



Press Release

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**More girls dropped out of school during covid - Prof. Rekha Pande
National Conference on Muslim Women concluded at MANUU**

Hyderabad:

“During covid, more and more girls dropped out of school, in-access to digital education and infrastructure furthered this divide”. Prof. Rekha Pande, Director, Society for Empowerment through Environment Development (SEED) said yesterday at Maulana Azad National Urdu University on the second day of National Conference “Gender and Inclusion: a focus on Muslim Women”. The conference was organized by the Centre for Women Studies (CWS) of MANUU and Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP) Hyderabad in collaboration with Goonj, SAFA, Sahayata Trust, Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) and Soochnapreneur.

Speaking on the impact of covid on education and the socio-economic aspect, Prof. Pande pointed out that online education did not do any good during the pandemic. Education has to be linked with the economy and livelihood, she added.

According to Prof. Shahida, Director, CWS, Academics and scholars from various milieus - Arvinder Ansari, Mallika Mistry and Sangheetha A, Nilanjan Banik discussed on education and livelihoods mainly focusing on low participation of women and its further declining trajectory. Sharan Ahluwalia was the moderator.

P C Mohanan, former Member, National Statistical Commission pointed out that controversy of death registration during the COVID-19 was precisely because of the lack of proper data collection. He concluded by saying that one of the ways out of this conundrum is to return to taking census surveys, which can throw more light on these issues.

In the panel discussion “health indicators: what causes vulnerability” Meenakshi Gupta, founder of Goonj pointed out that some health indicators are in some cases insufficient as they do not address some major issues at all. Prof. Sanghmitra Acharya, JNU said women’s health should not be confined only to their physical health, but should consider their psychological as well as emotional health. Prof. Nilanjan Banik, Mahindra University pointed out that literacy is a big factor, the better the literacy of a women, the better their health.

Prof. Amitabh Kundu, Senior Economist shared his path breaking study on discrimination against Muslim labour yesterday in the last session held at Lamkaan, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. This study quantifies discrimination against women, Muslims and daily wagers in the labour markets, especially in post COVID times. PC Mohanan and Osama Manzar, Founder & Chairperson, DEF were the other panelist.

Vahida Nainar, founder & director of Women’s research and Action Group, Fatima Khan, a Delhi-based Journalist and Prof. Aseem Prakash, Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS), Hyderabad, Rubina Ayesha, Former GHMC Corporator and Educationist were the panelist for the panel discussion “women in difficult locations, sectors and occupations” held at Lamkaan yesterday and Manisha sethi was the Moderator. Vahida stressed on the need for a special Law against incitement to violence and Genocide. Prof. Prakash highlighted on the shrinking common culture among people of different religion in India today. Shireen Azam, Doctoral Researcher, University of Oxford, Anshu Gupta, Founder & Chairperson, SAFA and Osama Manzar were the panelist for the panel discussion “Role of civil society” and Sumaira Naser, Educationist was the moderator.

Prof. Amir Ullah Khan, Research Director, CDPP was the moderator of the first panel discussion held on the first day of the conference.

(Abid Abdul Wasay)
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