

UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION, PUNE

Affiliated to Indian Federation of University Women's Associations (IFUWA) and
Graduate Women International (GWI)

progress-eves

BIENNIUM - 2019-2021, 2021- 2023

June - 2019 to June - 2023



◆ *President's Platform:*

So many memories of so many things that have occurred in the last four years of UWAP (University Women's Association- Pune) spring forth in my mind, as I bid good-bye to a job that has given me so much enrichment, making it the most eventful journey of my life. It was about heading an organization, working with people, and making the most of adverse situations given the fact that over two years of this assignment were shrouded beneath a very vexing pandemic. It was indeed a great learning to keep things moving and happening in the parallel world of cyberspace and hold things together despite the lull forced by the pandemic.

The top priority during the pandemic for UWAP was to keep our hostel residents safe during these unprecedented times. The residents were exceptionally cooperative and all the 22 girls, who resided in the hostel during that time, adhered to the rules and regulations stipulated for their safe keep under the watchful and kind eye of our warden Christina. There was not a single case of COVID among the residents or the house-keeping staff who helped keep the building clean and sanitized, nor was there a single day that when the hostel was shut down. It continued to function like a well-oiled clock despite the unsurmountable challenges. This victory of sorts merits an applause for the staff and people of our Hostel.

The other long-pending work that was finally concluded successfully was that of filing of Change Reports with the Office of Charity Commissioner. It had been slumbering for fifty long years and is now finally complete! This work translated to over eighty hours of time spent at the court and with the lawyers or simply standing in the court for the verdict to be announced at every call. All the anxious waiting aside, we are happy to announce that it is now done and signed, and the slate is clear for the fresh team to take over the new regime.

Two major facelifts have transpired during this time. The physical building of the hostel received a fresh coat of

paint within and without, and its worn-out windows have been freshly replaced. The building looks daisy-fresh today making it a happy space for residents to inhabit and ready to receive delegates slated for the IFUWA Asia Meet in the month of February 2024.



The other facelift was the UWAP logo that acquired a personality of its own. Our new logo, displayed besides, has now replaced the old IFUWA logo and sits pretty in the foyer of the Hostel building. The UWAP website is reinstated with a fresh look and is in place now making it a gateway for aspiring

residents and scholarship enthusiasts to gain access to UWAP (www.uwapune.com). We also have a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/uwapune/) and Linked-In (www.linkedin.com/company/uws-pune/) profile just to make our presence felt and accessible to the world at large and keep in-step with the digital world. The feedback flowing in from offshore countries encourages us to believe that we as UWAP are indeed being noticed. The media manager masterminding our site ensures that our in-house events receive attention on social networking sites.

COVID compelled us to take some very heart-breaking decisions during this time frame. Owing to the pandemic, **Dipika Bal Mandir** held in the basement of our Hostel building, had to be shut down. The problems it faced were multifarious. The basement became damp and molded due to flooding of rainwater. Had we continued using this basement, it would surely have an adverse impact on the health of tiny children. Added, the parents had not cleared the long-standing dues of the children's fees, despite making repeated calls and requests and thereby weakening the financial health of the school. Moreover, as per new government rules it was mandatory for us to add 2nd standard to our school even though we had no space for it. Owing to these several factors we finally had to shut down the school. The long serving staff was given a decent gratuity for closure of service.

Chhandarang too took a back seat since no human interaction seemed safe to carry on activities during the pandemic. But as of today, it is picking up activity and soon it will gather its vibrant momentum.

On the brighter side though, pandemic taught us to get a parallel universe of cyberspace and make the most of it. The R and D unit of UWA organized several programs on legal literacy work which was further continued to the wider international platforms through Zoom webinars. The theme of POSH (Prevention of sexual harassment) which was picked by us five years ago, has been sustained through all these years too, as the problem is protracted, widespread and surfaces with a new facet each day. The international webinars were devoted to this topic for the member countries all over the world, especially, under the auspices of India-Egypt Partnership program which garnered the interests of countries like Mexico, Canada and Britain requesting us to conduct such programs with them too!

UWAP has been rising and shining high on the international platform too. It takes the honor of the most highly represented UWA of the country with GWI. A total of six members are elected on the GWI platform: **Dr. Meera Bondre**, working as Vice President Membership Development committee, **Dr. Ujwala Shinde**, working as Vice President on the Legal and Governance committee, **Ms. Neelam Jagdale**- working member on the Resolutions committee, **Ms. Medha Ranade**-Member Projects committee, **Ms. Neeta Patwardhan**- Member Finance committee and **Ms. Rekha Monani**, Hegghoffet committee.

The credit for reviving *SAARCFUW* as *SAARCGWI* goes to the work put in by our Managing Trustee **Dr. Meera Bondre**, which is yet another feather in our cap. The body comprises of **Ms. Ranjana Banerjee** the President, **Dr. Meera Bondre**, Vice President, and our Association Representative **Ms. Veena Raman** as the Secretary.

In an endeavor to celebrate and honor the legacy dignity and hard work put in by the earlier UWA members, UWAP in its program Naari Shakti felicitated its senior members - **Dr. Zainab Poonawalla**, **Ms. Vinayabala Mehta**, **Ms. Mini Grant** and **Ms. Freny Tarapore**.

I was chosen to speak on the topic The work of Women Empowerment conducted through UWA in yet another effort spearheaded by Ambassador **Dyaneshwar Mulay** titled the Movement of Positivity. This event was shared on Facebook platform.

While I have walked you through the zenith and nadir of my tenure here as UWAP president, I deeply appreciate the help and efforts of my team members who saw me through this journey and made it such a pleasant one and without whose help we could not have achieved what we have here.

Wishing my successors, the very best for their tenure in this fine organization!

Good luck and cheer.

Neelam Jagdale
President UWA

News In Brief

● *Sanyukta Stree Sanstha:*

At the local level, UWAP was felicitated by the Pune-based *Sanyukt Stree Sanstha* for having served the area of women empowerment and providing a safe habitat for girls to live and work for over 50 years. UWAP was chosen to be one of the ten organizations picked by this institution that had served women in the city for over fifty years. This was indeed a recognition for UWA for having consistently worked for half a century keeping a good institution going.



Movement of Positivity is an activity started by Ambassador Mr. Dyaneshwar Mulay through his NGO. Our president **Ms. Neelam Jagdale** gave a talk on *Mahila Sabalikarnacha Khestratil UWA sansthechekarya*, delineating the work done by UWA over the half century in the service of women empowerment.

This event was shared live on the Facebook platform where several viewers had logged in.

◆ *The Stalkers and Sexual Harassment in the New Digital World.*

How safe are women from sexual harassment at workplace in digital new world?

Not safe, really, as per the data reported on cyber crime against women. Almost 58 % women all over the world undergo this harassment in one form or the other. This sexual harassment mirrors the harassment from real life into the cyber space but in a different way. The medium itself becomes the new playground for the old ailment. Cyberspace it is! Women get sexually harassed through cyber space consistently and extensively all over the world.

Getting one more step ahead in the quest for helping women save themselves from sexual harassment was, the webinar on **Cyber Security Trends and Awareness to avoid Harassment** conducted by **Mr. Yogesh Thanage** held on April 18th, 2023, for UWAP and international delegates all over the GWI fraternity of women in their endeavour to bring about awareness about all kinds of sexual harassments at workplace.



Mr. Yogesh Thanage works for his own setup *Shellstrong Technologies Private Limited*, based in Pune that offers cyber security solution to Indian corporates. What made **Mr. Thanage** a special guest and a speaker for the UWAP specifically, was the fact that he has been an ex-student of our very own of *Dipika Bal Mandir*!

In his crisp and informative presentation, **Mr. Thanage** expounded the nature of the cyber crimes against women, its extent, and the solutions that India offers to curb and it to keep the country's women safe. "The problem," he said, "is the lack of awareness about it and knowledge and commitment of people to work to control it".

Defining what amounts to cyber harassment, **Mr. Thanage** further stated that it refers to any type of harassment, bullying, or threatening behaviour that occurs through digital communication channels such as social media, emails, text messages, or online forums.

Listing the most common and rampant of cyber crimes committed against women, he said, were cyber harassment, cyber blackmail, online threats, cyber pornography, posting and publishing of obscene sexual content, stalking, bullying, defamation, morphing and establishing of fake profiles.

Cyber harassment, akin to the sexual harassment, has the very same consequences to the victim's mental and emotional well-being, often causing anxiety, depression, and even sometimes leading to suicide. Such crimes can also impact their personal and professional lives, leading to loss of reputation, employment, and relationships.

Such crimes, as we all know, have already been addressed, to some extent, in the mainstream Bollywood cinema as well.

Being plagued by the COVID-19 pandemic since 2019 was not enough for all of us. When life began to be conducted entirely in cyber space, the crime here also increased. The cyberspace crime in 2023 spiked by 63% as compared to that in 2019. From a mere 10,000 reported case before pandemic, it rose to over 50,000 cases being officially reported in India alone. What augments this specific kind of crime is the ease of anonymity, exponential impact, remote execution, its silent nature, and the humongous increase in online traffic. This is further aided by the lack of awareness amongst the technology-savvy and non-savvy users and the lack of technical knowledge amongst Law enforcement agencies.

Mr. Thanage prescribed various strategies to get 'cyber fit'. Some of these were, to strictly enable 2nd factor authentication in all your email accounts, not let others see your connections/ friends, abstain from over posting on social media, from accepting friend requests from unknown people even if the user has several friends in common or send confidential information through a social networking site. In addition, one must get into the practice of periodically searching for fake accounts and be aware of which links you click and what software you download and install from the e-social media posts. And, most importantly, to scrupulously verify offers and shopping deals popping through social media.

Mr. Thanage also brought to the attention of the audience the sites that record and address online cyber crimes and harassment created by the government of India. One such site was <https://cybercrime.gov.in> and <https://ncw.nic.in/> which registers all kinds of criminal complaints from women.

Needless to say, the audience stayed riveted to this presentation, given the update on information and its exponential relevance to women's e-life. Is it any surprise that we had several international delegates asking for the copy of this recording and the presentation!!

◆ *Revival Of SAARCFUW As SAARCGWI: Another new milestone*

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which is an intergovernmental organization of eight countries in South Asia was established on 8th December 1985 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This was because of the efforts of their late President Mr Zia-ur-Rehman, who is called the Father of SAARC. The Heads of countries like Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka formally became a part of it for trade, and collective economic, technological, and social development. The motto of the SAARC organization is 'Deeper Integration for Peace and Prosperity'.

Members from Bhutan and Maldives, who were not members of IFUW (now Graduate Women International-GWI) were invited as observers. As SAARC maintained diplomatic relations with the UN, and had developed links with the European Union, representatives from several other countries were also present.

In response to a call from SAARC leaders for increased women's participation, the Sri-Lankan Federation of University Women led the formation of SAARCFUW at a conference held in Colombo from 17-19 July 1995. Prof Chitra Ghosh, the then-president of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW), endorsed the Charter signed by members from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Ms. Jezima Ismail from Sri Lanka was the first President of SAARCFUW and led a delegation to the office of their Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Mr. Laksham Kadirgamar** on 17 th July 1995 when he expressed his support for the formation of SAARCFUW.

The historic 14th SAARC Summit was hosted in Delhi by the Honourable Prime Minister, **Dr. Manmohan Singh** of India, 3-4 April 2007. **Mr. Hamid Karzai**, President of Afghanistan, himself attended the Summit and Afghanistan officially joined SAARC as the 8th country. Since then, for many years India has been supporting Afghanistan along with the other SAARC countries. The summit covered a variety of subjects aimed at deepening ties within this regional grouping.

Despite all this, today we know a lot needs to be done together in the eight SAARC member-countries and there is a felt need to put in joint efforts towards agricultural towards women-empowerment in various fields – be it agriculture, education, infrastructure development, energy cooperation etc.

Different countries which have held the office of SAARCFUW have been Sri Lanka 1995-1998, Bangladesh 1998-2001, India 2001-2004, Nepal 2004-2007, Pakistan 2007-2010. [every three years, among the countries where National federations or Associations affiliated to IFUW existed.]

Unfortunately, since 2007, no meeting or conference was held and SAARCFUW became non-functional. That is the SAARC continued to work but its association with IFUW was lost.

For the last two years, I have been tirelessly working to rebuild this connection. I thank **Purobi Ghosh Mohan** of WGU from Mumbai for making available the original Charter of 1995. I am happy today to announce that now SAARCFUW has been revived and restructured as SAARCGWI and the Headquarters are in India. The Board and the Executive Committee has been formed, with four Vice Presidents from four NFAs from the member-countries of GWI, along with the President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Communications Officer from India, CIR from Pakistan, and three members from each NFA, as the Executive Committee members. The Charter is renewed and modified, the logo is formed by **Saira Banoo**, and **Nabia Bari** of Pakistan and Bangladesh respectively. The first SAARCGWI Meeting took place on 25 th May 2023.

I conducted this inaugural meeting and provided some background information. **Dr. Ranjana Banerjee**, President IFUWA/SAARCGWI officially welcomed everyone and introduced the SAARCGWI team. Short informative speeches were made by the GWI President, Patrice Wellesley Cole, Executive Director, Stacy Dry Lara, Vice President Projects, **Mildred Asmah**, and Treasurer, **Sudha Srivastav** from the GWI Board.

The logo and the charter are filed in GWI office. The video from the 25 May SAARCGWI meeting is on the GWI Vimeo channel and can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/831791046>

After reviving UWASIA in 2021, I stated that we would now strive to revive SAARCFUW. Today, it feels great to see that all our efforts have paid off, and that my dream has come true.

Dr Meera Bondre,

***GWI Vice President Membership**

***Vice President UWAsia and SAARCGWI**

***Managing Trustee UWA Pune, An affiliate of IFUWA**



◆ Sustaining the movement of POSH: Partnering with Egypt.

UWAP has been on the forefront in working towards awareness and advocacy in favour of various issues for its members as well as the society. UWAP undertook the cause of Prevention of sexual harassment of women at workplace (POSH) since 2017 and has been serious in pushing the agenda in sustained manner over the years. Through its R & D wing, UWAP has conducted various awareness sessions for students of Law, Nursing and for its own members as well as its own Hostel residents.

An informal dip-stick study had revealed that while mostly all are aware that there is law against sexual harassment at workplace, most are not aware of its redressal mechanisms when harassment occurs. This finding acted as an impetus for UWAP to conduct these program on an extensive scale. It took upon itself to bring about the awareness on how to ensure that more and more organisations set up a legally approved process in handling this issue.

The Central Committee meetings are usually organised by IFUWA where all UWA's come together. One such meeting had been organized at UWAP in 2019. A POSH seminar was conducted on that occasion. From this point on, UWAP moved from local awareness sessions to national level. UWAP is today proud to have taken it on a global diaspora partnering with women of other countries to hold hands to deal with the universal working woman's bane.

This occurred through the Marketplace platform along with Egyptian partners. The Egyptian partners were eager to understand best practices that can be followed for such preventions, creating awareness and advocacy through various methods. Since it was our first program through the Marketplace platform with the Egyptian partners, we expected to meet many new friends who wished to work for this cause all over the globe.



Three webinars were planned and executed online between India and Egypt under the Marketplace initiative of the Graduate Women's Association (GWI). This initiative was offered to all the countries who are the members of GWI under the flagship program for working towards the growth of membership of all the organisations. The Marketplace is created to work jointly on projects of common interests, and at the same time giving a chance to build friendships among the members across the world. The India-Egypt partnership program was announced on 12th September 2020, as a part of GWI- NFA (National Federation and Association) to NFA stream of the Marketplace. It was initiated by our President

Ms. Neelam Jagdale and IFUWA President **Ms. Ranjana Banerjee** and **Dr. Meera Bondre**. **Dr. Ujjwala Shinde**, our legal expert, was the supervisor NFA to NFA stream of this international project that spread out over 6 months. Altogether 3 webinars were conducted under this auspices, of which two were organised by UWAP.

Other than developing friendship and camaraderie, it seemed good idea to unite over a cause of mutual concern, brainstorm, understand and learn from each other and go beyond 'greet and meet'. It was also a step to go beyond merely understanding countries via culture and cuisine and instead hold hands to overcome a problem that womankind faces. This seemed like a fitting bold initiative to mark the GWI crossing its centenary – to unite over problems rather than unite over bread. Sexual harassment at workplace is a topic that resonated well with educated working women making a bold foray into the brave new world.

The very **first** webinar was organised by India on **September 12th 2020**. It dealt with how Indian women working out of the home faced sexual harassment at work. It further explained how India passed an act in 2014 and reiterated its redressal mechanism. The role of women centric non-governmental ICC (Internal Complaints Committee) was further explained.

The **second** webinar was organised by the Egypt chapter on **November 21, 2020**. Here they explained the situations faced by them in their country. Also, some methods and steps taken by the Egyptian government to tackle the harassment issues pertaining to street violence and harassment.

The **third** and final webinar was organised jointly by India and Egypt on **May 29th, 2021** where international participation was the highest. We received the registrations from more than 100 members. However, it was attended by around 75 members. The absenteeism could have been due to time difference in various European countries.

UWAP show cased a real-life study of a corporate in the city of Pune to show how an enquiry is conducted, what were the 'dos and don'ts' of it and how ICC can be a powerful body to handle case and offer justice to the aggrieved women in such POSH case. The Egyptians had a lot of questions which were answered to their satisfaction by our in-house experts. Other interesting facts were shared by friends from Japan, Canada and USA. Though all these countries have women joining their workforce way before us, some countries still had to pass a law restricting such behaviour. Japan had one being passed as late as June 2020. All the countries seemed keen on partnering with such programs.

The significant learning from these interactions was that most women of the world undergo similar set of agonies at work place no matter how economically advanced their country is. Insecurity, safety, and sustenance with respect to job is not always assured. Freedom of choice is not necessarily entailed in economic freedom. Struggle for a safe working place is right of every working woman for which we need to unite, demand, and obtain.



UWAP had a zoom webinar organised to mark the International Women's Day. **Dr. Vasanthakumari**, a gender and POSH specialist from Chennai, and also a UWA member from there, presented a session on prevention of Sexual Harassment at work place on March 5/2022. This was specially designed to "Train the Trainers" who are already in the space of offering Awareness Sessions to other people in the society. This was to enhance Trainers' existing skills, update them with latest happenings in the field and arm them with new case studies pertaining to POSH. The session was helpful and met the needs for what it was designed.

News In Brief

• Environment Cell:



Convener of the environment cell **Ms. Manjushri Parasnis** organized a webinar under the joint auspices IFUWA and UWA for a lecture by **Dr. Gurudas Nulkar**, the Trustee, Ecological Society of India on 30th April 2022 on the topic of **Biodiversity, Ecosystem and Human Health**.

Dr. Nulkar is a renowned scholar and a recipient of the prestigious *C. D. Deshmukh Award* in Economic Literature for his book in Marathi entitled *Anarthshastra*. He has been an expert on several committees and panels, including UN-ESCAP program, the government of Maharashtra, and Pune Divisional Commissioner's office. He contributed to the Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority Draft Plan as an ecological expert. It was an insightful talk he gave through the topic of his choice addressing the issues of impacts of consumption-driven lifestyles on the natural environment. As economist and engineers have their own perspectives to solve this problem, he dwelled on whether human beings ought to save nature for the sake of nature as

from common man's viewpoint or is there a deeper connection yet to be revealed. He further explained the role of biodiversity on the planet and how eco systems connect the human economy and human existence.

• Jeevitnadi participation:

Jeevitnadi is Pune citizens' movement that firmly believes that river revival is possible through active participation of the citizens.

Inspired by prominent ecologist Late Shri Prakash Gole, alumni of Ecological Society came together in 2014 to work for revival of rivers in Pune. This was a group of individuals from diverse professional fields who were passionate about environment conservation and their focus is on changing perception of people about the rivers and bringing back the lost connection particularly in the urban areas.

This initiative to protect rivers evolved into *Jeevitnadi*. Since 2016, it is a section 8 company, registered under the name ***Jeevitnadi – Living River Foundation***.



Jeevitnadi works on various projects and is associated as one of the founders of *Ramnadi* restoration mission. It is also on advisory panels and recipient of many accolades and awards.

UWA women have decided to show their solidarity with this movement by their active participation.

◆ Celebrating Hostel Day and Hostelites :



Hostel day which also happens to be the Foundation Day of UWAP is celebrated in the month of February each year.

The Pune Police from Chaturshingi Police station always give us a demo on self-defence to the hostelites to be able to defend themselves in times of crisis like an attack on their person. This initiative was taken to ensure police help for Hostel girls since 1917 and continues to flourish even today. Here the police appoint Beat Marshals whose cell number is shared with all the hostel girls and are therefore called the Buddy Cops.

The Hostel girls, who usually all tend to meet only on this day at the same time make this day their own with all the dancing, singing, theatrics and eating.

Over the four years, apart from the usual fun, this day was marked by retiring our long-standing peon **Mr. Bharat Khapre** and organising lecture by an Accountant to dispense accounting wisdom to Hostel residents. This day is also day for thanksgiving our Hostel staff to whose service we are greatly indebted.



● *Hostelites Share their experiences:*

A place for amity and serenity.



Prajwal Wadettiwar

UWA, the Working Women's Hostel is a heaven for women who want to achieve their professional goals by also experiencing a nurturing and secure environment. As a resident of UWA Hostel I can attest to the exceptional experiences and a sense of community that thrive within its walls. From its ideal location for evening walks to the unwavering support system among its residents, UWA is a testament to the empowerment and solidarity of women in the workplace.

Nestled near the Tekdi areas of the city, UWA benefits from the strategic locations that offers numerous advantages to its residents. One of the most remarkable aspects in the opportunity for an evening walk in the area. The peaceful and picturesque surroundings provide a much-needed respite from demanding work demands of the workday allowing the residents to unwind, reflect and rejuvenate.

The hostel is also home to a vibrant community of women from all walks of life. All of us women come together to support each other in our professional and personal endeavors. We share meals, laugh and tears, and create a sense of belonging that is truly special.

UWA is more than just a place to live, it's a home away from home for women who are striving to achieve their dreams. It's a place where women can be themselves, grow, and thrive.

One of the most appreciated elements of life at UWA is the resident's strong sense of camaraderie and support. Living with other working women fosters an environment of understanding, empathy, and encouragement. The relationships developed within these walls go beyond housemates to become lifelong friendships and professional networks. The female residents look out for one another, creating a space to share stories, seek advice and celebrate accomplishments. UWA'S collective strength and unwavering support system enable women to face problems with confidence and resilience.

The common areas allow inhabitants to socialize, exchange ideas and build a sense of community. UWA Hostel is more than simply a hostel; it's an incubator that recognizes women's potential and equips them with the tools they need to flourish in all facets of life.

I came to the city of Pune from Uttar Pradesh to do research fellowship in Symbiosis College. The UWA hostel seems to be the finest option among all the places I had considered. This hostel embodies more than just a place to reside. It is vibrant. And close-knit community. That offers a secure and affordable living environment.

The hostel provides a place inhabit where women like me can thrive, fostering sense of belonging and companionship. It not only fulfils a practical needs for accommodation but also creates an atmosphere conducive to personal and professional growth.

The hostel emphasis on safety is paramount. Ensuring that residence feel protected and secure all the time. This reassurance allows us to focus on our professional development, without the unnecessary anxiety. Moreover, affordability plays a vital role in the hostel appeal. It provides an economical option for those of us seeking are comfortable living space while managing our expenses effectively.

What sets it apart is the sense of community which it fosters. Living among fellow women pursuing various professional paths creates an enriching environment. I can engage in meaningful conversations, share experiences, make friends, and support each other throughout our journey. This companionship helps to alleviate the sense of being lonely in an unfamiliar city. Making it more like a home away from home.

In conclusion, the UWA's Working Women's Hostel in Pune has proven to be a remarkable choice for me and many other women in my circumstances. Choosing it has undoubtedly enhanced my experience as I embark on this new phase of my life in Pune.



Prakriti Chahar



NabanitaChoudhury

Pune means sacred land or Punyabhoomi, as described by the great poet Rabindranath Tagore. It is in fact a blessing that was bestowed on me when I first got a call from Pune. For, in my heart I was craving for a life to stay absorbed in my thoughts and study. I got this opportunity after I left Bengal and soak in the glory of this city of Pune.

The University Working Women's Hostel is most preferred place of living. Its location is ideal, it's calmness soothing and its facilities are fantastic. I have always wanted to lead a quiet life far away from the maddening crowd and turn in internally. The hostel has provided me all that I wanted. I share my immense gratitude towards my friends and warden for making my stay so beautiful. This phase will be cherished as the quietest meditative span of my life where twenty-four hours of the day seem short. I am now in the process of counting the blessings that life has gifted me with. And living

here in this Hostel is one of them.

News In Brief

• Members Shining Bright:

It is a proud moment for UWAP whose member **Padmaja Jalihal** was recently felicitated for a distinctive achievement. Her enterprise **Indic Inspirations**, a Pune-based Culture Startup, has won the Maharashtra Startup Award 2022 during the Maharashtra Startup Week. She has been the founder director of **Heart for Art Trust**. An MBA in Finance, she earlier worked with CRB Capital Markets and was part of the team at Sivan Securities that launched the initial Café Coffee Day.

Startup Week is a flagship initiative to provide opportunities for startups to work with the government and bring innovation to governance. **Indic Inspirations** was selected as a winner from the top 100 finalists amongst 1100 startup applications from around the country. **Indic Inspirations** narrates stories of India's tradition, culture, heritage, and achievements through its products. Padmaja loves arts and crafts and has been a collector of artifacts from around India and the world.



Obituary:

We regret to announce the sad demise of our senior members **Ms. Malathi Sankaran** and **Ms. Jayashree Bedekar** whose loss has created a void in the vibrancy of the UWAP.

They will be missed very deeply.

◆ Open House Programs:



Open House had been busy conducting programs online and offline. By 23rd Aug of 2019 we were still not swamped under the Covid, and so the program of “*The Fabrics of India, TaanaBaana*” was held on 23rd Aug 2019 at UWA Hostel Hall. **Ms. Phoola Kaul**, the convener for Open House offered an exposition and showcased fabrics of India and was kept open for members to view and strut with their own collections of the same. There is no greater melody than women and sarees, so the program was enthusiastically received and attended.



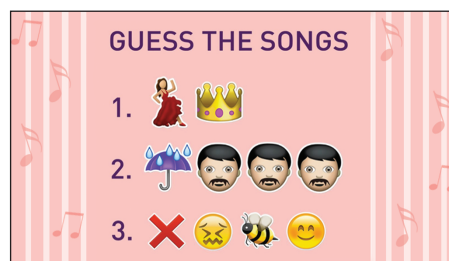
Again, the venue for *Diwali Mela* was Hostel Hall where the annual sales gala took place on the 12th & 13th Oct 2019. Like always, there was food, jewellery, clothes, fabrics, plants, household decorative items, kitchenware on sale. UWA made net profit on this activity.



In a contest where about ten participants partook in a competition for *Healthy Cooking Contest – Soups and Salads*, our President **Neelam Jagdale** won the competition, who had cooked the nutritious *ambeel* made from jawar cereal on 7th March 2020 at UWA Hostel.

Covid set a new tone for fun when life went digital. **Phoola Kaul** took the challenge seriously to make fun happen and brought in **Kiran Mehta** to entertain UWA members with her online games.

Suhana Safar was a Bollywood melody program where members filled in blanks for old Bollywood melodies. *Brain Teaser* where members to make one word with 2 pictures. *Galat ko sahi batao* was about differences between apparently similar pictures. *Bollywood Lovers* teased women's brains to give the name of the movies of famous celluloid lovers. There were more of such *Fun n Masti Whats App Quiz* one of which dealt with cooking and was titled *Khana Khazana*.



A deeply moving program was presented by **Mr. Vishwas Kale**, scholar on the famous lyricist Sahir Ludhianvi titled *Sahir ke Geet*; which took the members on a melodious memory lane on 2nd July 2022.



Felicitations of some of our very senior members who have completed 90 years of age and were still active in UWAP, was organized on 21st Dec 2023. These members were **Mini Grant, Dr. Zainab Poonawalla, Dr. Vinaybala Mehta and Freny Tarapore**. UWAP also felicitated its own members for their selection on the GWI committees.

◆ *Scholarship and Youth Wing:*

● *Scholarship:*

The convenor for Scholarship and Youth wing has been **Ms. Preeti Pawar** under whose diligence the scholarships were disbursed to girls of various age groups ranging between 18 to 25 yrs. These recipients aspired to do either their Ph. D or study for post-graduation or to do their Bachelor of Education study or peruse undergrad studies or were students who were physically disabled. For year 2019-20 we had **68** students who qualified; for year 2020-21 we had **18** students and for year 2022-23 we had **51** students who became the recipients of the UWA scholarship.

● *Nava Durga Sessions for Youth:*

The students who get UWA scholarships usually come from economically weaker sections of society are not necessarily adept at thinking skills, communications skills, decision-making skills, or inter-relationship skills. Having sensed this need in youth, UWAP came up with a program titled **Nava Durga** and empower these young bright girls with the well-established psychometric tools and techniques to make a more wholesome person out of them.

This was an initiative of our ex-President and ex-Trustee **Ms. Malathi Kalmadi** who instated updating our younger members under the Youth Wing.



Nava Durga sessions were anchored by **Archana Deshmukh** who exposed the participants to the concepts **Johari window**, **SMART** and **SWOT** analysis. All these concepts taken in tandem help an individual survive successfully in a demanding environment and be able to achieve set goals. These sessions were augmented with the meditation practices as well.

The **Johari Window** is a framework for understanding conscious and unconscious bias that can help increase self-awareness and our understanding of others thereby helping people better understand their relationships both with themselves, and with others. As such, it's a useful technique for improving an individual's self-awareness and development in group situations. It also aids two-way communication with the group.

The **SWOT** stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, and so a SWOT analysis is a technique for assessing these four aspects of your business. This can also be applied to personal analysis.

The **SMART** acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound. This framework provides the framework for setting clear, attainable goals in self and project management.

The youth in the UWA group stood hugely benefitted by this exposure which was conducted over one Sunday a month. This was an offline session from 17 Nov 2019. It moved to online sessions from March 2020 up to June 2020. Given that its concluding sessions took place at the height of Covid, it happened to be perfectly primed for the best outcome for the youngsters who felt rather incarcerated in confines of walls.
