



College of Social Work (Autonomous) Nirmala Niketan

Equal Opportunity Cell

Organizes

A Talk on the occasion of

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's 131st Birth Anniversary

By Ms. Vibhawari Kamble

Associate Human Rights Officer

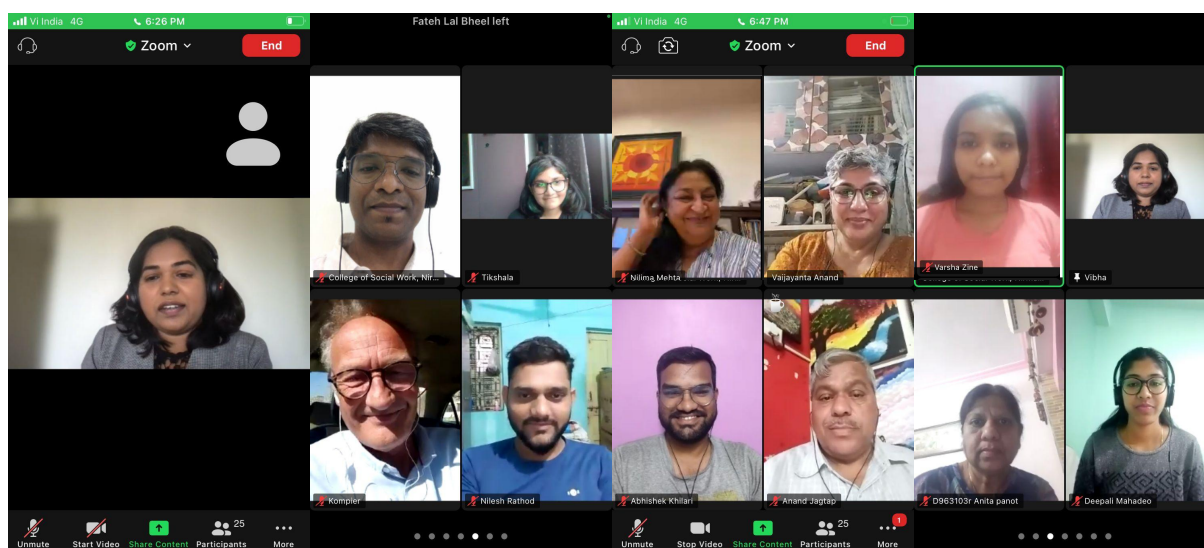
The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva

14th April, 2022

Introduction

On the eve of the 131st Birth Anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Equal Opportunity Cell of College of Social Work (Autonomous) Nirmala Niketan organized an online talk by Ms. Vibhawari Kamble for the students of the college on 14th April 2022. Ms. Vibhawari Kamble is an Associate Human Rights Officer at the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva and she is an alumnus of the College of Social Work. The topic of the talk was Dr. Ambedkar's contribution in motivating students for higher or overseas education and the main aim of the talk was to make students aware of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's contribution towards motivating students for higher education.


Dr. Sameer Mohite welcomed all the participants and thanked them for their presence and sparing their precious time. More than 25 participants attended the talk. Current faculty members and retired faculty members were also present on the occasion. Ms. Deepali Khandare, a student representative introduced Ms. Vibhawari Kamble.



Glimpses of her Talk

Ms. Vibhawari Kamble while delivering her speech she highlighted the inspiration that she has drawn from his work, which focuses on empowering communities, building bridges with different communities and Educating oneself. She further shared her own personal and professional experience drawing his contribution in reaching where she was today. She highlighted her childhood experience, her informal and formal education—what inspired her to choose the career path and few takeaways.

She further focused on intergenerational inspiration where she discussed her informal education, primary education and formal education. In her informal education she said that she was introduced to Dr. Ambedkar by her family, especially her grandfather. Her grandfather followed what babasaheb said i.e. a great man is different from an eminent one in that he is ready to be the servant of the society. The notion of serving the society/sharing your knowledge with others -- with limited or no resources was taken from his practice. Her grandfather believed that Babasaheb was promotor of sharing knowledge, and building communities. In primary schooling she said that her aunt insisted on enrolling her in English medium school. Considering their economic situation, she was enrolled in a government English medium school where everybody spoke “Marathi”. Schooling was tough for her where her grandfather insisted that she should speak in English with her brother at home. She did not understand it at first. Her parents were primary school dropouts, for them education became very important—her father later started working as a security guard with minimum salary to make sure she would not stop her education. Here she emphasized that her parents’ act resonated with Babasaheb's words: “The backward classes have come to realize that after all education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight”.



Then she shared about her employment experiences where she had focused on the idea which was heavily borrowed from Babasaheb where he said successful revolution is not enough that there is discontent. What is required is a profound and thorough conviction of the justice, necessity and importance of political and social rights. She emphasized that today, she works at the leading United Nations entity on human rights. The mandate of the Office is to promote and protect all human rights. Her thematic area that she covered are victims of contemporary forms of slavery and victims of torture.

She concluded her talk by highlighting that as she grew up in the vibrant locality or ghettos that helped her understand from her childhood the caste location, and prepared her for the obstacles on her journey. The courage and strength she had gained over the years through intergenerational sharing of Babasaheb ideas and ideology through the Ambedkarite movement had shaped her life, right from childhood. Finally she acknowledged the fact that Nirmala Niketan had provided a conducive environment for her to grow in its premises, acquire the skills and knowledge required to be in the field of social work. She also acknowledged the students group who mentored her during college years. She had wonderful mentors throughout her journey, such as Jija- Eknath Awad, Anita Pagare, they both taught her working in the field with gender justice in mind. One of her mentors Coen also attended a talk and she thanked him for believing in her for working on caste based occupation from the labour perspective.

At the end, Ms. Deepali Khandare summarized her talk and proposed vote of thanks to Ms. Vibhawari Kamble, Principal Dr. Lidwin Dias, organizers and the participants.

