SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CENTRE

In Montreal on unceded Kanien'kehá:ka [Mohawk] territory

Bulletin novembre 2016



Le Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques

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Qu'en pensezvous?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



SAWCC Joined 100s of Community Groups Across Québec ...

Hundreds of Quebec community groups united in province-wide protests in Québec, which culminated in demonstrations on Wednesday 9th November, to demand that the government in-

crease funding to organizations including health clinics, legal clinics, food banks, community and women's centres, housing rights groups, groups working with immigrants, youth and many who are marginalized.

There has been no increase in funding from the Liberal government and with the cost of living and food rising, they barely make ends meet. The long freeze in funding is that the actual dollar value of the funding the groups gets has been dropping in the face of rising cost of living and inflation. Many groups have to cut back, lay off staff, reduce services and eventually are forced to close their doors completely.

While the Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity François Blais said his department meets with community groups regularly and will continue to do so, the groups involved in the protests say that those meetings don't result in change. This is the first time that that all the groups are working together. Because the problem is everywhere. It's time for action!

As stated by the FFQ (Fédération des femmes du Québec/Québec Women's Federation) of which SAWCC is a member, "Cuts and the transformation of the funding of community groups impoverish us and undermine our autonomy. With over 1,000 other community organizations on strike, we are calling for:

- a significant increase in funding to the global mission, annual indexation of grants, and money for non-funded organizations
- respect for the autonomy of Community action and recognition of their role in social progress
- the end of cuts and refinancing of public services.
- le rehaussement significatif du financement à la mission globale, l'indexation annuelle des subventions ainsi que de l'argent pour les organismes non financés
- le respect de l'autonomie de l'action communautaire et la reconnaissance de leur rôle dans le progrès social
- la fin des compressions et un refinancement des services publics. (also p.10)

sawccbulletin@gmail.com

CENTRE UPDATE



Centre Hours/heure d'ouverture

Monday & Thursday/lundi & jeudi 9am—9pm Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday/mardi, mercredi & vendredi- 9am-5pm

The Centre is wheelchair accessible

Le centre est accessible aux fauteuils roulants.

<u>Volunteers</u> If you are interested in helping out at the Centre, please contact Homa (Ext. 102

or homa@bellnet.ca) to coordinate a meeting!

SAWCC Bulletin -- submission guidelines

SAWCC members are encouraged to send submissions to the Bulletin, to share items of interest with other members.

Send submissions to: sawccbulletin@gmail.com
If using the post send to: SAWCC Bulletin, 1035 Rachel est, Montreal, Quebec, H2J 2J3

Submissions should reach by the 25th of the month.

Submissions may be original work or reprints (with permission) and can include -- art, reports, photos, information, opinion pieces, short fiction, poetry, announcements, recipes, etc.

Publication criteria are guided by SAWCC's commitment to not negatively discriminate on the basis of physical and mental ability, religion, colour, nationality, age, sexual orientation and identity, caste, and class. Publication is further guided by the feminist ethos of sis-terhood, and principles of intersectionality*, equality, equity, and transparency. As well, material that may compromise confidentiality of individuals without their consent will not be published.

SAWCC reserves the right to select, reject or edit submissions. When authorship identified, items reflect the views of the authors.

Executive Council Meeting Highlights Meeting of October 24th 2016

- Sixth December commemotartion event will happen at SAWCC on Sunday 4th December (see p. 11 for details.)
- Our Year End Party will be on Sunday 11th December from 1-4pm. It will be at CEDA, 2125 rue Delisle (metro Lionel Groulx). All welcome! Come, have a fun time. Meet friends, make new ones.
- We will send comments to the Québec National Assembly on Bill 62 "An Act to foster adherence to State religious neutrality and, in particular, to provide a framework for religious accommodation requests in certain bodies".
- Next EC meeting Monday 28th November. There will be no EC meeting in December. January's EC meeting will be on Monday 23 January.

NEXT Executive Council meeting — MONDAY 28th November, 6pm. All members are welcome. Come and have a say in your organization!



South Asian Women's Community Centre invites members, friends, users

REMEMBERING RAMANI our friend and sister in struggle

Memorial & Celebration of Life

Wednesday 16 November

5:30-6:30 pm refreshments

6:30-8:00 pm program



SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S COMMUNITY

CENTRE

1035 Rachel east, 3rd floor
All are welcome



Member News

CONGRATULATIONS to Samantha,
Samer and Malek on the birth of
Maya Alice, daughter and sister, on
5th August. All are doing well!
A baby girl to swell the ranks of
SAWCC! Welcome.

MEMBERS are reminded and encouraged to share their news. Send member news to sawccbulle-tin@gmail.com by 25th of the month.

Updates from the South Asian Youth (SAY) Program

High School Programming

The SAY program has been very busy starting up youth programs in schools for the 2016-17 school year. During the month of October, we started our girls groups in three schools. Getting to know the participants is a very exciting part of our job. Every school program is always different. From a workshop series based in leadership and empowerment at Laurenhill Academy, to a film-making club at Roberval Academy, every girls group is completely different in their interests and vision for their program. One thing is always consistent, that spaces for girls are important, needed, and full of energy.

Poetry Workshop Series

On October 30th, we also held the third edition of the Unraveling in Rhymes poetry workshop series. The Unraveling in Rhymes series started in May with the intention of bringing together women and femmes of colour for a free day-long writing workshop. We've put this workshop together multiple times now and the only appropriate word we can think of for the feeling in the room is "magic." What we have found again and again is that the young women who show up are not only brilliant and talented but they've also been through a whole hell of a lot and, in writing, have often just begun to find healing and empowerment. During the workshop, the attendees are grouped with three-to-four writing mentors who are there to nurture and encourage the truths they want and need to tell on the page and out loud. These mentors are other women of colour who have been writing and performing for a number of years and who, alongside their writing work, have also been on some sort of journey towards healing themselves and their communities.

SOUTH ASIAN YOUTH CONT'D

Sisters in Motion Poetry Event

Taking place on September 7th, the magical SistersInMotion event acted as a follow-up to the magic that came out of the Unraveling In Rhymes writing workshops. Our unraveling became the site of our transformation where we found new confidence as we discovered the power of our voices.

This was probably the ONLY stage in Montreal exclusive to black, indigenous and racialized women and femmes. What we've witnessed again and again is the erasure and disregard for our voices and stories in favour of the fandom that so often surrounds white and/or masculine people not because they're more talented but because of patriarchy and white supremacy. SistersInMotion aimed to do something different - something radical. To lift up the work of women and femmes of colour and to demand that they be heard in all of our glorious, messy vulnerability.

SistersinMotion is calling in the diversity, resiliency, and magic that are often missing from many artistic, activist, and green initiatives here in the city. It is so important for everyone, but especially Black, Indigenous and racialized women and femmes of colour to have an intersectional space like this where we can reconnect in a space that isn't extracting and exploiting our labor while devaluing the land...as these are interlinked. Reconnection to the land. Reconnection to our voices.

And we don't intend to stop at just having one event. Stay tuned for our winter edition of SistersInMo-

Sisters in Motion in the media:

http://www.mcgilldaily.com/2016/09/the-storm-was-needed/

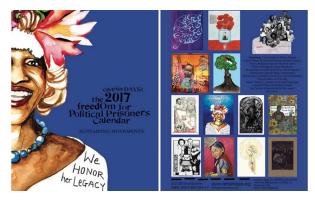
Co-organizers Dona and Malek talked about the event in an interview on Dragonroot Media.

 $\underline{https://soundcloud.com/dragonrootmedia/theres-a-small-distance-between-a-spell-and-a-poem-an-interview-with-sisters-in-motion}$





On 28th of Oct.2016 at noon a group of women from SAWCC went to visit a Breast Cancer clinic. We got a tour and an explanation of the procedure for mammograms.





CERTAIN DAYS 2017: Sustaining Movements

SAWCC has participated in this year's calendar.
We have a short piece about us & SAWCC member
Farha Najah Hussain has contributed a work of calligraphic art.

Calendars will be available for purchase at SAWCC as a fund-raiser for SAWCC. If interested in purchasing a copy contact Dolores dolchew@hotmail.com Put "calendar purchase" in the subject box.

See also page 7
for LAUNCH info!

Apart from this, each year Certain Days Freedom for Political Prisioners Calendar sales go different beneficiaries. This year they are: Release Aging People in Prison, Addameer Prisoners Support and Human Rights Association, a Palestinian non-governmental, civil institution which focuses on human rights issues (Addameer is Arabic for conscience), and Unist'ot'en Camp, a non-violent homestead created with authority of the traditional Hereditary Chiefs of the Unist'ot'en people.

SOUTH ASIAN YOUTH CONT'D from page 5

Upcoming SAY meetings:

SAY Support Meetings

Want to meet other South Asian women in a safe space? Come join us while we drink tea, eat some snacks, and share our stories. From funny incidents to personal struggles, our SAY meeting space is a time to talk among other young South Asian women.

For more information, please contact: sawccyouth@gmail.com

Year End Party: Call-out for performers!

Do you have a talent you would to share? Consider performing at SAWCC's Annual Year-End party! We are currently in the search of performers for our line-up.

Whether it's dancing, singing, poetry, theatre, etc. Whether individually or in a group. We want you! To sign up, please e-mail sawccyouth@gmail.com or let a community worker know you would like to sign up!

INVITATION from CERTAIN DAYS for LAUNCH

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 5:30pm at the Center for Gender Advocacy 1500 de Maisonneuve West, #404 (métro Guy-Concordia)

Join us as we launch the 2017 Certain Days Freedom for Political Prisoners calendar alongside Clandestine Occupations: An Imaginary History, a novel by Diana Block. Diana spent thirteen years living underground with a political collective committed to supporting the Puerto Rican independence and Black liberation movements, during which time she had two children, worked in the AIDS movement, and published poetry under a pseudonym – she will be present at this event, speaking about life underground, the ongoing reality of political prisoners in the United States, and reading from her book.

This event is FREE; the Certain Days calendar, copies of Clandestine Occupations,

and various books from Kersplebedeb Publications will be sold.

WOMEN RESIST OCCUPATION, MILITARIZATION & WARS OF AGGRESSION

Women are at the forefront of

resistance struggles as orga-

nizers, participants and sup-

porters.

During the 12 Days to End Violence Against Women (25 November – 6 December), Women of Diverse Origins issues a call to take to the streets of Montreal to march in soldarity with women who are resisting occupation, militarization and wars of aggression here and around the world.

We live in a time of massive imperialist wars and proxy wars and on-going occupation, but we are also living in a period of great resistance, organized and spontaneous, of people's movements and armed resistance. Women are at the forefront of these struggles as organizers, participants and supporters, as we seek to protect the land, water and air, to ensure a better future for our children and communities. As a consequence, we are also the victims of those who seek to silence us with violence and threats of violence and death.

But we will not be stopped! Locally and globally we are on the frontlines, resisting corporations and their state partners as they seek to denude the earth, and forests, and build pipelines

that will contaminate the land and water in Canada, Dakota, Ecuador and elsewhere.

We denounce our government for their complicity overseas, selling military equipment to despotic regimes like Saudi Arabia and lending support to military interventions in the Middle East with devastating and terrifying consequences for the people there. We also call attention to the hypocrisy of the Trudeau government with regard to indigenous people, setting up a Commission into murdered and missing indigenous girls and women, but not calling a moratorium on dangerous oil and gas pipelines, many across the lands of indigenous people!

We are one with Palestinian women resisting occupation for almost seven decades, and also with the Kurdish Rojava who are defending their land and their right to exist as a people. We are also in solidarity with our sisters around the world who are struggling against the rapaciousness of Canadian

corporations, like the Saharawi (Western Sahara) women, fighting for political and economic sovereignty against Morocco, where Saskatchewan-based giant Potash Corp is exploiting the world's largest reserve of rock phosphate.

The imperatives of patriarchy ensures that sexual violence against women is used as military strategy. So-called 'comfort' women in East and Southeast Asia were made sex slaves by the Japanese army in World War II. Today our female bodies continue to be used as trophies of war, to intimidate, punish and destroy communities. In Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Guatemala, Philippines, Kashmir, Colombia and Haiti, women have undergone sexual violence in conflicts, committed in their

majority by military and paramilitary forces.

As women we have always struggled for peace with justice and we will continue to do

so. Stop the rape and pillage of our Mother Earth and the rape and pillage of our women! Women of the World Unite! Stop Violence Against Women! No to Militarism, Occupation, Wars of Aggression and imperialism! No More Blood for Oil! No more Blood for Gold! Protect our Bodies, our Land, our Rights, our Freedom and Dignity!

Join us to demonstrate against the violent exploitation of women and our communities, as a direct result of occupation, militarization and wars of aggression.

Saturday 26th November, 1pm, Place Norman Bethune (Guy & de Maisonneuve; metro Guy-Concordia)

Women of Diverse Origins Info: wdofdo@gmail.com



Un an de féminisme avec Justin Trudeau

LE DEVOIR 15 octobre 2016 | Aurélie Lanctôt -Étudiante en droit à l'Université McGill et diplômée en journalisme de l'UQAM

En mars 2016, lors d'une conférence d'ONU Femmes à New York, Justin Trudeau séduit les progressistes du monde entier en affirmant qu'il proclamera haut et fort son féminisme jusqu'au jour où cela « ne suscitera plus qu'un haussement d'épaules ». Après une année au pouvoir, c'est à peu près la réaction que suscite l'engagement féministe de notre photogénique premier ministre. Trudeau a composé un cabinet paritaire et a mis sur pied une enquête nationale sur les femmes autochtones disparues et assassinées. Saluons-le. Toutefois, les gestes posés pour améliorer les conditions de vie générales des Canadiennes déçoivent.

Les libéraux ont joué du tambour bien fort pour vanter les investissements et la création d'emplois inscrits dans leur premier budget. C'était de bon augure pour les Canadiennes, qui sont en moyenne

plus pauvres que leurs concitoyens et plus nombreuses à être au chômage ou à occuper des emplois précaires. que les emplois promis bénéficieront aux femmes. chapitre, on pourrait avoir des surprises amères. On se réjouit de l'investissement de 89,9 millions sur deux ans dans le soutien des refuges pour femmes victimes de violence. Toutefois, l'enveloppe dont dispose Condition féminine Canada (CFC) pour financer les projets de prévention de la violence est bien mince, ce qui est un choix curieux, alors que Justice Canada estime que la violence faite aux femmes coûte annuellement plusieurs milliards à la société canadienne.

Société civile mal financée

Quant aux groupes de femmes, qui forment l'épine dorsale de la promotion de l'égalité d'un océan à l'autre, ils sont loin de trouver leur compte. On a prévu investir 23,3 millions sur cinq ans pour renforcer CFC, mais après le véritable saccage orchestré par le gouvernement Harper, c'est trop peu pour restaurer la capacité d'agir du

Les groupes de femmes sont les organisations de la société civile les plus mal financées au Canada. ce sont les forces vives de la promotion de l'égalité et du féminisme. Or, la bienveillance féministe de Trudeau sera vaine si celles et ceux qui font avancer l'égalité Toutefois, il n'est pas clair sur le terrain sont à bout de souffle et de moyens.

Par ailleurs, et c'est là où le bât blesse, CFC persiste à offrir aux organisations admissibles du financement par projets ciblés. Or, cela a

pour conséquence désastreuse de placer des groupes déjà affaiblis et débordés en compétition les uns contre les autres, pour des fonds de toute façon insuffisants. De plus, on coupe ainsi les ailes de ces groupes, qui ne peuvent plus définir, planifier leur action à long terme, enfermés qu'ils sont dans les critères de financement étroits et sans grande vision.

Les groupes de femmes sont les organisations de la société civile les plus mal financées au Canada. Leurs employées sont les moins bien payées de tous les organismes communautaires. Pourtant, ce sont les forces vives de la promotion de l'égalité et du féminisme. Or, la bienveillance féministe de Trudeau sera vaine si celles et ceux qui font avancer l'égalité sur le terrain sont à bout de souffle et de moyens.

Si Trudeau veut faire la preuve que son féminisme n'est pas qu'une affaire de marketing, il devra faire plus, et faire mieux. Sinon, les haussements d'épaules se transformeront vite en franche colère.

Des investissements inadéquats

Kate McInturff, chercheuse au Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives, souligne que 88,5 % des emplois qu'on créera dans les deux prochaines années se concentrent dans des secteurs à prédominance masculine, et il n'y a pas d'investissements prévus dans les secteurs où les femmes sont majoritaires. On peut donc craindre que seule une modeste proportion des emplois créés bénéficiera effectivement aux femmes. Pourtant, ce sont elles qui en auraient le plus besoin pour améliorer leur taux d'emploi et corriger les écarts de revenus entre les sexes. Le budget prévoyait aussi une somme de 500 millions de dollars pour la création d'un « cadre national pour la garde des enfants ». Toutefois, rien ne garantit pour l'instant que les fonds seront utilisés pour propulser la création d'un système de garderies national accessible et universel, conçu comme une responsabilité collective à l'égard des familles, plus particulièrement à l'égard des jeunes mères, et non comme un simple service client. À ce

ENGAGEZ VOUS! The Demands of the COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS against FUNDING FREEZES

More concretely, we demand:

A significant increase in funding to the overall mission of the 4,000 autonomous community organizations and the indexation of grants to the global mission:

- The campaign will demand from the Government of Quebec the amount that will cover the financial requests of the entire ACA movement, which means compiling the claims addressed to all departments, recognizing and subsidizing groups waiting for funding.
- Many departments do not index their grants annually. Combined with the stagnation of subsidies, this means that the groups are becoming poorer, unable to bear the increase in costs to be covered.

Compliance with the Community Action Recognition Policy:

• Adopted in 2001, this policy should call on all governmental bodies to respect the autonomy of groups, to establish or maintain specific funding programs for autonomous Community action and to recognize the contribution of Community action to Quebec society, including the contribution of the ACA movement and the importance of the role of collective rights groups. However, many departments do not respect the policy and the government is not doing the right thing to ensure compliance.

The recognition of autonomous Community action as an engine of social progress:

- The government frequently mentions the importance of the contribution of autonomous community action, but, whether it confesses it or not, it is often the services that go there that interest it. The ACA makes a major contribution to social progress and the government must act to exceed the level of discourse. The campaign also calls for an end to cuts in public services and social programs:
- Public services and social programs are at risk. Whether it is by reducing budgets, accessing services and programs, or privatizing, a demolition company is underway and it is the people who pay the price. As a result of the population, the movement of autonomous community action is evidently the defense of the population. The campaign will therefore add new strengths without replacing existing campaigns and actions (Coalition Main rouge, Coalition solidarité santé, etc.)

Semaine Québécoise

des rencontres interculturelles 2016 at SAWCC

We celebrated Semaine Québécoise des rencontres interculturelles 2016 on the 26th of October. SAWCC team, service users, and French and English class students participated on this day. The SAWCC team planned a discussion and lunch at the centre to celebrate different cultures at SAWCC. A simple South Asian meal and Apple crisp were cooked at SAWCC for all participants. It was followed by an icebreaker game and discussion about what everyone misses about their country. People shared cultural traditions and memories. Participants learnt a little about Quebecois, Canadian, South Asian, Mexican, Spanish, Chinese and Taiwan's culture and enjoyed getting to know about the SAWCC community.

Save the date! SAWCC's December Sixth Commemoration Event

Film screening and discussion.

Sunday 4th December, 2-4pm

at SAWCC

Film: "The World Before Her"

1035 Rachel east

ARUNA ROY AND THE GRASSROOTS REVOLUTION IN INDIA Jooneed Khan

In the "multiple Indias" where firebrand social activist Aruna Roy has earned herself a world-wide reputation for integrity and commitment, women of all castes, classes and creeds come together more easily than anyone else in the struggle for rights, justice and for constant deepening of democracy. This theme emerged from a well-focused and hard-hitting 2-hour talk and Q&A she delivered Sunday Oct 23 at the South Asia Women's Community Centre (SAWCC) in Montreal. The youthful and energetic 70ish former teacher and civil servant turned civil society activist, as co-founder of the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS - Workers and Peasants Strength Union) in 1987, believes in furthering what she calls the "civil society political process".

BUILDING GRASSROOTS COUNTER-POWER CENTRES

Mobilization at the grassroots, she says, is a counterweight to institutional party politics, and acts as a counter-power that demands accountability from the powers-that-be. "Denouncing power in general is an abstract exercise. So we focus instead on the exercise of power at the local, village, town, and State levels, where the reality is more concrete. Struggling people can relate to that more easily, and local officials can be pressured and kept on their toes", she says. "Women are the backbone of all the great struggles going on in India today, she says, whether in trade unions, against sexual abuse and discriminations of all kinds, or for the social and economic rights of their families". Her biggest single victory to date has been the Right to Information Act (RTI), passed in 2005 after a multi-year campaign centred in Rajasthan. "To hold our governments accountable, we needed access to official information and data, all of which was kept hidden from us", she says.

UNITY VS DIVIDE & RULE IN THE "MULTIPLE INDIAS"

The "multiple Indias" she talks about refers to caste, class and religious barriers – a reality that political parties use, exploit and manipulate to the hilt following "Divide & Rule" strategies of their own.

"Our counter-strategy is to unite, and women are much better at this than men, around rice and dal, work and welfare, health and education, dignity and freedom issues. «Neo-liberals like to talk of Middle Class India as if it were one unified entity. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The so-called Indian Middle Class is ridden by the same divisions as the rest of society. And above all, it lives in a bubble induced by media and advertising jingles. And that bubble cannot last".

BALANCE OF POWER SHIFTS: FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

On a par with the Right to Information, Aruna Roy places the Right to Freedom of expression – which means using the full space of democracy for political organization, mobilization and action. She also fights for the Right to Work, the Right to Food and the Right to socialized Pensions.

She stresses that her "civil society political process" is driven by NGOs that take no institutional funding whatsoever, either from inside India or from abroad. "Our campaigns, our projects are all crowd-funded on a case by case basis", she says.

Chatting with her after the presentation, I said that I was focused on the shifting Global Balance of Power. I added that after listening to her, I realized more than ever that change in the local and national Balance of Power was an absolute prerequisite for the Global Balance of Power to change, faster and more durably. Aruna Roy is a recipient of the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership. She also received the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award for Excellence in Public Administration, Academia and Management. In 2011, Time Magazine listed her among the 100 most influential people in the world.

Centre Communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques

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35 years of sisterhood, strength, struggle and success 1981-2016

www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca

Nov. 1 — Breast Cancer Info Nov. 8– Human Rights Info Nov. 15 – Family Budget Info Nov. 16 — Remembering RAMANI

Nov. 22 — Arts & Crafts

Nov. 25 — Diwali festival

Nov. 26 — Demo against militarization, occupation, aggression

Nov. 28 — Executive Council

meeting 6pm

Nov. 29 — Group activity

Dec. 4 — Sixth December Commemoration 2-4pm

Dec. 11 — Year End Party

1 nov — cancer du sein

8 nov — droits de l'homme

15 nov — budget familial

16 nov — Souvenir de Ramani

22 nov — l'artisanat

25 nov — Festival de Diwali

26 nov — Manif contre la militarisation, l'occupation et l'aggres-

sion

28 nov — Réunion du Conseil

exécutif

29 nov — Activité

é de groupe

4 déc — Commémoration du sixième décembre

11 déc — fête fin de l'année

November 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Breast Can- cer Awareness	2	3	4	5
6	7	8Human Rights Info	9	10	11	12
13	14	15Family Budget	16Remember ing RAMANI	17	18	19
20	21	22Arts & Crafts	23	24	25Diwali festival	26 _{Demo} against war
27	28Executive Council Mtg	29 Group activity	30			