

September 15, 2021

Press Release

**JMI organizes online Distinguished Lecture on 'Women's literacy and development through Panchayati Raj'**

The Department of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension (DACEE), Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) joined the week long global celebrations of the international literacy day from 8<sup>th</sup> September onwards. On the culmination day of the International Literacy Week celebrations, the DACEE today hosted online Distinguished Lecture on "**Women's literacy and development through Panchayati Raj**". The Eminent Speaker Prof. Vandana Chakrabarti, Former Pro-Vice Chancellor, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai delivered the distinguished lecture. Prof. Vandana has contributed academically to higher education, research and also to the field of Adult literacy. Her exemplary contributions have been recognized and she has been the recipient of Tagore Literacy award (2015), Bhaskar Karve award (2015) and Niranjana award (2019). Under her leadership, her Department was honoured with the NLM-UNESCO award for excellent contribution to the field of Adult Continuing Education.

Prof. Thomas J Sork, Professor, Adult Learning and Education at The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada chaired the session. With an illustrious career spanning more than 40 years, Professor Sork is known for collaborations globally with India, Germany, New Zealand and Botswana. The Linkoping University awarded him Honorary Doctorate in Sweden for helping to plan a three-university, online master's program in Adult Learning and Global Change which has been in operation now for 20 years. Currently he is the President of International Society for Comparative Adult Education. He is also serving as Vice President, North America for the International Council for Adult Education.

In her Lecture Prof. Vandana discussed how the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment impacted woman's participation in Panchayati Raj. Citing relevant cases gathered from her own action researches in the field she also illustrated how under Panchayati Raj, women's literacy optimized their roles as decision makers and how they were able to contribute meaningfully to sustainable development, raising social, economic and environmental issues. She touched upon how

women's literacy contributed to women's empowerment and challenged the stronghold of *Mukhiyapati*.

While chairing the session, Prof. Thomas J Sork highlighted his experiences with adult learners during many of his visits to India. He emphasized that appropriate pedagogical approaches should always form the core in literacy and training of women. Along with this he reiterated the need to keep in sight the appropriate structural support and resources for strengthening the literacy movement. This is important to keep the momentum of social change in forward direction.

Dr. Shikha Kapur, Head of the Department, DACEE, JMI was the Convener & Moderator of the celebration of Literacy week which started by hosting 3 Online Extension Lectures on the theme Contextualizing Literacy on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The International Literacy Week celebrations culminate with today's distinguished Lecture.

**Public Relations Office**

Jamia Millia Islamia



