

## **Webinar Report**

### **On**

### **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, Redressal), Act 2013**

The Internal Complaint Committee, in collaboration with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell, of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Khalsa College organised a webinar on 16 June 2020, Tuesday. The topic was Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, Redressal), Act 2013. Our guest speaker was Ms. Prita Jha, a noted solicitor, women's and children's rights activist.

First and foremost, she equipped all the participants with some basic concepts which we often overlook while discussing sexual harassment. It was emphasised that for an incident to qualify as sexual harassment, there has to be a sexual element attached to it which can range from unwelcomed touching and asking for sexual favours to making inappropriate gestures and sexually coloured remarks. Ms. Jha also informed about legal remedies available to the victims of other forms of harassment or abuse that do not come under the purview of this Act.

The participants were made aware of how mandatory consent is and how imparting training on everyone in a workplace can play a crucial role in eliminating the patriarchal environment. Anyone, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, may be a part of a culture which breeds workplace patriarchy and sexual harassment, as the speaker duly mentioned.

Getting into the technicalities of the act, she informed that anyone can seek redressal despite their age, position or employment status. There is no need for complainants to prove their employment status at the firm, and it can also include clients, customers or any outsider who has been sexually harassed at the workplace. The complaint can be filed against anyone working for the organisation, in a written form. The Internal Complaint Committee is required to assist those who cannot write.

The webinar was well received and concluded with the speaker taking up some queries raised by the participants. Despite the wide range of queries, she meticulously advised the students on various topics such as false complaints, legal provisions for blackmailing and online/virtual offences.

The talk was informative and enlightening not just in terms of the technical know-hows provided, but also by virtue of its eye-opening nature. It definitely unlocked several doors for self-introspection on how we as a society, irrespective of gender and age, can be far more accommodative and kinder to everyone. With workplace becoming increasingly diverse and gender neutral, the need to uproot the deeply entrenched systematic discrimination and patriarchy has never been higher.