD' was organized by the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) with the House of Representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco and Forum of Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Kingdom of Morocco on September 18-20, 2019.



Declaration of Commitments.

The meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Abdelhakim Benchamach, President of House of Councilors of Morocco.

Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP, India and Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, IAPPD attended this meeting.

During the meeting, sessions on Finishing the Unfinished Business of the ICPD, Population Dynamics, Population Policies and the SDGs; Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality and Universal Access to SRH; Panel Discussion on Parliamentarians' Roles in Addressing the ICPD Unfinished Agenda, were held.

While chairing the session on 'Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality and Universal Access to SRH', Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP, said that although much has been achieved since the ICPD in 1994, much more has yet to be achieved. The achievement of the ICPD goals will depend on the political will to fill the gaps in laws, policies and funding. Quoting the example of India, she said that as parliamentarians, we have the power to transform the voices of our people into concrete action. We have the power to make a real difference.

At the end of the meeting, a Declaration of Commitment was adopted by the Parliamentarians.



Group photo of the participants.

Launch Ceremony of the New Edition of Chinese Embassy Magazine, "News from China" – China-India Review

April 10, 2019, New Delhi

With the objective to review of the new edition of embassy magazine, "News from China", sharing impressions, comments and suggestions of the members, a launch ceremony was held in New Delhi on April 10, 2019.

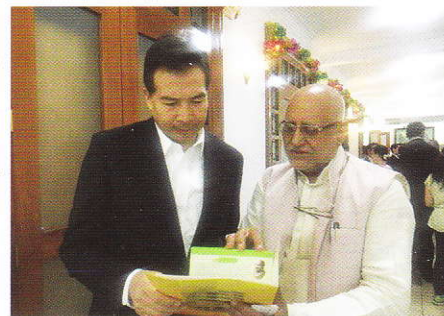
H.E. Ambassador Luo Zhaohui made a keynote speech and launched the new edition of the magazine in presence of eminent guests.



Group photo of the participants.

IAPPD participated in the ceremony.

During deliberations, it was suggested that maximum information should be shared with the stakeholders especially on policies and programmes on population and family planning between both the countries.



Mr. Manmohan Sharma briefing the Hon'ble Ambassador about IAPPD activities.

US Ambassador Kenneth Juster launches initiative to bring Indian Corporates in fight against tuberculosis Launch of "T.B. Pledges" Workplace and Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives

April 25, 2019, New Delhi



Hon'ble Ambassador addressing the participants

The US Ambassador to India H.E. Kenneth I. Juster launched a bold new initiative designed to galvanize India's corporate sector in the fight against tuberculosis (TB) on April 25, 2019 in New Delhi. This initiative supports the Government of India's ambitious goal of eliminating TB by 2025, which would be five years ahead of the UN's Sustainable Development Goal. The initiative creates a shared platform for corporations committed to ending TB in India. The event was held in partnership with the American Chamber of Commerce in India (AMCHAM India) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, IAPPD attended the launch ceremony.

Speaking at the event, Ambassador to India noted, "The United States is proud to be working with the Indian government to bring the corporate sector and civil society together to seek to eradicate this devastating but curable disease. Indian companies can play a key role in assuring a healthy India. We ask all of you here today to get involved in the fight against TB through the TB pledge."

India: Civil Society Representatives and Community Partners meet in Delhi - India CSO Partners Meeting

June 27, 2019, New Delhi

The Global TB Caucus hosted a meeting of key CSO partners engaged in parliamentary advocacy around TB in New Delhi on June 27, 2019. Participants at the meeting used the opportunity to plan for next steps in engaging with Parliamentarians in the national post-UN High Level Meeting (UN HLM) and post-election landscape. Representatives from the Centre for Legislative Research and Advocacy (CLRA), the Global Coalition of TB Activists (GCTA), the Global Fund Advocates Network (GFAN) India Working Group, the Global Fund, Global Health Strategies (GHS), the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, (IAPPD), the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), the India HIV/AIDS Alliance, PRS Legislative Research, REACH, and The Union were present and participated in the discussion. IAPPD was represented by Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary. He highlighted the role of Parliamentarians in the seminar.

India has the highest TB burden in the world and was home to over one quarter of all new infections and deaths in 2017. Each year India loses over 420,000 people to TB. Over the past years, the Indian government has shown strong commitment to fight the national TB epidemic. In March 2017, Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi announced that India would end TB by 2025, 5 years before the global target.

Over the course of the meeting, partners presented their work thus far in engaging elected representatives, and proceeded to work in groups to map up-coming opportunities and the distribution of responsibility for the coming months. Technical sessions on the global work of the Global TB Caucus, the UN High Level Meeting on TB and the composition and history of the India Parliament were conducted in order to build context around TB advocacy plans and priorities. The meeting concluded with participants agreeing on a work plan and action framework that will guide coordination and collective action for the coming months.



Participants sharing their views during the meeting.

PHD Chamber Conclave to help build bridge between state policy makers and industry leaders

September 7, 2019, New Delhi

As part of its mission to empower states and strengthen the interface between the government and industry, the PHD Chamber of Commerce organized a Conclave on the theme “National Ambition and Regional Aspiration” in New Delhi on September 7, 2019,.

The Conclave aimed to provide an interactive platform for state policy-makers and industry leaders, and support the mission of “Making New India” with a focus on areas such as agriculture and food processing, education, skill development and employability, infrastructure, ease of doing business, industry and MSMEs.

Mr. G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, was the Chief Guest of the Conclave. Some of the distinguished speakers include Dr. Shamika Ravi, a member of the PM’s Economic Advisory Council; Dr. Omkar Rai, Director-General, Software Technology Park of India and Dr. Lovneesh Chanana, Vice President (Digital Government), Asia Pacific and Japan, SAP, among others.

Seminar on AYUSH for Prevention and Control of Diabetes

May 31, 2019, New Delhi

India is slowly turning into the World Diabetes Capital and there is an alarming increase in the cases of heart related ailments due to changes in lifestyle which are slowly deteriorating the overall health of a person, reducing his life span.

Global trends indicate that the natural medicine is going to be preferred resort of health care for chronic lifestyle and geriatric disorders and Indian systems of medicine can play a significant role in tackling emerging health problems. AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) play an important role in curbing this life threatening disease if used in the right way.

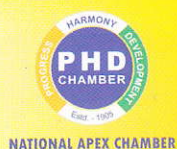
Against this backdrop, a Seminar on AYUSH for Prevention and Control of Diabetes was organized by PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry in New Delhi on May 31, 2019.

The objective of the seminar was to sensitize all the stakeholders regarding importance of the Indian Systems of Medicine in treating lifestyle diseases especially Diabetes and to deliberate on the scope, opportunities and challenges in AYUSH industry.

Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, represented IAPPD in this seminar.

At the end, it was recommended that AYUSH systems are the preferred systems of living and practice for attaining a healthy India and there is a need to promote good health and expand the outreach of health care to our people, particularly those not provided with health cover, through preventive, promotive, mitigating and curative intervention through ISM&H.

Seminar on
AYUSH
for Prevention and
Control of Diabetes



Workshop on 'Municipal Solid Waste Management: Status, Challenges and the Way Forward'

May 29, 2019, New Delhi

India faces major environmental challenges associated with waste generation and inadequate waste collection, transport, treatment and disposal. Current systems in India cannot cope with the volumes of waste generated by an increasing urban population, and its impact on the environment and public health. The challenges and barriers are significant, but so are the opportunities. With this background, a Workshop on 'Municipal Solid Waste Management: Status, Challenges and the Way Forward' was organized by the PHD Chamber in New Delhi on May 29, 2019. Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Secretary, IAPPD, attended this workshop.

During the workshop, deliberations on several aspects of Solid Waste Management in India, practical challenges being encountered while implementing Solid Waste Management Solutions, Technologies available for Waste Minimization and Utilization, Energy from Waste, Successful public-private partnerships, etc. were made by renowned experts in the field.



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