

## **International Women's Day Celebration**

**8<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

On the occasion of International Women's day, NSS Units and Centre for Women Studies organized an event to celebrate social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women the role of women and to raise awareness about equality for women. The chief guest for the event was Dr. Saumya Gurjar, Mayor, Jaipur Greater Nagar Nigam. The other guests included Dr. Sunil Chaturvedi, Secretary, Connect Signal and Dr. Vinod Chandrawal Field Director, Bosch India Foundation, Jaipur. The programme started with a formal welcome address by Dr. Ashok Gupta, Chancellor, IIS (deemed to be University) Jaipur through which he expressed the importance of recognizing the determining roles played by women in all societies. After the welcome addressed. Sunil Chaturvedi, Secretary, Connect Signal was invited to speak about the NGO Connect Signal that proved monumental in making women self-reliant and giving them a platform for livelihood generation.

Connect Signal was started in 2016 as a part of initiative taken by Bosch India under their social engagement programme. The agenda was to generate opportunities for livelihood to empower for women and help them become self-sufficient. In the two villages that have been adopted by Connect Signal, they carried out extensive work by through social mapping in order to identify the chances and scope of activities that can prove to be lucrative to the women living in that area. He talked about the exemplary case of Mohanpura village where through the initiatives of Connect Signal women transformed their lives. Mohanpura village is in proximity to Sitapura Industrial area which is the hub of garment industry. Modules were designed to train women under 'Fit to Industry', a 45 day short-term programme. Over 100 women have been trained to take up jobs in the garment industry. For all those women who couldn't commute to city, a Common Facility Centre was set up so that they can contribute and become economically independent. The women mastered the skills of block printing, bag making and stitching. Connect Signal has diversified its approach wherein women artisans are not only upgrading their skills but are also focusing on selling their product via exhibitions. The idea has also led to elimination of the middlemen thereby empowering women. The initiatives of the NGO seem inspirational and tell us how women can outgrow various challenges around them.

Dr. Saumya Gurjar, Mayor, Jaipur Greater Nagar Nigam spoke few words of motivation. As she holds an eminent position, her thoughts were deep and impactful. Her stand of the idea of women empowerment really filled the minds of the students with vigour and hope. She drew instances from epics and the current scenario to justify that how women need to believe in themselves because nothing is impossible. She on one hand agreed that women face challenges in all walks of life.

and on other hand she seemed really optimistic about the present day women who are proving themselves in all the fields.

Towards the end of the programme, women from the villages namely Bassi and Mohanpurawere presented mementos for their commendable work in contributing towards the garment industry of Jaipur. In the back lawns of the university, all the resource persons, college authorities, faculty members and students visited the exhibition that honored the skills of female artisans. One could take a look at bags and clothes all reflecting the famous block print, gottapatti work and bandhej that are a huge part of Jaipur's cultural identity. At last the students of NSS performed a nukkad natak that focused on the multiple challenges which women face at all levels of the society, their performance mirrored the society's attitude towards women as the norms are differential and discriminatory not allowing them realize their full potential. Overall the event was educational and motivating to the students and the faculty as the true spirit of women empowerment lies in valuing the contribution of women. The event brought to light the vitality of skill development programme for women and how we need to build enough of physical and social infrastructure for women so that there is inclusiveness as financial independence can lead to women empowerment in a massive way. 152 NSS volunteers participated in the activity.

