**Empower Women To Make India Truly Independent**

*Women form about one half of the total population of the world. Thus, they have every right to enjoy equal rights and duties with men. it is, however, unfortunate that women have been neglected during the ages, particularly since the middle ages when they were pushed behind the four walls of the house and were forbidden to undertake any work which required calibre, enterprise and responsibility. They were considered weak, frail and inferior. In ancient times women enjoyed high status in society. No yajna was considered complete unless a woman was present there. It is said that some women sages also wrote certain hymns of the Rig Veda. In the present age, there has been a lot of awakening among women in many countries, particularly the countries which are partially or completely westernized. Women have now got the right to vote. They have equal fundamental rights and duties with men. They are considered fit to be selected to most of the jobs. Now, we have women officers, judges, magistrates, advocates, teachers, doctor, pilots engine drivers, architects, engineers, entrepreneurs, managers, etc. In fact, they are there in every field including sports, religion, dance, music, film industry, manufacturing industry, publishing industry, etc. Modern women, especially in high society, are generally highly educated. But the condition of women in lower society, particularly in rural and slum areas, is still far from satisfactory. These women are still steeped ignored, illiteracy and superstition. Crimes against women such as rapes, murders, exploitation, etc. are increasing these days in spite of the National Commission for Women and so many other bodies to look after the welfare of women. Day in and day out, we have so many dowry deaths. It is need of the hour that more attention should be paid to women's welfare and uplift.*