

## **Cultural Event and Gender Equality "Mela" in collaboration with Oxfam India on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2020**

Centre for Women's Studies (CWS), Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University Raipur, together with OXFAM India and State Women's Commission organised 'Towards Equality' a programme on bringing people together to work for equality on 24th January at the auditorium, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur. The day consisted of cultural expression to highlight issues of inequality and how to reduce them. A Gender Mela was also organised as part of the day. 24 January also happens to be National Girl Child Day, and the programme commemorated the day with a resolve for gender equality. Introducing the programme Mr. Anand Shukla, Oxfam India said that inequality is at extreme level now and urgent action is needed to reduce it. Wealth accumulation has reached to an unimaginable level. Women are worst sufferers of this inequality. Delivering the keynote address Prof Keshri Lal Verma, Vice-chancellor said that youth have to play an important role in creating a conducive environment for women and girls. Now girls are getting education, but a lot needs to be done to bring gender equality.

A new positive thought can form a gender sensitive society. Prof. Reeta Venugopal, Director, CWS, Pt. RSU, Raipur said that all sections of the society especially the youth need to contribute to bring gender equality. Prakash Gardia, Oxfam India said that towards equality is a powerful message. We need to understand the causes and impacts of deep rooted inequalities in our society. He reminded of Nelson Mandela's message that nobody should rest until the inequality is ended. Smt. Khileswari Kiran, Member, State Women's Commission said that if all of us resolve to end gender inequality, it will be a great respect to today's Girl Child Day.

Women need to come out in all spheres. The society need to create an environment, which helps in women and girls development.



The day started with cultural programmes. Chandrika presented Pandawani on unpaid care work of women. She also communicated the message that women's and girl's consent is necessary before taking any decision about them.



Mono Act was performed by Priyal Parakh and Nitin Prajapati, NIT College, Raipur on gender inequality and how education plays an important role in reducing the inequality. A skit was performed by Ms Purnakshi and team on the importance of consent. At last, a musical performance was given by Band Rhythm Queens – an all women band. They presented motivational songs dedicated to women’s empowerment.

The equality mela was a big hit with the visitors. The mela has various stalls on explaining various gender roles, inequality created by gender norms and how all especially men can reduce them. The visitors found the various activities of the mela interactive and engaging and simple way of understanding gender norms and how to break them. The programme concluded with vote of thanks by Prof. Priyamvada Shrivastava, Associate Director, CWS, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur.



