

Le Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques

Inside this issue:

Protest against austerity measures	1
Centre Update / Protest cont.	2
SAWCC condemns	3
Urgent alert and warning	4
SAY/JSA Update	5
Hear Me Out (Panel at Va-	5
Sadeqa Siddique essay competition	6
The King Is Dead!	6
Canadian coalition for migrant rights founded	7
Community organiza- tions against austerity measures	8
Two pieces by Caden Mil-	8-
lion-Lovett.	10
Renu Mandhane	10
Calendar	12

Qu'en pensez-vous? What do you think?

- Let us know your thoughts about the bulletin.
- Que pensez-vous de notre journal?
- We encourage you to send in your stories and articles for upcoming newsletters in any language by the 25th of every month to:

sawccbulletin@gmail.com

• Écrivez -nous à

sawccbulletin@gmail.com

OUR BODIES! OUR RIGHTS! OUR CHOICE!

Sawcc is a proud member of « Table régionale des centres de femmes de Montréal et Laval ». This year, the Table Régionale injunction with Women's World March Committee and L'R decided to organize their protest against austerity measures with a new twist. The organizers worked hard to translate the 100 slogans which were to be chanted. The committee started their work in July of this year for the protest of 6th October. The result was a very well organized and forceful display of unity and solidarity. The slogans were translated and spoken aloud in 12 languages by the members.

The group of ladies who volunteered to chant the slogans met early morning of 6th of October to rehearse. The group then proceeded to stand on steps of Christ Church Cathedral. Just then another group of cheering members and protestors joined the first group. The day started by acknowledging that we are here, speaking to all, on unceded land that is the traditional territory of the Mohawk people. The slogans were all read aloud



in great applause and admiration by the clapping audience. It was a beautiful display of harmony, cooperation and solidarity between women belonging to different communities and cultures coming together for a common goal and dream of a fair and just life for all.

We are members, participants and workers of women's centers in Montreal and Laval and L'R women's centers in Quebec. Women take the public square centers; Women take public speaking.

Free our speech; free our body; our Earth and our territories!

OUR BODIES! OUR RIGHTS! OUR CHOICE!

URDU

ھمیں مت روکو ھم اپنے حق کیلے کھڑی ھیں ھم کھڑی رییں گی

FARSI

افسردگی عمیق، شوک فرهنگی، سوء استفاده دانستن حقوق ما، مبارزه برای حقوق ما

TAMIL

இது வரை எங்களை தடுத்தது போதும். இனிமேல் எங்களை யாராலும் தடுக்க முடியாது

BENGALI

আমরা সর্বত্র ,

আমরা সংখ্যাগরিষ্ট , আমরা সবাই ভগ্নী সম্প্রদায়া

We are women, mothers, sisters, friends, neighbours, daughters, wives, grand-mothers, we are feminists!

CENTRE UPDATE



Centre Hours/heure d'ouverture

Monday & Thursday/lundi & jeudi 9am—5pm Monday & Thursday/lundi & jeudi 9am—9pm (as of September 7th, 2105) Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday/mardi, mercredi & vendredi– 9am-5pm

The Centre is wheelchair accessible Le centre est accessible aux fauteuils roulants.

Volunteers

If you are interested in helping out at the Centre, please contact Homa (Ext. 102 or homa@bellnet.ca) to coordinate a meeting!

OUR BODIES! OUR RIGHTS! OUR CHOICE! Continued...



WE, WOMEN, HAVE THE RIGHT TO

Publically fully funded and accessible Sexual, physical, and mental health services in our communities.

WE, WOMEN, DEMAND

Reproductive justice for all communities; Reproductive health and rights;

Pregnancy and birthing options.

WE, WOMEN, DEMAND

Abortion, contraception; Comprehensive sex education; Sexual consent.

NO MEANS NO!

RESPECT

Our sexual autonomy; our body diversity; our gender expression; and identity!

WE, WOMEN, REJECT

Gender based violence; Conjugal violence; all forms of violence; Sexual, street and online harassment; Rape culture; Victim blaming

WE, WOMEN, REJECT

Rigid beauty standards, gender stereotypes and body shaming; all forms of violence against sex workers.

We have the right to protect ourselves and our bodies! Violence is a burden that we no longer want to bear. We, women, will speak out!
We are not objects. We are no longer silent!

FREEDOM FOR OUR BODIES!



SAWCC CONDEMNS

SAWCC CONDEMNS the racist and sexist violence and brutality of the Sûreté du Québec that has just been exposed via Radio-Canada's report. However, indigenous women and their communities have been subjected and continue to be subjected to racist violence since settler colonialism, the Indian Act, residential schools and on-going institutions and systems that are there ostensibly to protect children, women, communities, oppress them. It has been going on for a long time and it continues to go on and it must stop! We stand in solidarity with the strong women who spoke about the violence that they have suffered for many years. It took great courage.

We reproduce the press statement of Quebec Native Women.



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

Quebec Native Women asks for an independant investigation for Val d'Or's Sûreté du Québec

Kahnawake, October 22nd 2015 - Last night, Radio-Canada broadcasted an exclusive report on police violence against Aboriginal women in Val d'Or. Quebec Native Women (QNW) would like to express its admiration of the women who courageously shared their stories, and began to shed light on this shocking and alarming situation.

The Sûreté du Québec claims it has already begun an internal investigation regarding this deplorable situation. However, in recalling Gladys Tolley, who died after she was hit by an SQ vehicle in 2001, QNW demands a transparent, neutral and independent investigation. In spite of individual police officers' good intentions across the province, racism and discrimination persist within police forces. Indeed, we expect a wave of similar denunciations might follow yesterday's broadcast. The underlying problem is a social one; the entire Québécois population is ill informed regarding Aboriginal women's histories and current realities. As a result Aboriginal women's lives are, bluntly, less valued than other lives.

"This situation in Val d'Or angers me terribly, but it does not surprise me. This situation really is just the tip of the iceberg. We hope that any upcoming investigation or commission will be followed up with concrete measures and funding for all those who are already dedicating such effort to support Aboriginal people in cities and in their communities", declared QNW's president, Viviane Michel.

Concurrent to an investigation, we hope that survivors of this abuse and their families will have access to any service or source of support they may need in the future.

About Quebec Native Women

Quebec Native Women represents members in 56 communities, 9 nations throughout Quebec and urban areas. https://www.faq-qnw.org

-30-

Source :

Laureanne Fontaine, Communication Officer communication@faq-qnw.org Tel.: 450-632-0088 ex. 232

URGENT ALERT AND WARNING

For a while now many people in the Montreal area have been receiving fake phone calls from individuals pretending to be from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Canadian Border Service Agency, Revenue Canada or elsewhere. Some of the callers don't even say where they are calling from. However what all calls have in common is that they are threatening. The caller says that you are in deep trouble. Some say that you need to call back right away at the number they give to avoid facing any further action. Others say that if you don't pay a certain amount of money right away you will be deported or put in jail. The callers seem to target immigrants; they call people with 'foreign-sounding' names. They also target older people. If you receive any such type of call don't call back. Don't communicate in any way. If you are unsure of what to do or if you are afraid, contact the SAWCC at email: sawcc@bellnet.ca or at phone 514-528-8812.

ضروری اطلاع اور وارننگ

کچھ عرصہ سے، مانٹریال کے لوگوں کو پریشان کن فون کالز موصول ہو رہے ہیں۔ فون کرنے والے اپنا تعارف کراتے وقت اپنے آپ کو کسی گورمنٹ ادارے کا ایجنٹ بناتے ہیں مثال کے طور پر وہ اپنے آپ کو کنیڈیین امگریشن،کنیڈیین باڈر ایجنسی، {ریوینیو} كيندًا يا كيوبك تيكس ايجنسي كا كاركن بتاتر بير-

۔ ان کالز کا مقصد لوگوں کو ڈرانا اور دھمکنا ہے۔ یہ جہوٹی فون کالز کرنے والے، لوگوں کو یہ یقین دلانے کی کوشش کرتے ہیں کہ آپ کسی بہت بڑی مشکل اور پریشانی میں پہنس چکتے ہیں۔اکٹر وہ آپکو یہ کہہ کر دھمکاتے ہیں کہ اگر آپ نے فورا" مطالبہ کی گئ رقم ادا نہ کی تو آپکو جیل بھی ہو سکتی ہے اور کیینڈا سے نکانے کا حکم

اگر آپکو اسطرح کی کالز موصول ہوں تو آپ ایسے لوگوں سے بات چیت کرنے سے اجتناب کریں اور فون بند کر دیں۔ اگر آپ بے یقینی کا شکار ہوں یا آپ کسی سے بات کرنا چاہیں، تو آپ ساک [SAWCC] میں ہم سے فون یا ای میل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کر

अम क्रास्कृति रेख- किंग्र हमाक "कामाछिमान वर्शव भाषित्र" सदेतीय रास राजा- कार्य आक्रियाच- तक्षाकासमूषक क्रिंग एकार्य क्रिंस क्राया । अभिता अभिता अभिता अभिता क्राया टिम्पिट रिकान कार महाने, किया रिकाम तमान-COTT FORE FIRST राज्यार (कार्यायाम हम्मेर हिमक्दिन क्रिक्सिय उभाग जन नगएथ कामना, 211. Maga र्भाष्ट व्हार वास्त न्यूप्ति डिक्टिवा कि उ DIAR. RIGIR 200/19/00 स्था वना जान जारान

அவசர முக்கிய எச்சரிக்கை

அண்மை நாட்களில் பல மொண்ட்ரியல் வாசிகள், குடிவரவு மற்றும் குடியுரிமையிலிருந்து அல்லது கனடிய எல்லை சேவைகலிளிருந்தோ மற்றும் கனடா வருமான இலாகாவிளிருந்தோ பேசுவதாக பாசாங்கு பண்ணி வினோதமான தொலை பேசி அழைப்புகளை பெற்றிருக்கிறார்கள். சில அழைப்பாளிகள் தாங்கள் எங்கிருந்து பேசுகிறோம் என்பதை தெரிவிப்பதும் இல்லை. ஆனாலும்அனைவரும் சொல்லுவது நீங்கள் மிக ஆபத்தான பிரச்சனையில் மாட்டியுள்ளீர்கள் என்பதுதான். சிலர் தங்கள் கூறிய தொலைபேசி இலக்கத்துக்கு திரும்ப அழைக்கும் படியும் அப்படி செய்வதனால் மேலதிக ஆபத்தை தவிர்க்கலாம் என்றும் பயமுறுத்துகிறார்கள். வேறு சிலரோ குறிப்பிட்ட தொகை பணத்தை தரும்படியும் அப்படி செய்யாவிட்டால் நாட்டைவிட்டு வெளியேற்றப்படுவார்கள் அல்லது சிறையில் அடைக்கப்படுவார்கள் என்றும் மிரட்டுகிறார்கள். வெளி நாட்டிலிருந்து குடியேறியவர்களே அழைப்பாளர்களின் இல்லைக்கு. வெளி நாட்டவரின் பெயர் போல தோன்றும் பெயருள்ளவர்களையே அவர்கள் அழைக்கிறார்கள். அதுமட்டுமன்றி வயதானவர்களும் அவர்களது இலக்கு. உங்களுக்கு இதுபோல அழைப்பு ஏதாவது வந்தால் தயவு செய்து அவர்களை திரும்ப அழைக்கவோ அல்லது வேறு எந்த விதத்திலும் தொடர்பு கொள்ளவோ வேண்டாம். உங்களுக்கு என்ன செய்வது என்று குழப்பமாக இருந்தாலோ, பயமாக இருந்தாலோ தெற்காசிய பெண்கள் சமூக நிலையத்தை 514-528-8812 என்ற தொலைபேசி இலக்கத்திலோ அல்லது <u>sawcc@bellnet.ca</u> என்ற மின்னஞ்சல் முகவரியிலோ தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்.

SAY/JSA UPDATE

Log on to Facebook and check out: Don't Touch Me: An Anthology for more information on our new anthology project!

Groups are in full swing! This year we will be present in 3 high schools as well as one cegep, with lots more on the horizon! Take a look at an exciting "group contract" activity we did this month!

There a small library located in the Youth Space in the back and we're on the lookout for a bookshelf! If you have any leads, please let us know at sawccyouth@gmail.com



HEAR ME OUT: CULTURAL PRODUCTION BY ACTIVIST YOUTH (co-

sponsored by Education Enseignement superieur et Recherche)



On Friday October 30th, 2015 SAY members participated in a panel discussion at Vanier College.

Panel description (as seen on Facebook): Youth and young adults are often silenced and condescended to by their elders, who say things such as, "You're young, you don't know anything" and "You need more life experience." Contrary to popular belief, however, young people have plenty to say, and they will always find creative ways to express their thoughts on all sorts of important social issues. This panel will feature representatives from three local youth-focused organizations—South Asian Youth (SAY), DESTA Black Youth Network, and Leave Out Violence (LOVE)—who will speak on projects through which teens and young adults have produced forms of expression

that convey their stories and experiences.

We felt very fortunate to be able to participate and share space with amazing and inspiring organizers, while discussing the zine, Life Stories on Being A Muslim Woman: Struggles and Solidarity. It was a morning well-spent engaging in critical dialogue with students and teachers at the college. Thank you to Sarah Mostafa-Kamel who joined us from Ottawa for the day, it was lovely spending time with you:)

SADEQA SIDDIQUI Essay Writing Contest

The deadline for submissions has been extended to Thursday, January 14, 2016.

To honour Sadeqa Siddiqui who worked as the coordinator of our centre and was and still is committed to the mission of SAWCC, an essay writing competition will be held each year. This is our very first competition and we look forward to hearing from HIGH SCHOOL and CEGEP students aged 16 to 18 years of age.

The contest runs from THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2015 TO THURSDAY JANUARY 14, 2016 AT 12:00 NOON.

The topics for the essay are:

Redefining of Women's Role in Today's Global World OR

Use the verse below, written by Maya Angelou, to inspire your essay: When we come to it
We, this people, on this wayward, floating body
Created on this earth, of this earth
Have the power to fashion for this earth
A climate where every and every woman
Can live freely without sanctimonious piety
And without crippling fear.

The essay should be no longer than a maximum of 750 words.

Along with your essay you need to also submit the application form found on our website:

http://www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca/EN/?page_id=24

Your name must only appear on the entry form. IF your name appears on the essay you submit, it will be disqualified. The essay must be **submitted** no later than **12 noon on Thursday**, **January 14**th **2016** by e-mail to: sawccbulletin@gmail.com

The judges will decide on one winning essay and two runners-up. The winners will be announced at an event in March 2016 (date to be decided). The three chosen essays will appear in the three SAWCC Bulletins that are published subsequent to the announcement of the selected essays.

THE KING IS DEAD! LONG LIVE THE KING! - election results in Canada

Stephen Harper is no longer the prime minister. Many of us heaved a sigh of relief. We felt that a weight was lifted off our chests and we could breathe again. However we need to also remember that the Conservatives got about the same number of votes they had earlier. It's the NDP whose seats went down.

Now we need push to ensure the Liberals hold true to their election promises and demand more. We must stay alert. Corporate Liberal Canada is still alive and well. We also need to push to ensure that Bill C-51 which the Liberals voted for is not simply amended. And we need to push the NDP to be the voice of conscience, speaking for the marginalized. We need to ensure they return to their roots.

Perhaps the mixed emotions are best caught by our ally, Harsha Walia, who posted on facebook the day after the elections, 20th October 2015.

"I am hopeful most folks aren't naive about the Liberals and so a bit of history that might offer some orientation moving forward. When I first came to turtle island [an Indigenous name for Canada] the Liberals were in power and remained for another decade almost, just like this younger generation has basically only grown up under Harper.

During the time (not exhaustive, just five things from memory):

- 1) Canada engaged in military intervention in Afghanistan and was involved in the coup in Haiti. Despite popular perception, Canada was involved in Iraq as well as Canadian oil companies that signed production-sharing deals in the KRG region.
- 2) It was under a Liberal government that the temporary foreign worker program was first vastly expanded. After 9/11, they also introduced the first series of anti-terror legislation widely condemned internationally and escalated highly publicized arrests under security certificates accompanied by racist and inflammatory and Islamophobic media rants.
- 3) A decade earlier, Liberal Minister of Finance Paul Martin had cancelled all federal funding for new social housing development and the impacts of rising homelessness a decade later were being felt in inner-cities and reserves acutely. Austerity in general was first introduced by Liberal govt including massive changes to El.
- 4) The 2005 Kelowna Accord by Paul Martin was met by fierce resistance of Indigenous sovereignists that attempted to mitigate the deliberate impoverishment of Indigenous communities through charitable injection of funds without any recognition or respect of Aboriginal Title and Rights.

THE KING IS DEAD! LONG LIVE THE KING! Cont...

5) Shortly after entering trade talks with Algeria, a moratorium on deportations to Algeria was lifted, meaning thousands of Algerians faced deportation to Algeria. Once during an occupation of Liberal Immigration Minister Denis Coderre's [now mayor of Montreal] office by non-status Algerian and allies, people were brutally tasered by police and had police dogs set on them.

The other thing i recall about that decade was that in as much Canada had to at least publically stay out of the war on Iraq it was due to a vibrant anti-war movement. That the FTAA (free trade of the americas) was met with a fierce ant-globalization movement that united so many social movements that has unfortunately not been seen since. And that no new security certificates have been able to be issued (though men and their families struggle on like Mahjoub and Harkat) because of an inspiring national campaign against secret trials and racism. If this Trudeau can similarly spark deeper social movements amongst us, ones rooted in history, ones rooted in an analysis of capitalism and imperialism, ones rooted in community not just campaign goals, ones that aim to serve all people and the planet, I totally welcome that!"

CONGRATULATIONS to our sisters at MCVI (Mouvement contre le viol et l'inceste) on their 40th anniversary!

CANADIAN COALITION FOR MIGRANT WORKERS' RIGHTS FOUNDED

30 October 2016

Today is a wonderful day. For the first time, migrant worker groups from coast to coast to coast have joined together and formed a singled unified voice for migrant worker rights.

The Coalition for Migrant Workers Rights - Canada (CMWRC) is comprised of members from Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, PEI, and Quebec [SAWCC ally, the Immigrant Workers' Centre]. Together, CMWRC members have launched MoVE, a campaign for Mobility, Voice and Equality for migrant workers. MoVE is calling on Trudeau to act urgently to untie migrant workers from their employers.

You can add your voice to theirs just as we have! Sign the petition.

[petition can be found at link below]

http://migrantrights.ca/en/take-action/#email

Share on Facebook - Post on Twitter

Did you know that low-waged migrant workers are restricted to working for the specific employer listed on their permit. Changing employers is extremely difficult which allows bad bosses to lower salaries and work conditions for migrant workers. As a result, wages and conditions worsen for everyone in the labour market.

That's just not fair. We have a new government in Ottawa that has promised real change. Let's call on them to make sure they do so.

We need to build a fair immigration system that values people, supports families and rejects divisiveness. That means justice and status for migrant workers.

The time for change is now.

Syed Hussan
Coordinator
Migrant Workers Alliance for Change
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Toronto, ON M5S 2T9
T: 1-855-567-4722 ext. 700
E: hussan@migrantworkersalliance.org

SAWCC JOINS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO PROTEST AUSTERITY

On 2nd and 3rd November, SAWCC offered reduced services as we joined with community organizations across the province to protest the austerity measures that hurt the most vulnerable populations, the populations we are committed to work with and empower. We took part in collective demonstrations. The strike action was organized by RIOCM (Regroupement intersectoriel des organismes communautaires de Montréal), of which we are a part.



The demands are:

Respect for the autonomy of community organizations and the recognition of their work as an engine of social progress;

- 2. The full funding to the overall mission of all the independent community action organizations that are entitled;
- 3. The annual indexation of subsidies to keep the increase in operating costs;
- 4. The end of budget cuts and a major reinvestment in public services and social programs

Nos revendications communes:

- Le respect de l'autonomie des organismes communautaires et la reconnaissance de leur travail comme moteur du progrès social;
- 2. Le plein financement à la mission globale de tous les organismes d'action communautaire autonome qui y ont droit;
- 3. L'indexation annuelle des subventions pour suivre l'augmentation des coûts de fonctionnement;
- La fin des compressions budgétaires et un réinvestissement majeur dans les services publics et les programmes sociaux

Two pieces by Caden Million-Lovett

i am not my gender.

i am not my body

i am confined to this flesh prison

that includes.

but is not limited to

breasts, hips, curves

all of which are things

that i don't want half the time

but that is not all

please, take the time to peel away

the surface and learn

that i am scared of the dark

i close my eyes when walking through

the unlit hallway

towards the bathroom late at night

(we have a nightlight now)

or in the vestibule when i get home from walking the dog and the lights are off and yet i can only sleep if there is pitch darkness

please, peel away the surface and learn that my favourite color is green green like the smell of freshly cut grass green like a soft spring breeze green like my childhood room like the sound of my grandmother's laughter and yet i would never, ever, dye my hair green

Two pieces by Caden Million-Lovett. Cont...

please, peel away the surface and learn that my mother is the most important person in my life

she is my sun and my stars and everything good in between

she is always there for me when i want to talk shit

and yet she is the last person i want to tell my problems to

please, peel away the surface and learn that writing poetry is incredibly hard for me i can't ever seem to be able to organize my thoughts

in a way that seems even potentially coherent and yet!! here i am...

please, peel away the surface and learn that i am not a game of 'guess the gender' so when you ask me 'are you feeling like a girl because i see a skirt!'

do not expect a particularly pleased response i do not owe you or anyone a daily explanation about my wardrobe choices

honestly, my mother does that enough as it is

see, i am not my gender.
i am not my breasts or my hips
any more than i am only my fear of the dark
or my love of the color green
they are all just parts that make up one whole
branches on the tree that is my self
and i hope that maybe some of you
will take the time
to help me grow

"caden here, caden has a story! caden is just dying to tell her - his - their? story cmon, let us have it!"

okay...

what do you want to hear first?
i'm sure you're interested in when i first realized
that i wasn't really a girl, right?
well i had always had some days where i wanted
to play soccer with the boys

and days where i wanted to skip with the girls and other days where i wanted to sprint. away. away from the playground at school away from home away from myself, or the self people had built me to be? and other days i would stand at the top of the play

structure
and look down knowing that it wouldn't kill me

but it would hurt and the days i wanted to crawl out of my skin and scream and yell but i couldn't because what could i say?

i was only 6, i didn't know

but haha

i guess thats kinda not so interesting, is it? then i'm sure you're dying to know which bathroom i use! okay

well, see i use the women's bathroom because the very *idea* of the backlash i would receive

from my peers at school is too much for me to handle right now,

i'm still so small and new at school and in life i'm only a child trying to do what's best for me and i'm sorry but 'taking a stand' or whatever you called it

isn't what i'm really looking to do right now but i will continue to use the women's restrooms until you wake up and see that me taking a stand will solve nothing for those

in the future

but whatever, right? not too intriguing nothing that would make a good story so what about my clothes, huh? alright, then well, see, ideally, i would have clothes for boy days

and clothes for girl days
right? well, you see, it's not so easy
because having those clothes means **buying**those clothes

and buying those clothes means **asking** for them

and that's not really something i've ever been good at

so i guess what i'm saying is that i just dress in whatever i have

Page 10 Newsletter Title

Two pieces by Caden Million-Lovett. Cont...

and force myself to accept myself in those clothes it's tough but hey what can you do?

oh but i'm certain i'm boring you, this can't beoh? you want to hear about-- are you sure? okay then

this person wants to know if i've ever had really bad days

and wow, let me tell you

some weeks the bad days outweigh the good because it's so hard to love myself when half the time i know i am in the wrong body wrong hips wrong chest wrong hands wrong

wrong wrong but i hide it behind "im just obsessed with myself!" which isn't really a lie but it's not really the truth either?

but who cares, right? have i answered your questions, mrs?
is this enough of a first class introduction, or are you looking for more?
because i've said it before and i'll say it again; i don't talk about this enough. but see, even you aren't really listening.

i'm okay. i'm okay. i'm okay.
don't worry about caden, she - he - they,
whatever! its fine!
i'm fine. i'm fine.







New Ontario Human Rights commissioner Renu Mandhane vows aggressive approach

Jim Rankin, Toronto Star Sun, 1 November 2015

http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2015/11/01/new-ontario-human-rights-commissioner-renu-mandhane-vows-aggressive-approach.html

...Mandhane leaves her old job as executive director of the University of Toronto's International Human Rights Program to take on her new role, beginning Monday. During her time at the program, Mandhane edited a 2015 research paper on migrants to Canada with mental health issues who are subject to arbitrary imprisonment. It is a bleak assessment of how the country deals with these newcomers, and prompted calls for more humane treatment and an end to indefinite detention.

She also works with PEN International, and through the U of T rights program helped produce a 2015 research



paper on freedom-of-speech challenges in India. With her new role comes a public profile and the power to make change.

Page 11 Newsletter Title

Renu Mandhane Cont...

With her new role comes a public profile and the power to make change.

"I am sure she will inject excellent energy into that role and she will push for change," says Audrey Macklin, a U of T law professor who sits on an advisory committee that oversees the program Mandhane ran. "None of this is expressing any judgment on predecessors, but I think Renu is not complacent and not comfortable with sitting back and taking it easy."

An idealist, but practical, is how law school friend Maggie Wente, an aboriginal rights lawyer, describes Mandhane. She also believes Mandhane's time with the U of T Faculty of Law has given her an insider's perspective on the workings of institutions that are likely to find themselves on the receiving end of rights-based complaints. Wente is also one of Ontario's human rights commissioners. When Barbara Hall, who retired after nearly a decade as the chief commissioner, mentioned it was time to think about who would replace her, Wente thought of Mandhane and prodded her friend to apply.

Mandhane is conscious of her new profile and the responsibility that comes with it, yet she comes to it without pretension, and with a sense of humour. While the Star was interviewing Mandhane for this profile, a Conservative candidate had just been exposed for urinating in a coffee mug of a client's kitchen, to which Mandhane said: "I can confirm that I don't have a peegate in my background."

Historically, notes Mandhane, the commission's work has been done with a soft approach, where one can work behind the scenes and cajole people to do the right thing. That doesn't always work.

"Some of this persistent discrimination, I think that you have to be willing at a certain point to say, you know what, the velvet glove has to come off," says Mandhane.

"I want to take positions and be bold in advocating those positions."

Mandhane says interim chief commissioner Ruth Goba got it right when she publicly made strong statements on the police practice of carding, or street checks, and racial profiling, and that commission staff were happy with the bold approach.

It is too early for Mandhane to say what changes she would like to make to the 54-year-old commission, but she is interested in looking at what role it might play on a national and international stage. She sees the commission as a "gold standard" leader on human rights "that could influence the work of a lot of other bodies."

But to begin with, she plans on meeting with staff and doing a lot of listening and settling in to her new Dundas St. W. office.

"Law is a great tool but I don't think it's the only tool, and I think there's lots of flaws with the law," she says. "Very legal thinking can sometimes be quite one-dimensional. I guess I would say I am not a lawyer's lawyer." She was called to the Ontario bar in 2002 and a year later earned a Master of Laws from New York University.

Save the date! Saturday 5th December, 2-4 pm at SAWCC — we remember the Montreal massacre of 6th December 1989 at Ecole Polytechnique.

Details about SAWCC program to be announced.

South Asian Women's Community Centre Centre communautaire des femmes sudasiatiques

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3 nov-demo Nov 3rd-Demo 10 nov—Session d'information sur la Nov 10th-Info session on Nutrinutrition et les habitudes saines tion & Healthy Habits (10:30AM) Nov 17th—Info session on family (10H30)law (10:30AM) 17 nov—Session d'information sur la Nov 24th—Arts & Crafts loi familiale (10H30) (10:30AM)24 nov—Les arts (10H30) Nov 26th-French class evalua-27 nov—Dîner communautaire et tion (9:00AM) Nov 27th—Diwali Party & Potfête du Diwali (12H00) luck (12:00PM) 30 nov - Réunion du Conseil exé-Nov 30th—SAWCC Executive cutif de CCFSA (18H00) Council meeting (6PM)

November 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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