



### Dalit women first participation in CEDAW

Dalit women for the first time in the history participated in the 49th CEDAW session. FEDO president Durga Sob, General Secretary Kala Swarnakar and senior board member Renu Sijapati attended the CEDAW meeting in New York, USA. The 49th Session of CEDAW was from 11-29 July 2011. FEDO president Durga Sob spoke about the Dalit women issues and challenges in one of the discussion on women's human rights in conflict and post-conflict contexts. She enlightens the Dalit women situation during the conflict and gave recommendation to make Transitional Justice System Dalit and marginalized friendly, specifically women, reintegration package based on their specific needs, culture and tradition. She also recommends the Truth Reconciliation Commission should ensure no forgiveness in case of sexual violence and protect the human rights of marginalized women especially vulnerable Dalit women.



*FEDO President Durga Sob speaking on Dalit women situation during conflict and post conflict situation in CEDAW Session.*

The CEDAW is composed of twenty-three experts with expertise in the fields covered by the Convention and usually invites eight State Parties to

present their reports at each three-week Session. In this 49th Session, along with Nepal, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Italy, Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Zambia are presenting their reports to the Committee.

During the session FEDO team shared our lobby document which was prepared by FEDO with coordination with IDSN. This lobby document contains the key concepts affecting the human rights situation of Dalit women in Nepal. This also includes the current political situation of Nepal and opportunities and the recommendations for the CEDAW and UN recommendations on Dalit women in Nepal. CEDAW members raised the Dalit women's issues and concerns to the delegation of Nepal government in the CEDAW session. During the session participant acquired the knowledge about the principles & guidelines, different themes and methodology. The lobby document was very effective that the discussion was made around the recommendation made by us.

Nepal's non-government organizations presented a shadow report in CEDAW. The CEDAW session discussed the Fourth and Fifth Periodic Report of the Government of Nepal. 49 NGOs on the leadership of Forum for Women Law and Development (FWLD) have jointly prepared the shadow report by incorporating the left over issues on July 18. The shadow report comprises 25 issues those raised in the Article 1-16 of Women Convention such as violence against women, women's rights, nationality, employment, health including reproductive health, economic and social rights, Dalit women, woman migrant

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## Dalit women pressurizing for Dalit women friendly Constitution

Women's pressure campaign was started jointly by different women's rights organizations along with FEDO for establishing Peace and constitution through pressurizing government and CA members. Right after the 3 months extension of CA tenure, women restarted the campaign "Let's go to Kathmandu for Peace and Constitution" from 15th June 2011.

FEDO has been involved in campaign from the beginning. Women from different part of Nepal and members of different organizations gathered with their demands in Baneshwor for pressurizing the government and CA members. FEDO's centre General Secretary Kala Swarnakar, Senior member Renu Sijapati, Treasurer Kamala Bishwakarma and Secretary Punyawati Ramtel along with FEDO's Dalit women participated in the campaign on 29th June and 2nd August 2011 where 60 and 35 women members participated respectively. They demanded for Dalit and Dalit women friendly constitution and breakthrough of political deadlock which was hindering the timely drafting of the constitution.



*Dalit women sitting near in Baneshwor pressurizing CA members and government.*

## Women's festival Teej Celebration

As usual, Nepali women's greatest festival "Haritalika Teej" was celebrated this year with full joy and happiness throughout Nepal. During this festival, a day long fasting is kept by both married and unmarried women and worship in Shiva temples. They gather around their neighborhood and in shiva temple and perform singing and dancing whole day.

On 25th August 2011, FEDO organized a get together on "Dar khaane" program where Dalit women activists, Dalit CA members, FEDO board members and staffs participated. FEDO management made arrangement of singing and dancing programme with lunch for all the women which all of the women enjoyed a lot. FEDO's male staff also joined the program and danced together. At last, all the Dalit women and other participants had "dar"/lunch together and exchanged each other the best wishes for peace and Dalit women friendly constitution in the country.



## Public Speaking Training

FEDO organized a three-days Public Speaking Training at FEDO Central Office Lalitpur from 22 to 24 August 2011 where representatives from various sister organizations of different political parties and civil society were invited. Mr. Meen Bishwakarma acted as chief facilitator for the overall session during the period. As a guest speaker, CA member and Nepali Congress central board member Ishwori Neupane, CA member Laxmi Pariyara, CA member Bishwo Bhakta Dulal (Aahuti) and Youth leader Nain Singh Mahar were invited to address various sessions on Dalit women rights, role of youth in politics, the present Constitution deadlock and role of political parties. It was realized during the training that the main cause of deadlock in writing the new constitution was the different political ideologies held by various political parties and hard to get into consensus.

Mr. Bishwakarma taught some skills to the participants to become effective Public Speaker and Master of Ceremony (MC). Participants were asked to play the role practically and demonstrate their performance during the period. Having seen their performance during the training, all participants are believed to have acquired skills and knowledge for public speaking. A total of 25 participants took part in this event.



*CA membe Meen Bishwakarma facilitating the training.*

## Condolence to Suvash Darnal

It is with profound grief that we came to know the untimely demise of Mr. Suvash Darnal in Washington DC in a car accident.

Suvash was a founder of Jagaran Media Center and Samata Foundation, a well established organizations working for the Dalit rights through media advocacy.



His contribution in Dalit movement was immense and memorable. He was a youth leader of a Dalit community with a vision and his demise will create a vacuum in Dalit movement.

FEDO family would like to extend heartfelt condolence on this sad moment to Darnal's wife Mrs Sarita Darnal and their family. May God rest his soul in peace and give fortitude to bear the irreparable loss to his family .