

## IETE KOCHI CENTRE

### Report on the Programme on Women Empowerment @ MEC, Thrikkakara

IETE Kochi Centre conducted a Programme on Women Empowerment on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at Govt Model Engineering College, (MEC), Thrikkakara, Cochin. The programme started at 14:00 hrs with an invocation by the students of MEC. Dr. M.V. Rajesh, Vice Chairman, IETE Kochi Centre and Associate Professor of MEC (EC Dept) and ISF Staff coordinator, welcomed and introduced the dignitaries to the audience.



Dr R. Gopikakumari, Chairperson of Kochi Centre addressed the gathering and spoke on the present changing trend in the behaviour and outlook of young girls and boys in particular. She opined that comparatively the women in Kerala are ahead in the matter of getting empowerment. Further, Dr. Vinu Thomas, Principal of MEC addressed the gathering. He mentioned about the male domination existing even in the present days. He sadly quoted his own experience while promotions are dealt in academic profession. He advised his students, to create self-confidence and to aim for fulfilling their ambitions. Besides learning from academics, he also suggested them to listen to the talks from experienced professionals through the platforms set by IETE etc. and learn from the lives of leading professionals.



Afterwards, a video presentation about Capt. Radhika Menon, the first Woman Captain in Indian Merchant Navy and recipient of the IMO Bravery Award was shown. The video covered portion of the rescue operation performed by Capt. Radhika Menon to save the life of seven fishermen hit by cyclone in Bay of Bengal. The related video of the award ceremony at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) presenting the 'Exceptional Bravery Award' to Capt. Radhika Menon was also shown. Shri C. Krishnakumar, Hon Secretary, IETE Kochi Centre gave a narration about the video presentation and described the event as a proud moment for the whole Nation. The audience gave a standing ovation to Capt. Radhika Menon.



In honour, the IETE memento was presented to Capt. Radhika Menon by Dr. R. Gopikakumari, Chairperson, IETE Kochi Centre. Prof Dr. Laila D., Head of Dept. of Electronics, MEC spoke felicitating Capt. Radhika Menon. The Chief Guest, Capt. Radhika Menon, then addressed the gathering. She spoke about her childhood days having ambition to learn something different and how she could become the first woman Radio Officer in SCI and subsequently becoming the Captain of a Merchant Ship. She just mentioned some aspects about women empowerment. She compared the mind-set of the Indian woman to that of a trained elephant. The mahout chains the elephant's leg with a flimsy chain, but it does not try to break free ignoring its mighty power. Similarly, a girl is seasoned out by her family and confine her boundary to certain limits. Captain Menon emphasised the need for breaking free these inhibitions to get empowered. She mentioned about the opportunities in Merchant Navy and recommended the students to choose an adventurous career.



The key note address on the subject 'Women Empowerment-Kerala Scenario' was delivered by Dr. Mary Matilda, (retd. Principal of Maharajas College, a post graduate in multiple disciplines and a professional HRD Trainer). She started the talk by differentiating between sex and gender. Sex is by birth and God's creation whereas gender is a human creation. Men are bestowed with muscle power, but women are more powerful when it comes to endurance and tolerance. She said, the present need to empower a woman arises just because of the pattern in which a girl is brought up by the family and the society. The girl gets conditioned to these practices from its birth onwards and gets confined to a virtual boundary. It is time to reset such norms. Thus, women shall change her mind set and get empowered within herself. Dr. Matilda expressed her own views that comparison or competition between women and men do not arise when they start sharing the load together in all walks of life to achieve success. As an example she presented the video of the new-gen turtle and rabbit, how they could win the race together. Her friendly and witty talk in mother tongue was well received by the young audience with applause. In appreciation and as a token of gratitude, the IETE memento was presented to her by Prof. Vinitha George, IEEE SBC and WiE, MEC. Finally, the vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. C.D. Suriyakala, Hon Treasurer, IETE Kochi Centre.



Around two hundred participants including Corporate Members of Kochi Centre, Faculty and Student Members of ISF Units of MEC and from various other neighbouring Engineering Colleges were present for the programme. The event concluded with National Anthem.

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Hon Secretary, IETE Kochi Centre  
(C. Krishnakumar)