

PRESS NOTE

Amaravati, February 25, 2025

SRM University-AP's Easwari School of Liberal Arts Hosts National Symposium on Rethinking Gandhi in Contemporary Times

The Department of History from the Easwari School of Liberal Arts, SRM University-AP, hosted a national symposium on “Rethinking Gandhi: Relevance and Revaluation in our Times,” focusing on the facets of Gandhian legacy of meditation and tolerance. The symposium witnessed an assembly of noted stalwarts of Gandhian Studies and modern South Asian history whose expertise in unpacking Gandhi and his politics is noteworthy. Prof. Mridula Mukherjee, Retired professor, JNU, Prof. Amar Farooqui, Retired professor, University of Delhi-North Campus, Prof. V Krishna Ananth, Professor of History, Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Sikkim University, Gangtok, delivered insightful sessions at the symposium moderated by Dr V Rajesh, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Science, IISER, Mohali.

Prof. Vishnupad, Dean of Easwari School of Liberal Arts, SRM AP, gave a comprehensive account of the relevance of revisiting the Gandhian legacy and ideology of inclusivity, compromise and tolerance in the contemporary world. For students he stressed the importance of liberal arts education aligned to Gandhian thinking, redefining themselves and be the contributing members of society.

The symposium highlighted three perceptive lectures by leading academicians in Gandhian Studies. Prof. Mridula Mukherjee elucidated Gandhi as a leader of civil liberties. She commented, “Gandhi's doctrine placed democracy, civil liberties, and the notion of dissent in the forefront. His political ideology played with the terrains of legality and legitimacy.” Prof. Amar Farooqui discussed Gandhi's relevance, particularly in relation to the idea of secularism. He commented, “Gandhi is uncompromisingly secular” and emphasised that Gandhi's understanding of secularism remains relevant today.

Prof. V Krishna Ananth highlighted that tolerance was central to Gandhi's journey. He remarked that Gandhi's activism exposed the exploitative nexus between colonialism and financial power, a reality that remains relevant today. Dr V Rajesh moderated a Q&A session following the lectures.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Manoj K Arora expressed his appreciation to the Department of History and the Easwari School of Liberal Arts for this formidable initiative. He stated, “The National symposium is hugely beneficial for liberal arts students to enlighten the idea of swaraj. It is important for young minds to imbibe Gandhi's teachings to strive towards a right and judicious world”.

The symposium aimed at revisiting Gandhi's legacy, ideology, and vision and their relevance in the contemporary world. The event featured the participation of the Associate Dean of Easwari School of Liberal Arts, Prof. Vandana Swami, Head-Department of History Dr Aqsa Agha, Convenor of the symposium, Dr Maanvender Singh, faculty from the Liberal Arts school, research scholars, and students.