

Commemoration of the Gender Equality Day 2021 at IIPS

A brief note on the Webinar on Gender Equality Day 2021 organized by the Internal Complaint Committee of the IIPS on August 26, 2021

On the occasion of the Gender Equality Day, the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) of IIPS organized a virtual webinar through WebEx Video Conferencing Application. Prof. Usha Ram, Chairperson, ICC of the IIPS welcomed the Guest Speaker and the participants. Prof Ram introduced the speaker for the webinar **Dr. Sangeeta Desai**, RCWS, SNDT Women's University to the audience.

Prof. Ram invited **Prof. K S James**, Director and Senior Professor, IIPS, to chair the webinar and formally inaugurate the webinar. Prof. James welcomed the speaker and the participants and distinguished invitees. In his inaugural speech, Prof. James emphasized the need to debate on gender equality and continued efforts for a gender equitable society.

The speaker, **Dr. Desai** deliberated on “**Gender Equality: Goals, Gaps and Issues in India**”. **Dr. Desai** began with the Constitutional Guarantees of Equality in India and emphasized the role of important personalities in shaping it. She presented a very comprehensive review of the Role of International Bodies/organization in taking forward the Gender Equality Agenda globally. Dr. Desai further highlighted the significant Milestones towards gender equality in India. She especially mentioned the findings of the Shramshakti Report – 1988, National Commission for Women –1992 and NCW Act 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlement of women, Reservation for women in local self government bodies, National policy of women empowerment – 2001, Year of Women's Empowerment –2001 declared by GOI, Introduction of Gender Budgeting – 2005-06, the Vishaka Guidelines on Sexual Harassment of women at workplace, and various women centric laws.

She presented a brief scenario on the current status of women in India and stated that according to World Economic Forum Gender Gap report 2021, India has slipped to 140 position from 113 last year. It was highlighted that although gender Gap in Education has reduced at elementary level but continue to be high at Secondary level. Additionally, Female Labour work force participation is declining, Maternal Mortality at 113 per 100,000 live birth is still high although steadily declining, Political participation of women continue to be minimal (14% seats at the Lok Sabha). Dr. Desai viewed that Gender Quota, Policies and Mainstreaming are the 3 strategies to increase political participation of women. She also talked about the new forms of violence against women such as Obstretic Violence, Cyber bullying, and ART .

Dr. Desai concluded with measures to address Gender Inequality gap in India. She cited the *Mckinsey Report on Gender Equality* that talks about closing gender gaps in secondary and

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tertiary education in India's large states, Lowering barriers to job creation, Expanding skills training for women in key sectors, Expanding the reach of financial and digital services to enable women entrepreneurs, Stepping up gender diversity policies and practices in private-sector organisations, Further strengthening legal provisions for women and the enforcement of laws, Improving infrastructure and services to address the high burden of routine domestic work, childcare and elder care, and Reshaping deep-rooted attitudes about the role of women in work and in society.

The deliberation was followed by a brief insightful presentation by **Prof. Vibhuti Patel**, member IIPS-ICC. Prof. Patel reiterated the importance of gender equality in Indian Society. She further mentioned the increasing violence against women and some of the insensitive judgements passed by judiciary in the recent past.

Prof. K. S. James comprehended and summarized the presentation and raised a few issues. The implementation of existing laws in our country continue to be a challenge in addition to mediaval mindset of some section of the society.

Prof. Usha Ram coordinated the question-answer session. There were questions on increasing dowry deaths especially among the highly literate women and changing dynamics in the country, women participation in political spaces, entitlements of the women in social, political, economic, and community resources/assets etc. The speakers responded the positive role of education in curbing many social evils. There was a consensus that continued efforts should be their for creating a gender just society.

After the question-answer session, **Dr. Manas R. Pradhan** proposed a formal vote of thanks and gratitude to the presenters, all participants, IIPS administration, Director Office, the ICT unit, and the ICC members for their timely help and support in organizing the webinar. The webinar was attended by the faculties, students, researchers from the academic and non-academic Institutions/Organization, representatives of the International and national development partners and the NGOs besides Faculty and students from IIPS attended the event. The webinar was concluded at 6.15 pm.

The ICC members involved in organizing the webinar:

1. Prof. Usha Ram
2. Dr. Manas Ranjan Pradhan
3. Ms. Yogita H. Rangari
4. Mr. Soumendu Sen
5. Ms. Shivani Gharge
6. Ms. Aditi
7. Mr. Dinesh More

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Pics from the GED 2021 Webinar

