

Smt. Alice Garg

Recipient of Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Uplift and Welfare of Women and Children-2003

Born: 14th January, 1941

B.A., Diploma in Swedish Language

Motivated by the desire to work for the children of the socially and economically deprived people belonging to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward communities suffering from abject poverty, Smt. Alice Garg entered into the field of social service in 1972 by bringing four destitute children into her home to provide complete emotional and psychological care. She founded the Bal Rashmi Society on 14th November, 1972 with the motto of "Save Children, Save Generation". This children's home gradually increased its size from four to one hundred eighty three poor, destitute, downtrodden and orphan children without any discrimination of caste or creed.

During the last two decades, she enlarged her activities in the fields of women's awareness, uplift and empowerment, literacy, counselling and legal aid, dowry abolition, stopping of infanticide, population education and family planning, shelter, vocational training, etc. in the districts of Jaipur, Dausa, Bhilwara, Tonk and Sawai Madhopur in Rajasthan. Through the Bal Rashmi Society, she has been able to transform the lives of 3000 children and their families in 280 villages of Rajasthan including parts of Jaipur city.

Smt. Garg established a foundling home "KILKARI" for abandoned children from 0 to 5 years of age. The infants are given in foster care/adoption to childless Indian couples after following the due process of law. She established another home "Nirashrit Bal Grah" for taking care of children of deserted women and the so called criminal tribes like Saansis. Bal Rashmi Society has arranged from its own sources through donations to provide the inmates with a wholesome and nutritious food, sufficient clothing, good education and health services. It also runs five schools and 3 balwadies for children coming from poor and downtrodden families. Smt. Garg also organised mobile libraries for villages on rotation and an immunisation programme on a mass scale under the Rural Health Programme in 108 villages of Bassi Tehsil, the Expanded Health Programme and the National Pulse Polio Programme in the project areas.

The Bal Rashmi Society has rendered yeoman service in the field of restraining child marriages, Awareness, Action and Support programmes for women, vocational training for women and in the matter of arranging short-term and medium-term loans for poor, rural women and their self help groups.

Under the personal supervision of Smt. Garg, the Society provides help and free legal aid to dowry victims, conducts Population Education Programmes for adolescent girls, supports girl children from poor families by providing school uniforms, school bags, books, stationery articles and cash, supports widows and women in distress and organises Mahila Mandals for women. It also advocates and struggles for the housing rights of slum dwellers of Jaipur. The Society has taken up the cause of the Saansis, scheduled castes of a semi nomadic nature, with a view to bringing them into the mainstream of society.

Her work among the scavengers' community for over two decades is also noteworthy. The observations of the eminent writer, thinker and social activist, Dr. Mulk Raj Anand on Smt. Garg are worth quoting :

"I had sensed your human concerns from the very day I met you, when I visited the school in a village, where you had adopted 'learning by doing' as the way to enable the young to grow.

