



ISSUE 7

FEBRUARY 2011

Special Issue on the 2nd Congress of The Asian Association of Women's Studies (CAAWS)

The 2nd Congress of Asian Association of Women's Studies (CAAWS) 2010 with a theme, "Debating Gender Justice in Asia," was organised by the Women's Development Research Centre (KANITA), Universiti Sains Malaysia together with the Asian Association of Women's Studies (AAWS) and the South East Asian Association for Gender Studies, Malaysian Branch (SAMA). The four sub-themes were:

- Feminism(s) in Asia and gender justice
- Gender, culture and religion
- Citizenship, leadership and governance
- Globalisation and alternative development

Inside this issue:

The Congress themes received an overwhelming response from potential paper presenters. The Scientific Committee, headed by Professor Cecilia Ng Choon Sim, received well over 221 abstracts but only 166 papers were accepted and presented at the Congress. The three-day programme was attended by 214 participants from 25 different countries including the host country. Present at the opening ceremony of the Congress were Professor Ahmad Shukri Mustapa Kamal, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academic & International Affairs as the Acting Vice-Chancellor, and Professor Asma Ismail, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research & Innovations.

FEATURE ARTICLE 2

The Congress started with the welcoming remarks by the Congress Chair, Professor Datin Rashidah Shuib and AAWS Chair, Professor Chang Pilwha whilst Professor Ahmad Shukri, on behalf of Professor Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkipli Abdul Razak, the Vice-Chancellor of USM, officiated the CAAWS 2010. One of the highlights of the event was the launching of "Our Lived Realities: Reading Gender in Malaysia", by KANITA's academic staff and associates; a book significant in filling the gap in the local literature on women's and gender studies. The book launch was followed by a poem recital by Professor Haji Muhammad Haji Salleh, Malaysia's National Literary Laureate. Prof. Muhammad composed "Mud Splattered Realities" based on the book's content.

GLOSSARY 3

PLENARY SESSIONS OF THE 2nd CAAWS 4

THE CAAWS 2010 & THE WELCOMING DINNER 6

The Congress keynote speech was addressed by Professor Jayati Ghosh of the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Professor Jayati spoke on "Crisis and beyond: Debating gender justice in Asia", stressing on the importance of policies to be fundamentally more gender sensitive thus enabling for more gender justice to prevail in society. The richness and rigour of the keynote speech set the momentum of the Congress's discourses, upholding the issues in gender debate. Besides the keynote address, there were two plenary sessions, involving seven outstanding speakers. Each one of them, expert in their own rights, brought up issues of various dimensions to be pondered and discussed. There were 31 parallel sessions on various sub-themes. In total, the 2nd Congress of The Asian Association of Women's Studies (CAAWS) 2010 was a very successful event, setting a very high standard for the next Congress, to be held in 2012.

UP CLOSE & PERSONAL 8

HIGHLIGHTS 11

(Prepared by Gaayathri Prabakaran, Research Officer, KANITA)

Gender Justice Requires Enabling Economic Conditions by Prof. Jayati Ghosh, Keynote Speaker CAAWS 2010



Professor Jayati Ghosh

The Asian region is the focus of attention in this crisis-ridden world. Its fast growth and expanding economies have placed it in a position of influence and significance in the global stage. But this growth and expansion is coupled with wider inequalities that continue to be barriers for achieving gender justice. At the same time, the rapidity of socio-economic

change in the Asian region means that there are transformations in many aspects that are not always adequately recognised. Finally, the last couple of years have clearly demonstrated the uneven effects of the material dynamism of the region as the global financial crisis made itself felt throughout Asia. The struggle for gender justice must contend with these complexities.

Women play a variety of roles in the economy and society that often overlap and create multiple demands upon her time and shape her identities. There are several trends in the areas of work and citizenship that must be noted.

Increasing role of women workers in global production chains.

The most significant change for women throughout the developing Asian region since the early 1980s was their substantial increase in labour force participation. There have been very rapid shifts in the labour market in the space of less than one generation, as Asian women have been first drawn into paid employment, especially in export sectors, and then ejected from it. Life cycle changes such as marriage and child birth could be used as proximate causes to terminate their employment and engage younger and fresher set of female workers.

The nature of work has also changed. There is much greater reliance of short-term contracts for workers in very small units or home-based production, at the bottom of a complex subcontracting chain. The increasing use of outsourcing is not only for export-oriented firms. A substantial proportion of subcontracting extends down to home-based work, which provides substantial opportunity for self-exploitation, especially when payment is on a piece-rate basis. Home-based work is also typically left unprotected by labour laws and social welfare programmes. The economic crisis has increased the number of women in precarious work.

Growing phenomenon of economic migration of women. International migration for work is highly gendered, with male migrants going in dominantly for employment in manufacturing and construction sectors, while women migrants are concentrated in service sectors, such as the care economy and entertainment. The care activities performed by women workers are often invariant to the business cycle or are at least less responsive. Demographic tendencies, institutional

arrangements, and the extent to which women work outside the home in the host country contributes to explaining the demand for women migrant workers.

Increased burdens of unpaid work after the crisis. Most women have to cope with the competing burdens of both paid and unpaid work, with a greater burden on informal workers who often cope by means of overlapping activities. During crisis, there is a tendency for these women to engage paid home-based activities, such as handicrafts in order to compensate for a shortfall in their income. Consequently, women's leisure time is ultimately reduced. Women's unpaid work increases during a crisis because cost-cutting measures involve: (i) cash poor households shifting market-oriented activities towards domestic work; (ii) paid medical services become unpaid services; (iii) unemployed and underemployed men demand more caring work from women, and; (iv) women increase their collection of free goods from common lands and properties.

Varying situations of violence against women. The global crisis has also shown an increased inclination to gender-based violence and domestic violence as worsening material conditions combine with a sense of helplessness among men, who then look for outlets for their anger and frustration. Mental health deteriorates because of stress caused by economic hardship, loss of job and other insecurity. Situations of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction also pose challenges for women even when they are not directly involved in the conflict. The specific needs of women in post-conflict situations have only begun to be recognised. The trauma created by war and violence is, of course, universal, but for women and girls, the specific possibility of sexual violence often continues well after "peace" has been established.

Placing attention on gender gaps due to the impact of climate change.

It is now recognised that climate change will not only endanger lives and undermine livelihoods, but also that it threatens to exacerbate the gaps between rich and poor and amplify inequities between women and men. Periods of extreme weather conditions, such as droughts and floods, or even other changes such as erratic rainfall, desertification, and deforestation all force women in rural agricultural areas to work harder to secure food, water and energy for their homes. The role of women in social reproduction, especially in managing households and caring for family members, limits their mobility and usually increases their vulnerability to natural disasters. At the same time, women may also play an important role in adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. Women's role in contributing to energy generation, using energy, recycling water and waste management within the household includes a variety of opportunities to make women an important agent in resource conservation.

Progressive economic policies are needed more than ever to secure enabling conditions for gender justice. Social protection in the Asian region is very weak and needs to be drastically revised and reformed

(Continued from page 2)

so that they respond to the issues raised above. Given women's lived realities and the challenges they face, the formulation and implementation of policies at both national and international levels must be with the active participation of women. Policy formulation should be on the basis of continuous dialogue with those likely to be affected, and in particular, the declared "objects" of policies, whose own agency should be recognised as much as possible.

(Prepared by Marina Durano, Post-Doctoral Fellow, KANITA).

Professor Jayati Ghosh, a Professor of Economics at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, was the keynote speaker at the 2nd Congress of The Asian Association of Women's Studies, held in Penang from 9-11 December 2010. Prof. Jayati Ghosh is a well recognized, prolific economist whose many interests include issues related to gender and development, globalisation, international finance, employment patterns in developing countries and macroeconomic policy.

She received her tertiary education at the Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), and the University of Cambridge. She has authored several books and more than one hundred scholarly articles. Recent books include "Never done and poorly paid: Women's work in globalizing India" (Women Unlimited, New Delhi) and "After Crisis: Adjustment, recovery and fragility in East Asia" (Tulika Books, New Delhi). She was also the principal author of the West Bengal Human Development report 2004 which received the 2005 UNDP Award for excellent analysis. She has most recently worked on migration patterns as well as on the impact of the global financial crisis on developing Asia. Outside of academia, she is a regular columnist for several newspapers and journals in India including Frontline, Businesslike, Asian Age, Decan Chronicle and Ganashakti. She has been a consultant and researcher for many government and non-government organisations, nationally and internationally. She was the Chairperson of the Commission on Farmer's Welfare in 2004 constituted by the state government of Andhra Pradesh in India, and Member of the National Knowledge Commission reporting to the Prime Minister of India (2005-2009). This issue contains the main substance of her speech at the 2nd Congress on the 9th December 2010

GLOSSARY

- **Home-based work:** 'Home-based worker' refers to the general category of workers, within the informal or unorganised sector, who carry out remunerative work within their homes or in the surrounding grounds. However, the term 'home-based work' encompasses a wide diversity. Home-based workers:

 - do piecework for an employer,
 - who can be a subcontractor, agent or a middleman,
 - they can be self-employed on their own or in family enterprises.

(Source: SAARC Gender Info Base, <http://www.saarcgenderinfobase.org/glossary-terms/> - accessed February 14, 2011)
- **Care Economy:** The 'care economy' is the work done, usually in the domestic sphere, which keeps the labour force fed and clothed, and raises the future labour force, therefore ensuring that society operates effectively. Women's contribution to the economy is largely in this hidden area of production which includes care work, voluntary or civil society activity, subsistence production and work in the informal sector. If the care economy is neglected this can have serious consequences for society and its productivity as it is neglecting the care of its most important resource and people. (Source: Gender Budget Initiative - Background Papers, London: Commonwealth Secretariat, UNDP, <http://www.undp.org/women/CD-Gender-and-Budgets-2004/Budgets%20CD%20section%203/3.1%20gender%20neutral%20gender%20blind.pdf> - accessed March 03, 2011)
- **Unpaid work:** Unpaid work covers all work other than paid work that is done in the household or community, all care activities, including personal care, studies, socializing and leisure time. (Source: Gender Statistics Programmes, <http://www.escwa.un.org/gsp/glossary/u.html> - accessed February 14, 2011)
- **Precarious work:** Precarious work is created when permanent, regular jobs are replaced by subcontracted labor and temporary, short-term jobs. Numerous case studies have shown that women are in the most precarious positions at work. Subcontractors and recruiters (often hired by large companies) working for temporary employment agencies or labor "cooperatives" target women, assuming that they are less likely to stand up for their rights and have less formal work experience. (Source: International Labour Rights Forum, <http://www.laborrights.org/sites/default/files/publications-and-resources/Precarious%20Work%20Worldwide%20women,%20migrants,%20etc.pdf> - accessed March 03, 2011)

- **Informal Economy:** The most meaningful way of looking at the situation of those in the informal economy is in terms of decent work deficits. Poor-quality, unproductive and unremunerative jobs that are not recognized or protected by law, the absence of rights at work, inadequate social protection, and the lack of representation and voice are most pronounced in the informal economy, especially at the bottom end among women and young workers. (Source: Decent work and the informal economy, International Labour Office (ILO), <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc90/pdf/rep-vi.pdf> - accessed March 03, 2011)
- **Gender gap:** The gap in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access, rights, remuneration or benefits. (Source: Glossary of gender and development terms, <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sp/gender-toolkit/en/pdf/section3.pdf> - accessed February 14, 2011)

(Prepared by Siti Shahrizatil Husna, IT Officer, KANITA)

PLENARY SESSIONS OF THE 2nd CAAWS

PLENARY 1

The theme of the First Plenary Session of the Second Congress of the Asian Association of Women's Studies (CAAWS) is "Critiquing Feminist Scholarship on Asia". Three plenary speakers presented papers under the general rubric of this theme. The first plenary speaker Lenore Lyons is a research professor in Asian Studies at the University of Western Australia. Associate Professor Lyons is recognised as a leading scholar in feminism movement in Singapore. She has extensive research experience in Southeast Asia. Lyons started her presentation by highlighting on the role of transnational advocacy networks and alliances with international NGOs in the emergence of transnational feminist scholarship and activism. She spoke about the widespread claim that women's transnational engagement challenges coercive and excessive state authority and becomes a remedy to the negative effects of globalisation on women. However, she argued, that transnational activism is more successful at policy level but not so much at the redistribution level. Drawing case studies from Southeast Asia, she critiques transnational feminist thinking. She conceptualizes transnationalisms following the work of Manisha Desai, who defines transnationalism as "both organising across national borders as well as framing local, national, regional, and global activism in 'transnational' discourse". She used transnational feminism framework to explore how gender, race/ethnicity, and class intersect in the construction of historically and cultural specific feminism. From her research with a transnational NGO, she found that the local level organizations are better organized in local level advocacy because of their familiarity with local contexts. The participation of local level organisations in regional conferences, however, can be regarded as the contribution of transnational organization movement. Finally, Lyons concluded by saying "the ability to 'think transnationally is an important factor determining the success or efforts to organise transnationally".

The second Panelist, Associate Professor Bernadette P. Resurreccion hails from the Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand, who teaches and conducts researches on gender, urban-rural linkages and migration, climate change, livelihood and natural resource management. Her plenary speech was entitled, "Unseating GAD and Gender: the view from disasters". She highlighted on the rationales for the shifts of approach from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD). Despite working under the banner of 'gender', she argues that GAD projects and programmes fall into the WAD trap. GAD approach, she said, placed women in oppositional juxtaposition with men, regarded men and women as 'fixed' and 'discrete' identities, and assumed that the primary site of 'change' or intervention is 'gender inequality'. She argued that gender alone cannot provide explanation to the experiences of women in the rapidly changing environment and disaster prone environment. Resurreccion further explained the importance of other social differentiation, based on the work of Hydnman (2010), which look at the effect of Tsunami to different social groups and different groups of widows in Sir Lanka. She concluded that single dimensional view of women is not sufficient to fully understand of the interconnections between gender, disaster and climate change.

The last panelist, Vivienne Wee, is an anthropologist who works as an independent consultant in Singapore. Wee has done extensive research in the area of gender, power, religion, ethno-nationalism, especially in Indonesia. She taught at different universities in Hong Kong, and served as a Director of the Research Programme Consortium on Women's Empowerment in Muslim Context (WEMC) in 2006-2009. Wee's plenary topic entitled, "Towards critical feminist analyses of priority challenges for women in Asia". She tried to address the question: "Does feminist scholarship in Asia address the needs and concerns of the majority of women in this vast continent?" Her starting point of analysis was the seven priority gender issues identified by the UN/UNEFAM, which are maternal health, gender disparity in education, economic exploitation, women's time-burden, women in conflict, women with HIV/AIDS, and closing of spaces due to culture & religion. She argues that feminist analysis should go beyond such superficial approach and try to understand and analyze power structure that perpetuates inequalities. She also talked about the impact of mega- structures of domination on the poorest and the most marginalized women. Such women, she said, though do not have the luxury of analyzing their discrimination in the abstract; they do resist from their guts the injustice and the deprivations they experience. She refers to this group- "indigenous feminism", which emerged out of lived-experience of injustice not from intellectual analysis. She suggests that Asian feminist scholars have to pursue their struggle in the context of the lived experience of the most oppressed women not in the abstract, as

intellectual game. However, if feminist scholars, who are part of the urban middle class women only defend themselves, feminist research and analysis will fail to be relevant to the majority of women in Asia. Instead of following a fashionable feminist discourse that is constructed by other context, feminist scholars in Asia need to build partnership with “indigenous feminist”, to chart suitable intellectual direction for feminist scholarship in Asia that will be relevant to women’s struggle on the ground.

(Prepared by Dr. Hirut Bekele Haile, Post-Doctoral Fellow, KANITA)

PLENARY 2

Women’s Movements: Spaces and Phases

The last plenary session of the 2nd CAAWS focused on women’s movements in Asia. The panelists hailing from diverse national contexts reflected upon their activism amidst changes and transformations in their political environments.

The session began with Ms. Karen Lai, a Malaysian lawyer who combines private law practice with pro bono watching briefs in sexual assault trials. Ms. Lai worked with the Women’s Centre for Change, Penang and took up graduate courses on gender studies at the Universiti Sains Malaysia. This variety of experiences informed her presentation on the challenges of movement-building within Malaysian civil society and women’s groups. She refers to an “NGO-isation” of the women’s movement that is led by middle-class and highly educated women concentrated in major cities, contributing to a lack of reach to grassroots and indigenous women. At the same time, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of women activists for more political engagement in order to counter worrying trends such as ethnic and religious polarisation, clampdowns on democracy, a market-driven economy and increasingly consumerist lifestyles.

Ms. Cai Yiping, the Executive Director of ISIS International, Philippines who is from the People’s Republic of China, spoke on the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) that have brought on tremendous changes to way people communicate with each other. At the same time that ICTs provide opportunities for increasing transparency and expanding democratic spaces, ICTs also are tools for the abuse of women’s human rights and the perpetration of gender-based discrimination. Ms. Cai’s experience in media advocacy for women’s rights, both in China and internationally, brings to the fore the need to use diversified communication tools and strategies to build stronger women’s movements in the Asia Pacific region. Her own work with ISIS International reveals, however, that traditional communication tools such as radio, theater, print and face-to-face communications are still the most efficient means to reach out to grassroots women.

From Nepal, Ms. Jyotsna Maskay, who works with the Women’s Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC), emphasised the generational gaps that can divide women’s movements. Ms. Maskay describes the women’s movement in Nepal as a dynamic space that interlinks generations of feminists but has yet to gather women from different class, caste, sexual orientation, age and geographical backgrounds. Members of the movement can be prejudiced against other groups of women due to social status and identity. The movement has been oblivious to the needs of emerging young feminists who look up to the older feminists as mentors, which has led to disappointment and dismay.

Finally, Ms. Sri Wiyanti Eddyono of Semarak Cerlang Nusa, Consultancy, Research and Education for Social Transformation (SCN-CREST) in Indonesia, gave a presentation on the challenges to the Indonesian feminist movement as it navigated the Post-1998 Reform Movement in collaboration with the wider women’s and other social movements. Ms. Eddyono spoke from the standpoint of a woman who has spent years handling cases of violence against women that eventually led to an appointment as commissioner of the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) from 2007 to 2009. She notes that this inter-movement collaboration is unstable and vulnerable, particularly as this collaboration initially rested on a common enemy (‘enemy together’) of “militarism and authoritarianism” as symbolised by Mr. Suharto. In the search for an ‘enemy together’, alliance building must also face the impact of the politicisation of Islam, which has already made itself felt in a number of regulations including in the fields of economy (Syariah banks and regulations on inheritance), social services (wakaf and zakat) and politics (criminal laws regarding pornography).

(Prepared by Dr. Marina Durano, Post-Doctoral Fellow, KANITA)



Speakers for Plenary 1 (from left: Associate Professor Lenore Lyons, Associate Professor Bernadette P. Resurreccion and Professor Chang Pilwha & Dr. Vivienne Wee)

THE CAAWS 2010

REGISTRATION



The registration desk was opened from day one until the last day of the Congress.

OPENING CEREMONY



Prof. Chang Pilwha delivered her speech during the opening ceremony



The Congress was officiated by launching a book, "Our Lived Realities: Reading Gender in Malaysia." (From left, Prof. Rashidah, Prof. Ahmad Shukri, Prof. Cecilia and Prof. Asma)

CAAWS 2010 PROGRAMME



Prof. Ahmad Shukri presenting a token of appreciation to Prof. Jayati Ghosh, the Keynote Speaker for the Congress



The Congress received an overwhelming support and attended by 214 participants from 25 different countries



Prof. Hj. Muhammad Hj. Salleh composed and recited "Mud-Splattered Realities"



From left, Dr. Hirut Haile and Dr. Marina Durano as the main repertoires for CAAWS



The participants during one of the break up sessions.



A musician from Mutiara Nusantara Live Band



Some of the members of the Secretariat



Aida Redza thrilled and inspired the audience with a creative dance, "Unearth the Woman"

THE WELCOMING DINNER at Bayview Hotel, George Town, Penang for the delegates, guests and participants of the Congress.



Performance presented by the School of Arts undergraduates



A Nigerian participant wearing her national attire



Some of the participants looked great in their own national and cultural costumes.

UP CLOSE and PERSONAL with OUR PLENARY SPEAKERS

The 2nd Congress of AAWS attracted many outstanding scholars including two distinguished guests, Associate Professor Bernadette P. Resurrection and Miss Cai Yiping who shared their knowledge and experience in a plenary session. Kanita Matters (KM) was able to arrange an informal interview with them in between the parallel sessions of the Congress. Below are their short biography and responses regarding few issues relevant to the theme of the Congress.

MISS CAI YIPING



Miss Cai Yi Ping currently serves as the Director of Isis International, a non-governmental organisation based in the Philippines. Prior to joining Isis, Cai was an Associate Professor at the Women's Studies Institute of China, and served as the Deputy Director of International News Department, China Women's News, Beijing. She also writes extensively on the issues of women's human rights and her latest publications include "Find Women's Stories" and "International Conventions and Protection of Women's Human Rights in China: A Case Study on CEDAW". She has been actively involved in media advocacy for women's human rights in China and internationally, especially on the issues of violence against women and gender and media. Below are her views on feminism.

KM: How do you see yourself as a feminist?

CY: I think I would like to describe myself that as a feminist, I think I never question about my identity as a feminist. No matter how other people look at or how they define the term of feminist, I don't mind... but I would consider feminist as a person who is not necessarily... biologically a women but...more like taking a political position. Meaning... (firstly) one who believes (that) there should be justice and equality in the society. And secondly the feminist in my definition will recognize (that) there is still so many inequality and discrimination in different forms all over the world... the third a feminist does not just recognize those problems and identify those problems but rather we would like to take action, to change...so If you agree with these three then I think that is a feminist. It does not matter whether one is a man or a woman, but if you don't believe that or you just believe two out of these three or is contented with one of these, then I don't think that would meet the full meaning of a feminist.

KM: Do you see this congress or conference as a means to help inculcate gender awareness among the public?

CY: I think it's a very good question...my personal background, as I said, I used to be working as a journalist. I worked a couple of years in the Institute of Women Studies which is supposedly an academic centre, but not really, because we have a lot of non-academic activities like action, advocacy and research. Then I moved to the women organization that focuses on using the media and communication including ICT to empower mostly women, and you know, to achieve gender justice and social justice ... with this background, this always reminds me, first we have to sharpen our analysis and generate the critique. Feminist critiques and analysis ... what's going on in our society and every day life, and find the... empowerment within the women and within the movement. That was one. And second, I think it's more important and also related to the question on how this conference can contribute to the women's movement and to the change of, you know, women's life... is how to convey the message. How to popularise what you debate in the academic forum, like this one. For example many topics were discussed here. Very basic fundamental questions that we asked and fundamentals issues that we needed to deal with. We can't just like... move away from those questions because that's the reality, that's what are people facing. For example religious fundamentalism, the economic crisis, political participation, the media, the representation of women, the violence against women... After this forum I think we have to sit down and look at how this message and the knowledge that we generated here can be transferred to the general public. You know, made them think critically about their daily life and you have to be able to make people associate this knowledge with their own personal life at the personal level.

Because what we discussed here for example, we used a different language, so you have to translate this academic debate into the daily language which is very simple and easy to understand. So I was joking to my friends and colleague who used to work at Isis as a Director and now teaching in the university. I was joking that she is more attuned to the academic base. We are discussing the same issues. I don't feel comfortable to use the terms or the language that people are using here like "discourse", "negotiation" since these are jargons...academic jargons. The community wouldn't understand and that's what I also reflect in my presentation on the need to use communication strategies to reach out to the community, reach out to the grassroots, the general public and also the policy makers. You have to use the language that the people can understand, to convey the message that you want to deliver. That's the lesson that we should learn from the other groups that are so successful in sending messages. For example the fundamentalist.. you know their movement. I can see how they can become the movement....maybe the first one that I would like to reflect from my position or perspective is to think of the communication strategies.

(continued from page 8)

KM: What are your advice to the young scholars who just start to belief in the feminist or women's movement?

CY: I think I don't have anything to say to the younger generation even though I still consider myself as young. Because I really see the confusion among the young feminists. These women believe in the feminist concepts and really commit themselves to gender justice and want to take action but they don't know how, and they don't know where they can find...where to start and where they can find like-minded people they can work together. As I mentioned before, with the new ICT, many young people you know, are very active in campaigns online... as I said, the movement building is different. You can't build the movement by yourself no matter how committed you are, how smart you are. You have to work together with people...that is how you can make a bigger change,...with the feminist and gender mainstreaming, many young women now are privileged and have more advantages than women of the past generation. But how do they consider those progressive changes that have resulted in those achievement that they benefited, the achievement of the feminist movement that they are living with. Did they associate these changes in their life as the result of the feminist movement or they consider the change as an automatic progress, or privileges they got as result of their own talent?, or their personal efforts? I think that is the difference. And I also see the anxiety of the young feminists to get together either in virtual, or in reality. Because I remember they were asking "where can I find the like-minded people? And I said but you already have so many facebook friends. They are like-minded people, aren't they?" I said... you only share part of your life in the virtual world but you can only understand these people in the hall, face to face communication and movement cannot be built up or be strengthened without having the face to face communication. I think , apart from the virtual space, the online space, I think the young feminists should put more attention on this communication that is the face to face communication to continue to be important, because this is the most important tool for bringing people together to mobilise for the movement building. I think we (have) to bridge the gap (language) of the academics and the movement on the ground.

(Prepared by Zaireeni Azmi, Lecturer , KANITA)

ASSOCIATE PROF. BERNADETTE P. RESURRECCION



Bernadette P. Resurreccion is an Associate Professor in Gender and Development Studies at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Thailand. She teaches and researches on gender, urban-rural linkages and migration, climate change, livelihoods and natural resource management. She has done research on these themes in the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. Apart from various journal papers on these themes, she has co-edited 'Gender and Natural Resource Management: Livelihoods, Mobility and Interventions' (Earthscan and IDRC, 2008) and 'Water Rights and Social Justice in Mekong Waters' (Earthscan, 2011). She has also done assessments for gender mainstreaming programmes of the ILO, UN-Habitat and UNDP Regional Centre. Bernadette received her M.A. and Ph.D in Development Studies from the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University, Rotterdam.

KM: Hong long you have been involving yourself in your areas of expertise?

BR: I was an activist before going to academia, so I would say since the mid 1980s, but in terms of as a scholar, for almost 20 years.

KM: Do you consider yourself as a feminist? If yes, can you share your journey as a feminist and how do you see your role as a feminist?

BR: Yeah, in terms of feminism, it was largely because I started as a feminist against the very oppressive government in my country. And that opened my eyes to the need for liberation, for all kinds of liberation. For that matter it is of course women's liberation. So that began my consciousness about issues on how women can be very constraint and control and I still experience that up to today especially in the very male dominated work place. I think my role as a feminist is because it is that a feminist scholar says that 'I do research that should expose exclusion of women, all types of exclusions and try to explain why there are these exclusions, and that's for me the task of research, to offer explanations, as well as to do teaching, to expand knowledge and that I see as my role being a feminist apart from of course to ensure that those close to me, friends, family, wherever possible, to make sure that there are those spaces that liberate.

KM: How do you see the future and the challenges of Gender Studies?

BR: Of course Gender Studies have been around for a long time, but so many challenges because especially in this increasing (in university for the matter) emphasis on financial productivity on earning for the university. Because now more and more universities are very much market oriented and therefore for them what is important is what sells. We all know of these challenges and struggle of feminism and how this has been obstructed by society because essentially feminism is destabilizing and unsettling to the status quo and patriarchy. So in a sense that it is challenging, Gender Studies will have to face a university environment that is increasingly market oriented and will go only for those fields that sell whereas Gender Studies would probably not sell to many people and therefore we have to be aware of. So there, one of the biggest challenges.

(continued from page 9)

KM: What do you think would be the most important steps to overcome this sort of challenges?

BR: Well, first of course is you have to have alliances with people in decision making position within the university. Second is that you need to have a strong sense of solidarity with other Gender Studies units in other universities. So at least you have a critical mass. You can enhance your work as scholars in feminist research. You can enhance feminist scholarship. You can also strategise ways that can make Gender Studies more acceptable and more attractive and that people would begin to see its usefulness to society. So you need alliances within the university, you need champions in the university who are in higher decision making position. Second is of course you also have to make a good accounting of yourself as a scholar and as a feminist activist. What is the value of having a degree in Gender Studies? And third is of course your network. Because those networks are supportive if you have networks, for example establishing women's association, that is one, Asian Association of Women's Studies can be very helpful for you to sell. It can be very supportive of your effort to stabilize Gender Studies through many ways. As I said through research, joint peer research, peer reviewing, and student faculty exchange.

So the only challenge for them is really more rigorous research, good papers, publication so on and so forth, as well as critical engagement with relevant sectors in society and the community as a whole. So the challenge is largely intellectual, whereas Gender Studies is both, political and intellectual challenges. My advise for young scholars would be to be good at it. Be good in your research. Never allow for others to say that just because you are in Gender Studies, you are not rigorous enough. You have to be good at what you are doing.

KM: Any last words for the Congress?

BR: More spaces for gender, environmental issues in women's conferences.

(Prepared by Lai Wan Teng, Lecturer , KANITA)

HIGHLIGHTS

Conferences/ Workshops/ Forum

Leadership and Governance Workshop

Date: 15 November 2010

Venue: Rafidah Aziz Conference Room, KANITA

This half day workshop marked the initial embarking and pursuing of a new thrust area enable KANITA to drive the research, teaching, training, advocacy and community engagement. The new thrust will be headed by Assoc. Prof. Intan Osman . The workshop engaged all the academics, board members, research officers, research assistants and postgraduate students of KANITA in the briefings and discussions on the status of leadership programs and activities especially on women as well as new leadership directions at Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, UKM and International Centre for Leadership and Finance (ICLIF). The speakers for the workshop specially invited from the above Ministry and institutions represented academics and non-academics and experts on the issues, and structural mechanisms of leadership and governance. They were Assoc. Prof. Rashila Ramli from Institute of Occidental Studies of UKM, Ms. Wan Hasmah, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, and Puan Rahmah Ismail of ICLIF. The workshop made a resolution to include intermediate research and training initiatives to drive this new thrust to a sustainable and feasible long-term program of KANITA. The thrust will serve as a platform for the leadership and governance on gender to collaborate institutionally and synergise talents as well expertise so as to mobilise national agenda one being promoting the minimum 30 % quota of women in decision making positions by 1215.

(Prepared by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Intan Osman, Lecturer and Siti Waringin Oon, Research Officer, KANITA)



The participants pictured together with Prof. Datin Rashidah Shuib, Director of KANITA (nine from left) and also Prof. Asma Ismail, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovations) (eleven from left).



KANITA's new IAP member, Ms. Wan Hasmah.

KANITA dan Memorandum of Understanding

Tahun 2010 merupakan satu tahun yang amat membanggakan bagi seluruh warga KANITA. Pelbagai aktiviti berjaya dianjurkan baik pada peringkat Universiti ataupun Antarabangsa. Kejayaan terbesar KANITA sudah semestinya dalam penganjuran Persidangan Antarabangsa CAAWS 2010, bertempat di Hotel Bayview pada 9-11 Disember 2010. Namun begitu, antara kejayaan terbesar KANITA selaku wakil USM memeterai perjanjian atau MOU dengan beberapa buah organisasi atau Universiti pada peringkat antarabangsa.

Antara MOU yang berjaya ditandatangani pada tahun 2010 adalah seperti berikut:

Bilangan MOU	Organisasi yang terlibat
1	KANITA, USM dengan University of Lethbridge (U o L), Canada
2	KANITA, USM dengan Fakultas Ilmu Sosial & Ilmu Politik (ISIPOL), Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia
3	KANITA, USM dengan Fakultas Hukum, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia
4	KANITA, USM dengan Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia
5	KANITA, USM dengan Center for Population and Policy Studies (PSKK), Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
6	KANITA, USM dengan Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI), Korea

Tujuan utama setiap MOU adalah untuk menjalinkan kerjasama dan jaringan yang lebih kukuh pada peringkat antarabangsa dengan organisasi yang terlibat. Selain itu, diharapkan dengan kerjasama ini, KANITA dapat meningkatkan lagi kualiti dan kuantiti penyelidikan serta penerbitan di KANITA.

Memorandum Of Understanding yang ditandatangani di Canada, para delegasi USM terdiri daripada Y. Brs. Prof. Asma Ismail, Timbalan Naib Canselor (Penyelidikan & Inovasi) selaku ketua rombongan dan dua kakitangan akademik KANITA iaitu Y. Bhg Prof. Datin Rashidah Shuib dan Prof. Madya Intan Osman. Antara bentuk aktiviti yang dipersetujui sebagai memenuhi MOU ini ialah pertukaran staf untuk tahun 2011, penganjuran seminar dan pengajaran. *Memorandum Of Understanding* ini telah ditandatangani pada 18 Oktober 2010.

Bagi empat *MOU* yang ditandatangani di Yogyakarta Indonesia pada 14 Oktober 2010, antara aktiviti yang bakal dijalankan bagi tahun 2011 ialah penganjuran seminar secara kerjasama antara KANITA dengan Universitas Muhammadiyah di USM, Malaysia serta beberapa aktiviti lain. Pada 15 Oktober 2010, satu aktiviti telahpun dijalankan di Universitas Muhammadiyah iaitu *International Joint Seminar* dengan tema '*Women in Local Governance & Its Contribution To Good Governance: Challenges & Models To Global Governance*'.

Memorandum Of Understanding paling terbaru telah ditandatangani pada 13 Disember 2010 dengan Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI), Korea. Pengerusi KWDI, President Taehyun Kim serta Dr. Young Taek Kim dan Cik Hyunjoo Youn telah datang ke Malaysia selama 4 hari untuk tujuan ini. Majlis ini telah berlangsung di Bilik Persidangan Canselori. Y. Brs. Prof. Ahmad Shukri Mustafa Kamal selaku Pemangku Naib Canselor telah menandatangani MOU ini bagi pihak USM. Turut hadir ialah Y. Brs. Prof. Asma Ismail, Timbalan Naib Canselor (P&I). KANITA dan KWDI masih dalam proses merancang aktiviti yang akan dijalankan secara kerjasama sama ada dalam bentuk penyelidikan atau akademik.

Harapan KANITA agar semua MOU ini dapat berjalan lancar dan setiap aktiviti yang dirancang dapat disempurnakan dengan baik bagi memastikan MOU yang ditandatangani aktif.

(Disediakan oleh Hasniza Mohd Hassan, Pegawai Tadbir, KANITA)

KANITA FAMILY NEWS

Editorial Team



KANITA welcomes Prof. Dr. Diana Wong Ing Boh on board as Visiting Professor beginning November 2010. Prof. Diana graduated in Sociology from the University of Singapore (1974) and the Universitaet Bielefeld, Germany for her Master and PhD. She taught at the Faculty of Sociology, Universitaet Bielefeld (1980-1985) and was a fellow at the Universitaet Erlangen-Nuernberg (1985-1992), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (1993-1994) before she was appointed as Deputy Director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in 1995-1998. She joined UKM as Associate Professor in 1999-2005 before she became a research fellow at the Social Science Research Council, New York in 2006-2008. She has done extensive research on issues of migration and globalisation. We look forward to Prof. Diana's wealth of knowledge to strengthening KANITA's role nationally and globally.

Advisor

Prof. Datin Rashidah
Shuib

Editors

Prof. Datin Rashidah
Shuib
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Intan
Osman

Coordinator

Zaireeni Azmi

Layout

Syazana Mohd. Husain

Contributors

Assoc. Prof. Intan
Osman
Dr. Hirut Bekele Haile
Dr. Marina Durano
Gaayathri Prabakaran
Hasniza Mohd. Hassan
Lai Wan Teng
Siti Shahrizatil Husna
Siti Waringin Onn
Vasumathy Sukumaran
Zaireeni Azmi

Photographer

Ahmad Ariffin
Mohamad Kassim
Teo Sue Ann



Sadly, KANITA bids goodbye to Visiting Professor, Prof. Cecilia Ng who has been with KANITA since 2007. Prof. Cecilia has conducted research and published widely on gender and development, gender and work, democracy and the women's movement. She is active in women's groups in Malaysia and has been involved in research, training and advocacy on gender issues in Malaysia since the early 1980s. She is currently the Vice President of the Good Governance and Gender Equality Society (3Gs), a newly registered NGO set up in December 2009 and based in Penang. KANITA will miss her presence and words of wisdom on women's issues yet we wish her good luck and may she be well and healthy always.

KANITA

VISION

Transforming society towards gender equality and social justice

MISSION

As a Centre of Excellence, KANITA is committed to research, advocacy and community engagement utilizing and promoting a gender and social equality framework. It strives to impact the academe, the state, women and the society at large and in particular, the bottom half billion.

Contact :

Website: <http://kanita.usm.my/>
Email: kanita@usm.my Phone: 60-4-653 3436 OR 60-4-653 3445 Fax: 60-4-656 6379
Address: **Women's Development Research Centre (KANITA)**
Universiti Sains Malaysia 11800 USM, Penang, Malaysia

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

Vision:

Transforming Higher Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow

Mission:

USM is a pioneering, transdisciplinary research intensive university that empowers future talent and enables the bottom billions to transform their socio-economic well-being.

Senarai Aktiviti Di KANITA sepanjang bulan Oktober 2010-Januari 2011

Bil	Tarikh	Tempat	Perkara
1	4 Oktober 2010	Bilik Persidangan Rafidah Aziz, KANITA	Mesyuarat Ahli Panel Jaringan <i>Industry-Community</i> KANITA
2	23 Oktober 2010	Hotel Berjaya	Bengkel Gangguan Seksual Bersama Pekerja Cucian
3	6 Disember 2010	Bilik Persidangan Pusat Pengajian Sains Kemasyarakatan	Seminar oleh Dr. Jo Anne Fiske bertajuk "Creating Inequality: State Reliance on Gambling, Revenues and Pathologisation of Marginal Women".
4	10 Januari 2011	Bilik Persidangan Rafidah Aziz, KANITA	Seminar Pelajar Pascasiswazah oleh Crystal Corman bertajuk " <i>Gender and Islam in Malaysia: Leadership Access for Muslim Women</i> "
5	25 Januari 2011	Bilik Persidangan Rafidah Aziz, KANITA	Seminar oleh Cik Lai Wan Teng bertajuk " <i>Gender in Water Sector: Sharing of The Research: Findings at CAP-NET, Pretoria, South Africa</i> "