

## Location

Nilokheri is situated on National Highway No. 1 (GT Road) at a distance of 144 Kms from Delhi and 120 Kms from Chandigarh between Karnal and Kurukshetra. It is well connected by Bus and Rail Service from Delhi/Chandigarh and nearby towns of Punjab/HP/Rajasthan.

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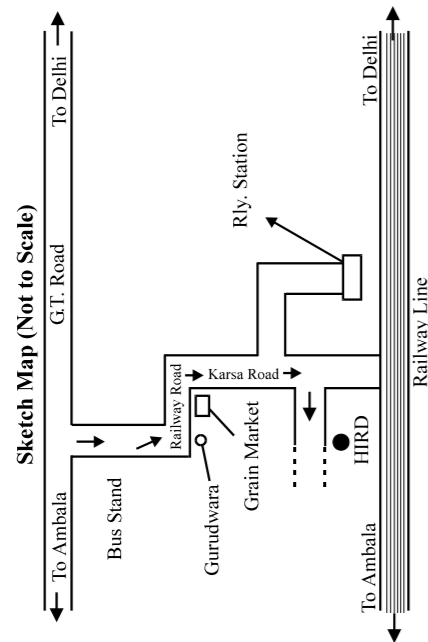
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## About HIRD

Haryana Institute of Rural Development (HIRD), the apex Training and Research Institute in the field of Rural Development in the State, was set up at Nilokheri (Karnal) in 1990 as an autonomous body. HIRD imparts training to different categories of stakeholders in decentralized rural governance and rural development. The Institute also undertakes empirical studies on the above themes.



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## Two Day National Seminar

On

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

(March 22-23, 2010)



**Haryana Institute of Rural Development**

**Nilokheri-132117 (Karnal) Haryana**

### **The Perspective:**

The makers of Indian Constitution had resolved to empower the women in view of the significant role that they had played in the freedom struggle after their mobilization by Mahatma Gandhi in the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1931.

The empowerment of the women was implicit in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution in the promise to secure justice, social, economic and political; equality of status and opportunity; and assuring dignity of the individual. It was to achieve the above objectives that the provision had been made in the chapters on Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy for the empowerment of women.

But, in spite of the above mandate of the Constitution, the women remained un-empowered at all the levels. Their representation in the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas never reached even 10% despite the fact that they constituted almost 50% of India's population. This happened because they were not given reservations in the election of these bodies. Their share in the Panchayati Raj Institutions too remained nominal due to the same reason despite the provisions for their co-option in case of their failure in getting elected.

It was this dismal state of affairs that made Professors Iqbal Narain and VM Sirsikar to observe that there is a wide gap between symbolism and actuality. They rightly concluded that the political rights have failed to bring about the desired changes in the empowerment of women. (Towards Equality, Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, 1975).

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the Indian Constitution (1992) has enabled the women to get one-third share in the Panchayati Raj Institutions. This has given impetus to the demand for the reservation of one-third seats for women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative

Assemblies and culminated in the introduction of a Bill for this purpose in Lok Sabha in 1996. This could, however, not be made a law because of the absence of consensus on this issue. It has once again been moved in 2009. But this seems to be merely a formality as it is unlikely to be accepted by the Parliament owing to the same reason.

### **The Problem and the Issues**

This leads us to the question: Will the provision for the reservation of one-third share for women in the national and state legislatures ensure their empowerment? In this context, the experience of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, however, shows that mere representation of women would not lead to their empowerment. Only those women representatives of the fair sex could be empowered who were well educated, politically aware & articulate and were also economically & psychologically empowered. It too has been found that the empowerment of women also depends upon the historical, social, cultural and political context of a State.

### **The Theme & the Participants**

It is in the above backdrop that the Haryana Institute of Rural Development, Nilokheri has decided to organize a Multi-disciplinary and **Inter-disciplinary Two-Day National Seminar on Women Empowerment on March 22-23, 2010.**

Its broad objective is to discuss the status of women empowerment at the national, state & local levels to identify the bottlenecks in its way and to suggest suitable strategies for removing the same.

The participants shall include Social Scientist from the Universities, Experts from Training/ Research Institutions, Women Activists in the NGOs and the Media Persons.

### **The Sub-Themes of the Seminar are:**

1. The Concepts of Women Empowerment and Gender Justice.
2. Impact of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment of the Indian Constitution on Women Empowerment
3. Representation of Women in National and the State Legislatures and the Need of Reservation for them.
4. Economic Empowerment of Women and the Role of Self-Help Groups.
5. Education & Women Empowerment
6. Socialization Process and Women Empowerment
7. Gender Budgeting and Women Empowerment
8. Role of Civil Society in Women Empowerment
9. Capacity Building and Women Empowerment
10. Any other related sub-theme

### **The Call for Papers**

Being a well known expert in the field, you are requested to participate and present a paper in the Seminar. We shall be, as per past practice, publishing the selected paper in an edited volume. Kindly send a brief abstract of your paper by 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2010 and the full length paper by March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010 through E-mail [dirhird1@rediffmail.com](mailto:dirhird1@rediffmail.com) & [hirdnlk@yahoo.co.in](mailto:hirdnlk@yahoo.co.in). Also convey your phone/mobile numbers and e-mail address for communication with you.

Only those participants whose papers are selected by the Institute for presentation shall be paid TA as per their entitlement. However, the HIRD shall also be making arrangements for the free boarding and lodging in the Hostel of the Institute.