

VIRSA - The History Society
Panel Discussion Event
Brief Report

Date: October 1, 2020
Platform: Google Meet
No of participants: 40

VIRSA - The History Society of the Department of History, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Khalsa College organized a Panel Discussion on **Relevance of Gandhi in the Modern World** on the occasion of 151st Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Amidst the gloom and fear of the pandemic and the domestic and international unrest that has clouded the prospectus of this great nation, it feels the most comfortable to remember Gandhi and the ideals he imparts not only to the people of India but to the human civilization. It was the most suitable to discuss Gandhi in a form of a Panel Discussion where everyone has a voice to contribute, a platform where the current generation imparts its wisdom to the future generation which proudly echos the vision of democracy and inclusivity with a tincture of its efficacy in 21st century. The panel discussion was held over the online video calling application, Google Meet – with all smiles and enthusiasm beaming from behind the screens – and witnessed participation from both faculty and students.

The event commenced by quoting Gandhi's words, "When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall, think of it - always", by the hosts of the event, Mr Vikas Raj and Mr Mohd Rafay. They welcomed the faculty members and the students and gave a brief about the event's purpose. After laying out the schedule of the event, hosts invited Dr Baljeet Singh for an opening note. Sir exquisitely remembered Gandhi and his achievements, then he provided us with an outline of the topic for the discussion. He educates the audience about the Mahatma's journey from being a barrister in Mumbai to the father of the nation he was, from his immense historical and analytical knowledge, sir narrates a mesmerizing story of Gandhi's early years in Congress and how he developed and strengthened his notions for the non-violence, satyagraha etc. He also connects Gandhi's teachings with the present time and how they are still impacting and influencing our daily life.

An informative PPT titled "Special Postal and Philately Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th Birth Anniversary" was presented by Dr Preeti Singh. She talks about the various stamps celebrating Gandhi collected by her over the years and how they impact Gandhi's various stages of life. The presentation includes special covers highlighting Gandhi's core values and practices make many people curious about the world of collectable stamps, it was a delight and an interesting demonstration by ma'am.

Following this, Deepti ma'am shares her thoughts about the topic and pays her tribute to Mahatma Gandhi. She ponders over the topic of Satyagraha, Truth and Non-Violence and explains how Gandhi was able to implement his ideas and ideals into the practice and that makes him a true 'Mahatma'. The floor was then opened for the students to share their views on the topic and discuss the various interpretations of Gandhi's message. Mr Siddhartha Singh spoke at first on Gandhi's strength and his resolve. He narrates Gandhi's story from his time in South Africa and how it gives a lesson of resolve and duty when even after facing numerous challenges there Gandhi remain on the path of his ideals, that shows the true fervour of his beliefs. Mr Vinayak Pandey and Mr Gautam Bali also speaks on the topic and put forward their position of the respective topic.

Towards the end, Mr. R.K Sharma gives a closing speech and told us how selective thoughts of Gandhi Ji are being used by various factions for pursuing their political agenda. He underlines the present scenario of globalization and Gandhi's stand on it, he reveals how we should treat the history and what differences we have in the current society when compared to Gandhi's time. He motivates the audience by encouraging them to follow the ideals of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and take this nation towards the path envisioned by Gandhi and treat it with the respect it deserves. Sir concludes the event by congratulating the organizing committee for conducting such an interesting and significant event.