



School of Pedagogical Sciences
MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL

WOMEN'S

DAY

MARCH 8TH

#BREAK THE
BIAS



CHIEF GUEST

Dr Aju K. Narayanan

Associate Professor
School of Letters
MG University

Time 11.00 AM



School of Pedagogical Sciences
MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
8th MARCH 2022, 11 AM

PROGRAMME

Silent Prayer

Welcome Address

: Ms Jeeva S Kumar
(Students Representative, MG
University Students Union)

Presidential Address

: Prof Dr Jaya Jaise
(Professor, SPS, MG University)

Inauguration &

Keynote Address

: Dr Aju K. Narayanan
(Associate Professor,
School of Letters, MG University)

Felicitations

: Dr Ismail Thamarasseri
(Asst Prof, SPS, MG University)
: Mr Ebenezer P V
(Class Leader, 2nd Year MEd)

Special Lecture on "Gender

Perspective in Literature"

: Ms Parvathy Rajan (1st Year MEd)

Cultural Programme

: Ms Greeshma Joyal, Neelanjana & Party

Treasure Hunt

: Ms Neethu Maria Mathew & Party

Vote of Thanks

: Mr Jaison P Sunny
(Student Programme Convenor)

Organizing Committee; Prof Dr Minikutty A (Patron), Dr Ismail Thamarasseri (Teacher in Charge), Jaison P Sunny (Student Programme Convenor), Greeshma Joyal (Student Programme Coordinator) Shalini Joseph (Anchor), Joshini Jose (Rapporteur), Aditya Jyothi (Reception & Hospitality), Paul Joseph (Photography), Febin Jose (Media)

Report of the International Women's Day observed by School of Pedagogical Sciences, Mahatma Gandhi University on 8th March, 2022

UNESCO states, "International Women's Day is an occasion to celebrate the progress made towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment but also to critically reflect on those accomplishments and strive for a greater momentum towards gender equality worldwide". It is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality. The theme of this year's international women's day is "break the bias". We all want a gender equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. This day calls to celebrate women's achievement, raise awareness against bias and take action for equality. In this context, the International Women's Day was celebrated at School of Pedagogical Sciences, Mahatma Gandhi University on 8th March, 2022.

The programme began with a silent prayer followed by the welcome speech of Miss Jeeva S Kumar, Student representative of the School of Pedagogical Sciences at University Students Union. She spoke about the indispensable role played by women and the importance of commemorating their achievements in various fields. The presidential address was delivered by Prof Jaya Jaise, Professor, School of Pedagogical Sciences, Mahatma Gandhi University. She began by urging to critically reflect upon the meaning of the word woman and the place she occupies in various spheres like home, workplace, society etc. The selfless struggles, the difficult paths trodden and the protests raised by the great women of past. "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow", the theme of international women's day was also discussed. She said even in the twenty first century the pathetic plight of women is appalling. The speaker emphasized the significance of an indiscriminate perception towards women and stressed the need for mutual respect and complementary relationship. She also stressed the importance of ensuring gender equality for the welfare of generations. The significance of colour purple selected for observing the global occasion was also detailed. She said the colour purple signified justice, dignity, loyalty, the constancy to purpose and unswerving steadfastness to a cause. The victorious women in different fields of science, literature, history, politics and other fields showcased the uncontainable panorama of women in the annals of history. Finally she concluded the speech urging the listeners to salute and pay respect to the women who brought us up and the women that we are.

The inaugurator and the keynote speaker of the day was Dr Aju K. Narayanan, the Associate Professor School of Letters, MG University. Speaker started the session recalling his past memories related to the department and his leadership in the direction of *Samaksham*, a first full-length feature film that a university has produced in Kerala. He recalled the memories and said memories are histories. He then called our attention to the observance of certain days in history each with a varied purpose. For example the celebration of Independence Day is a looking back into the future whereas observance of Valentine's Day, father's day, international mother language day is associated with contemporariness. He emphasized the celebration of international women's day as a signifier of progression. It is not a day to be celebrated and forgotten but a goal to be achieved in future. He said the need of the hour is to develop political sensibility and the enthusiasm to harbour it for a sustainable future. Then the speaker talked about modernity. In the words of his colleague Mr Rajeev "the scientific temper in Europe is nothing but the Newtonian physics". Science brought a cognitive paradigm shift. Mechanization is a prime reason for modernity and this modern consciousness gave birth to

the concept of citizenship. The Voting is an ontological process. It is a testimony for your existence this by constitution. Everyone had the same rights but in New Zealand the right was granted exclusively to men. Even in a modernist society women were treated as lifeless entities. In 1557 women organized and protested for this cause. The speaker said during *Sangham* period women had respect and were allowed intellectual pursuits. There were female poets like Ms Avvaiyar who flourished and contributed to literature.

The speaker also brought the attention to humanism. Modernity also witnessed the rise of humanism, a shift from deity to man centred. There also the speaker wanted us to ponder regarding the 'man' in humanism. According to Europe it is the white man and not the Negro. He said this is "March" is a dynamic and not a static process. He also discussed the role of myth and culture in portraying women as subordinate to men. He said gender is a social construct and not a biological one. Different folktales spread the message of women as inferior sex. The collectiveness of narrative is culture and so the speaker stressed the need for breaking the biases. Every religion portrayed women as second sex and the speaker urged the need to practice religion with wisdom. The resource person said the acclaimed women writer Simone de Beauvoir's 'second sex' started empowerment in Europe. De Beauvoir's analysis brought the category of "gender" into focus for the first time, all the while consistently distinguishing between biological sex and cultural or social conditioning. The speaker also mentioned contemporary women writers like Ms Saraswatiyamma whose magical writings had the power to inspire more women in unleashing their creativity. The speaker also mentioned the world renowned work of Judith Butler 'Gender Trouble'. Gender according to her is by no way tied to material body facts, but solely and completely a human construction. Her concept of performativity was also discussed. The concept of 'gendered language' and how it shapes and perpetuates gender distinctions was also discussed. The patriarchy hidden in the Kerala architecture was also unveiled by the speaker. He also discussed the importance of collective efforts in ensuring women's rights. Speaker concluded his thoughts quoting the book 'kulasthreyum chantapennum' written by Ms Jayadevika, a prominent social activist who made a strenuous effort to bring into light the gender disparity existing in our society.

The programme was then felicitated by Dr Ismail Thamarasseri, Assistant Professor, School of Pedagogical Sciences, MG University. Then Mr Ebenezer PV, Class Leader, Second Year MED spoke about the need of carrying this spirit every day and not confining it to a single day. He said the achievements of eminent women from different fields like - Harnaaz Sandhu, Tulsi Gowda, Bhavana Khanth - should fuel our desire to inscribe our names in the book of history. He ended his speech urging women to be gender neutral in attitude as well. Then Ms Parvathy Rajan spoke about the "Gender Perspective in Literature". It was a very resourceful talk detailing the portrayals of women in different periods of British literature as well as English literature. She spoke about several powerful female characters in novels as from Greek mythology who should be an inspiration for all the women. She also expressed her concern regarding the unrealistic, stereotypical portrayal of women in popular culture. It was followed by a treasure hunt organized by Ms Neethu Maria Mathew and team. Ms Surumi Nazar sang a melodious song and Ms Sumi gave an enthralling dance performance. Ms Greeshma Joyal and other team members performed a group dance. It was followed by a PowerPoint presentation depicting the theme of international women's day and oath to be taken by men. It also contained the images of strong ladies of India and their inspiring words. Mr Jaison P Sunny, Student Programme Convenor delivered the vote of thanks. He also remarked on contemporary issues related to women and discussed the inevitable role society has in ensuring empowerment.









