

## **Report on International Women's Day Celebration Week, RGU**

The International Women's Day celebration week began at Rajiv Gandhi University with a round table conference/ discussion on the topic "Empowerment of Women: Women In Leadership Position", held at the Seminar hall of Department of Education on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. Keeping the theme of IWD 2020, "Each for Equal" the Programme was marked by intensive discussion on crucial issues of role of women leaders in Politics, discourse on Property rights of tribal women and girlchild, indigeneity , Uniform Civil Code and dissent.

Speaking on the occasion organized by Women's Studies & Research Centre (WS & RC) , RGU Prof. Elizabeth Hangsing, Director (WS & RC, RGU) hoped that the conference/discussion ushered a new and positive thought process through the experiences of the resource persons in various fields at grass root level. The occasion was graced by Prof. A. Mitra, Pro-Vice Chancellor, RGU who highlighted on the statistical percentage of women's participation in different spheres in India and emphasized on women's contribution in the overall development and empowerment. The session was chaired by Prof. Jumyir Basar (AITS, RGU) who highlighted the poor scenario of participation of women in politics and also mentioned the dilemma in relation to women's efforts in bringing about change in the traditional rules and on the other hand adhering to keep the traditional rules intact.

The panel session began by opening remarks by Advt. Radhila Chai Tech, Chairperson, Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Women (APSCW) who discussed on the pros and cons of codifying the customary laws. She stated that "the customary practices should not be codified as in the present form. There are many customs which are not women friendly. They have to be changed or modified before we go ahead with codification of customary practices". The stigma of, "she is a female, she will not be able to work" always is imposed in the context of female aspiring for a leadership role. Chai demanded for removal of this stigma. She was of the opinion that the younger generations need to participate in women empowerment discussions to facilitate concrete recommendations to the Govt. for the welfare of the people as a whole.

The next resource person Advt. Kani Nada Maling, Arunachal Pradesh Women Welfare Society (APWWS) spoke on the challenges of the uniform civil court in present day context. She stated in clear terms that when it comes to recommending anything to the Govt. and also consultations and meetings involving various community based organizations, stake holders, experts should be present during such deliberations and discussions. She quoted that "empowering Women is empowering society".

The third resource person Mrs. Nido Savita, General Secretary, Nyishi Nyem Acham (NNA), spoke on the role of NNA as an independent autonomous community based organisation of Nyishi Community. The team led by women stressed on the belief that women can work equal to men without being under any influential banner and emphasized on the sacrifice made by women in leadership position. Rigid Patriarchal mindset is detrimental for the growth of future generations. The anthem song of NNA was read out to the audience.

The next resource person Miss Bengia Mepu, Convenor, Women's Wing AAPSU stated that women can be equally a part of any decision making in the presence of the male counterparts and that the best decision is taken into account and agreed by all irrespective of the gender who placed the opinion during the decision making. She also put forth the much debated views on tribal identity.

Miss Marie Riba, Advt. Project Consultant, Arunachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority, Itanagar (APSLSA) urged all to fight for their own rights and to stand for the rights of women. Also spoke on relevance of non-violent medium to protest.

Further, Miss Junty Singpho, Secretary, BJP, Arunachal Pradesh spoke on BJP's women leadership and party constitution in the context of Arunachal Pradesh. She urged the female population to come forward and contribute as much as they can in the political arena.

Miss. Toko Mina , General Secretary, Arunachal Pradesh Mahila Congress Committee (APMCC) encouraged the women population to think beyond political arena and to truly think for your rights, legal rights, integrity and equality. She was of the opinion that if one has the eligibility, qualifications and determination; one can stand alone and yet represent an army. She ended her speech by reading out the constitution of India, 26<sup>th</sup> November 1949.

The program winded up by open discussion and active participation from the audience which was answered and discussed by the resource persons. The program ended successfully on a very positive note in the presence of various dignitaries, faculties, students and scholars of RGU. The Programme was jointly Co-coordinated by Dr. Radhe Amung, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, RGU and Ms Lisa Lomdak, AITS, RGU . The program was attended by Registrar Prof. Tomo Riba, Joint Registrar Dr. David Pertin, Prof. R C Parida, Director ,IQAC, RGU, HoDs, Research Scholars and Media persons.