

A LECTURE BY WOMEN CELL

OCTOBER 16, 2025

A Special awareness lecture titled "**Gender Identity Construction: Rethinking Gender: Society, Education and Law in Contemporary India**" was organized by the Centre for Women Studies and Development at Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla, in collaboration with the **COE, Government Degree College Sanjauli, Shimla, on 16 October 2025**, in the college auditorium. The event was honored by the presence of **Chief Guest Prof. Bharti Bhagra**, along with other distinguished senior staff members and members of the women cell. Prior to the start of the program, kits were distributed to the students, adding a thoughtful and warm touch to the occasion.

The session commenced with an address by **Dr. Aparna Negi**, the Director of Women Studies, HPU who engaged with students through thought-provoking questions and an enlightening PowerPoint presentation. She eloquently illustrated how gender distinctions are established in childhood—where girls are often expected to wear pink and play with dolls, while boys are encouraged to play with cars and are taught to suppress their emotions. She underscored that such stereotypes hinder self-expression and that gender should not be confined to societal expectations. Dr. Negi also tackled significant issues such as hypertension, noting that men frequently suffer the most due to emotional suppression, and she sensitively discussed the acknowledgment and acceptance of the third gender.

Following her, **Dr. Ritika Sharma** from the Education Department at HPU took the stage, initiating her session by referencing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and highlighting that India currently ranks 49th in achieving SDG 5—Gender Equality. She further elaborated on the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, emphasizing that gender identity is a deeply personal and fluid concept that warrants acceptance and respect from everyone.

A brief video produced by **UNESCO, Delhi**, in partnership with NCERT was subsequently presented to the students, effectively illustrating that a child's initial understanding of gender starts within the family unit.

The event concluded with touching remarks from a student named **Meenakshi**, who is pursuing a BSc in this college, followed by a Vote of Thanks and the singing of the national anthem.

The occasion provided all attendees with a refreshed outlook on gender sensitivity, inclusivity, and the significance of honoring each person's distinct identity.