

**Women's Development and Gender Sensitization Cell**  
**Indraprastha College for Women**  
**Annual Report 2020-21**

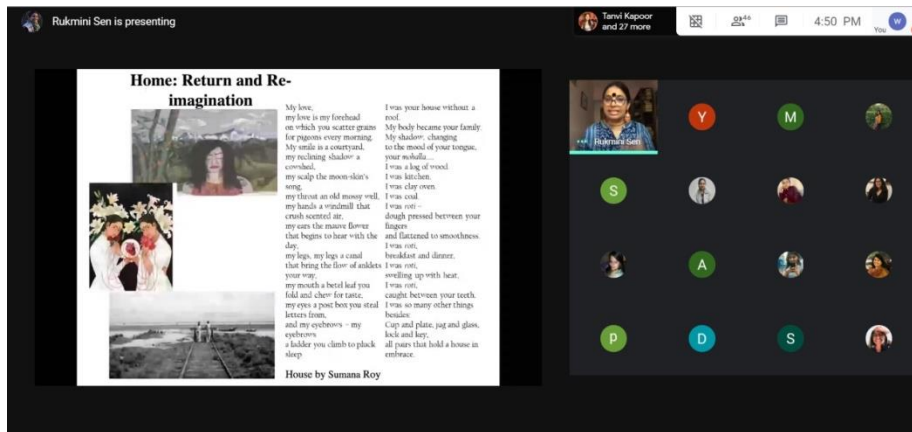
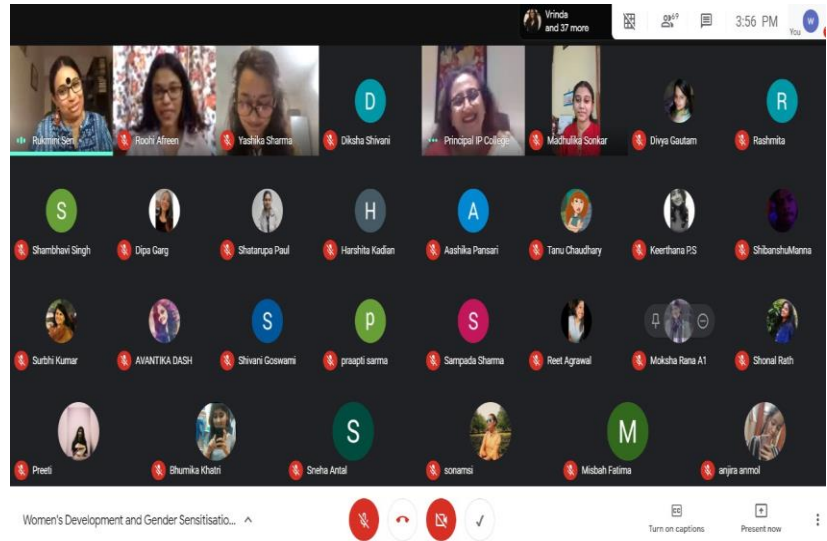
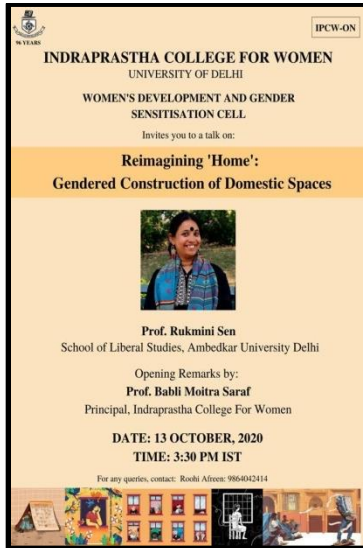
As part of the extension activities of the college, the Women's Development and Gender Sensitization Cell has always had an active and engaging year. The Cell holds events, discussions, meetings through which young women get to articulate themselves. The Cell ensures that the process of education within the framework of the institution maintains a vision of an inclusive, intersectional space where we can question the internalized patriarchal and misogynistic notions, while being conscious of our privilege, and work towards education and empowerment. However, this past year has been a little different. It is the year we were hit by an unforeseen crisis, a global pandemic and though our eager minds were excited to engage in many more conversations on fighting existing gender norms, we were locked inside our homes behind screens. However, that could do little to shun the spirits of the Cell and the students, and the process of unlearning, re-learning and learning continued.

**Semester: August- December 2020**

**Talk on 'Reimagining Home: Gendered Construction of Domestic Spaces' by Prof. Rukmini Sen: 13th October, 2020**

With a global pandemic in place and the constraints on travel and mandatory isolation, the prospects of inclusivity and accessibility only became bleak. The challenges posed were manifold, be it in the form of the gendered spaces of home or the gap of technological know-how, access to devices or viable internet connectivity, a suitable learning environment or the hopelessness looming large on every front of life. Hence, we planned and organized a webinar on one of the most important issues which propped up during the pandemic - **The space of Home**. Home along with a sense of belonging is also about household composition, about sense of privacy and safety, about gendered violence especially owing to isolation. The space which was and is always equated with warmth and comfort proved to be a place where violence rose to an unprecedented level and proved to be an arena of unmatched discomfort, doom and ruination. To further throw light on these contemporary and new found meanings of 'home', the WDC

hosted an interactive session with Prof. Rukmini Sen from School of Liberal Studies, Ambedkar University, Delhi on the theme of “Reimagining ‘Home’: Gendered Construction of Domestic Spaces”. The opening remarks for the talk were delivered by the college principal Prof. Bhabli Moitra Saraf. The talk was successful in garnering a new perspective about home and its everyday dimensions and how it holds different meanings for different individuals. Amidst the binaries of love and contestations, peace and war, freedom and constraints, companionship and loneliness, us and others, and so much more is what home can mean to an individual. The interactive session started from the experiences of the past, continued through happenings of the present and ended with debates and deliberations for the future.



*Screenshots from the talk by Prof Rukmini Sen in October 2020*

## Online Workshop on Menstrual Health and Hygiene by Ms. Ankita Sukhwal: 10th November, 2020

Menstrual Hygiene is vital to the empowerment and well-being of women and girls worldwide. Even today, menstruation and menstrual practices are clouded by taboos and face many social, cultural, and religious restrictions. Menstrual Hygiene Management aims not only to ensure the availability of sanitary products, but also an environment that values and supports women's ability to manage their menstruation with dignity. The issue was made more grave with the exclusion of sanitary products from the list of essential commodities during the pandemic, owing to substantial rise in period poverty, awareness on such issues has always been integral to gender sensitization. To address the issue and raise awareness, the Cell organized an online interactive workshop on the theme: "Online Workshop on Menstrual Health and Hygiene: Breaking the Taboos" in collaboration with Unicharm India and Globalhunt Foundation with Ms. Ankita Sukhwal as the facilitator for the session. Ms. Sukhwal, who holds an experience of conducting more than 100 community training programmes on menstrual health, initiated participation from the audiences and was concluded with a Q and A session. The session was an important step forward in the direction of demystifying period stigmas in the minds of menstruators and contributed significantly in sensitizing the students.

IPCW-ON

INDRAPRASTHA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN  
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER  
SENSITISATION CELL

ONLINE WORKSHOP ON  
MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

**BREAKING THE TABOOS**

Presentation | Q&A Discussion

Facilitator:  
Ms. Ankita Sukhwal  
Unicharm India

DATE: 10th November, 2020  
TIME: 3:30 PM IST

For any queries, contact: Roohi Afreen: 9864042414

The screenshot shows a Google Meet interface with a presentation slide titled "Reproductive Phase in Women". The slide content includes:

- A flowchart showing the progression: White Discharge → Menarche → Menstruation → Menopause.
- Text boxes: "Before Menarche, one may also experience white discharge from vagina for 3-12 months (in intervals)" and "Menarche is when a girl experiences bleeding from her vagina for the first time".
- A section titled "Factors affecting menarche" with sub-points: Genetic, nutritional and social factors; Physical Health; and Mental Health.

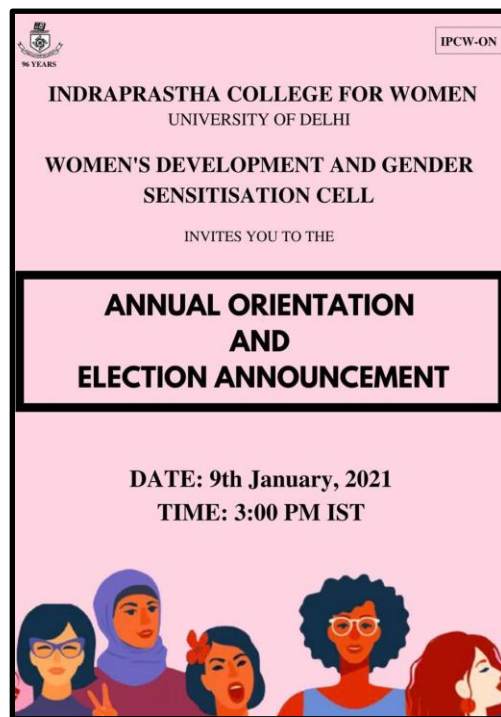
The Meet interface shows the presenter "ankita sukhwal" and a list of participants including Madhulika Sonkar, Aditi Singh, Nandini Vats, and sunaina sabat.

*Screenshots from the workshop held in November 2020*

## **Semester: January-April 2021**

### **Orientation: 9th January 2021**

The WDC held its annual orientation on 9th January, 2021. The orientation was hosted on Google Meet and saw an enthusiastic participation from students across different departments. The orientation was initiated with a presentation of previous year activities, explaining the aim and functioning of the Cell. Further, representatives from the Queer Collective laid out the role, activities and objective of the collective. Announcements for the next election were made along with explaining the technicalities of the new procedure for application and selection as every year the elections took place offline efficiently but this year they were to be conducted in the online medium. Lastly, the doubts and queries of the students were cleared by the core team and members of the cell and they were excited about beginning their journey of leading change.



### **Core Team Elections: 18th January 2021**

The WDC conducted its annual elections for the core team 2021 through the online mode. While every year, this process is conducted offline, in a single day, this year due to the pandemic we were pushed to think of alternative ways of conducting the elections online in a democratic, transparent, equitable and inclusive way. The core team 2019-2020 ensured that the elections were conducted through a fair process. The election procedure was held from 11-20 January. Nomination forms were collected via e-mail, candidature speeches were delivered on Google Meet and shared with the registered voters. The voting process was carried through Google Forms.

### **Unmukt 2021: 13th February 2021**

The WDC in collaboration with the QC organised the fourth edition of Unmukt on the theme ‘*Ishq-e-Indhradhanush*’ in the online medium for the first time as the significance of sustaining a space for celebration and recognition of identities was felt more strongly than ever. Given the exclusionary nature of the online medium, the team strived and tried to be as inclusive as possible and reached out to the maximum number of people. For the inaugural event we collaborated with the Teach for India for an interactive session on the theme ‘Building Inclusive Classrooms: Sexual Diversity and Gender Sensitization in Educational Spaces’.

The panelists from TFI included Ms. Devangana (moderator), Mr. Sunny and Mr. Danish who were the student representatives from TFI. They shared their raw and beautiful experiences of coming out, of being a queer person in a heteronormative world. The session was also crucial against the backdrop of the pandemic which has compelled many queer youth to conceal and closet their identity, the session helped foster a sense acceptance and being comfortable with oneself, celebrating oneself and normalizing one’s identity and sexuality.

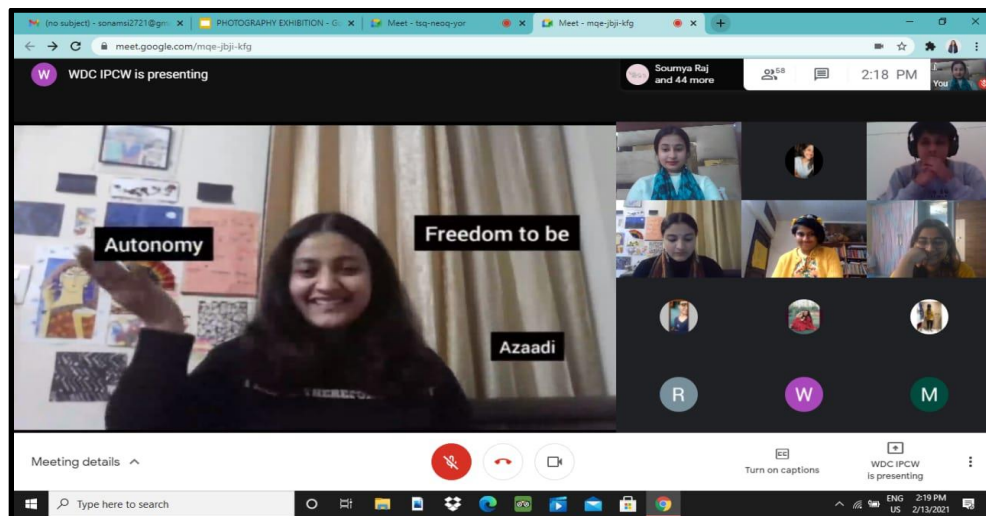
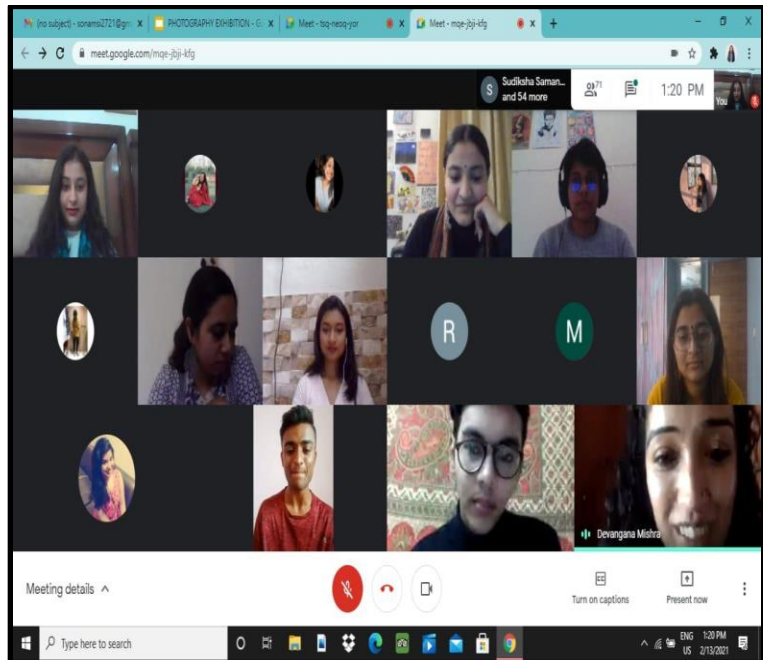
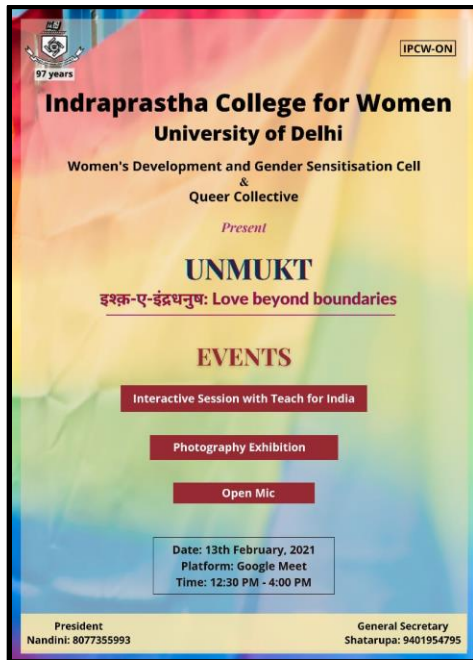
The celebration of love and pride continued further with a range of events including:

1. **Photography Exhibition-** It was based on the theme: *Born this way- art as a form of self expression.* , the aim was to provide a space for the students to express and assert



themselves through the medium of art, and bring forth lesser known perspectives, interpretations, ideas, journeys, experiences and stories.

2. **Open Mic**- It was based on the theme: *Love, Resistance and Negotiation*. The main intent was to welcome and provide a platform to the students to reclaim their voices and spaces and to showcase their interpretations of the theme.



*Screenshots from Unmukt 2021*

## Two-day seminar on the International Women's Day

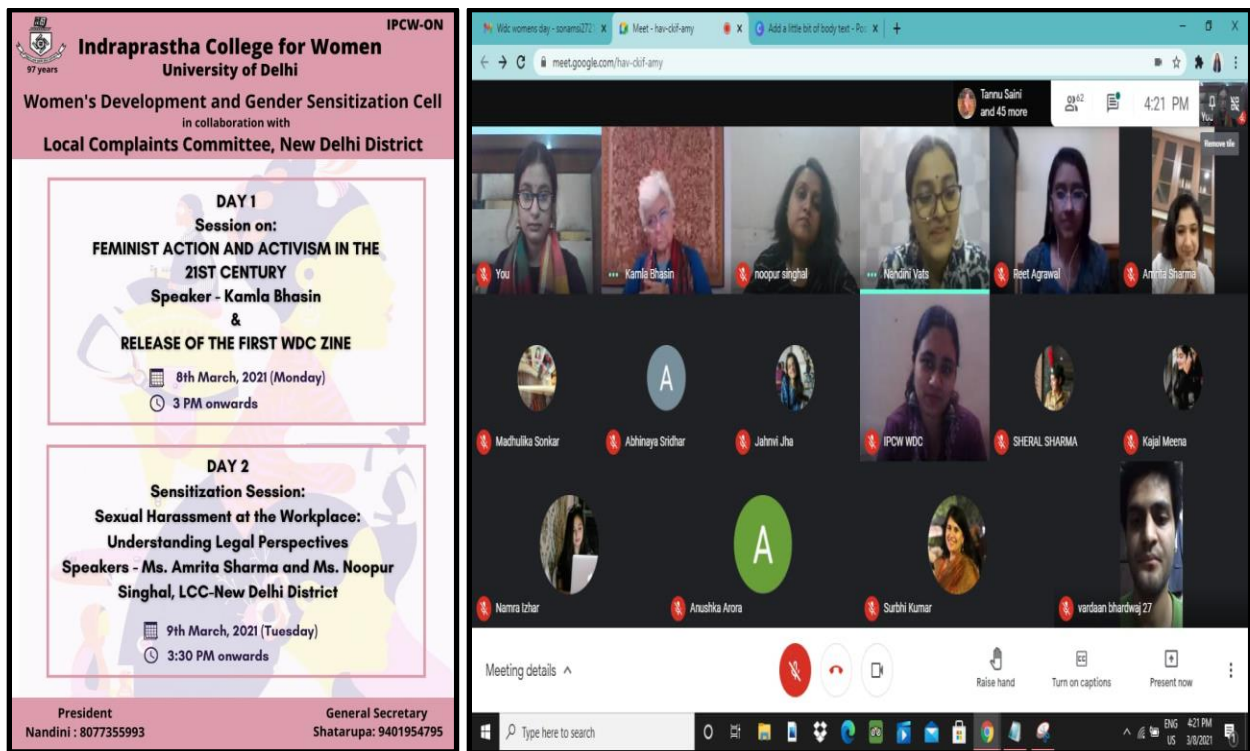
- (a) Release of the first WDC Zine *Dehleez* and talk by feminist activist Kamla Bhasin: 8 March 2021

On the occasion of International Women's Day which is celebrated globally on 8th March, the WDC held a two-day online event on the theme 'Feminist Action and Activism in the 21st Century' in collaboration with the Local Complaints Committee (LCC), New Delhi district. Continuing the tradition of producing student-made annual productions, the Women's Development and Gender Sensitization cell released its first zine '*Dehleez: Narratives between the Home and the World*'. The first issue of the zine was made with encouragement and support from the Principal Prof. Babli Moitra Saraf. *Dehleez* carries original writings by students from different departments while portraying the multiplicity in the perspectives of a diverse set of women, who are inevitably interlinked through their shared history of marginalization. The annual publication aimed at weaving together a collection of essays, poems, interviews, short stories, photo essays, art works, comic strips, and illustrations that capture the narratives of women about home, from home and beyond home.

Against the backdrop of a decade full of significant shifts in the debates and perspectives on women's movements in India, a platform of young audiences were introduced on the importance of feminism and what feminism means to us in the 21st century, by our guest of honour, Kamla Bhasin, an Indian developmental feminist activist who has contributed immensely to feminist movement in India. The talk enlightened the audience on the theme of the event, with some key learnings including the important understanding that "There is not one Feminism" and emphasized on the intersectional nature of the movement which encompasses the intersections of caste, social status, color, creed, sexuality, religion and gender roles. Thus, concluding the engaging and eye-opening session on the high notes of breaking the glass ceiling and freedom from paternalistic dominance.

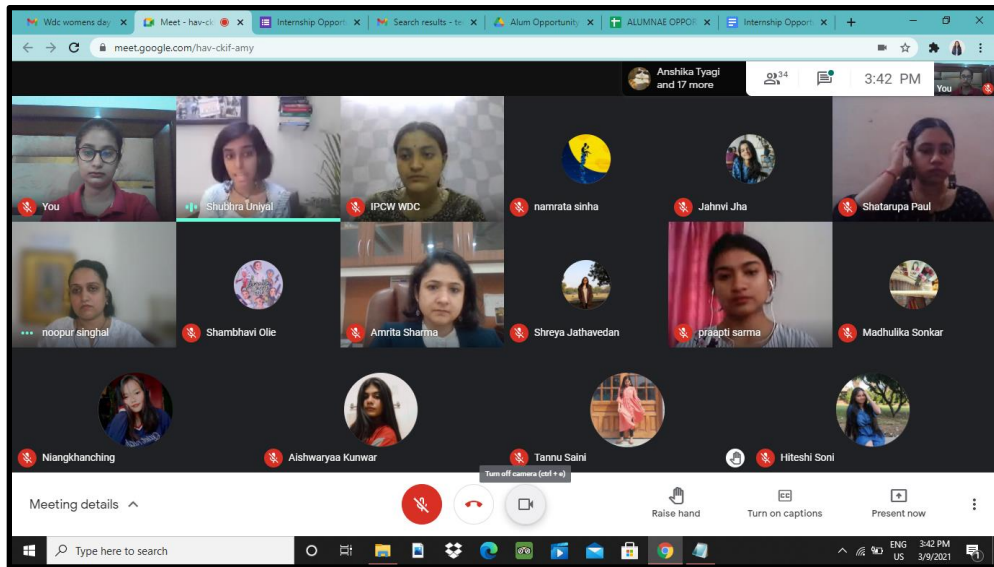
(b) Sensitization Session on Sexual Harassment at the Workplace: Understanding Legal Perspectives: 9 March 2021

On the second day of the event, the Cell collaborated with LCC New Delhi District to host a sensitisation session on the theme: “Sexual Harassment at the Workplace: Understanding Legal Perspectives”. The discussion was steered by the representatives of LCC, Ms. Noopur Singhal, chairperson and Ms. Amrita Sharma, member of LCC. The speakers steered discussions on the elimination of gender-based discrimination at the workplace through a deeper understanding of Vishaka guidelines and POSH act. The session was successful in implanting basic legal skills and knowledge in the audience, needed in order to protect oneself or others under instances of violence and harassment at the workplace.



*Poster of the event and Screenshot from the talk delivered by activist Kamla Bhasin*





*Screenshot of Day 2: Sensitization workshop on sexual harassment at workplace*

### **Bunai: The Reading Circle of WDC**

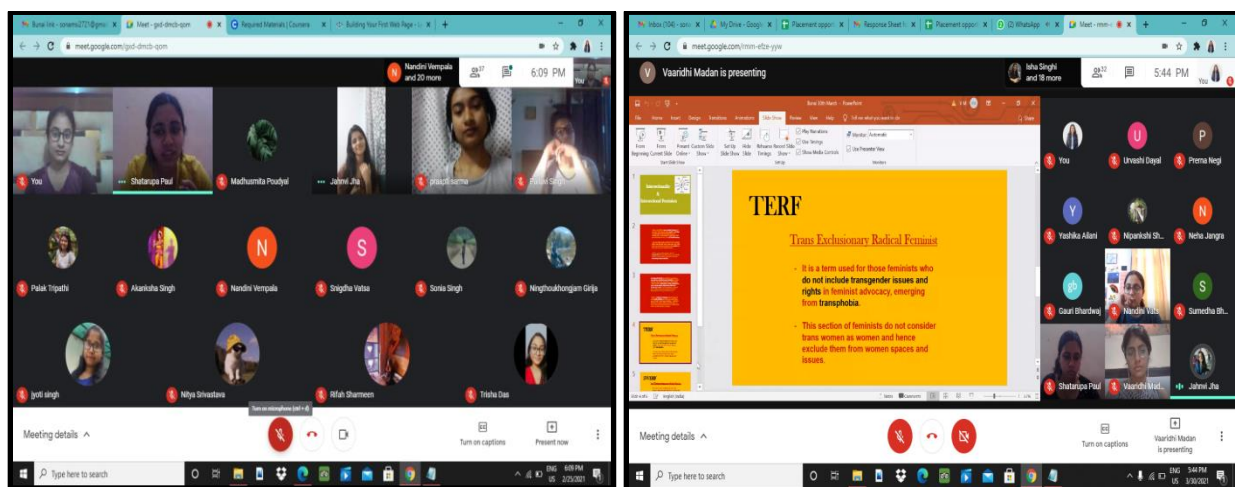
Following an energetic response from the students who wanted to explore alternative ways of engaging on pertinent gender issues in the online mode, members of the Women’s development and gender sensitization cell came together to create the first reading circle of the cell: *Bunai*. As the word itself signifies, the idea behind *Bunai* was knitting and creating something. Works of women and other marginalized genders and identities have grappled with invisibilization. We hoped to bring stories and works knitted by them to the forefront in this reading circle, and reinterpret them. One of the main aims of the reading circle was to build a community together and create a safe and accessible space for academic engagement.

Given below is a list of the sessions hosted and moderated by Core team members and participants:

- (a) The first session on 25 February, 2021 started with Kamla Bhasin’s text ‘What is Patriarchy?’ All the members discussed how patriarchy affects their lives, how it manifests itself and how it is institutionalized into the system of power-control which runs very smoothly in our everyday lives.

- (b) The second session was held on 13 March 2021. In this session, we discussed Maitreyee Chaudhari's 'Issues in Contemporary Feminism', with a specific focus on Women's Movements in India.
- (c) While talking about intersectionality, it was immensely important for us to have a discussion on Queer Movement and Queer Feminism, and that is how we went ahead with our third session held on 30 March 2021. The conversation started with the idea of consent and was steered ahead by discussing 'Feminism is Queer - An Intimate Connection between Queer and Feminist Theory', by Mimi Marinucci.
- (d) The fourth session was held on 16 April 2021, with a discussion on Urvashi Butalia's 'The Other Side of Silence' and 'Lihaaf' by Ismat Chughtai. The aim of this session was to talk about silence, agency and honor which are always attached to the body of a woman and to view partition from a feminist lens.

With the second wave of pandemic hitting us in April, we all needed a space to talk, to share what we are going through. This is what we did in our last session which took place in May 2021. All the members came together for one last time for this academic session and talked about how they were, they expressed their emotions and feelings, which was the main aim of the session. Towards the end, we discussed what we learnt and unlearnt from all the sessions and how we can make *Bunai* a better platform in the semesters to come.



*Screenshots of the Bunai sessions*