

MANTHAN:
Study Circle for Swaraj

Manthan is the study circle of Y4S where young minds meet to build an understanding of contemporary issues through discussion and debate. It provides a platform where ideas are nurtured to instill a free yet focussed thought process, where one can freely discuss one's ideas without being labelled.

Salient features of Manthan:

- Organised frequently.
- Reading material shared in advance
- Frequent sessions with experts and scholars

We firmly believe that democracy can only be strengthened by societies that share information. Where there is information there is enlightenment. Culture of debate in universities is need of the hour.

To join Manthan, call +916350631083 or write us at youth4swaraj@gmail.com

Guidelines for Manthan:

1. Decision on the Topic

One contemporary topic to be democratically decided by the team after every session of the Manthan.

2. Announcement and propagation

- Get a simple poster designed, we must look to evolve an uniform template for Manthan posters.
- Create an FB event
- Circulate in whatsapp groups
- B&W posters at major centres
- Personal meetings with potential participants.
- Reading material to be shared at least 24 hours in advance(The person responsible for introduction to be in-charge of sharing reading material.)

3 Discussion

- Discussion to begin with an introduction to the topic (the person responsible for introduction to be decided during decision on the topic).

-Discussion to be moderated by a Moderator, who will ensure that the discussion doesn't go astray and everybody has the freedom to put forth one's ideas without any fear.

-Minutes of the discussion to be prepared.

-Experiences and feedback of the participants to be noted down.

-A separate diary to be maintained in which the names of all the participants, description of the discussion and feedback and suggestions of the participants will be written.

Follow up:

-Some pictures and a brief description of the Manthan to be uploaded on Social Media and Y4S website.

-All the participants to be added in Y4S DU and Y4S mailing list and WhatsApp groups for constant communication.

MANTHAN on Citizenship Amendment Bill:
Suggested Reading Materials

Date: 18 Feb, 2019

Time: 4:30 PM

Arts Faculty, DU

What is the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016?

<https://www.google.co.in/amp/s/www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/what-is-the-citizenship-amendment-bill-2016/article23999348.ece/amp/>

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.(PRS legislative research)

<https://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/the-citizenship-amendment-bill-2016-4348/>

<https://www.prsindia.org/billtrack/the-citizenship-amendment-bill-2016-434>

BJP is Using Citizenship Act Amendment to Reinforce and Spread Hindutva in Assam- Hiren Gohain

<https://thewire.in/politics/assam-citizenship-act-amendment-hindutva>

Does India care about the simmering volcano that Assam has become?

<https://theprint.in/opinion/assam-situation-nrc-report-ripe-ethnic-violence/28399/>

With amended Citizenship Act, BJP will do Jinnah proud- Yogendra Yadav

<https://theprint.in/opinion/with-amended-citizenship-act-bjp-will-do-jinnah-proud/175662/>

Amit Shah & Modi are playing with a fire that doesn't distinguish between Muslim & Hindu- Shekhar Gupta

<https://theprint.in/national-interest/amit-shah-modi-are-playing-with-a-fire-that-doesnt-distinguish-muslims-from-hindus/93154/>

The seething state- Pratap Bhanu Mehta

<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/assam-citizenship-bill-protests-sarbananda-sonowal-5187287/>

Foreigners', friends- Tora Aggarwal

https://indianexpress.com/article/north-east-india/assam-citizenship-foreigners-detention-centre-foreign-tribunal-5587523/lite/?__twitter_impression=true

Citizenship Amendment Bill: A humanitarian act- Nitin A Gokhale

<https://www.rediff.com/news/column/citizenship-amendment-bill-a-humanitarian-act/20190111.htm>

MANTHAN on Citizenship Amendment Bill:
A brief Note on Discussion

Date: 18 Feb, 2019

Time: 4:30 PM

Arts Faculty, DU

Participants:

1. Komal
2. Manish
3. Dharmendra
4. Darshim
5. Nilotpal
6. Pike
7. Ranjit Singh
8. Lokesh
9. Yusuf
10. Vikas Kumar Meena
11. Shivam
12. Deepak
13. Vipul
14. Prakash
15. Anish
16. Amit

Amit: Manthan is the study circle of Y4S where young minds meet to build an understanding of contemporary issues through discussion and debate. It provides a

platform where ideas are nurtured to instill a free yet focussed thought process. In the polarised times we live in, extreme points of view have ceased to converse with each other, as a result of which, our politics and thought processes have hit a dead end on most of the matters. There's an urgent need to open up that space for dialogue without any hurry to label anyone according to existing categories. In order to imagine something new, we urgently need to get out of our obsession to box each other down in narrow categories; Manthan is the first steps in that direction.

Pike:

Introduction to Citizenship Amendment Bill:

Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2016 is aimed at making it easier for immigrants of six religions- Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi, Christians and Parsis from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan; to acquire Indian Citizenship by naturalisation. This bill and the way it was being pushed through, have sparked massive protests in Northeast, especially Assam. The proponents of the Bill argue that this is a humanitarian move aimed at providing shelter to persecuted minorities of our neighborhood.

To my mind the bill stands on weak legs primarily for two reasons:

1. It does not take into consideration the anxieties of indigenous communities of Northeast.
2. It discriminatory on the basis of religion and thus goes against the basic tenets of our Constitution.

Nilotpal:

The bill is primarily aimed at Assam but it fails to acknowledge the consensus of the Assam Accord of 1985. There has been a long standing movement in Assam to protect Assamese identity and it has already seen so much of bloodshed. Ruling party is trying to paint a false picture of persecuted Hindu minority in Bangladesh. Hindus form 9% of the population in Bangladesh and there are multiple instances including the ubiquity of Durga pandals during Durga puja in Bangladesh and the increasing number of Hindu cricketers in Bangladesh national cricket team; to show they Hindus in Bangladesh aren't as persecuted as being propagated by the ruling party. Assam is already facing a resource crunch and Assamese harbour a deep anxiety of being overrun by immigrants from Bangladesh. Citizenship Amendment Bill only aggravates that anxiety and is a deliberate attempt to disturb the peace in Assam by polarising the electorate on religious lines.

Manish:

The bill throws up multiple challenges. Despite the differences in the exact content of the bill, we can't ignore what it intends to do, albeit partially and with a malevolent intention. Generations of Indians have felt proud of Vivekananda's famous speech in United States where he had said that India has been home to persecuted minorities from all over the world. But the very logic of humanitarianism points to the shortcoming of the bill as it fails to recognize that there are other persecuted minorities as well and discriminating against them on religious grounds goes against the very idea of India.

Darshim:

This is a brazen attempt to communalise the issue as recent evictions of people settled by Govt back in 1996 with undue haste in Assam represents. The order of eviction wasn't even passed by the Home Minister of the state but by Finance Minister. It's being attempted to 'unite' Hindus in Assam against the Muslims in Assam. This has been a long project of Sangh Parivar in Assam. Sangh Parivar too has intensified its activities in Assam. Assam has a long colonial history of fighting for its identity and this Bill ignores the consensus which seemed to have evolved from that struggle.

Deepak:

Citizenship Amendment Bill claims to provide shelter to persecuted minorities of South Asia but these are not the only persecuted minorities of South Asia. Hence, this bill's claim isn't much convincing. Also, it must be noted that Bengali Muslims more readily accept Assamese language as compared to Bengali Hindus in Assam. Hence, pushing through this bill against the consensus of Assam Accord will only make the situation worse in Assam.

Vipul:

Our excessive focus on the narrow interests of the indigenous Assamese community doesn't allow us to claim the moral high ground and oppose the non-inclusion of Muslims in the Bill. We should find ways of assimilating the immigrants under the wide umbrella of our inclusive.

Ranjit:

Citizenship Amendment Bill has been introduced to cater to the narrow interests of the ruling party. It wants to wedge divides and reap wants electoral benefits.

Komal:

Resource is a huge issue and we need to deeply think about it. There are a lot many practical issues which are being ignored in both the support and opposition to the bill. They too need to be taken into account.

Amit:

This bill is part of a long project initiated in the colonial times, i.e., defining India on the basis of ethnicity, which is opposed to territorial and Constitutional nationalism that we have come to practice so far. This project of ethnic nationalism seeks to erase all forms of diversities under its homogenising logic. Our founding fathers were deeply aware of the fact that we are a nation-in-the-making and we ought not to ignore anyone's fear of the nation. In short, this bill goes against the very idea of India and it needs to be opposed but simultaneously, we must also work to find creative solutions to the problems the bill pretends to address.

Consensus points:

1. As Govt of India has already conveyed to Bangladesh, immigrants cannot be deported. Hence, we need to find creative solutions to assimilate them.
2. The anxieties of indigenous communities in Northeast cannot be trampled upon under the rubric of homogenising project of nationalism. India is as much about diversity of unities as about unity in diversity.
3. The issue of immigrants is deeply interlinked to the larger politics of Northeast and any sustainable solution can only be found by nurturing strong local leadership in Northeast and places like DU can prove to be quite handy in that and Y4S will make efforts in that direction.

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MANTHAN on Sabarimala Temple issue:
Suggested Reading Materials

Date: 25 Feb, 2019

Time: 5:00 PM

Arts Faculty, DU

What Is Sabarimala Temple Violence Issue? Why Is This Temple So Important?
Which Lord Resides Here & What's His Story?

<https://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/ed+times-epaper-edtimes/what+is+sabarimala+temple+violence+issue+why+is+this+temple+so+important+which+lord+resides+here+what+s+his+story-newsid-99481567>

Devotion Cannot Be Subjected To Gender Discrimination, SC Allows Women Entry
In Sabarimala By 4:1 Majority; Lone Woman In The Bench Dissents

<https://www.livelaw.in/sabarimala-devotion-cannot-be-subjected-to-gender-discrimination-sc-allows-women-entry-by-41-majority-lone-woman-in-the-bench-dissents/>

Sabarimala Judgement: An Overview: Gautam Bhatia

<https://indconlawphil.wordpress.com/2018/09/28/the-sabarimala-judgment-i-an-overview/amp/>

Justice Malhotra, Group Autonomy, and Cultural Dissent: Gautam Bhatia

<https://indconlawphil.wordpress.com/2018/09/29/the-sabarimala-judgment-ii-justice-malhotra-group-autonomy-and-cultural-dissent/>

Justice Chandrachud and Radical Equality: Gautam Bhatia

<https://indconlawphil.wordpress.com/2018/09/29/the-sabarimala-judgment-iii-justice-chandrachud-and-radical-equality/amp/>

Appropriation of Ayyappa Cult: The History and Hinduisation of Sabarimala Temple:
Jitheesh PM

<https://thewire.in/history/appropriation-of-ayyappa-cult-the-history-and-hinduisation-of-sabarimala-temple/amp/>

A flawed Sabarimala verdict: Don't kill religious diversity in the name of countering gender discrimination: R Jagganathan

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/toi-edit-page/a-flawed-sabarimala-verdict-dont-kill-religious-diversity-in-the-name-of-countering-gender-discrimination/>

Battlefield Sabarimala: Other religious places which say no entry to women

<https://www.indiatoday.in/lifestyle/what-s-hot/story/battlefield-sabarimala-religious-places-no-entry-to-women-1371164-2018-10-19>

Sabarimala temple ruling distances courts from Indians steeped in tradition: Nitin Pai

<https://theprint.in/opinion/sabarimala-temple-ruling-distances-courts-from-indians-steeped-in-tradition/127954/>

The Sabarimala Aftermath: Pratap Bhanu Mehta

<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/the-sabarimala-aftermath-5415090/>

On Sabarimala, blame out-of-touch Indian liberal elite not the court: Yogendra Yadav

<https://theprint.in/opinion/on-sabarimala-blame-out-of-touch-indian-liberal-elite-not-the-court/139029/amp/>

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MANTHAN on Sabarimala Temple Issue:

A brief Note on Discussion

Date: 25 Feb, 2019

Time: 5:00 PM

Arts Faculty, DU

Participants

1. Anish
2. Vartika Yadav
3. Dharmendra
4. Sudhir
5. Hashir Sheheem

6. Pike
7. Amit
8. Shyam
9. Shivam
10. Vipul
11. Manish
12. Kapil

Introduction by Pike:

Sabrimala is one of the most famous shrines of India. People of that region hold the place and the Lord Ayappa in very high esteem. It's believed that Lord Ayappa is celibate and hence, presence of women of menstruating age may spoil the purity of the place. Consequently, they are debarred from entering the shrine. During the Annual festival, people fast for almost 40 days, observe very strict norms like abstaining from harsh language and sexual intercourse and eating only simple vegetarian food. The issue of women entry in Sabrimala has always been a very vexed issue and the approach of the people, the State and the Union Government in the aftermath of Supreme Court judgement allowing for entry of women of all ages in the shrine has deepened the fault lines in the state and the country.

Introduction of the legal aspects by Amit:

The judgement on the matter was delivered by a 5-judge Bench of the Supreme Court by 4:1 in favour of the entry of women of all ages into the shrine, with the lone female member of Bench dissenting. The judgement is bound to have very wide ramifications as it addresses very fundamental issues pertaining to religious freedom, group autonomy and equality. The judges had the following questions to decide upon:

- (1) Is Rule 3(b), which provided for the exclusion of “women at such time during which they are not by custom and usage allowed to enter a place of public worship.” of the 1965 Rules ultra vires the Kerala Hindu Places of Worship (Authorisation of Entry Act)1965 Act?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is “no”, then is the Act – to the extent that it authorises the exclusion of women from temples – constitutionally valid?
- (3) If the answer to (2) is “no”, and the Act is invalid, can a right to exclude be claimed under Article 25(1) of the Constitution?
- (4) If the answer to (3) is “yes”, then is the exclusion of menstruating women from Sabarimala an “essential religious practice” protected by Article 25(1)?

(5) If the answer to (4) is “yes”, then is the exclusion of women nonetheless barred by reasons of “public order”, “health”, “morality”, or because of “other clauses of Part III”, which take precedence over Article 25(1)?

(6) Do Sabarimala worshippers constitute a separate religious denomination under Article 26?

(7) If the answer to (6) is yes, then is temple entry a pure question of religion?

Judges arrived at different answers on each of those questions, even those who arrived on the same conclusion on the issue of entry differed on answers on specific questions.

In brief, the practice was found to be violative of the fundamental rights of women of the menstruating age and the practice was discontinued.

Shyam: The judgement is based on the unequivocal assertion of the Constitution that "freedom of religion" will always be secondary to other fundamental rights. Court has also made it clear that Essential Religious Practice can't be a ground to not discontinue discriminatory religious practices.

The Court has cleared the legal hurdles to the entry of women of all ages in the temple. It simply couldn't allow a discriminatory provision to remain on statute books. Now, it's for the society to live upto the ideals of the Constitution it has bestowed upon itself.

Pike: Sabrimala temple issue is a social issue, it needs a social solution. Legal solutions for a social problem are like prescribing pain killers for Tuberculosis. Our founding fathers and mothers were deeply alive to people's sentiments while introducing reforms. When Hindu Code Bill was passed, Muslim personal laws were left untouched as it wasn't considered the right time due to the wounds of the Partition and that gradualist approach helped. A similar approach could have been considered in this matter too. Women forcibly trying to enter Sabrimala when the public sentiment is outrightly against it; are doing a disservice to feminism as they are shrinking the space for dialogue.

Vipul: It's wrong to say that women trying to enter Sabrimala are doing a disservice to feminism. We must salute their bravery who have forced the society to have a dialogue on the issue. I am sure, with time, people will come around to the arguments of reform. It's not only about women rights, it's also about the nature of religion we want to evolve. How can we simultaneously worship a God and also cast aspersions on God's ability to maintain his celibacy in front of women of menstruating age.

Vartika: It's the lack of dialogue which is an issue. We have seen it in Shani-Shingnapur, where despite protests, a patient dialogue with all the stakeholders finally

facilitated the entry of women in the temple. Merely legalistic solutions for social problems may not help.

Hashir Sheheem: People are blindly attached to religion. We can't expect to have rational arguments with them.

Dharmendra: Lord Ayappa is a cult figure for his devotees. There are many temples in India that don't allow men to enter.

Amit: To consider the example of Hindu Code Bill more broadly, we must remember that it had faced so much difficulties when it was first introduced that Ambedkar resigned from Cabinet out of frustration and the bill had to be dropped temporarily only to be introduced and passed later in instalments. And now, no one can even dare think of touching the sacred egalitarian norms enforced by the Bill. There have been multiple instances where legal reforms have preceded social reforms.

Kapil: The protests over the judgement and the implementation hurdles faced by the Govt is another reminder that social reforms should always precede legal reforms and it's time to revisit the relationship of religion with modern democracy and the entire idea of ERP.

Anish: Sabrimala issue is reflective of the deeper malaise of the society as so much of our historical forms of social inequality has been based on the idea of impurity. It's a welcome judgement.

Shivam: To revisit the example of Hindu Code Bill, we can't always push reforms down the throat of unwilling masses. We need to patiently deal with their sentiments and visit the matters case by case. Every reform has a different context and it would be prudent to examine them in that way.

Manish: We need to look at this issue from three vantage points:

1. Court
2. Society
3. Government

And each one of these has a different role to play and simultaneously. There's no denial of the fact that dialogue is necessary for any reform but one can't expect the court to defer a decision on that ground. After all, court too is a space for dialogue. We need to look at 'dialogue' in a broad sense. We must laud our judiciary for taking this bold stand. Indian democracy has been fortunate that its Judiciary has grown bold with time and interpreted the Constitution in its spirit and the sense of promises it holds for its citizens. Political parties and the Governments involved have been totally exposed on the issue. They have tried to exploit this issue for petty political gains, which is condemnable as their attempts have gravely endangered peace and the rule of

law. A society can't conduct its dialogue in vaccum. It needs credible leaders who can facilitate that, which we sadly have a great dearth of. It's time that young people prepare themselves for that role and small beginnings like Manthan are a step in that very direction.

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MANTHAN on Developmental Costs of Gender Discrimination:
Suggested Reading Materials

Date: 8th March, 2019

Time: 4:00 PM

Arts Faculty, DU

The High Price of Gender Inequality: Kristalina Georgieva, Marie-Claude Bibeau

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/gender-equality-group-of-seven-summit-by-kristalina-georgieva-and-marie-claude-bibeau-2018-06>

What's holding women back?- An article by Anna Bruce-Lockhart answers

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/03/working-women-challenges-2018>

Women in India's Economic Growth-Annette Dixon

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2018/03/17/women-indias-economic-growth>

Subtle ways of discrimination: Indirect Discrimination- Are laws really neutral? By Gautam Bhatia

<https://m.hindustantimes.com/opinion/indirect-discrimination-rules-and-laws-are-never-really-neutral/story-WIIR1pAmkgN4zHja9gUeeP.html>

Unwanted 21 million girls: Seema Jayachandran

<http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/unwanted-21-million-girls-economic-survey-5075935/>

Large number of job ads in India explicitly prefer men: World Bank Study

https://thewire.in/women/women-jobs-india-ads-prefer-men/amp/?__twitter_impression=true

What is the progress that we have made so far?: Over 15 Years, India Slides On Key Marker Of Gender Parity, An article by Charu Bahri

<http://www.indiaspend.com/cover-story/over-15-years-india-slides-on-key-marker-of-gender-parity-99592>

Is there really no longer a need for feminist movements? This article by Elena Ferrante Answers

https://amp.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/mar/17/elena-ferrante-even-after-century-of-feminism-cant-be-ourselves?_twitter_impression=true

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MANTHAN on Developmental Costs of Gender discrimination:
A brief Note on Discussion

Date: 08 March, 2019

Time: 4:00 PM

Arts Faculty, DU

Participants

1. Anish
2. Pike
3. Shivam
4. Komal
5. Narsingh Patel
6. Kuber Nath
7. Amit
8. Amritanshu
9. Rahul
10. Shibu
11. Prakash
12. Vipul
13. Sudhir
14. Vaishnavi

Introduction by Komal:

Gender discrimination leads to lower participation of women in the workforce. Women made up 27.2% of India's workforce in 2011. In south Asia, this is the lowest rate of female employment after Pakistan. Among G-20 countries, only Saudi Arabia is worse, IndiaSpend reported on April 9, 2016. Globally, women constituted 41% of the paid workforce outside of agriculture.

Worryingly, India's rapid urbanization has not yet encouraged more women to join the labor force. Rural jobs have been decreasing and not enough rural women have been able to make the transition to working in urban areas. Also, increased education

hasn't translated into increased participation of women in workforce. There are clear social reasons of this economic situation.

Some policy initiatives that can change things for better are:

- Universal pension system for elderly.
- Improved infrastructure like more gender friendly education environment, safe public transport systems, etc.

Pike: It should be noted sadly that the effects of gender discrimination are visible in our Manthan too and it's there in almost all aspects of social and public life. It's time to realize now that gender discrimination doesn't only have moral and social costs but also huge economic costs. A credible estimate puts that there will be an addition of 160 trillion dollars in world GDP if participation of women in workforce equals that of men. Women participation in India's workforce is only about 25% and they contribute only about 18% of India's GDP, whereas the world average is 41%. Hence, bulk of this addition of 160 trillion dollars will be in India's GDP. We also see that gender discrimination has a clear economic angle. Lesser salary or no salary of women decreases their say in the family.

We'll need to learn and unlearn a lot many things and remain cautious in our daily lives for things to improve. Recently, a BJP spokesperson said that if opposition is afraid, they should wear petticoat and bangles.

To my mind, we don't need to do anything special for women, we just need to step back and let them be.

Simultaneously, women empowerment can't be achieved by demonization of men and unnecessary confrontation with them.

Shibu: We should keep in mind that gender discrimination is different and talking only about women doesn't justify the title.

This discrimination has been going on since eternity and it has remained unchanged over all phases of history. Even today, women don't get equal pay, they are asked to adjust at every junction. But looking only at economic aspects can have a constructing effect too.

There's also an aspect that we women need to be conscious of. Generally, it's believed that women in higher positions are more arrogant as compared to men in similar positions. I have also had some personal experiences regarding this.

Also, I would urge all of you to go through Virginia Wolf's 'A Room of one's own' to understand the pain of not being free as a result of being born in the 'wrong' gender.

Vaishnavi: I find the topic 'Developmental Costs of Gender Discrimination' very apt and forward looking. It's time that we begin to realize that gender discrimination doesn't only have costs for those discriminated but for the entire society. It's very demeaning to realize that our system has been structured such that women are denied opportunities everywhere, there's no place, no sphere where they can make a free choice.

It might not be correct to look at women of higher positions as arrogant. Yes, they may appear to be more strict, stickler for rules but that's because the environment around these positions are highly masculine, vulturous and demanding and more people look to pull her down from such positions. A phenomenon called 'glass cliff' has been observed where we see that when a firm faces difficult situation, a woman is brought to head it so that she can be easily blamed for its failure.

Most of the arguments advanced to perpetuate patriarchy are just humbugs. For example, it's said that women lack in strength whereas we see that most of the areas where constant application of strength is required for an extended period, it's the women who are mostly at work.

Vipul: Excessive focus on economic aspects may misdirect our energies. Also, when we talk of bringing more women in the workforce, we must realize that already the job opportunities are so meagre and constantly shrinking that this may not be the best way to deal with the issue. The problem is fundamentally that of the mindset, I fail to see substantial economic angle to it. There's not much that men can do without women taking the lead and asserting themselves.

Also, apart from glass cliff, we have also seen instances of women being brought to lead the organisations and sectors that are looking for stability.

Too much of our talk on women empowerment is filled with rhetoric. It would be better if our discourse takes some concrete steps as reservations more seriously.

Shivam: While talking of women empowerment, we more often than not focus on select examples from elite backgrounds. The real empowerment takes place when women from poor backgrounds get to make their choices on their own. There are some encouraging examples to demonstrate that when women are brought into the workforce, they don't eat into existing opportunities, rather they create new ones. Jeevika in Bihar has been doing good work in providing self employment to women and it has shown some very good results. Also, the time has come now to count household work as an economic activity. A mixture of social and economic steps are the way forward.

Prakash: Families need to change their mindsets. It's quite depressing to note that despite reservations in certain competitive exams and low cut-offs, so few women appear for those exams.

Kuber Nath: Our society doesn't count the work of women as work. If women don't do household work, our GDP shall collapse. It's very disheartening to note that girls of 6-9 years age do 30% more work than boys of a similar age. Even when both men and women of a family go out to work, we most often see that when men come back from work, they get indulged in amusement activities whereas women have to struggle with household chores. Such is the domination exercised by men that when a work usually done by women in the households enters the market, men capture and monopolize it.

Rahul: It would just like to narrate two instances to drive home the discrimination suffered by women. In my native state Bihar, I see that landlords prefer women in the sowing season as labourers as they are known to charge less and work more. Also, I had seen during an internship in Uttarakhand that women did all the difficult work and all men did was play cards in groups.

Anish: In recent times, we have seen a new kind of awakening. Some of the judgements of our judiciary have been quite encouraging. One my most favourites is the one on adultery where it was said that 'husbands are not the masters of their wives'.

Amit: I would like to share three anecdotes to illustrate the extent to which the souls of women are suppressed, the level to which these have been internalised by women themselves and what new forms of thinking are required to change things for better.

Almost four years back, one of my relatives died in his early 40s in an accident. His wife got a job in the same office on compensatory grounds. When she first went to his office for some paperwork, she couldn't contain her emotional shock at the memory of the things attached with her husband and wept profusely but when she came back from her second visit to the office, she was quite surprised to see the world outside. She confessed honestly that she didn't know what the world is like this. That statement has remained with me to understand the shrinking of imagination, expectations and ambition that suppression leads to.

While traveling on an e-rickshaw once, I heard two educated women discuss matter-of-factly about their careers and its dependence on the desires of their husbands. I was quite shocked to see that they didn't find anything revolting in the situation but it was a window to understand how deeply has the discrimination been internalised.

In a meeting of Jai Kisan Aandolan, one of the female participants had come with her 3-year old son. During the meeting, he made all sorts of noises, lapped on to the specs of other participants. When some of the participants protested against the presence of the child, Yogendraji cautioned them against such an approach saying that this will be discouraging for the participation of women in public life and politics.

Some brief points I would like to make in the end:

- We shouldn't believe that economic progress is enough for women empowerment. States like Punjab saw decrease in women participation in workforce with rise in per capita income. Social change and its economic fruits require efforts on the front of society and also a serious caution and we don't lose all the progress we have made in the last few decades.

- History of the world shows that some very simple looking freedoms have had huge impacts on marginalised populations. Our policy efforts must constantly look to expand those freedoms and choices of every individual from such sections of the society.

- We can't allow some minor digressions from the ideals of feminist movements to acquire centre stage in our discourse. It's inevitable that certain undesirable turns will take place but that's all just a part of the process.

To join MANTHAN, call us on **+916350631083** or write us at youth4swaraj@gmail.com

Manthan Update:

Yesterday, during the Manthan, we came across the concept of 'glass ceiling'. Here are a few relevant articles to understand the phenomenon in depth.

"women can rise to leadership, but when they're brought in to turn things around during dire times, they have to bear the blame if things don't go well. So while they've managed to break through the glass ceiling, they're then pushed off the glass cliff."

We often see that whenever a company is going in a financial crisis, companies decide on leadership change and in time of crisis, women and other minorities are often chosen as they will bring a new " thinking" which will be the way out for the company. This may look empowering, but this motive has a deeper hidden malaise, which can be termed as "glass cliff."

Read more:-

<https://www.worldfinance.com/strategy/female-leaders-being-set-up-to-fail>

"One account is that women receive fewer opportunities than men, making them more likely to accept risky positions. And yet, this cannot account for the fact that people actively pick out women for roles presiding over crisis situations. Another idea is that it could be the result of outright sexism, whereby people are simply singling women out for inferior positions." This article perfectly explains the whole phenomenon of glass ceiling and goes deep into the reason behind it supported with examples.

Other relevant articles:-

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90206067/what-is-the-glass-cliff-and-why-do-so-many-female-ceos-fall-off-it>

<https://www.vox.com/2018/10/31/17960156/what-is-the-glass-cliff-women-ceos>

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/economy/women-often-put-charge-failing-companies>

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