



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

REPORT ON

WEBINAR

"COVID-19, THE FLEXIBILITY STIGMA, AND GENDER EQUALITY"

29th May 2020, 3:00PM-4:30PM



Program Moderator:

Dr. Nupur Tiwary

Associate Professor,

**Head Centre of Excellence for Tribal Affairs,
Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi**

1. Introduction

- **About CoE**
- **About the Speakers**
- **About the chair and moderator**

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INTRODUCTION

About COE:

Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) has been entrusted with the task to strengthen Training and active research in various aspects of tribal welfare, by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Government of India. For this purpose, a Centre of Excellence has been established at IIPA for tribal affairs. Since its inception, it has been the consistent endeavor of the (CoE) to work on „Tribal Research and Exploration“ focusing on the issues concerning exclusion, inclusion, marginalization, etc. of the tribal communities. As per the mandate of the MoTA and CoE, quality publications, value-adding workshops, memorial lectures, national seminars, dialogue/ discussions, awareness and extension programmes, inter-CoE collaborating programmes are to be organized regularly.

About the Speakers



Ms.Brinda Karat, Indian Politician, Elected to the Rajya Sabha , First Woman Member of the CPI(M) Politburo Ms.Brinda Karat is an Indian politician, activist and actor. She is a long-time member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPI (M). As an actress, she is known for Amu(2005). The film is about Anti-Sikh riots. She has been involved with women's rights and labour rights movements for decades. She has also been interviewed on 60 Minutes. In 2005, she became the first woman member of the CPI (M) Politburo. She has also been the general secretary of the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) from 1993 to 2004, and thereafter it's Vice- President. She is the sister of Radhika Roy, Journalist and wife of CPIM leader Prakash Karat. Brinda is the author of Survival and Emancipation: Notes from Indian Women's Struggles, a work addressing the challenges faced by women's movements in India from a left perspective.



Dr.RanjanaKumari, Dr.RanjanaKumari is a renowned academician and social activist, who currently serve as the Director of the Centre for Social Research in Delhi, as well as the Chairperson of Women Power Connect, a national level organization of women's groups. Lotus Leadership Award winner (2015), Dr.Kumari has dedicated her life to empowering women across South Asia, and has authored many well-known publications. Her foray into social work was initiated by her concern for a dowry death that took place near her home in 1976. This led to her activism on world famous publication “Brides are not for Burning”.

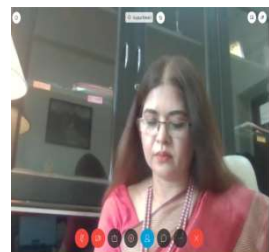
She has served as the Coordinator of the South Asia Network against Trafficking (SANAT) in Persons and is a member of the Central Advisory Board on “Pre Conception and Pre Natal Diagnostic Tests Act, 2001”, as well as the Central Advisory Committee for Prevention of Trafficking in Women and Children. Dr.RanjanaKumari combines the two roles of a women activist and scholar with great felicity and panache. Having dedicated her life to significant social causes, Dr.RanjanaKumari continues to impact the lives of many with her dedication and zeal. She is voice of women on numerous T.V Channels and quoted extensively in print and electronic media.

Chair and Moderator

Shri SurendraNathTripathi, IAS: M.B.A. (PublicPolicy), M.A. (Political Science), 1985 batch of IAS, Orissa Cadre.Shri.Tripathi has taken over the charge of Director, IIPA in April 2019 when he was still holding the charge of Secretary to the Government of India in Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. During his more than thirty-fiveyears of service, he has served in various ministries and departments under the Government of India including Panchayati Raj, Information Technology, MSME, Coal Board, Department of Agricultural Research and Education etc. He brings his rich experiences in administration and management to the IIPA.



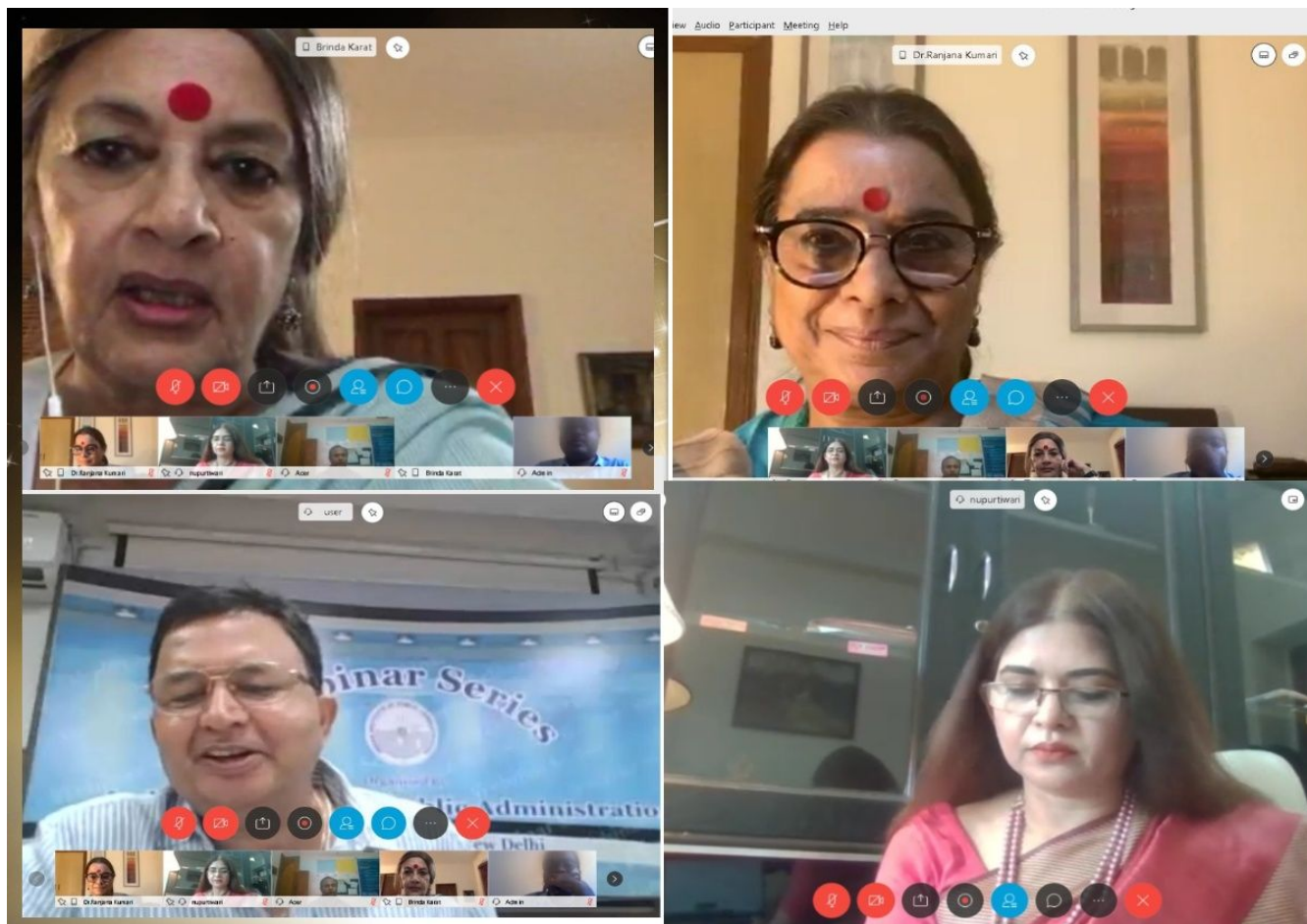
Dr. Nupur Tiwari, Associate Professor andHead, Centre of Excellence(CoE) for Tribal Affairs, (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt of India) at Indian Institute of Public Administration IIPA , New Delhi. She was also a Faculty member at LNSNAA, Mussoorie, She has lectured vastly in India and abroad.



Her current research interests include Tribal Governance, Public Policy, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Left Wing Extremism and Gender issues. She has authored Forty two research papers/Articles, published in peer reviewed National and International journals. She has authored seven books and four Monographs and has contributed Chapters in eleven volumes. Two books, authored on PESA and Left wing extremism are forthcoming. She has Published Twelve Reports for Government of India. She has been the member of twelve committees constituted by Govt of India. she has also been the Project Director of thirteen major projects commissioned by Government of India. She has also undertaken projects by IDRC, Irish Aid and UNDP. She has lectured vastly in India and Abroad. She regularly features on National TV channels like DD News, Rajya Sabha TV, Lok Sabha TV.

About Webinar

The webinar was a good online platform for live knowledge sharing and discussion. It was held on WebEx Platform. More than 140 participants came forward to attend the webinar. It had a group of diverse participants across nation such as Officials of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Head of TRIs, Tribal Scholars, and Researchers from Osmania University, Kalinga University, Faculty from IIPA, JNU, DU, Jamia Millia Islamia, Jamia Hamdard, IGNOU, Ambedkar University etc. were presented.



A Webinar on **"COVID 19: The Flexibility Stigma & Gender Equality"** was organised by IIPA. It was Chaired & moderated by Shri S.N.Tripathi, Director, IIPA and Dr. Nupur Tiwari, Associate Professor. This was the sixth Webinar in the series ongoing webinars organised by IIPA on different Topics. The honourable speakers invited were Ms. Brinda Karat, Indian Politician, Elected to the Rajya Sabha, First Woman Member of the CPI(M) Politburo and Dr. Ranjana Kumari, a renowned academician and social activist, who currently serves as the Director of the Centre for Social

Research in Delhi, as well as the Chairperson of Women Power Connect , a national level organization of women's organisations. The webinar started at 3:00PM on 29th May'2020. Dr.NupurTiwari warmly welcomed shri. S.N. Tripathi , Director ,IIPA and gave a brief introduction about the hon'ble speakers. She also shared a background about the topic of the webinar.

All The participants were welcomed by Shri S.N.Tripathi, Director,IIPA. Around 150 Participants participated in the webinar and they were enthusiastic about the webinar.

The purpose of the webinar was to raise awareness about some of the gendered impacts that Covid-19 is having on our society and to highlight the different realities that women and men could be facing in light of this pandemic. The idea to organize such webinar was to put forward ideas for policymakers to ensure that the gender perspective is not forgotten when it comes to making important decisions during and after the pandemic that will affect the lives of every citizen. The webinar majorly focussed on -

- Frontline workers
- Gender impacts on health
- Unpaid care and housework
- Gender-based violence
- People in vulnerable situations

Discussions

Ms.Brinda karat and Dr.RanjanaKumari shared their valuable opinions on the topic and enlightened the learners about the impacts of the current pandemic affecting the people globally. The importance of women leadership is one of the important tools to tackle the problems caused due to Covid-19 pandemic.

MS. Brinda Karat-spoke on the specific impact of Covid-19 in India and specific Impact on women. She discussed about social inequalities before and current pandemic crisis. She also said that the social inequalities prevailing social inequalities in any given society.

Secondly she questioned about sufficient government interventions to address to specific social inequalities which may or may not be impacted during a period of crisis and thirdly what is our experience in India in this time of Crisis?

As far as prevailing social inequality is a concern we know that imperious shares in India and in Indian society treated in large measure as second class citizen if we look government statistics in the world of work if we looking government statistics in the world of the public space and the kind of violence women face in the public space.

If we look at in the world within the home in the domestics fear the specific aspects of domestic violence that women face and she included in all this issue of children and child abuse specifically against girl children and along with that in the complex society that we have in India.

She also discussed about the phase of women discrimination in India. And she also discussed other major factors like; the issues of class inequalities which also impact on women of the poor class is quite differently than women of the better off and along with that she talked on Indian cast system which impact on dalit women and adivasi women badly. The greatness of the Indian constitution by recognizing these discriminations and by providing for clauses laws to women that prohibit discriminations on the basis of Sex and Cast.

She further explained how in 21st Indian women breaking so many barriers to reach their goals and achievements. On this pandemic crisis she explains some aspects like- the world of work and how have the pandemic affected women and men but women specifically in the world of work.

Furthermore she talked about unpaid work done by women and the much greater work load among the women in lockdown in pandemic. And some still is doing all the work who found corona positive.

Furthermore she talked on current issues of women's added work is a part of the Lockdown, is it to all in the consciousness about country she said *"I don't think at any level any official has ever talked about it publicly because everything else is so important and this aspect of women's work is invisibilized and therefore the burden on women the health issues which women face"*, she said that is something as a policy matter women is like this must definitely take into account and also the issues of domestic violence of child abuse issues which are really important and which we have to take into account there are some of other specific aspects which about policy initiatives of the government like; set the first issue of direct gas transfer the second issue is that of hunger and the issue of distribution of food grains then an area where jobless is increasing and women's work is going to be very specifically impacted period where it is very difficult for women even to retain the inequality which was there unemployment that is going to be a very critical issue and therefore hunger and the management of family economies is so dependent on women the issue of food supplies has very critical importance to women in all household with prices increasing it is also critical for women.

She also talked about MGNREGA and women participation and how adivasi women lose their productions because local market has collapse in this crisis and how the minor forest produced is far below because of this crisis. And on MFP MGNREGA which they using for agricultural work it is essential today to include that work MFP produce should included in MGNAREGA. And there should be a change in policy approach on specific requirements on women.

She concluded with experience of ongoing crisis, the health emergency, manmade humanitarian crisis, migrant's workers, the condition of women and children, lose of rural employment, Asha workers mostly are women working in this critical condition. And need of special recommendation for women. And we need to work for all the women as a one society.

Then after Shri S.N. Tripathi called to next speaker Dr.RanjanaKumari with adding that Women are playing an obvious role in fighting corona and playing a good role in society.

Dr.RanjanaKumari spoke about home care economy and frontline care workers. And how everybody has taken a back because of the pandemic She also spoke on stresses of pandemic Crisis and what cause of pandemic and what future are we looking for after this pandemic? Every single human being men, women and children are all of us are going through a kind of experience, one has ever imagined. It has different kind of stress on men and women. 94% women are in informal sector and many of women have been ruthlessly sent out of job without any compensation, labour law. This has happened with every migrant worker be it man or woman. Dr.RanjanaKumari stated that “**there is a lockdown within a lockdown.** ‘We were living in a system where women are the care provider and also bread earners, but now it is many folds more. Now lot of men in this lockdown who have never experienced any kind of home care work or daily household chore , are now can been seen on social media cooking or dusting, cleaning etc. This is something new normal of men in the prevailing situation. As Dr.RanjanaKumari said it totally normal for anybody to clean their house or cook for their families. But due the stereotypes and gender roles constructed by the society so to say a “common” man feels less of a man if asked to help in household work. It has lead to intra family tensions As majority men had never participated in the care economist has given rise to more domestic violence. About migrant labour she discussed that in times of crisis and natural disasters, there is a documented rise in domestic abuse. As normal life shuts down, victims – who are usually women – can be exposed to abusers for long periods of time and cut off from social and institutional support.

We do not yet have comparable data but some countries have already provided initial figures showing a spike in domestic violence during lockdown. Even outside times of crisis, women face the greatest danger from people they know. Globally, 64 % of women who are killed die at the hands of

an intimate partner or family member [More than a fifth of women have been physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner

The financial instability that often prevents domestic violence victims from leaving abusers can also worsen in view of job and income losses and a looming recession.

When it comes to domestic violence, women with disabilities are more vulnerable. 34 % of women with disabilities have suffered intimate partner violence, compared with 19 % of women without disabilities. They often are not physically able to access shelters and other facilities, so they remain in violent situations

She talked about women who are still working and contributing to their society. Now men are also experienced this home care work and showing domestic equality. Now they experience new situation by participating in homecare work also.

With this we need to remember that WHO chief suggested that women should be given the kind of space they need in the current situations we are fighting a war against a war. Women are suffering much more domestic violence and mental health issues. Government initiatives should provide to women in protecting them, and provide support system to them and we need proper structured system which could respond to such women. Some of the govt. initiatives taken so far are –

1. The government decided to double the collateral-free loan amount for women in self-help groups to Rs 20 lakh.
2. Wages under MGNREGA to be hiked to Rs 202 from Rs 182. The move would bring in Rs 2,000 in addition to workers.
3. Nearly 20 crore women Jan Dhan account holders received Rs 500 each in their account. The total disbursement under the head was 9,930 crore, the finance ministry said.
4. The National Commission for Women (NCW) on Friday launched a helpline number — 0721-7735372 to enable those facing domestic violence to send a WhatsApp message to access help.

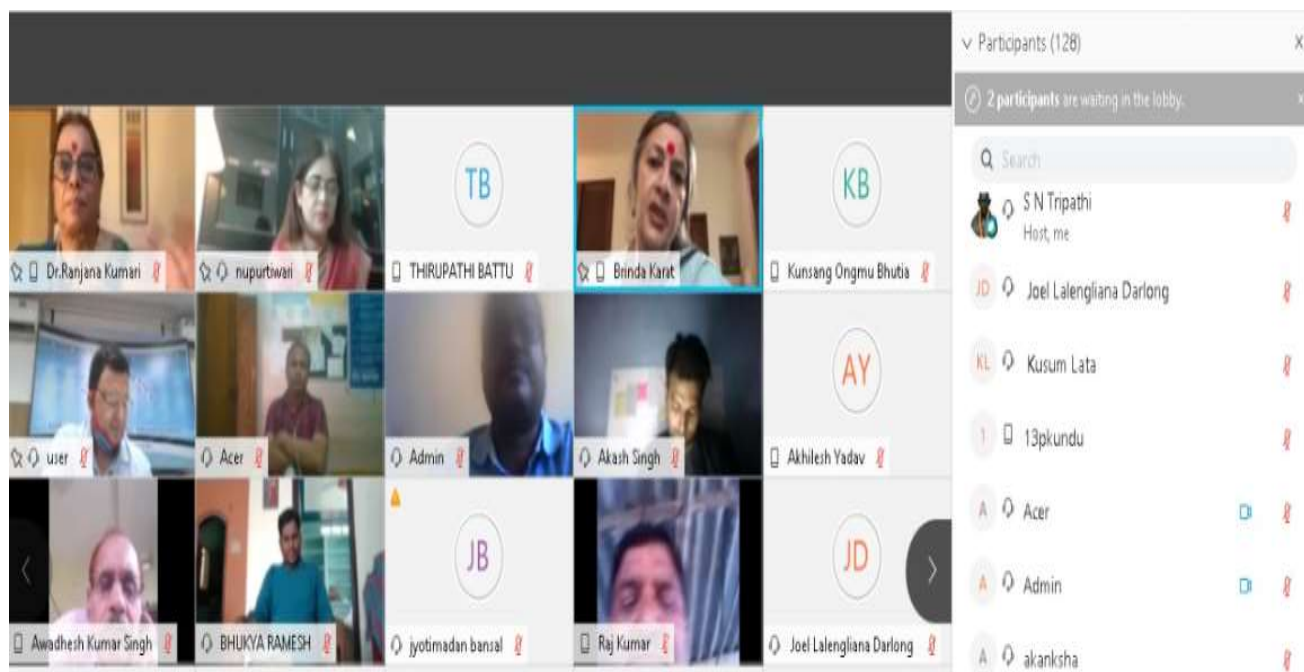
Also Women Self Help Groups in India have risen to the extraordinary challenge of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. They are meeting shortfalls in masks, sanitizers and protective equipment, running community kitchens, fighting misinformation and even providing banking and financial solutions to far-flung communities.

Secondly she talked about frontline workers and suggested that government needs to support them and appreciate their work by providing them the facilities they deserve. As they are working for COVID patients; provide secure services to them,

Dr. Ranjana Kumari also spoke on the condition of working women, and how girls' dropout from their schools, further she focused on health issues, reproductive issues, domestic violence, and how globally women are facing many critical situations. Menstrual issue as we know is a major barrier and reason behind the dropping the schools. Mensuration still being a taboo is totally ghosted whereas it should be brought in light.

Due to covid-19 mostly women have lost their jobs, and because of gender discrimination or gender stereotyping it becomes difficult for women to get a job easily as compared to men.

Lastly, she spoke on how social media playing a vital role towards gender issues, she gave an example on women leadership space and how globally women are taking in charge. Government and we as a society need to provide them great and more opportunities and government should encourage women self works too. And we need gender conscious policies in India Policy Intervention like: - Govt policies must keep the issue of gender-based violence as a priority as lockdown measures increase vulnerability, Implement risk management measures involving the police, justice and health sectors to ensure a coordinated response to the increased risk of gender-based violence.



Background questions

We all know that in various spheres of India, women are treated as second citizens, if we look at the statistics in the world of the public space, and recognising this Indian Constitution has attained greatness by recognising these discrimination by providing clauses and laws to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and on the basis of caste. Both speakers stated that while we have a constitution and legal Framework it should make India more of equal society. They saluted the women of India for breaking so many barriers to reach these goals .Today in the end of second decade we are still in a position of deep inequality. According to Ms. Karat this is the worst man-made crisis and specifically amongst the entire world crisis this pandemic is worst humanitarian hit crisis that independent India has ever faced and she believes this is a manmade .There are sufficient government interventions to address to specific social inequalities which may or may not be interacted during crisis.

There were following questions discussed during webinar.

Question no. 1:- Corona Crisis impact on unorganized sectors Woman Labour.

(To BRINDA KARAT)

Question no. 2:- Tribal Women's Contribution in Indian Economy.

(To DR. NUPUR TIWARI)

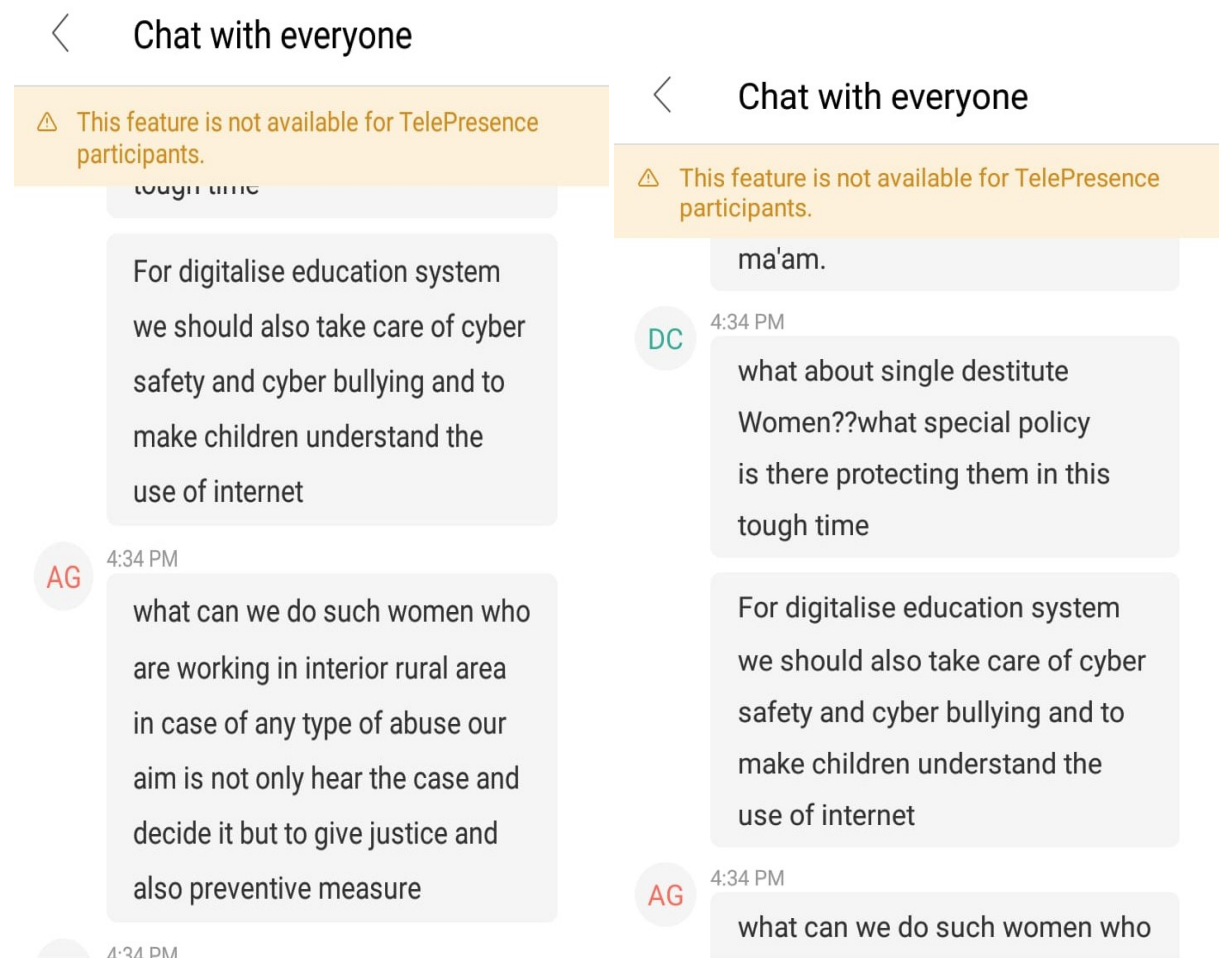
Question no. 3:- How we can use unorganized sectors in the Indian economy.

(To S.N. Tripathi IAS sir.)

Question no. 4:- After migration, the labours are facing much more problems, likewise women's unemployment, FOOD and problems related to general facilities of quarantine canter. What are the way forewords...

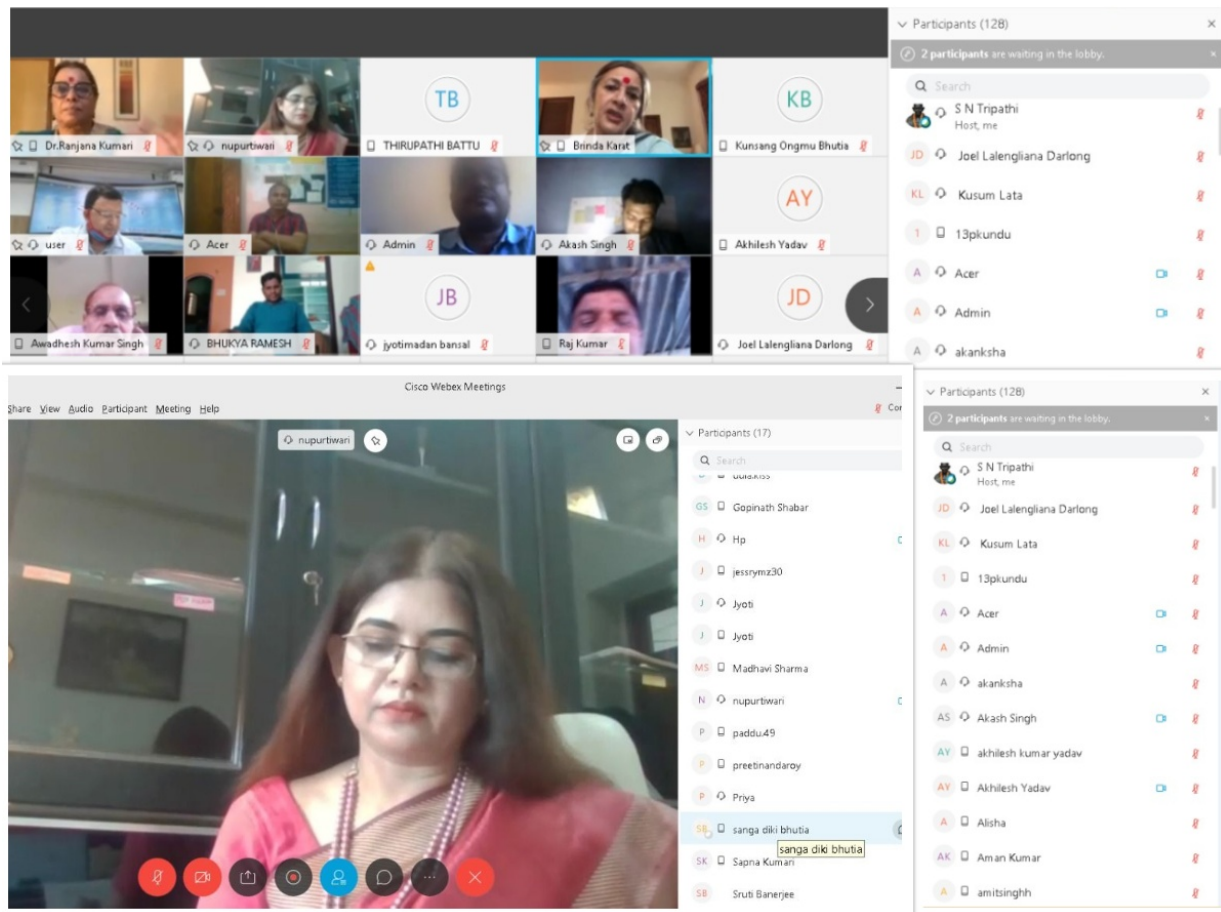
(To RANJANA KUMARI)

Questions asked by scholars;



1. What are the implications of current outbreak caused due to COVID-19 on gender equality with regard to economic downturn?
2. How Covid-19 influences gender-based violence and what can be done to tackle it?
3. Why do we need gender perspectives in our global solutions to COVID-19?
4. How is the Covid-19 crisis exacerbating Gender inequality?
5. Suggest few recommendations for policy makers on the economic impacts of covid-19 on gender inequality.
6. In general People still think of care giving responsibilities as women's work. They punish men who seek flexibility and men have been fired, demoted, or lost job opportunities for seeking flexibility .Why would spending more time at home be such a risk for men?
7. What is "femininity stigma"? What greater gender equality can look like?

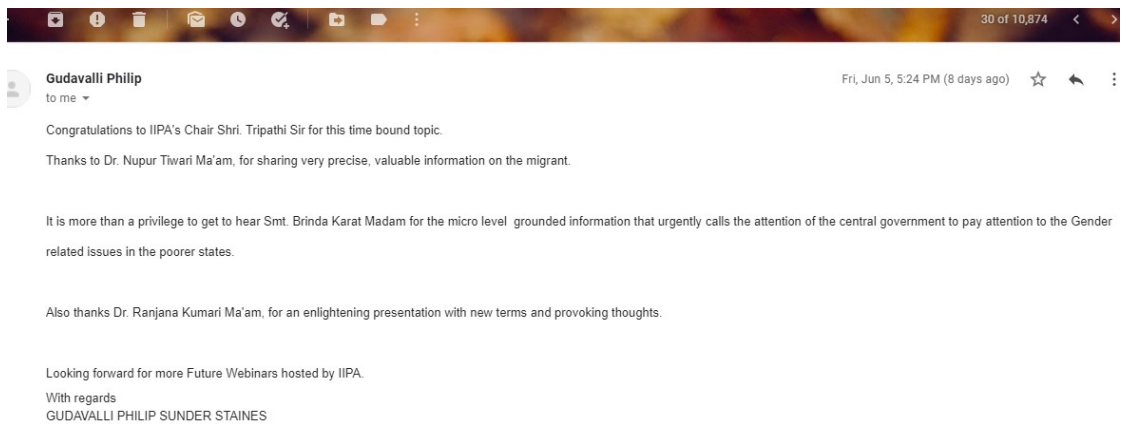
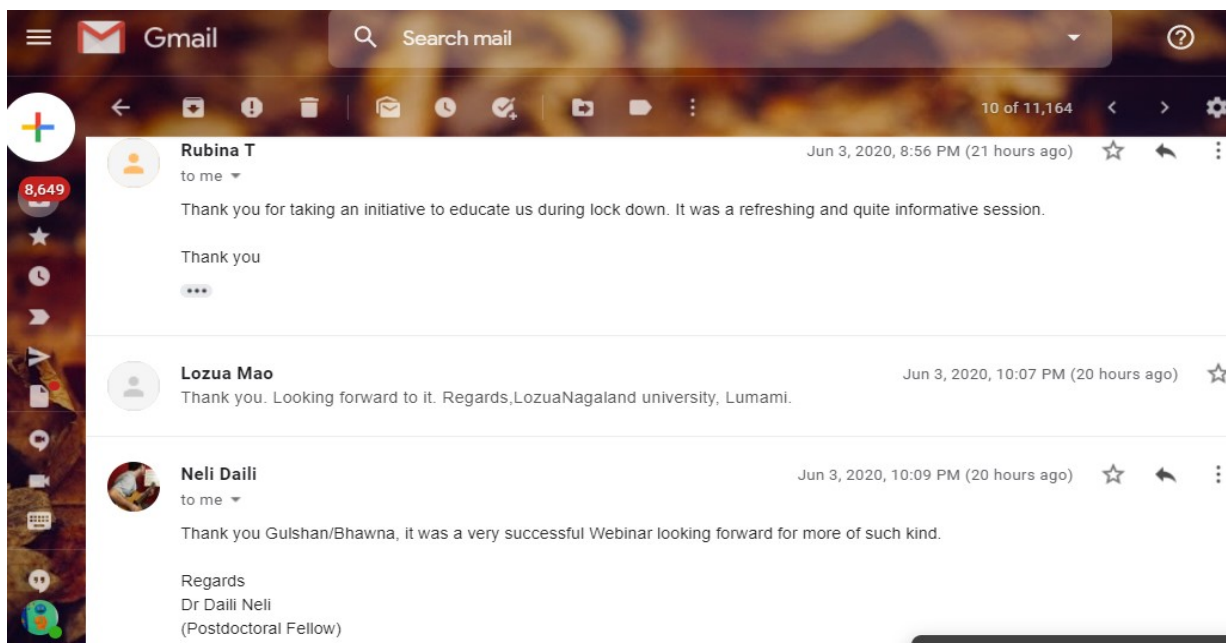
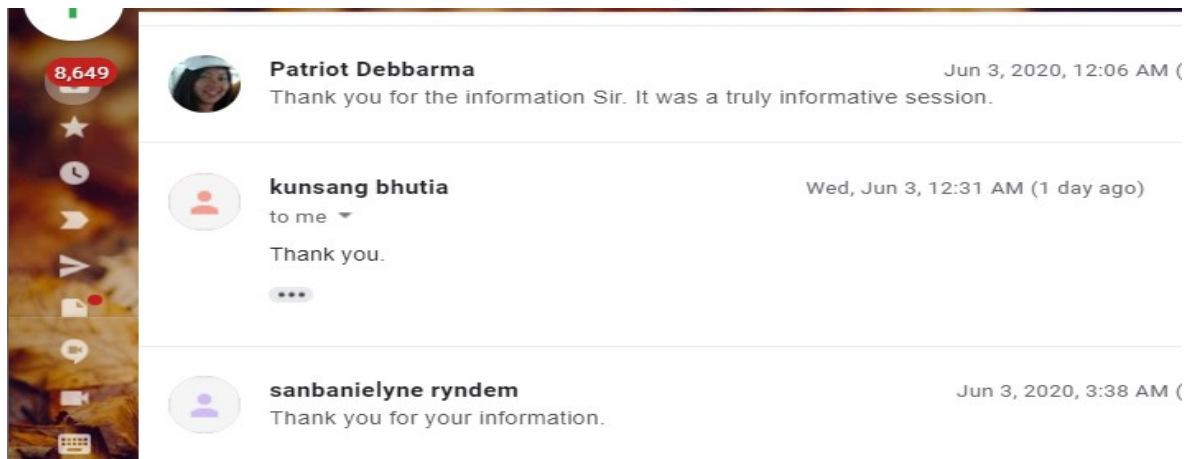
8. What can be the negative career consequences experienced by Gender due to Covid-19?
9. What is the family conflict of female workers in this Covid-19 time? Can we say that men should be more available than women at this time?
10. Many fathers are now taking more responsibility for childcare. Can it erode social norms that lead to a lopsided distribution of the division of labour in house work and child care?
11. Can through this crisis, men and women may have a chance to show businesses that all of us can be there for our families and our jobs?
12. Why feminist leadership matters in a crisis?



Vote of Thanks

Vote of thanks given by IIPA Director Shri S.N Tripathi to both the Speakers MS. Brinda Karat and Dr. Ranjana Kumari who gave time from their busiest schedule and also thanked to all the participants to make this webinar successful.

Feedback through mail



Annexure I: program Scheduled



IIPA WEBINAR SERIES



COVID-19: The Flexibility Stigma & Gender Equality

29th May, 2020, 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Welcome Remarks: Shri. S. N. Tripathi, IAS, Director-IIPA

Introductory Remarks: Dr. Nupur Tiwari, IIPA

SPEAKERS

Ms. Brinda Karat, Indian Politician, Elected to the Rajya Sabha, First Woman Member of the CPI(M) Politburo

Dr. Ranjana Kumari, A Renowned Social Activist and a Prolific Academician

Webinar Link:

<https://meetingsapac22.webex.com/meetingsapac22/j.php?MTID=m4e1be65dc89bc4595d5fed8c0653c75b>

Meeting Password: Myiipa@2020

Meeting Number: 916 049 627

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**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
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For any queries please contact

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Ms. Brinda Karat



Dr. Ranjana Kumari

Annexure II: List of the Participants

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