



International Women's day celebrated at IIT Bhubaneswar

By [skilloutlook](#) / March 9, 2021 / Comments Off on International Women's day celebrated at IIT Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar: On the eve of **International Women's Day**, on 8th March, **IIT Bhubaneswar** Women Welfare Committee (WWC), organized a thought provoking session at its campus today. This year's theme for the International Day, "*Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world*", celebrates the tremendous efforts by women and girls around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. **Mrs Rajita Kulkarni**, President of World Forum for Ethics in Business & President Sri Sri University graced the occasion as Chief Guest via video conferencing. **Adv. Snehanjali Mohanty**, Senior Member State Commission for Women Odisha attended the event in person as the Guest of Honour. The event was presided over by **Prof. R.V. Raja Kumar**, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar.

Speaking on the occasion **Prof. R.V. Raja Kumar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar** spoke about the need to bring awareness about making gender parity as a culture in the society. He mentioned that in an old civilizations like India, women with motherhood has a status equivalent to a goddess. But the contrasting distortions that exists in the society on gender front, like elsewhere in the world camouflages this virtue. Of all the issues, the long term issues of female infanticide and harassment at workplace are inhuman and the society needs to come out of these barbaric practices at the earliest. Lack of parity on several fronts including access to education, more because of backwardness of the mind-set of the society continues to be of concern even today. He lauded the decision by the Ministry of Education (MoE) to increase the supernumerary seats for women candidates to at least 20% has certainly raised the women student percentage from the paltry **8 % to 20%** in the academic year 2020-'21. It would certainly enhance the hopes to find several women in important positions in different walks of life, in the near future.

He stressed on the need for promoting women as entrepreneurs and as heads of organizations for providing them an opportunity to play a predominant role in today's lives. Encouraging women to incubate technologies, create start-ups and seed funding opportunities would greatly help in this endeavour.

Mrs. Rajita Kulkarni, President of World Forum for Ethics in Business & President Sri Sri University and Chief Guest of the evening in her address spoke about the several complex aspects of womanhood and their course of journey lucidly in an easy to understand manner by giving day to day examples from daily life. She inspired the audience with the glorified message about breaking the stereotypes of today and accepting the path of change and living up with challenges every day as per 2021 theme, "*Choose to Challenge*". She further stressed on the fact for conscious action, intentionality, investing in training, linking oneself with the platforms and network to make the women more visible in the crowded and noisy society of

today. She also opined on the fact that nation today considers woman as the engine of growth and believes in being committed to the rise of women nationally and globally.

Adv. Snehanjali Mohanty, Senior Member State Commission for Women Odisha and Guest of Honour on the occasion emphasized on the core fact to make the women of today aware of their basic rights and empowering them for living their lives with a sense of pride and dignity. She also spoke about the need for having Internal Complaints Committee at workplaces and also at local level leading to women empowerment in true sense.

Also present at the event were Dr. P.R. Sahu, Dean Academics (Online) Dr. (Col) Subodh Kumar, Registrar (In-person) along with active participation from faculty, staff and students on online and offline mode. The event ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. Remya Neelanchery, Chairperson, WWC, IIT Bhubaneswar.

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