

A report on One-day web talk cum interaction by Dr. Mousumi Mahanta on “Child Sexual Abuse” on the occasion of National Girl Child day

January 24th, 2022

Time : 3:00 PM

Chandraprabha Saikiani Centre for Women Studies, Tezpur University organized a one-day web talk cum interaction by Dr. Mousumi Mahanta on “Child Sexual Abuse” on the occasion of National Girl Child day in collaboration with SAED Solution Private Limited, Sorbhog, Barpeta.

The programme host, Nelofer Ameen, student of CSCWS, TU, welcomed everyone and initiated the programme by introducing the speaker and the purpose of organizing the programme. Total 40 participants attended the programme. The participants are both boys and girls of age group started from 8 to 20 years studying in different schools and colleges of Barpeta districts, Assam.

Dr. Mousumi Mahanta addressed the participants. The speaker first of all deliberated on the purpose of celebrating National Girl Child Day that National Girl Child Day is celebrated in India every year on January 24th. It was initiated in 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the government of India, in order to spread public awareness about inequities that girls face in Indian society. The day is celebrated with organized programs including awareness campaigns about Save the Girl Child, child sex ratios, and the creation of a healthy and safe environment for girls. Dr Mahanta stressed on the importance of organizing talks on topic like “Child Sexual Abuse” which is rather considered as something not to be discussed openly. According to the speaker, society cannot be fulfilled only with man or only with woman as contribution from both is needed in the society. She spoke on gender equality, equal division of role for men and women or boys and girls. The speaker discussed about gender roles by asking various questions on gender roles in the family and society. The students actively participated and interacted by answering all the questions. Dr Mahanta presented a PPT on child sexual abuse explaining the meaning of child sexual abuse and its various types. The speaker explained how both boys and girls equally face child sexual abuse. Anyone can be victim of sexual abuse. The speaker presented a short video on Child Sexual Abuse titled “KOMAL”. The video is about a girl who is sexually abused by her neighbor. She shares with her mother who

calls the helpline immediately. The culprit is arrested. Through the video children could clearly understand the importance of raising voice in such situation.

The speaker informed the participants about the Child Line number (1098) which can be contacted anytime whenever someone faces child sexual abuse. Dr. Mahanta discussed on child sexual abuse citing many examples. The speaker shared her own childhood experiences of such abuses. Dr. Mahanta further explained about the importance of awareness about child sexual abuse that most of the time the culprits are close ones, related to the victim. She narrated many real incidences on child sexual abuse. Dr. Mahanta stressed on the importance and necessity of sharing such incidences with the parents or any one whom we trust. Dr. Mahanta talked about POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences). She explained the rules and regulations under POCSO. She also asked the participants to note down all the Child Line helplines.

Dr. Samhita Baroah, Faculty (Sociol Work, Tezpur University) shared her personal experiences on child sexual abuse and acknowledged the importance of programmes on child sexual abuse. Before winding up, Dr.Mahanta presented another video based on breaking the silence on such abuses. At the end several queries were raised by the participants on child sexual abuse, gender equality, and ways to handle the situations and how to change the mindset of the people. Dr. Mahanta explained that changing people's mindset is not one day process as it would take long time. She said every individual has responsibility to bring changes in the society, to make a better society to live in. At last the participants expressed how the programme helped them to understand about laws related to child sexual abuse and how they also can organize such programme to sensitize the other members of the society of all age group. At the end Nelofer Ameen thanked the speaker for leading the session and thanked the centre for all support for the programme.