

‘One-day workshop on ‘Gender Sensitization – Issues at Workplace’ held on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2015:

The Centre organized one-day workshop on ‘Gender Sensitization – Issues at Workplace’ on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2015. The prime focus of the programme was to highlight the menace of Sexual Harassment with special reference to working women. It was organized in the Centre’s Silver Jubilee Hall. Around 150 participants had registered online for the workshop, including staff, students and faculty members of the Institute and 121 members participated in the same. Members from other Institute’s like Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics (SINP), Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata (IACS), Jadavpur University, IISER, Kolkata attended the workshop as invitees. The sessions were moderated by Mrs. Chama Mukherjee, Advocate, Calcutta High Court and Member, Complaints Committee, S.N. Bose Centre.

The meeting was inaugurated by Prof. Sibaji Raha, Director, S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Kolkata. He welcomed the members and thanked the experts for kindly agreeing to address the workshop. He stressed on the need of spreading awareness about the ‘Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013’. Prof. Mamata Ray, Chairperson, Complaints Committee, talked on the objective of the workshop, necessity of organizing such seminars to create awareness on the act. She appreciated that the Centre is organizing the workshop on such an important current issue.

Dr. Bhaswati Chakravorty, Associate Editor, The Telegraph and the first speaker of the session focused on issues related to harassment and power and media’s role in changing perceptions about gender discrimination which is a major concern in today’s society. She emphasized the practical problems being faced by women in the society as well as in the workplace. She discussed some practical situations and measures to be taken by a woman to protest and overcome the situation.

Prof. Shobhana Narasimhan, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) chose the topic ‘Gender Issues in Academia’ and elaborated upon how women are discriminated by their fellow colleagues and supervisors in the academic arena and how one can overcome these situations. She was the Chairperson of the Committee on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace at JNCASR and shared her personal opinion gathered from her experience. She explained what constitutes ‘Sexual Harassment’ viz. any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature, e.g., unwanted deliberate touching, pinching, leaning over, making threats if the person doesn’t agree to a relationship etc. She pointed out that various organizations, including all educational

institutions and scientific institutes should have a “women’s cell” or committee for prevention for sexual harassment of women at workplace.

Ms. Ruchira Gupta, founder and President of ‘Aapne Aap Women Worldwide’ delivered her talk upon ‘Putting the Last Girl First’. Ms. Gupta, a journalist and an activist, has worked for over 25 years in the arena of sex trafficking and has been recognized for her work by nations, governmental leaders, and organizations on a global scale. Her talk primarily focused upon bringing change in people’s mindset to erase the misconception of gender discrimination. During her various social activities, she visited many brothels and eye-witnessed how women are getting used by a man and become victim of sexual harassment. She discussed about creating awareness amongst women regarding proceeding of lodging complaint properly against the harassment and taking help of the administration. .

Hon’ble Justice Altamas Kabir, Former Chief Justice of India, was also one of the eminent speakers of the Workshop. He became the Acting Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court in January, 2005, an elevation that was made permanent on March, 2005. He was elevated to the Supreme Court of India as Justice in January, 2005. He was the 39<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of India. Addressing the participants at the workshop, he cited the Preamble to the Constitution of India, explaining that ‘We’ as in ‘We the people of India’ does not speak about sex, gender, caste or religion. He then went on to say that things began to change with education, which made women realize that they are not inferior.

The Question Answer session at the end of the lecture sessions were very fruitful and interactive. The speakers addressed various questions raised by the participants.

A ‘Feedback Form’ was distributed alongwith the registration kit, wherein some positive feedbacks and suggestions by the participants are received.

The workshop was widely covered by the media & press.