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SUBALTERNS

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Editorial

Agriculture has been the main occupation and livelihood option for a large population in India and farmers in India have been at the forefront of producing foodgrains and other crops that fuel India's economy. Since Independence, India has made immense progress towards food security and foodgrain production. Till the mid-1960s, India was importing food and depended on food aid to feed its people. However, the green revolution of the 1960s achieved self-sufficiency in foodgrain production through better farming techniques. The irrigation infrastructure started improving with the building of networks of canals from rivers and the harvesting of groundwater through tube-wells also helped in increasing foodgrain production. According to Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), India is the largest producer and exporter of a large number of agricultural products. However, the agricultural economy has been undergoing structural changes. The share of agriculture in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined from 43 percent in 1970 to 15 percent in 2020. At the same time, the population engaged in agriculture also declined from over 70 percent in 1970 to 42 percent in 2020. Besides, due to increase in population, two-thirds of agricultural land holdings is less than one hectare. Poor rural infrastructure, erratic monsoon season, increase in agricultural wages and other agricultural inputs

FARMERS AND FOOD SECURITY

and low price for agricultural produce has created an agrarian crisis. This has led to high indebtedness among farmers and increasing farmer suicides. Nearly 3 lakh farmers have committed suicides since 1995 and farmer suicides account for 11.2 percent of total suicides in the country. Successive governments have tried to address the agrarian crisis through various policies that protected agricultural markets, ensuring minimum support price for some agricultural products, and having a large public distribution system right from procurement and storage of foodgrains to distribution of subsidised foodgrains in ration shops. The passing of the three farm laws in 2020 tries to alter the system of agricultural markets and the public distribution system by allowing greater participation of corporates in agricultural marketing. The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act 2020 permits intra-state and inter-state trade of farmers' produce beyond the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) market yards (mandis). The farmers fear that this will result in the dismantling of the APMCs making them vulnerable to corporate interests in agriculture. The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act 2020 creates a national framework for contract farming through an agreement between a farmer and a buyer. The farmers fear that this

law will make them vulnerable to corporate buyers of farm produce and it could end up with farmers losing their land as they have no legal recourse under the law. The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020 seeks to deregulate agricultural produce and removes the limits to which anybody can stock agricultural produce except under exceptional circumstances such as famine, war or other calamities. The farmers fear that this law will dismantle the public distribution system that guarantees food security in the country and allow corporate entities to indulge in hoarding and black marketeering of agricultural produce to make huge profits at the expense of farmers. Ever since the three Farm laws were passed hurriedly at the end of September 2020, the farmers in different parts of the country have been protesting against these laws by blocking several highways along the borders of Delhi. At Mahapanchayats of farmers across India, large numbers of farmers are calling for the repeal of these new laws and the enactment of a law guaranteeing Minimum Support Price (MSP) for all crops. Let us hope that policy makers heed the genuine concerns of the farmers so that agricultural reforms can address the agrarian crisis, guarantee food security to all and make agriculture a sustainable livelihood option for most farmers in the country. □

Denzil Fernandes

FARMERS AND FOOD SECURITY AMONG ADIVASIS

Pascal Tirkey

Food security exists when all people in a society have adequate food for an active and healthy life at all times. As a broad term 'food security' is defined by: "the availability of safe and nutritious food and a guaranteed capability to procure and acquire food of good quality in a socially acceptable way". Food insecurity on the other hand occurs when basic healthy food is not easily accessible, and poor households struggle to secure enough food for their nutritional needs. Food insecurity has been identified as a global crisis.

In India small and marginal farmers comprise 78 percent of the country's farmers, but own only 33 percent of the total cultivated land; they nonetheless produce 41 percent of the country's food-grains. Their productivity is somewhat higher than that of medium and large-size farmers. All the Adivasis are small and marginal farmers without any exception. Most of the Adivasis depend on agriculture, particularly small-scale farming, as the primary source of their livelihoods and minor forest products to some extent. Ensuring food security and poverty reduction among them depend largely on growth and development of the agriculture sector. Agriculture in Adivasi areas is dominated by small scale farms that rely on family labour. The role of small-scale farmers in ensuring food, nutrition and sustainable rural development in Adivasi areas are becoming more crucial as the world faces increasing climate change challenges. Climate change had and will continue to have a significant impact on the livelihoods and food security of the poor not only in India but all over the world. We need ecologically sound and climate resilient farming system to provide nutritionally balanced food and ensure food security for

the most vulnerable. Getting Adivasi households to actively participate in small scale agricultural activities for subsistence farming can play a vital role in minimizing the vulnerability to hunger in Adivasi food-insecure households.

Small-scale agriculture presents an opportunity to improve the livelihoods of the Adivasis and ensure food security; however, many of the Adivasi farmers, who had previously managed to successfully cultivate crops for subsistence use and to supplement their income, now experience poor yields or have ceased production. This can be attributed to increased urbanization, poor productivity, competition from commercial agriculture, which is producing food more effectively and at lower prices. Adivasi youth are increasingly migrating to cities for better opportunities and do not prefer to cultivate due to poor yield and lack of profit. It is, therefore, imperative that small-scale farmers adopt new technologies to increase production and, consequently, ensure food security.

Farming in Adivasi areas is characterized by many small and marginal farmers with small farm holdings. These farmers produce only a limited number of crops, which occupy a relatively large portion of the production area. These modern agriculture systems have degraded the natural biological interactions responsible for generating ecosystem services that are essential to agriculture, including soil fertility, water-holding capacity, pest/disease control and pollination. In modern mono-cropping agricultural systems, crops rely on external nutrient inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides to replace interactions that occurred naturally. This reliance on external inputs has several consequences,

including climate change, polluted air and water and the degradation of fertile soils. Growing the same crops continually each year results in the emergence of several biotic and abiotic constraints and progressive reduction in yield. Therefore, crop diversification is one of the cost-effective and simple methods that can be implemented to ensure sustainable and increased agricultural production.

The new farm laws passed by Parliament include (1) The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, (2) Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, and (3) Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020. The farmer unions have named them as 'anti farmer laws' or 'kale kanon'. According to the farmers and some analysts, the laws are in favour of big corporate companies. Nothing is said about the basic minimum support price for essential commodities. If these laws come into effect then the central government will not buy the food grains. Corporate companies can buy as they like and store as much as they can. Public Distribution System and the National Food Security Act, 2013 will no longer be effective. This will affect adversely the whole country, mainly the poor and the middle class families. The vital contribution to India's food and agricultural economy and to its national food security results from these farmers' responsiveness to public policies and their hard work. The central government needs to invest in agricultural research and development and in public infrastructure. We should remember that without farmers there will not be food grains and without food grains we cannot survive for long. □

FARMERS AND FOOD SECURITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

Basil Abraham

Food security can be defined as a situation wherein all households have physical and economic access to adequate food for all members, and where households are not at risk of deprivation of this basic access. Explicitly, this access is inseparably linked to the larger question of the survival of humanity. Implicitly, the different elements that influence food security can be classified into three broad dimensions - food availability which depend on food production and imports, secondly food access which depend on purchasing power, and thirdly, food absorption, which is a function of safe drinking water, environmental hygiene, primary health care and education.

Broadly speaking, the concept of food security is based primarily on certain fundamental human values aimed at protecting humanity from the scourge of famine, hunger and malnutrition. The question of food security has become an important issue globally, particularly among developing countries, in the wake of globalization.

Nowadays, food security is less feared than the quality of food what we get. Historically, India's dalit, adivasi and minority populations were prosperous and enjoyed the fruits of nature. Due to their own indigenous culture, the adivasis find difficulty in intermingling with the general population in

India. Successive government's intervention and deforestation led to the disintegration of these cultures, which directly threatened their subsistence.

With the onset of the imperialist-dictated policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization imposed by the ruling classes of our country during the last three decades, the problems of dalits, adivasis, other backward castes and the working people as a whole have greatly aggravated. The closure of thousands of mills and factories have rendered lakhs of people jobless and this has also hit dalits and other backward castes. The ban on recruitment to government and semi-government jobs that has been imposed in several states has also had an adverse effect. The growing commercialization of education and health has kept innumerable people from both socially and economically backward sections out of these vital sectors. In this background, reservation in the private sector has become a very important issue because joblessness among the SCs and STs has witnessed a steady increase in the recent period.

The most disastrous effects of these policies can be seen in the deep agrarian crisis that has afflicted the rural sector. Rural employment has sharply fallen and this has hit dalits and adivasis the

most. Mechanization of agriculture has further compounded the problem. The real wages of agricultural workers, of whom a large proportion are dalits, have fallen in many states. No efforts are made to implement minimum wage legislations even where it exists, and periodic revision of minimum wage is also conspicuous by its absence. The dismantling of the public distribution system has increased hunger to alarming proportions. An overwhelming proportion of malnutrition-related deaths of thousands of children in several states are from dalit and adivasi families.

The Indian government has used various programs and policies to ensure the country's food security with limited success. Some of these policies and programs, instead of contributing to food security, had a detrimental impact on assuring food security to its people.

Food security at both the national and household levels has been the focus of India's agricultural strategy since the mid-1960s, when two consecutive droughts significantly pushed up India's import dependence for staple grains.

Due to new reforms, farmers are widely affected because it is not favourable for them and for food insecurity of the people of the country, which will lead to many issues in the future. □

UNSEEN AND UNHEARD WOMEN FARMERS – THE PROVIDERS OF FOOD SECURITY

Archana Sinha

Globally, women represent more than 40 percent of farm labor force and grow much of the food for their households and communities. Furthermore,

men's migration from rural to urban areas has only increased women's responsibilities on farms. Despite the fact that women are responsible for half of

the world's food production, and in most countries they produce between 60 and 80 percent of food, they continue to be considered as home producers or farm helpers,

and not as farmers and economic agents. They need more support, in the form of policies, resources and other actions to help them and the first step is recognizing them as farmers. Many women farmers don't possess secure land rights, due to which they are often excluded as beneficiaries of government schemes to support farmers, for instance subsidized inputs and training. Eventually, women farmers' non possession of documented land rights keep them 'invisible' and restricts their productivity.

Three farm-related Bills were recently passed in the Parliament, which have subsequently received presidential assent. They argue that these Acts will adversely and disproportionately impact a majority of women farmers and agricultural workers, who form the bulk of the small and marginal segments in the Indian agriculture and depend on the sector for their survival and livelihood. Development programs supporting farmers often fail to adequately benefit women by setting beneficiary targets without addressing their constraints, such as mobility, land ownership, and other household responsibilities. Until women are recognized as farmers and have secure, documented land rights, many women farmers will continue to face difficulties accessing other productive inputs or fully investing in their land. Making women farmers 'visible' and taking down the institutional barriers that hold them back should be the keystone of food security agenda in the rural sector to ensure that all farmers can emerge stronger than ever. In a context where Indian women farmers face manifold pre-existing challenges in terms

of lack of recognition as farmers - access to support systems and services related to agricultural credit, inputs, subsidies, fund allocation and marketing their produce - the three legislations will subject them to a new set of vulnerabilities and livelihood threats.

Women farmers, with their poor mobility and access to facilities, are on an unequal footing when it comes to traveling to another place to trade their produce, indeed, what women farmers need is safe proximal markets. Instead of bringing in reforms that regulate the traders outside of the APMCs and make it more women farmer-friendly, the Act proposes fragmented and unregulated markets. It is believed that MSP and procurement system can be strengthened and expanded in a decentralised manner that universal PDS can ensure food as well as nutrition security. The proposal to remove cereals, pulses, potatoes from the list of essential commodities is bound to impact food security goals. Under Essential Commodities Act, with ceiling on storage and pricing being taken away in general, women as farmers, agricultural workers, consumers as well as beneficiaries of the PDS will be adversely affected in the future.

Women farmers often produce a diverse set of crops such as green gram, black gram, finger millet and other millets which can find markets if Public Distribution System, Mid-Day Meal Scheme and Integrated Child Development Services programmes are amended to include these foods. Therefore, the following needs to be done:

- Small and marginal farmers including a significant number of women form the base of

this sector, so protecting their rights is not only about assuring markets and remunerative prices, but also about ensuring necessary support to improve yields based on agro-ecological principles in agriculture that ensure diversification of crops.

- Government must support small and marginal farmers who are in distress due to the pandemic by providing cash transfers, loan, seed and market support through MGNREGA.
- Government should guarantee MSP in all market transactions involving women farmers.
- Government must bring in reforms in APMCs that would ensure easy access to women farmers who trade at the local level thereby supporting direct marketing initiatives.
- Bring in a separate law that guarantees remunerative prices for women farmers for diverse crops and ensure payments to farmer households.
- Universalisation of public distribution system and including millets, pulses and oilseeds that could be procured by guaranteeing remunerative prices. This would attend to the fear of non-procurement of farm produce as well as fulfill the goal of eradicating hunger.

Therefore, from perspectives of women farmers, dependent on small and marginal holdings, these provisions are neither empowering nor provide any protection indeed! This is because poor literacy levels amongst farm women and their differential state of affairs based on caste, class and gender places them in an underprivileged position. To reach their potential, women farmers need to be seen, heard and supported. □

WEBINAR ON "FOOD SECURITY AND HUNGER ERADICATION"

A special online lecture on "Food Security and Hunger Eradication" by Sushil Kumar, an independent journalist, was organized on 16th February, 2021. On this occasion, the Hindi Book "Khadya Suraksha" by Archana Sinha and T.A. John, published by Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, was released. While studies and indices provide information on gender inequalities and on food insecurity, there is no quantitative measure that directly looks at hunger and disempowerment. In an effort to close this gender data gap, there is a need to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 2 (End hunger) and 5 (Achieve gender equality). Almost 690 million people around the world went hungry in 2019. High costs and low affordability also mean billions cannot eat healthy or nutritious food. If recent trends

continue, the Zero Hunger target of the Sustainable Development Goals will not be achieved by 2030. While equality of treatment between women and men and food security are mutually supportive, gender equality remains an elusive goal in many regions, also a transformation of traditional gender roles is urgently needed. In this regard, in the fields of gender equality and food security, the above mentioned book based on empirical research examines the multiple dimensions of food insecurity present in varying degrees among the vulnerable social groups in the study area. This book, based on a micro level study, explores the availability and access to food, factors influencing the household food distribution, giving special focus on gender discrimination and neglect, and suggests interventions to address



food security problems. It is hoped that this book would be helpful for researchers, social activists, policy makers and practitioners who need to access quantitative and qualitative information for the design and implementation of evidence-based strategies, plans and programmes. □

Archana Sinha

A special online lecture on "Closing Inequalities Gap to Realize Social Harmony and Justice" by Dr. Subhasis Bhadra, Central University of Rajasthan, Ajmer, was organized on 20th February, 2021, to commemorate World Day of Social Justice. On this occasion, there was the release of the book "**Social Harmony and Justice: Perspectives of Dalit Women**" edited by Archana Sinha and Denzil Fernandes and published by Indian Social

WEBINAR ON "CLOSING INEQUALITIES GAP TO REALIZE SOCIAL HARMONY AND JUSTICE"

Institute and Bharti Publications, New Delhi. Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and harmonious coexistence within and among social communities. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality, or human rights, and we advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, caste, or culture. Despite some progress in achieving social justice and efforts undertaken by researchers and social activists, people in vulnerable situations face significant challenges. This webinar addressed the stark levels of inequality that exists within rural and urban populations. Closing the inequalities gap requires a comprehensive approach, targeting challenges that arise from rapid technological change,

and demographic shifts. It is thus critical for decisive actions for an equitable future, which requires strong and coordinated responses at the global level to address the multidimensional root causes and to achieve 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This book, based on a symposium, is an outcome of a qualitative research study Dalit Women in Social Conflict: The Case of Haryana. Dalit women carry the burden of representing community's dignity and pay for it by facing violence. This book will add to the debate that private space of home is not sacrosanct and what happens inside the house should be of concern in the public domain. The speaker discussed the causes of gender disparity and ways to close the gender gap. □

Archana Sinha

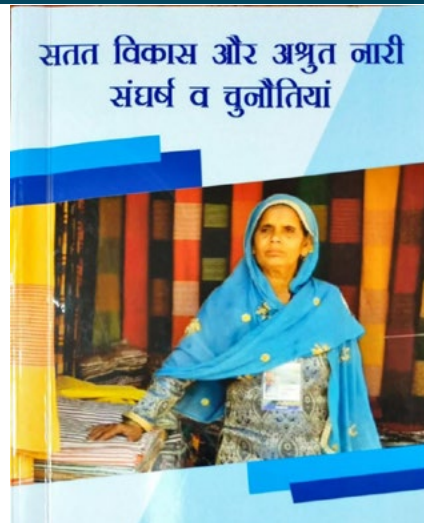


**Social Harmony
and Justice**

Perspectives of Dalit Women

WEBINAR ON "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP"

A special online lecture on "Sustainable Development And Women's Leadership" by Dr. Prof. Hemlata Mahishwar, Ex-Head of Department of Hindi, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi, was organized on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8th March, 2021. On this occasion, there was the release of the Hindi book "*Satat Vikas Aur Ashrut Naari – Sangarsh Va Chunautiyan*" edited by Archana Sinha and published by Indian Social Institute, New Delhi. Women's leadership identifies competencies critical to successfully developing livelihood opportunities in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals by way of long-term thinking, innovation, and social inclusiveness. The webinar suggested that only women can lead in pursuing these



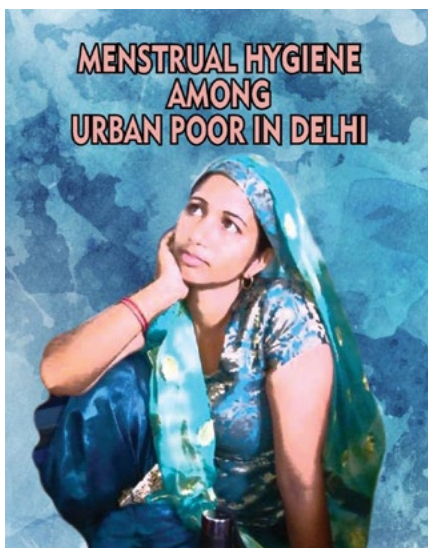
goals and they are vital drivers of positive change. To achieve the goals by 2030, we need to value and push in the leadership skills that will unlock these opportunities with speed and scale. The responsibility rests on the shoulders of everyone

who has an opportunity to influence communities and society at large. Women's voices must be heard, and we need men to be supporters of gender equality and women's leadership, thereby challenging the status quo. The book hopes to motivate women's groups to see the incredible opportunities available if they align their strategies with the global goals, and to see women as critical to unlocking them. The book also hopes to inspire women to recognise their own potential and act on the power they have to make a difference and inspire other women to join them as well. It was suggested that the first step would be to simply share this book with policy makers and social activists. The world has ten years to achieve the global goals and hence it is time for us all to step up the momentum. □

Archana Sinha

WEBINAR ON "MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE: TIME FOR ACTION"

A special online lecture on "Menstrual Health and Hygiene: Time for Action" by Dr. Mira Shiva, Initiative for Health & Equity in Society, New Delhi, was organized



by the Institute on 16th March, 2021. On this occasion, there was the release of the book "Menstrual Hygiene Among Urban Poor in Delhi" by Lata Jayaraj and Archana Sinha and published by Indian Social Institute, New Delhi. Good menstrual hygiene triggers health, confidence, and self-esteem of women and girls and is linked to gender equality and basic human rights. Menstruation is challenging in urban slum areas, given the lack of awareness, education and also conservative mindsets of people bearing the age-old myths relating to subject, which is still considered a taboo. Water, sanitation and hygiene facilities often ignore the very real and practical needs of women and girls. Ensuring menstrual hygiene

should be at top of the development agenda. The research study on "Menstrual Hygiene Management in India: A Women's Perspective" was undertaken with the hope that an intensive study on these issues and problems in real life situations would go a long way in helping policymakers with critical decision-making inputs for the health and hygiene of women. The findings of the study introduces Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) and explains the impact of it on urban poor inhabitants. Menstrual experiences of women and girls are complex and multifaceted. In this regard, this webinar dealt with the challenges and opportunities of MHM towards transforming urban poor areas and empowering of women and girls. □ Archana Sinha

WEBINAR ON TRIBAL HERO OF BASTAR 'GUNDADHUR (BAGA DHURWA)'

The Department of Tribal Studies, Indian Social Institute, organized a National Webinar on a Tribal hero 'Gundadhur' through Google Meet on 28 February 2021. Dr Vincent Ekka welcomed the speakers and the participants. Mr. Arun Oraon moderated the meeting. The main speakers of this webinar were Mr. Mangal Kunjam and Mr. Makhan Lal Sori. Both the speakers spoke on the similar subject and said that the "Bumkal Movement" of Gundadhur was about water, forest, land and

people. The British government was persecuting the tribes of Bastar. This movement was against the British government and the local feudal lords who exploited the tribals of Bastar. There is hardly any mention of this movement in the history books. A similar movement continues in various tribal areas of the country even today because the government is exploiting water, forest and land in those areas in the same way as the British did. The United Nations has also upheld the



indigenous ways of preserving the environment and called for adopting their ways of life. It shows that the tribals knew the importance of the environment for human living. At the end Dr Benjamin Bara proposed a vote of thanks. □ **Arun Kumar Oraon**

INAUGURATION OF MAIN



The Central Hub of Migrant Assistance and Information Network (MAIN) was inaugurated by Dr. Jerome Stanislaus D'Souza SJ, President of the Jesuit Conference

of South Asia (JCSA), in the premises of Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, on 25th February, 2021. In his address, Dr. D'Souza said that MAIN is the outcome of a Jesuit response to the need of the hour during the time of the pandemic. MAIN is envisaged to provide assistance to distressed migrant workers in 12 states, namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Goa and Delhi. On this occasion, the website of MAIN was launched by Dr. Joseph Xavier SJ, the Director of Indian Social Institute, Bengaluru. While launching the website,

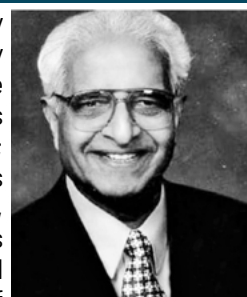
Dr. Xavier hoped that the MAIN model would become a commitment to make a difference in the lives of migrant workers. Dr. Siji Chacko SJ, the Director of MAIN, in his address, said that MAIN is the outcome of the felt need for a concerted, collective and innovative response to reach out to the distressed migrant labourers. He hoped that MAIN would become a network of NGOs, academic institutions, universities, research centres, government departments and Jesuit alumni supporting migrant workers. The programme concluded with refreshments to all staff. □ **Denzil Fernandes**

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR FR. ANTHONY D'SOUZA SJ

On January 29, 2021, the Institute organized a memorial service for Fr. Anthony A. D'Souza SJ, the fourth Director of the Indian Social Institute, who had passed away the previous day in Mumbai at the age of 95. The service began with the invocation "Asatoma Sat Gamaya". Dr. Denzil Fernandes, the Executive Director formally addressed the gathering recounting the contribution of Late Fr. Anthony A. D'Souza, during his tenure as Executive Director of the Institute from 1965-75. As a mark of respect to the departed soul everyone stood up and maintained two minute silence followed by a floral tribute to Fr. Anthony D'Souza. Scripture passages from different

religious traditions were read on the occasion. A scripture passage from the Holy Bible was read by Nigel Paul and all the staff of ISI, SJES, JRS, CDO, MAIN and Integrated joined in the hymn "The Lord is my Shepherd". A scripture from the Bhagwad Gita was read by Ms. Archana Sinha followed by Mr. Sayed Parvez, who read a text from the Quran and Mr. Ratnesh Kumar, who read out a Buddhist Chant. Invoking a spirit of gratitude, healing and love, Dr. Tony Dias of the Bombay Province spoke about Fr. Anthony D'Souza, honoring and remembering him as a great "leader". Mr. Rameshwar Dayal spoke about the books in our Library

authored by Fr. Anthony D'Souza. He shared his book titled; "Happiness in Marriage", which was reprinted because of its popular demand in 1974. This book was used as a text in schools of Social Work and also in marriage preparation courses. This book has also been translated into several regional languages. The memorial service concluded with the hymn "Abide with Me". □ **Anjali Das**



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - 2021



The International Women's Day is celebrated globally to honour the achievements of women in society, politics and economy. The International Women's Day 2021 was celebrated in the Institute with great fervour and enthusiasm on March 8, 2021. The programme was attended by the members of JRS, CDO JESA and MAIN along with ISI staff. The theme of our programme was "The Struggles and Achievements of Women Staff during COVID-19". The programme started with a welcome speech by Mr. Dilip Kumar. The inaugural speech was given by the Executive Director of the Institute, Dr. Denzil Fernandes. He emphasised in his speech that women have

always been at the forefront of the battle against COVID-19 as frontline and health sector workers, like nurses, doctors and caregivers. He further stated that our women staff struggled throughout the pandemic. The male staff of our Institute could reach and deliver their tasks in the office as they were supported by their women partners. He pointed out that when women lead, we see positive results as some of the most efficient and exemplary responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in the world were led by women. He also mentioned that young women were at the forefront of diverse and inclusive movements online and on the streets for social justice,

climate change and equality in all parts of the world. The next segment of the programme was a video presentation by Mr. Ruben Minj where the women staff of the Institute shared their challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. About 23 women staff shared their struggle and achievements on this topic. Later, Dr. Denzil Fernandes sang an English song and Mr. T.V. Antony sang a Hindi song dedicated to women on the occasion. There were also games organized for women. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr. Nigel Paul followed by refreshments. □

Satya Srinivasan

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