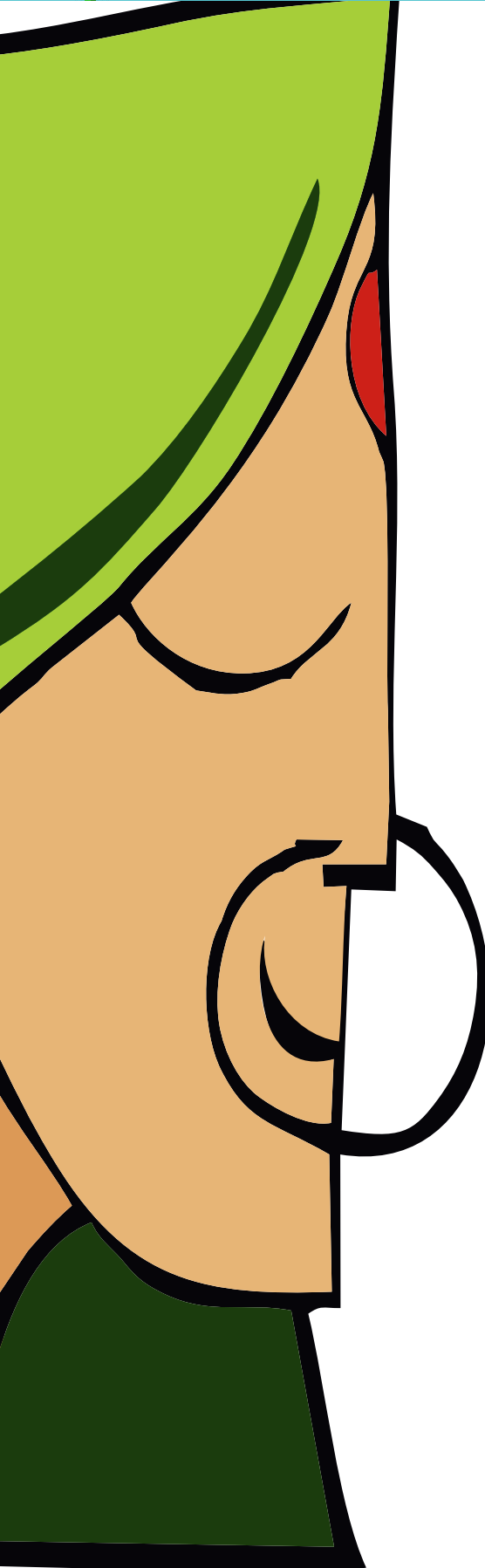


**Shantilal Muttha,**
Founder, BJS**eBULLETIN**

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Friends,

8th March is celebrated as the International Women's Day the world over. 160 years ago, women working in New York's industrial zone had given a clarion call for equal rights for women. Since then, the world has come a long way in recognizing women's rights.

In India we all worship Durga as the symbol of power, Saraswati as the symbol of knowledge and Lakshmi as the symbol of prosperity. India's history is replete with names of accomplished women who have brought glory to the nation. However, in different periods of time and in different circumstances, women are still as seen as the vulnerable section of the population. India has succeeded in giving equal rights of education and of property to the girl child to some extent and we can see increasing awareness of this issue in most sections of the society. From space travel to fighting on the battle front, from banking to managing huge industries, our women are achieving greater strides day by day and we are rightfully proud of them.

Yet, what is the percentage of such self made women? We still see huge disparity in social status of rural and urban women in terms of education and opportunities. In the race towards progress, traditional and cultural values are getting a back seat somehow and this poses a great danger to their security and self respect. It is in this context that the 'Empowerment of Girls' programme initiated by Shri Shantilalji Muttha now known as 'Smart Girl' programme assumes great significance. Having trained over more than one lakh young girls in this programme, the Smat Girl initiative is organised to provide all necessary skills and values to face challenges of the 21st century.

Prafulla Parakh,
National President, BJS

From the desk of National President



Educationally Advanced, Emotionally Strong – Women Power for Societal Development

As per a UN report, education for women is the single most effective way to improve lives and health of a family and a society at large. A woman with education is a powerful person, she has the power to educate the children in her family, guide them in taking decisions, contribute economically and offer valuable inputs for improvement on home and social front. Women constitute almost half of a country's population, when 50% of the population is denied education – a nation remains underdeveloped. Empowered women contribute to the development of the society, community and nation in numerous ways.

Education is the most important power that shapes the lives of mankind. It empowers with the ability to think, reason, take appropriate decisions and protect oneself from oppression & abuse. However, in most of the developing world around the globe including India, women are often denied of education and life opportunities. Girls are generally limited to the domestic activities like assisting their mothers in doing the household chores, looking after their younger siblings and sometimes working to earn income.

Gender inequality in education affects both girls and boys, and women and men, but girls and women are still more often disadvantaged. Gender disparity results in lack of confidence, low self esteem, low communication skills, wrong decisions and developing a vulnerable personality.



Poverty, geographical isolation, minority status, disability, early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence, and traditional attitudes about the status and role of women, are among the many obstacles that stand in the way of women's and girls' fully exercising their right to participate in, complete and benefit from education

It is the high time the society at large understands the importance of female education; every family should know that educating female children will enable them be a good housewife, good mother and a good citizen. Education will also help females to secure a professional occupation that will enable them contribute to the development of the society at large. The conclusion is that in all possible ways efforts should be invested to motivate families to ward off the negative attitude in female education such as the view that "female education ends in the kitchen" and rather they should cultivate the right attitude that educating female, empowering her emotionally to fight against the age-old suppression. Only this can lead to societal and national development which will enhance the standard of living of the people.



The Smart Girl Programme

The Chennai session of BJS convention adopted the aim of empowering 2 lakh girls within 3 years. BJS and the **Government of Maharashtra** selected Ahmednagar District to start this project and 72 teachers from Government schools were trained to become head trainers. They in turn, taught 1009 teachers to become Smart Girl trainers. From 23rd January, thousands of girl students are getting empowered under the Smart Girl programme.

One of the most prominent educational institutes in Maharashtra, **Rayat Shikshan Sanstha** has also adopted the Smart Girl programme. Accordingly, 49 teachers from this institution were trained at Satara for empowerment of girls. Similarly the **Latte Education Society** from Sangli organized a training programme in which 39 female teachers and 21 male teachers were trained to empower girls under the Smart Girl initiative.

In order to take the Smart Girl programme to all states of India, a training programme for prospective trainers was organized at the Educational Rehabilitation Centre of BJS at Wagholi Educational Rehabilitation Center(WERC), Pune where 73 trainees from different states in India participated.

All these programmes were successfully completed under the able guidance of Shri Prafulla Parakh, National President of BJS.

Statistics of Empowered Girls from January to March 2017



Organised through	Number of Workshops	Number of Empowered Girls
Govt Schools in Ahmednagar	1045	70905
Federation of Jain Educational Institutions	19	977
BJS Network	16	846
Rayat Shikshan Sanstha	13	528

Personality of the Month

India's 1st & only Woman Commando Trainer: Dr. Seema Rao

Dr. Seema Rao - India's first woman commando trainer, having trained Indian Special forces for 18 years without compensation.

A pioneer in Close Quarter Battle (CQB) — the art of fighting in tight proximity — and is involved in training various Indian forces.

Born to a freedom fighter of India, Professor Ramakant Sinari, Seema grew up committed to the cause of serving her country. A certified doctor in conventional medicine, Seema also has an MBA in crisis management. Teaming up with her husband, Major Deepak Rao, she contributed to training 15,000 soldiers in modern close quarter battle

Seema earned her Para Wings by skydiving in the Indian Air Force course. She is a combat shooting instructor, an Army mountaineering institute HMI medalist, and a 7th degree Blackbelt in military martial arts. She is one of a handful of instructors in the world authorised to teach Jeet Kune Do. She has been a Mrs India World beauty pageant finalist, too.

'The Rao System of Reflex Fire' is her innovative method of shooting at close quarters which is found to be better than conventional shooting.

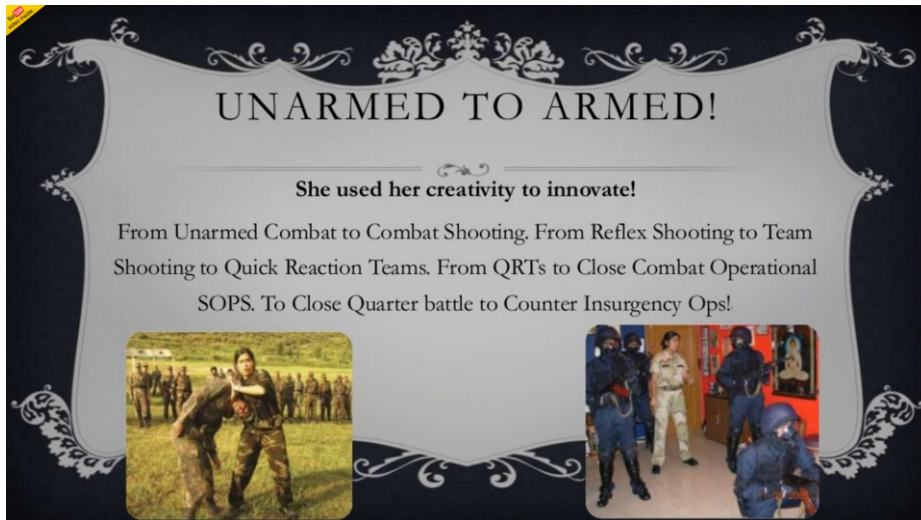
Together the Raos are recipients of three Army Chief citations over 18 years contributions to training 15,000 soldiers of forces in CQB, Indian Para Special forces, Commando wing, Corps battle schools, Academies & Regt

centers, Navy MARCOS marine Commandos, NSG Black cat, Air Force GARUD, ITBP, Paramilitary, Police units. Having taken to CQB training as a full-time profession, she works all year long in remote locations, keeping personal life aside.

She is the recipient of many awards — World Peace Award by World Peace Congress, Malaysia awarded by the Prime Minister of Malaysia for contribution to the country in 2008, US President's Volunteer Service Award, three Army Chief Citations, Home Minister of India Letter of Commendation in 2009 placing on record the selfless National service in the field of close quarters battle training, 1000 felicitations from Indian government. Yet she prefers to lie low and avoid social limelight despite being featured as a woman of substance

by magazines like Society, Savvy, India Today Femina, New Woman, national newspapers and TV media.

Seema is a prolific author and has eight titles thus far. Her books have found a place in the libraries of FBI, INTERPOL, UN, and SWAT Police the world over.



- Co-authored the first Encyclopedia of Close Combat Ops training in the world, produced solely for Indian forces
- The first Indian book on world terrorism — A Comprehensive Analysis of World Terrorism and the first book on Commando Manual of Unarmed Combat.

BJS salutes Dr. Seema Rao, and hopes the young generation takes inspiration from this selfless woman of substance.

Source: Wikipedia



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We would appreciate your feedback and comments

Please write to us on info@bjsindia.org for your feedback

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