



## **Jesus and Mary College**

**IQAC in collaboration with the Department of English**

### **Webinar Report**

**Title: “Stigma and the Covid Pandemic: Testimonies of Resilience, Resistance and Agency”**

**Speakers:**

Dr. Sheeba Marwah, Assistant Professor, Nodal Officer for Covid-19, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, VMMC & Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi

Ms. Angellica Aribam, Founder, Femme First Foundation; Political Activist

Ms. Geeta Seshamani, Vice-President, Friendicoes SECA; Co-founder, Wildlife SOS

Dr. Mridula Tandon, President and Co-founder, Sakshi CEC; Member, CSIR’s CAIRD Awards Committee

**Moderator:** Ms. Purnima Topden, Associate Professor, Dept. of English

**Q/A by:** Ms. Ishita Singh, Assistant Professor, Dept. of English

**Date:** 25 June 2020

**Time:** 4:00 - 5:30 pm

**Webinar platforms used:** Google Meet

YouTube (live streaming)

[Click here](#) for video on YouTube.

[Click here](#) for video on JMC website.

**Total Registrations: 582**

Number of Registered Students: 299

Number of Registered Faculty Members: 245 (Assistant Professor: 217; Associate Professor: 26; Principal: 2)

Others (including medical personnel, lab assistants, school teachers, research scholars, homemakers): 38

**Number of participants on Google Meet: 215**

**Number of participants on YouTube: 1,000 and counting.**

**Organizing Team:**

Sr. (Dr.) Rosily T.L. r.j.m., Principal

Dr. Alka Marwaha, IQAC Coordinator

**Webinar Team**

Dr. Ameeta Motwani,  
Webinar Committee Coordinator

Mr. Naveen Joseph Thomas,  
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Economics

Ms. Vrinda Moda,  
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Commerce

Ms. Megha Jacob,  
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Economics

Dr. Shikha Singh,  
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Mathematics

Mr. Gaurav Verma,  
IT Consultant, Administration

**Department Core Team**

Ms. Dolly Kapoor,  
Teacher-in-Charge

Ms. Purnima Topden,  
Associate Professor &  
IQAC Member

Dr.. Sharon Pillai,  
Assistant Professor

Ms. Jennifer Monteiro,  
Assistant Professor

Ms. Ishita Singh,  
Assistant Professor

**About the Speakers**

**Dr. Sheeba Marwah** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at VMHC and Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi. Currently, she is the Nodal Officer for Covid-19

for her Department. Her areas of keen interest include high-risk pregnancy, oncology and minimal invasive surgery.

She is the Joint Organizing Secretary IFCPC 2020, CME coordinator and Co-Web editor, NARCHI 2018-2020 and Chairperson of Menstrual Disorders Committee-SMDHM. She has 36 papers in National and International journals to her credit. She has been the Assistant Editor of AOGD bulletin 2015-16.

She has won several prestigious prizes such as second rank in Credentialed Indian Menopause Practitioner's exam 2012, second prize for oral paper at the 34th AOGD Annual Conference 2012, second prize for oral paper at the 4th National Conference of GESICON 2014, first prize at the FOGSI-Dr. Usha Krishna Quiz Gynecological Oncology, March 2016, 3rd prize at the NZYF 2016, Ghaziabad-Round table Management checklist, first prize at the 13th World Congress and 21st NARCHICON 2016, Jaipur, and the CS Dawn Prize for her Oral Paper at the 63rd AICOG 2020, Lucknow.

**Ms. Angellica Aribam**, Founder, Femme First Foundation, is a political activist working on issues of gender, race, and the democratisation of politics. She was named one of Forbes India's "30 Under 30" in 2017 for her work on policy and politics.

Hailing from Manipur, Angellica has a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry from Delhi University and a Master's degree in Public Policy from Peking University. She was the first student from the marginalised northeastern region of India to be elected in the Delhi University Students' Union Executive Committee in 2012. She was a National General Secretary of the National Students' Union of India, Indian National Congress for half a decade. She was also a Fellow for women political leaders at Vital Voices, an American NGO founded by Hillary Clinton, where she was mentored by former Prime Ministers of Canada, New Zealand, and Peru, and trained by professors of Harvard Kennedy School.

Angellica recently founded the Femme First Foundation, a nonprofit organisation, to amplify women's political leadership in India. Her work has been featured widely by both national and international media. She also regularly writes for various publications, including The Indian Express and The Times of India.

**Ms. Geeta Seshamani** is the Vice-President of FRIENDICOES SECA and the Co-founder of WILDLIFE SOS. She is an acting Senior Wildlife Conservationist and animal rights activist. For over three decades, her life has been centred on the profound belief that man can coexist with animals and forests.

In 1979, she became a part of FRIENDICOES SECA (Society for the Eradication of Cruelty to Animals), an animal rescue and welfare non-profit. FRIENDICOES SECA began as a shelter for sick, injured animals or abandoned pets and has gradually grown into Delhi's largest shelter for domestic animals. Today, it has a hospice, outpatient department (OPD) and ambulance services, an animal sanctuary in Gurgaon and a mobile clinic for horses and donkeys.

Geeta is now focused on developing human wildlife conflict mitigation strategies to aid wildlife conservation in India. She is currently a Special Officer of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, Govt. of India. She is also a member of CPSCEA committee for the ethical treatment of animals in experimentation and a former member of the Central Zoo Authority, Govt. of India as well as the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI).

**Dr. Mridula Tandon**, Co-founder and President of the NGO SAKSHI Centre for Information, Education & Communication, is a Social Entrepreneur, Philanthropist, Medical Doctor and a passionate promoter of Indian cultural arts and literature. She is an executive committee member of Friendicoes SECA, a member of CSIR's top level CAIRD Awards Committee, and an expert in ICC Committees Against Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace with Sena Bhavan, Air HQ, DRDO and other organizations. Dr Tandon's passion to promote and preserve India's rich cultural heritage led her to found "Jashn-e-Hind" which recently conducted a 3 day cultural extravaganza in partnership with the IGNC and the Ministry of Culture.

SAKSHI, the NGO Dr Tandon co-founded and now heads, is a holistic grassroots organization working with communities from the socio-economic margins. SAKSHI's education centers offering non-formal education and vocational training impacts 50000 women and children each month. In addition, SAKSHI's work focusses on Women's Empowerment, Water & Sanitation, Health and Community Development.

Since the National Lockdown, Dr Tandon has led SAKSHI in providing help to stranded migrant workers, daily wagers and others similarly rendered destitute. The SAKSHI COVID19 RELIEF program has provided over one lakh cooked meals, dry rations to 80,000 families, help to around 1000 migrant workers for transport back to villages, travel kits to over 1 lakh workers walking back to the village, PPE supplies and sanitizers to Police and Medical and Paramedical staff. SAKSHI has also provided Counseling and spread awareness about Covid-19 among the residents of slum colonies.

### **Webinar Summary**

On 25 June 2020, the IQAC in collaboration with the Department of English organized a webinar titled "Stigma and the Covid Pandemic: Testimonies of Resilience, Resistance and Agency". It began with a warm welcome by the moderator, Ms. Purnima Topden, Associate Professor, Department of English and a brief introduction of the esteemed speakers. Ms. Topden then invited the Principal, Sr. (Dr.) Rosily T.L. r.j.m. to address the audience.

Subsequently, Ms.Topden theorised and historicized the concept of stigma bringing in sociological, psychological and medical perspectives. She stated that evolutionary psychologists have argued that all stigmas evolved from disease avoidance mechanisms. However, in modern societies, stigmas have been proven to problematize disease dynamics in complex ways and act as catalysts for failures in protecting public health. She linked Stigma to the role and operation of power dynamics in society and spoke of how, in India, we have witnessed horrific dramas of the Covid related stigma latching on to already stigmatized and vulnerable groups.

She argued that Covid has met with an exaggerated stigma response in India due to several factors. It is highly contagious, still relatively unknown, with the race for the vaccine still continuing. The constant warnings issued, while absolutely necessary, have ironically, also added to the frenzy. This has been further fuelled by sensationalist media reporting, misinformation and the use of a criminalizing vocabulary for the infected due to which in no time at all, social distancing has morphed into the shunning, isolating, abandoning and attacking of entire groups.

Following her introduction to the topic, Ms. Topden introduced the first speaker, Dr. Sheeba Marwah and invited her to address the audience. Dr. Marwah began by talking about the high levels of fear, anxiety, panic and uncertainty associated with the disease. highlighting how the stigma vi-a-vis Covid-19 leads to difficulties in containing the disease. She outlined groups and communities of people who are particularly vulnerable to being stigmatized. Thereafter, she moved on to discuss the problems faced by healthcare providers like pathogen exposure, nosocomial transmission, long working hours, psychological distress, occupational burnout and the added burden of stigma during the pandemic.

She discussed different types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and the problems associated with them including discomfort levels, difficulty linked to donning and doffing, rashes and other effects. Dr. Marwah then shared how she herself contracted Covid followed by the problems she faced with her landlady due to the stigma associated with the disease. She emphasised the need to support those in quarantine and celebrate those who have recovered from the disease, not shun them.

After Dr. Marwah's lively discussion, Ms. Topden introduced the second speaker of the day, Ms. Angellica Aribam. Ms. Aribam began by sharing her experiences of racism and those of various others who have lost their lives due to it. She argued that while racism and discrimination against people from the North-East has always existed, in the the context of Covid-19, it has sharpened. She further linked this phenomena to the emergence of the virus in Wuhan, China and its consequent naming as the Chinese virus. This has led to the stigmatization of Chinese immigrants and others with mongoloid features. The brunt of this stigmatization is directly felt by people from the North East. She stressed that the problem is exacerbated by the absence of anti-racism laws in India, which denies victims direct legal address. She emphasised the need to formulate a legal framework to tackle the issue.

Ms. Aribam's talk was followed by a brief introduction of the third speaker of the day, Ms. Geeta Seshamani. Ms. Seshamani spoke on the stigmatization in the field of animal welfare. She stated that the stigmatization of animals and people working with animals existed even in the pre-covid world, giving examples from her experience from the early days of Friendicoes and the ongoing struggle since then. She had felt that the institutionalizing of animal welfare through animal shelters and homes, NGOs and hospitals, led by an army of vets and paramedics would help alleviate the stigma and contribute towards animal care, yet that hasn't been entirely the case. During the lockdown months, the violence against stray feeders has escalated. The pandemic has led to many families abandoning their pets due to misguided fears of contracting the disease from the animal,

their inability to take the pet to the vet any longer, or to take the pet on a walk in the neighborhood.

Despite the grim scenario, she concluded her talk on a positive note stating that in the past, she had noticed, that catastrophes and disasters change people's perspective towards all lives, even that of animals. She thinks Covid-19 too has the capacity to teach people kindness. Friendicoes has been feeding 2000 stray dogs and 600 cows and monkeys thanks to the generous donations from people who believe in their work.

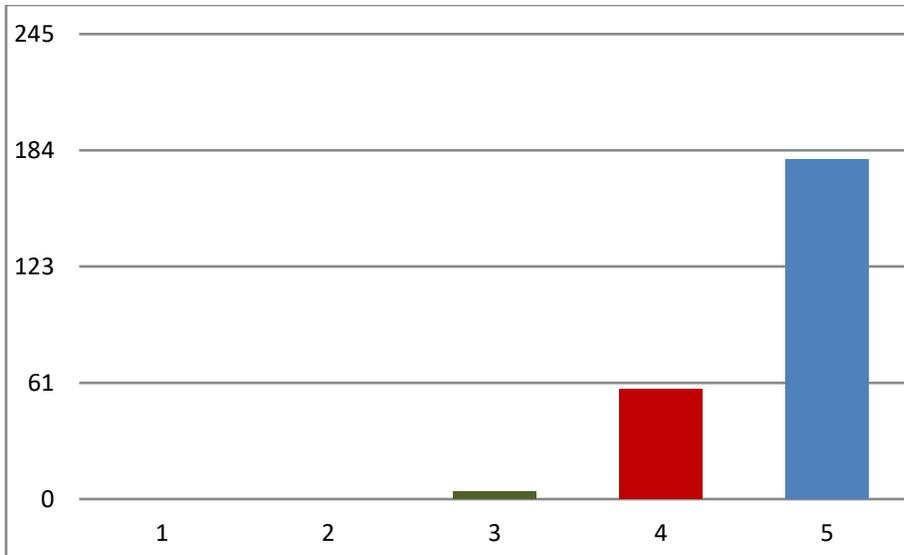
Following this, Ms. Topden introduced Dr. Mridula Tandon. Dr. Tandon began with a discussion of the SAKSHI Relief Program that has distributed meals from community kitchens amongst migrant workers. The relief work has also extended help to migrant workers to reach home safely and even encouraged and motivated others to stay back in their cities. She pointed out that it is a tragic irony that the small tradespeople who support the very framework of society are the most vulnerable and affected in these difficult times. She emphasized the 'power of one' and the motto 'each one feeds someone' that has the power to transform lives and communities. She further outlined the work that has been done by SAKSHI over the years with various marginalized and economically deprived groups. She also emphasized the women's helpline (181) that SAKSHI runs with the Delhi Commission for Women to help women suffering from physical, verbal and mental abuse. She ended by sharing some useful practical tips including how to wear masks correctly to keep Covid at bay.

The webinar concluded with a lively question and answer session moderated by Ms. Ishita Singh, Assistant Professor, Department of English. Following this Dr. Alka Marwaha, IQAC Coordinator, gave the vote of thanks. She expressed her gratitude towards the Department of English for organizing an engaging webinar on a pertinent topic that brought the series of webinars organised by JMC to a fitting close. She also thanked Sr. Rosily for being a pillar of support to the faculty members involved in organizing webinars. Lastly, she extended her gratitude to the Webinar Committee for successfully organizing over twenty webinars in the past two months.

**Feedback Summary:** After the webinar, we circulated the feedback form to which we received 241 responses from 104 institutions all over the country. Of these responses only 17%, i.e. 41 were from Jesus and Mary College. The feedback was overwhelmingly and unanimously positive. Below is a brief analysis of the data from the feedback forms:

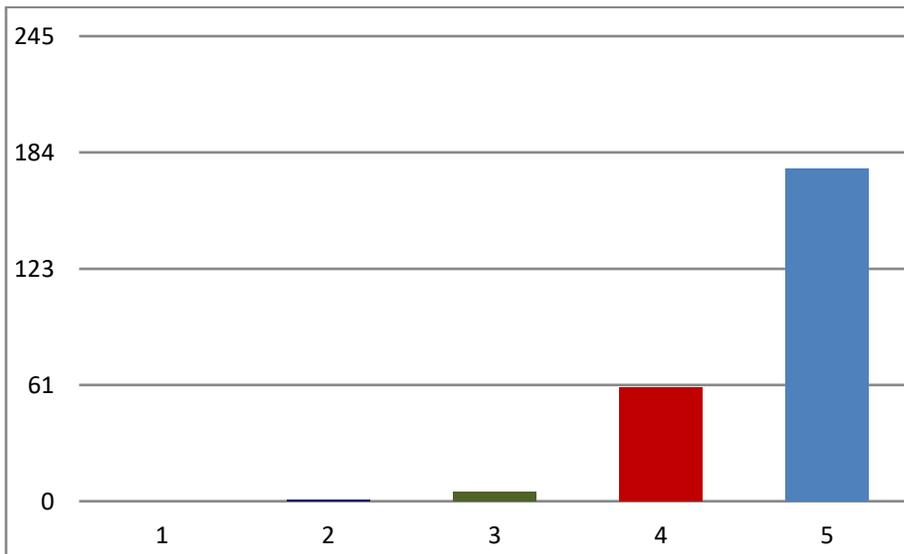
**Relevance of the webinar to respondents (on a scale of 1 to 5):**

179 of the 241 i.e. 74% of the respondents rated the relevance of the webinar on the highest score of 5, 58 scored it 4, 4 scored it 3, while none scored it 1 or 2.



**Response to whether the content met the respondent’s expectations (on a scale of 1 to 5):**

175 out of 241 i.e. 73% of the respondents scored the content of the webinar 5, 60 scored it 4, 5 scored it 3, 1 scored it 2, while none scored it 1.



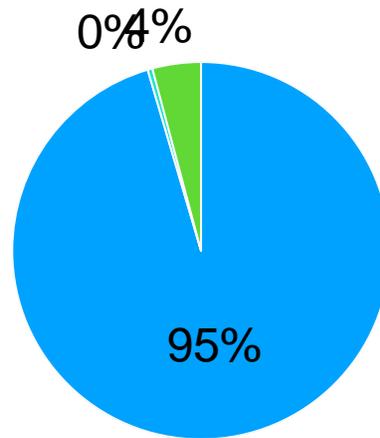
**Responses to their willingness to participate in more such webinars:**

95% of respondents, i.e. 230 out of 241, expressed willingness to attend more webinars organized by the college.

■ Yes

■ No

■ Maybe





**JESUS AND MARY COLLEGE**

**IQAC** in collaboration with  
**Department of English**

invites you to a webinar on

## **STIGMA AND THE COVID PANDEMIC**

**Testimonies of Resilience,  
Resistance and Agency**

**Date: 25 June 2020**

**Time: 4:00 - 5:30 pm**

### **PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

4:00 - 4:15 pm	Welcome by Moderator, Ms. Purnima Topden, Associate Professor, Dept. of English
	Address by Sr. (Dr.) Rosily T.L. r.j.m., Officiating Principal
	Introduction by Ms. Purnima Topden
4:15 - 4:25 pm	Dr. Sheeba Marwah, Asst. Prof. & Nodal Officer for Covid-19, VMMC & Safdarjung Hospital
4:27 - 4:37 pm	Ms. Angellica Aribam, Founder, Femme First Foundation; Political Activist
4:39 - 4:49 pm	Ms. Geeta Seshamani, Vice-President, Friendicoes SECA; Co-founder, Wildlife SOS
4:50 - 5:05 pm	Dr. Mridula Tandon, President and Co-founder, Sakshi CEC; Member, CSIR's CAIRD Awards Committee
	Q/A Session by Ms. Ishita Singh, Assistant Professor, Dept. of English
	Vote of Thanks by Dr. Alka Marwaha, IQAC Convenor



JESUS AND MARY COLLEGE



IQAC in collaboration with Department of English

# STIGMA AND THE COVID PANDEMIC

Testimonies of Resilience, Resistance and Agency

Date: 25 June 2020

Time: 4:00 - 5:30 pm

Webinar on



Moderator: Ms. Purnima Topden,  
Associate Professor, Dept. of English

Live Streaming on



Q/A by: Ms. Ishita Singh,  
Assistant Professor, Dept. of English

## SPEAKERS



### Ms. Angellica Aribam

Founder, Femme First Foundation  
& Political Activist; Alumni: Vital Voices;  
Forbes India "30 Under 30";  
ex-NSUI National General Secretary



### Dr. Sheeba Marwah

Assistant Professor  
Nodal Officer for Covid-19  
Dept. of Obs. & Gynae, VMMC  
& Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi



### Ms. Geeta Seshamani

Vice President, Friendicoes SECA;  
Co-founder, Wildlife SOS;  
Special Officer, Wildlife Crime  
Control Bureau; Member, CPSCEA



### Dr. Mridula Tandon

President & Co-founder, Sakshi CEC;  
Member, CSIR's CAIRD Awards Committee;  
Expert, ICC Committee Against Sexual Harassment,  
Sena Bhavan, Air HQ, DRDO;  
Founder, "Jashn-e-Hind"

Sr. (Dr.) Rosily T.L. r.j.m.  
Officiating Principal

Dr. Alka Marwaha  
Convenor, IQAC

Dr. Ameeta Motwani  
Convenor, Webinar Committee

Ms. Dolly Kapoor  
TIC, Dept. of English

## ORGANISING TEAM

### Department Core Team

Ms. Dolly Kapoor  
Associate Professor  
Teacher-in-charge

Ms. Purnima Topden  
Associate Professor  
Member, IQAC

Dr. Sharon Pillai  
Assistant Professor

Ms. Jennifer Monteiro  
Assistant Professor

Ms. Ishita Singh  
Assistant Professor

### JMC Webinar Team

Mr. Naveen J. Thomas  
Assistant Professor  
Dept. of Economics

Ms. Vrinda Moda  
Assistant Professor  
Dept. of Commerce

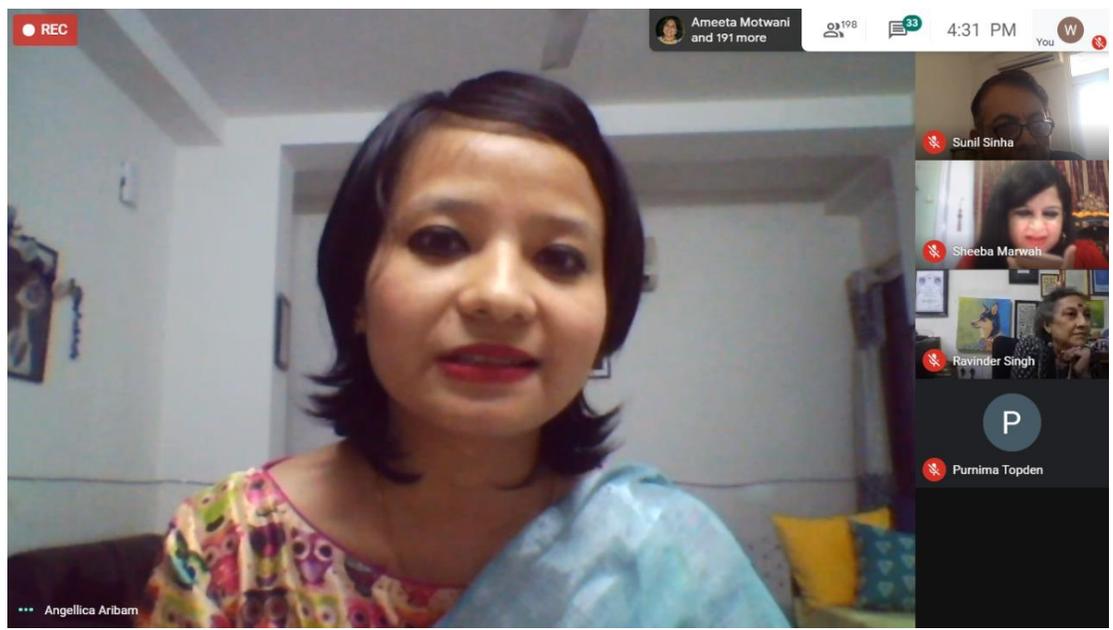
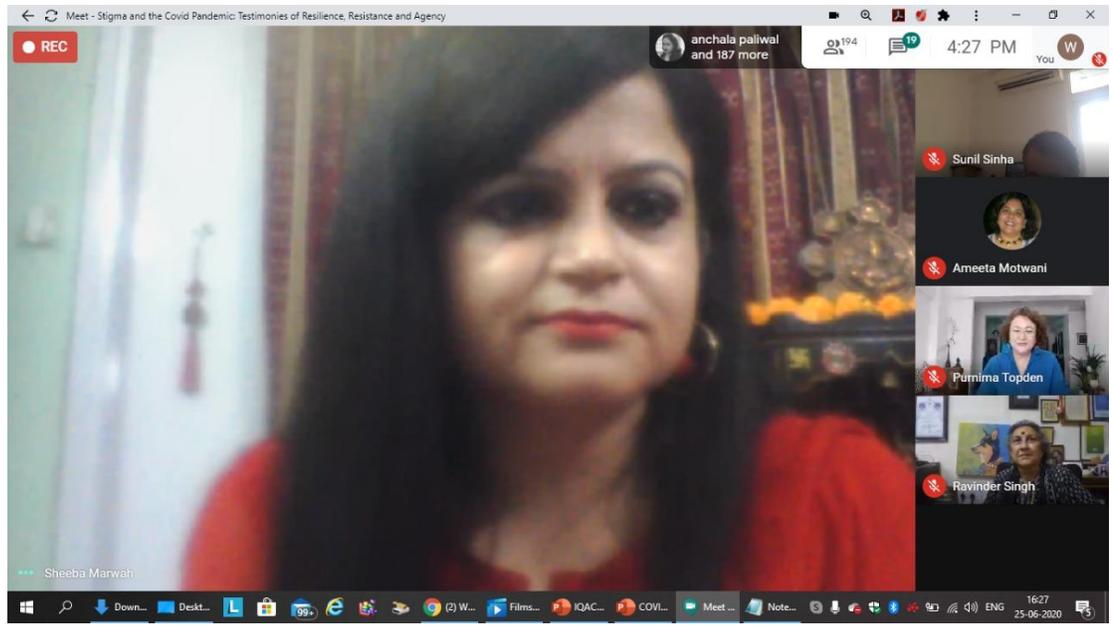
Ms. Megha Jacob  
Assistant Professor  
Dept. of Economics

Dr. Shikha Singh  
Assistant Professor  
Dept. of Mathematics

Mr. Gaurav Verma  
IT Consultant, Administration

*E-certificates will be given to all participants.*





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Ravinder Singh

Angellica Aribam

Purnima Topden

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Arneeta Motwani

REC

R Ruchi Kalita and 198 more

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midula tandon

Ramandeep Mahal  
nice to see you maam

Ravinder Singh

Purnima Topden

Megha Jacob

sunil sinha

