A DAY AT THE ANGANWADI WORKERS PROTEST

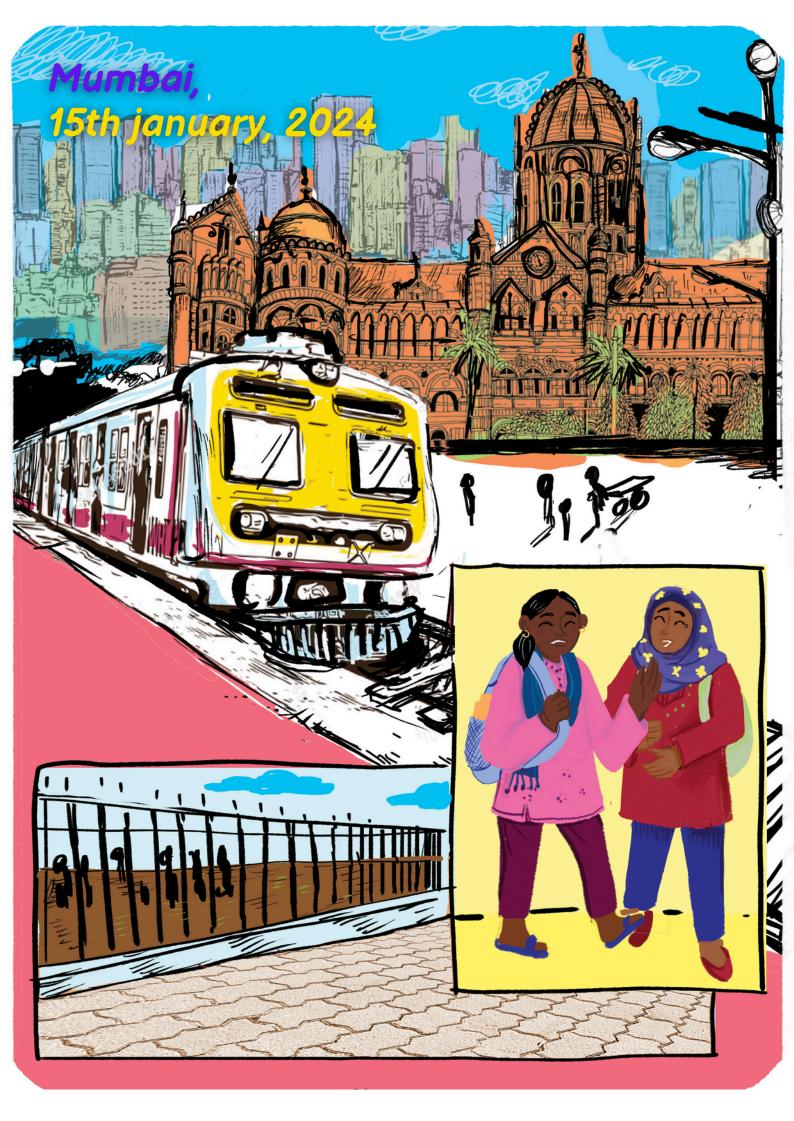
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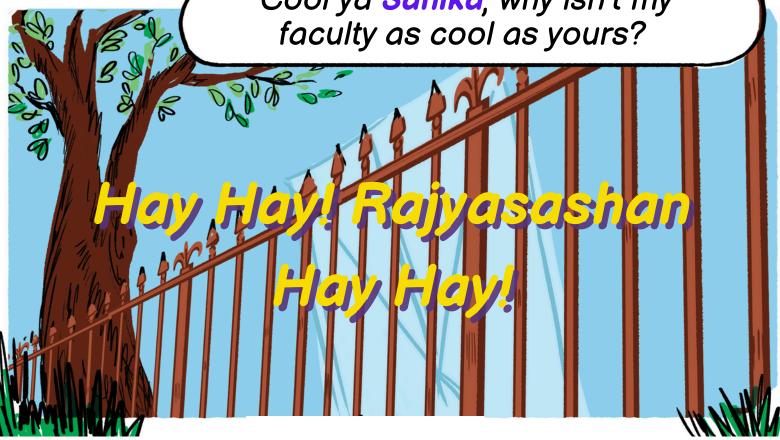
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Today we had an interesting conversation about intersectionality and education. Ms. Chakravarty asked us to read Teaching to Transgress by bell hooks.

Cool ya Sanika, why isn't my faculty as cool as yours?



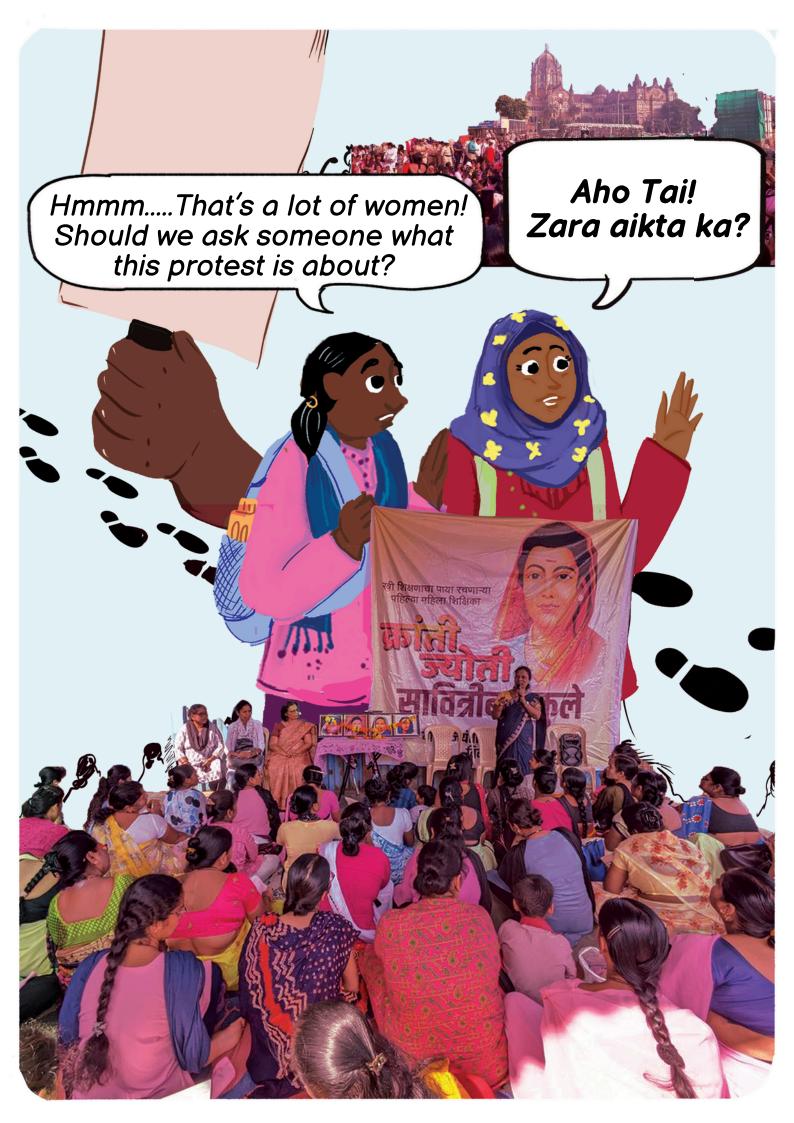
Do you hear that Mariam? It coming from over there in Azaad Maidan

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Oh I have been seeing these women here for the last few weeks since **January**. Let's go and talk to them.

Good Idea. I wonder why they are here!





I see! So you work with **preschool children**, right?

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We are college students. We have been passing by your protest for weeks and wanted to check in today.

Accha! So you are students. Hello, I am Jyoti Gaikwad. I am from Naigaon, a village in Chatrapati Sambhaji Nagar in Aurangabad. I have been an Anganwadi worker for **11 years** now.

Yes beta, you are almost right. We provide education for children upto the age 6, but that's not the only thing we do.

We are not only responsible for looking after children but also the nutrition needs of pregnant and lactating persons.

Role and responsibilities of AWWs

personnel

viii.

effect

To elicit community support and participation in running the programme

To weigh each child every month, record the weight graphically on the growth card, use referral cost cases of mothers/children to the sub-centres/PHC cases of or children below 6 nd para-medical years and pro

There are 21 here and a year. mandated tasks an ildren Anganwadi worker is ng of supposed to carry out ocally according to the ng on ganwad

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD hat took ry/Gram ar/Sub Regi DEVELOPMENT

> to enable mothers to play and development with

emphasis on new born

To maintain files and records as prescribed. ix.

To assist the PHC staff in the implementation of health component of the programme viz. immunisation, health check-up, ante natal and post natal check etc.

and

marri

SDE

- To assist ANM in the administration of IFA and Vitamin A by keeping xi. stock of the two medicines in the Centre without maintaining stock register as it would add to her administrative work which would effect her main functions under the Scheme.
 - To share information collected under ICDS Scheme with the ANM xii. However, ANM will not solely rely upon the information obtained from the records of AWW.

To bring to the notice of the Supervisors/ CDPO any development in the vilage which requires their attention and intervention, particularly in regard to the work of the coordinating arrangements with different departmente departments

- To maintain liaison with other institutions (Mahila Mandals) and involve lady school teachers and girls of the primary/middle schools in the village which have relevance to her functions.. xiv.
- To guide Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) engaged under National Rural Health Mission in the delivery of health care services and XV. maintenance of records under the ICDS Scheme.
- To assist in implementation of Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) and motivate. and educate the adolescent girls and their parents and community in general by organzing social awareness programmes/ campaigns etc.
- AWW would also assist in implementation of Nutrition Programme for xvii. Adolescent Girls (NPAG) as per the guidelines of the Scheme and maintain such record as prescribed under the NPAG.

Anganwadi Worker can function as depot holder for RCH Kit/ contraceptives and disposable delivery kits. However, actual distribution xviii. of delivery kits or administration of drugs, other than OTC (Over the Counter) drugs would actually be carried out by the ANM or ASHA as decided by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

- To identify the disability among children during her home visits and refer xix. the case immediately to the nearest PHC or District Disability Rehabilitation Centre.
- XX.
- To support in organizing Pulse Polio Immunization (PPI) drives. To inform the ANM in case of emergency cases like diahorrea, cholera XXI.

Role and responsibilities of Anganwadi Helpers

To cook and serve the food to children and marchers (ii) To clean the Anganwadi premises de (iii) Cleanliness of a

That's a huge responsibility, Tai! You are practically taking care of the whole country's childhood!

> Anganwadi workers in Maharashtra get Rs.**10,500** and Helpers get Rs. **5,500**. [These are revised rates after increase in **2023** after **years of protest**]

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Different states have different payment structures for Anganwadi workers ranging from Rs. 600 in Puducherry to Rs. 19,000 in Tamil Nadu

So what is your

salary, Tai?

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Ho Tai, I had to borrow **Rs. 2000** for traveling to Mumbai for the protest, and I'll have to pay **5% interest**.

Most women here survive on loans, for rent, food and other expenses. How are they supposed to pay off their debts with these wages?

This is ridiculous! Government has money to stick posters everywhere but not to pay their salaries?





I STEPPED INTO IT WITH THE AIM TO NURTURE YOUNG MINDS AND THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM.

> UNLIKE MY FELLOW ANGANWADI SISTERS WHO HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO CHOOSE THIS PROFESSION FOR THEIR INCOME

BUT DESPITE MY PASSION AND QUALIFICATIONS AS AN EDUCATOR I HAD TO FACE LOTS OF CHALLENGES

DISTANT

MEETINGS

INADEQUATE

ALLOWANCES

DELAYED EQUIPMENT FOR TEACHING

> FUNDS FOR TWO MEALS FOR OUR CHILDREN

THE WAGE DOESN'T MATCH WITH OUR RESPONSIBILITIES How much money do you get to feed a child at your Anganwadi center?

We are supposed to serve hot cooked meals for **65 LAKH** children across Anganwadis, aged **3 months** to **6 years**.

Yet we are only given **Rs.8 per day cost for two meals a day** for a child since 2014. So we are demanding a per day cost of **Rs.24** for severely malnourished children and **Rs.16** for the rest.

Oh my! That's not enough at all, what do you even get for Rs.8 these days?

It doesn't stop there

Us Anganwadi workers are also charged with an array of assignments ranging from election duty to pandemic relief work. Tai, they must atleast give you reimbursement for all the traveling and rent for Anganwadi center na since that's extra cost?

> OUR COLLEGE ALWAYS REIMBURSES US FOR FESTS AND PROJECTS.

NO, WE DON'T. THE TRAVEL ALLOWANCE OF RS 120 HARDLY COVERS THE EXPENSES, AND THE ANNUAL ALLOWANCE OF RS 2000 FOR ESSENTIALS LIKE CLEANING MATERIAL, STATIONARY, AND TOYS IS INSUFFICIENT. WE HAVE TO PAY FROM OUR OWN POCKETS.

But Tai, surely you must get a pension for your lifelong service?

OUR LIFELONG

WORTH?

No annual increments, no bonus, no provident fund – just a one-time payment on retirement.

IS THIS WHAT SERVICE IS

The government offers a one-time payment of **Rs 1 Lakh for retirement**? WHAT ABOUT A LIFETIME OF SERVICE?

And **Rs 75,000** for helpers? It's barely enough. Even Sandhya, who retired long ago, hasn't been paid for the last 6-7 years.

Our salaries never keep up with inflation. Government announced 3% increment in our salaries after 10 years of work, 4% after 20 years, and 5% after 30 years. And Inflation rate is around 6%.

> THE PEOPLE IN POWER SHOULD TRY TO BE AN ANGANWADI WORKER AND SEE IF THEY CAN EVEN SURVIVE ONE DAY!

Why does the Government **not consider us as workers** and call us **Sevika**? This is a job which needs skills, caliber and energy.

> Agadi khara ahe! We are workers and we want salaries and other social security benefits.

THIS POLITICS OF LANGUAGE IS UNFAIR AND EXPLOITATIVE.

This is unfair! More people should be made aware of the important role Anganwadi workers play in **India's healthcare** and **education system**.

The people in power must be held accountable and this fight should be amplified.



WE STAND WITH YOU!

BEHANBOX

This comic is a tribute to *India's 12 lakh* of India's *Anganwadi workers* and the care economy they contribute significantly to. At Behanbox, we are committed to their rights and struggle for dignity of work. The idea of this comic came about with the years of reporting on this issue but we met all the women mentioned in the comic at a recent protest in Mumbai.

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