

**Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension and
Department of Social Work,
S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mumbai**

**Short report of National Level Panel Discussion on
Transgender People: Issues and Challenges**

The in collaboration with Maharashtra State Commission for Women organized One day National Panel Discussion on 'Transgender Persons: Issues and Challenges' on November 6, 2019 at Patkar Hall, Churchgate, Mumbai. This is the first time in India; the national level panel discussion on transgender persons was organized by University. Ms.Vijaya Rahatkar, Chairperson, Maharashtra State Commission for Women was the Guest of Honour Ms.Laxmi Narayan Tripathi was the Chief Guest and Prof. Shashikala Wanjari, Vice Chancellor of SNDT Women's University Presided over the function. The objectives of the panel discussion were:

- To sensitize the society about the problems of transgender community
- To discuss the contemporary health issues of transgender
- To understand the livelihood challenges encountered by transgender community

Keeping these objectives in the mind, the issues of Transgender were discussed in three panels namely

1. Social issues of transgender
2. Health issues of transgender
3. Livelihood issues of transgender

Eminent activists working for transgender namely Ms.Priya Patil, Ms.Urmi Jadhav and Mr.Saadhy Pawar shared their issues and challenges faced by Transgender community. Dr.Asha Patil, Director I/C Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension and Department of Social Work, introduced the need for panel discussion. In her opening remarks, Dr. Patil said that till 2011, transgender persons were not even included in census. She mentioned about the new Bill on Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill passed in Rajya Sabha on August 5, 2019 and discussed about lacunas in the Bill. Transgender persons start identity crisis from their adolescence stage and become lonely as they cannot talk about their psychological struggle with anyone, including their parents. As a result Parents and the society do not support them and they are ostracised. Begging and prostitution are the only two options for them for their survival. Most of them are either illiterate or less educated. How many of us have really thought about their plight? She appealed the audience that all of us must treat them as our equals.

Ms.Vijaya Rahatkar said that the Commission believes in equality among male, female and transgender. She promised that the Women's Commission will play an active role in uplifting socio-economic conditions of transgender persons. Ms.Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, being a transwoman, shared her life experiences. She stressed on how education helps in changing the attitude of the general public towards transgender community. According to her, during British era, the existence of transgender and their rights were denied and till now they are struggling for it. Transgenders are human beings and they should be treated equally at all places. Hon. Vice Chancellor Prof. Wanjari said that to bring the attitudinal changes in the

society, there is a dire need to include a separate unit on transgender in curriculum at all levels. She also insisted on need to conduct more researches on the issues and challenges of transgender. SNDT Women's University will carry out interventions to address their issues and challenges. Dr. Ahsa Patil Chaired the panel discussion on Livelihood Issues of Transgender Persons, Dr. Rohini Sudhakar chaired the panel discussion on Social issues, and Dr. Prabhakar Chavan chaired the panel discussion on Health Issues of transgender Persons. Panellists put forth their views which were followed by question answer session. Mr. Anshit Baxi and Mr. Ameya Mahajan, faculty from Department of Social Work paid vote of thanks. There were 159 registrations from various NGOs, colleges, media and University. This helped the audience to understand that Transgender community is also integral part of our society and not be treated as untouchables.



Inauguration

