



DR. AMBEDKAR CHAIR

A Scheme of

Dr. Ambedkar Foundation

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Govt. of India

Activity Report

From

December 2023 To March 2026



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**SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR AMBEDKAR STUDIES
SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY), PUNE**

Dr. Ambedkar Chair

thrust area

*"Dr. Ambedkar's Thought and
Contribution to Education in India"*

FORWARD

It gives me great pleasure to present the Activity Report of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, covering the period from December 2023 to March 2026. The Chair has been established under the esteemed scheme of the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, with the objective of promoting scholarly engagement with the ideas, vision, and contributions of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Since its inception in December 2023, the Dr. Ambedkar Chair has actively undertaken a range of academic, research, and outreach initiatives aligned with the mandate of the Foundation. These activities have focused on advancing critical discourse on themes such as social justice, equality, education, and the intellectual legacy of Dr. Ambedkar. Through seminars, lectures, collaborative programmes, research initiatives, and public engagement activities, the Chair has sought to contribute meaningfully to academic scholarship and broader societal awareness.

This report presents a comprehensive overview of the activities carried out during this period and reflects the Chair's continued commitment to promoting Dr. Ambedkar's vision of an inclusive, equitable, and enlightened society.

I sincerely acknowledge the guidance and support of the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Symbiosis International (Deemed University) in enabling the successful implementation of these initiatives. I also appreciate the valuable contributions of scholars, collaborators, and students who have actively participated in these programmes.

I hope that the activities documented in this report will further strengthen the ongoing efforts to disseminate and deepen the understanding of Dr. Ambedkar's thought and philosophy in academic and public spheres.



MRS. SANJIVANI MUJUMDAR

Honorable Director

Symbiosis's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum
and Memorials, Pune

FROM THE HEART OF CHAIR PROFESSOR

As a Chair Professor of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, I was entrusted with the responsibility of institution-building around Babasaheb's thought on education, social justice, and the Constitution, and of giving this new Chair a clear intellectual, pedagogical, and public mandate. Since December 2023, I have been working towards making the Chair a platform where the Ambedkarite scholarship could address contemporary questions of schooling, higher education, marginalisation and democratic citizenship in India by centralizing the Caste dynamics.

When I joined on 1 December 2023, the Chair had just been established under the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation's scheme with a thrust area on "Dr. Ambedkar's Thoughts and Contribution to Education in India," making it the first such Chair in a private university. I took this mandate with a belief that Ambedkar studies cannot be left to be a text only or commemorative undertaking; it has to be based on realities of deprived populations and interventions into the education system.

Since the very beginning, we collaborated with fellow researchers at different schools like Symbiosis School of Economics, Symbiosis Law School and the Symbiosis Centre for Higher Education Research and Policy Advocacy (SCHERPA) and the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial to integrate together research, academic lectures, surveys and policy discussion into one unified programme on 'Ambedkar and education'. Within the four months (December 2023 to March 2024), we, as a team, carried out major activities and submitted our progress report as per the norms set by the Dr Ambedkar Foundation. Our academic research and social activities enhance the chair's visibility among universities in Pune and other parts of India, as well as within the Ambedkarite network across Maharashtra.

A core part of my role was to ground the Chair in serious research and long-term projects that would contribute to national debates on education and marginalisation. I and my colleague Dr. Hemangi Kadlak initiated and supervised consist of a major textual research project, "Review of Literature of Dr. Ambedkar's Writing and Writing on Ambedkar by Other Writers on the Issue of Education," which mapped Ambedkar's ideas on



university functions, primary and higher education, working-class education, entrepreneurship, and education as an instrument of social change; this work is being prepared for publication as a reference for scholars. Field research (2024 to 25) of the social and educational position of underprivileged groups in Maharashtra and the relative realities of government and non-government schools in Pune regarding access, scholarships and school conditions. Two larger forthcoming publications, including "Socio-Cultural and Educational Context of Schooling: An Assessment on the Learning Environment of Students in the Urban Peripheries of Pune" and "Inclusion, Diversity and Excellence: A Comparative Study on the Public and Private Universities in Maharashtra," link Ambedkarite concerns with current policy and institutional debates. By the grace of my Dr. Ambedkar Chair team and friends, I am able to announce my forthcoming Routledge publication of the book 'Ambedkarite Buddhism in Maharashtra: Caste, Conversion and Identity', which would become one of the milestones for our Dr Ambedkar Chair.

In my capacity as Chair Professor and approved PhD supervisor in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, I also began supervising doctoral research on the educational status of the Katkari community, thereby embedding Ambedkarite questions at the heart of research training. It was a new initiative to move towards making a Community Chair.

PROCESS OF MAKING A COMMUNITY CHAIR

Since its inception, I have never viewed the Dr. Ambedkar Chair as a mere university position; I have endeavoured to ensure that it is a community chair that students, activists, teachers and marginalised groups can all claim as their own to gain dignity and justice through Ambedkar's thoughts. This vision influenced a set of programmes and projects that were seen to cross the boundaries of campus, discipline, and hierarchy. Our activities began with some commemorative yet thought-provoking moments, such as the Mahaparinirvan Day (6 December 2023), during which we presented the rationale, purpose, and prospects of the Chair to a diverse audience of over 150 people at the Museum. The action prefigured the cause of Ambedkar, labour in the constitution, and the modern relevance of his ideas by making the Chair a living continuation of the legacy rather than a symbolic unit. The engagement with library students provides and cultivates a vision towards Ambedkar's transformative ideas.

The community-facing survey of the public perceptions of education at the time of the events of the museum Bhima Koregaon Shaurya Din (31 December 2023-1 January 2024) included ordinary visitors (many of whom are historically marginalised communities) and asked them to share their experience and thoughts of education, NEP 2020, school dropout, suicides among students of SC/ST communities and employability of young people, which created informal conversations where the policy is linked to the lives of ordinary people. As time passed, this community orientation grew through liaisons with schools, colleges, civil society organisations, and other Ambedkar Chairs across India through inter-chair programmes, webinars, and national-level seminars.

As Chair Professor, I curated and led a dense programme of lectures, conferences, and workshops that connected Ambedkar's thought to contemporary struggles and policy questions like lecture series on "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Idea on Education," Annual Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lectures (2023 to 2025) on various themes such as reparative epistemology and caste, state policy, and democratic politics, A national conference on "Reimagining Educational Equality: Contemporary Applications of Dr. Ambedkar's Educational Philosophy" (January 2025) along with National Seminar on 'Educating Ambedkar's Biography' (September, 2025) provided the vision how to perceive

Ambedkar not only as a philosopher, thinkers but also a great Humanistic of this era. The policy-oriented dialogue on NEP 2020 implementation in Maharashtra's schools (March 2024) and the multi-stakeholder dialogue on the Three-Language Formula, co-organised with SCHERPA, which generated concrete recommendations on linguistic justice, teacher training, and equity-oriented financing for submission to state authorities.

Through invited lectures and keynotes across India coming from talks on Ambedkar's philosophy of education, social equality, and women's freedom to sessions on NEP 2020, higher education, and caste I sought to carry the Chair's work into wider academic and activist publics and to build a network of institutions engaged with Ambedkar studies for which I am very grateful to Dr. Neeta Inamdar, Dean and faculty of SCHERPA, Prof. Suresh Babu, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, JNU and Prof. L.N. Venkataraman, OP Jindal Global University who were always supportive and encourage to such initiatives.

Finally, I tried to ensure that the Chair not only preserved Ambedkar's legacy but also innovated in response to new challenges in education, technology, and democracy. In doing so, I tried to shape the Chair as a genuine community chair, a platform where Ambedkar's thoughts on education, dignity, and equality could be studied, debated, and lived collectively by students, scholars, researchers and academicians alike. To materialise this dream, I am very grateful to Mrs Sanjivani Shantaram Mujumdar, Honorary Director, Babasaheb Ambedkar Memorial and Museum; Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar, Pro Chancellor, Symbiosis International University; Principal Director, Symbiosis; Dr. R. Raman, Vice Chancellor, Symbiosis International (Deemed University); and Dr. M. S. Shejul, Ph.D. Registrar, SIU, Dr. Jyoti Chandiramani, Director, Symbiosis School of Economics & Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, for their support and liberative vision in accomplishing the humanistic values of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

DR. AJAY CHOUDHARY

Chair Professor

Dr. Ambedkar Chair,
Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune.

PREFACE

Jai Bhim!

This activity report is not merely a documentation of work undertaken; rather, it reflects my commitment, dedication, and emotional engagement with the broader vision of developing this Chair into a platform for both research and community engagement. I joined the Dr. Ambedkar Chair on 17 November 2023 as the first official faculty member associated with this initiative. At the time of my joining, the office infrastructure was still under construction. One of the initial tasks undertaken was to begin developing the website for the Chair to establish its academic and public presence.

Subsequently, our Chair Professor, Dr. Ajay Choudhary, joined on 1 December 2023, and from that point onward, our collaborative efforts for strengthening the Chair formally began. As of now, two years and three months have passed since I started working for this Chair as an Assistant Professor. Since the Chair is primarily a research-oriented initiative without enrolled students, mobilizing participants for various programmes initially posed certain challenges. To address this, we began engaging with the students of the Library and Information Science programme at Symbiosis's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials, which significantly helped in building participation and academic interaction.

During this period, we have organized numerous conferences, seminars, workshops, training programmes, guest lectures, panel discussions, and group discussions addressing critical themes such as education, caste, gender, and the issues faced by marginalized communities. Our continuous efforts have been directed toward shaping the Chair into a vibrant academic and community-oriented platform by inviting a diverse range of participants, including academicians, researchers, scholars, activists, community leaders, and socially conscious citizens. Each programme has been an intellectually enriching and emotionally meaningful journey, allowing us to revisit and engage deeply with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's philosophy across various dimensions of social thought.

The central thrust area of the Chair is "Dr. Ambedkar's Thought and Contribution to Education in India." Accordingly, most of the activities conducted under the



Chair have been aligned with this core theme, emphasizing education as a transformative tool for social justice and equality.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, whose vision and ideology continue to inspire this work. I also extend my sincere thanks to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, for establishing the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, and to the Foundation for instituting Dr. Ambedkar Chairs across the country. It is indeed a matter of pride that Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, the first private university in India, has been honoured with the 23rd Dr. Ambedkar Chair.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. S. B. Mujumdar, Founder and President of Symbiosis, for establishing an institution dedicated to quality education and social commitment. I express my sincere gratitude to Honourable Director Mrs. Sanjeevani Mujumdar for her kind, caring, and continuous support. My sincere thanks also go to Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar, Pro-Chancellor, for her support in initiating the Dr. Ambedkar Chair in this esteemed university. I am deeply grateful to Vice-Chancellor Dr. R. Raman for his encouragement and institutional support to strengthen the Chair. I also extend my appreciation to Prof. Jyoti Chandiramani, Director, Symbiosis School of Economics and Dean,

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, for her valuable guidance in making the Chair more vibrant and academically impactful. I would also like to thank Dr. M. S. Shejul, Registrar, for his consistent administrative support, and Prof. Neeta Inamdar for her continued encouragement.

I sincerely believe that the Dr. Ambedkar Chair will continue to grow as an important academic and social platform and will contribute meaningfully toward realizing Dr. Ambedkar's vision of building a just, equitable, and enlightened society.

DR. HEMANGI KADLAK

Assistant Professor

Dr. Ambedkar Chair,
Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune.

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Report from December 2023 to March 2024

The establishment of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International Deemed University in Pune signifies a significant milestone in our academic journey, with a focus on "Dr. Ambedkar's Thoughts and Contribution to Education in India." The chair commenced its operations on November 17, 2023, and we have prepared a comprehensive report covering the period from the establishment to March 31, 2024. This new chair exemplifies our dedication to Dr. Ambedkar's vision. It is led by Chair Professor Dr. Ajay Choudhary, who assumed the role on December 1, 2023, and Assistant Professor Dr. Hemangi Kadlak. Our current efforts are concentrated on enriching the chair's activities, which have been initiated in accordance with the prescribed standards of the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, New Delhi. As per Annexure I C (Activities of the Chair), we have completed the following activities:



ORGANISING SEMINARS/ WORKSHOPS/ CELEBRATION OF AMBEDKAR AND OTHER SAINTS, ETC

1. MAHAPARINIRVAN DAY- 6TH DECEMBER 2023

On Wednesday, 6th December 2023, the Dr. Ambedkar Chair organised a significant event commemorating Mahaparinirvan Day. This event, held in collaboration with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, was a resounding success and marked an important milestone for the chair. The programme, graced by esteemed guests such as Mrs Sanjivani Mujumdar, the Director of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, and Mr. Arun Ghore, a senior writer and journalist, was a testament to the chair's commitment to Dr. Ambedkar's legacy. The Multipurpose Hall registered more than 150 participants. Mrs. Sanjivani Mujumdar delivered an introductory speech, highlighting historical insights about Dr Ambedkar and extending a warm welcome to Dr. Ambedkar, Chair, on this occasion. Dr. Ajay Choudhary followed with a presentation on Dr. Ambedkar's Chair, explaining its inception and essentiality for the future of society. He also emphasised the potential benefit of a chair for the students, others, and society. At this prominent occasion, the Chief guest, Mr. Arun Ghore, highlighted Dr. Ambedkar's pivotal role in shaping the constitution and the financial and political challenges he faced. He delved into Dr. Ambedkar's struggles, including his work on the Hindu Code Bill, and addressed issues such as unemployment and poverty. The programme culminated with insightful discussion and felicitation gifts. For additional information, please refer to the attached pamphlet and photos.



2. LECTURE ON "CONSTITUTIONAL MORALITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Deconstructing Perceptions and Realities" Under the heading of Lecture, including Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture on 29th January 2024.

Prof. Jyoti Chandiramani highlighted the importance of comprehensive and equitable development in achieving the SDGs. Dr. Ajay Choudhary emphasised the significance of our Indian identity is both our first and last priority. Finally, Dr. Ramratan V. Dhumal was invited to deliver his lecture.

During a recent speech, Dr. Dhumal discussed the importance of the Indian Constitution and its endurance for 75 years. He emphasised the need to keep things simple and relevant to the present, and referenced the prophetic predictions made during the Constitutional Assembly Debates. Dr. Dhumal also highlighted the significance of Dr. Ambedkar's speech on November 4th, 1948, in which he stressed the importance of an accountable government and the three essential sections of the Preamble.

Furthermore, Dr. Dhumal delved into the topic of constitutional morality and its relevance both during the Constitutional Assembly Debates and in landmark cases post-1950. He referenced the works of George Grote and why Dr Ambedkar deemed it necessary to invoke Grote during the debates. Dr. Dhumal underscored the importance of constitutional morality, noting that even a small, opinionated minority can wield enough power to render the Constitution impracticable. Finally, he referred to Dr. Ambedkar's writing in 'States and Minorities' (1945-46), emphasising the need for proper entitlements for all communities in the Constitution.

In his analysis, he cites notable legal cases such as the Keshvanand Bharti Case (1973), S.P. Gupta versus the Union of India, and the First Judges Transfer Case (1981). He also references Navtej Singh Johar versus Union of India 2018, which addressed the decriminalisation of homosexuality, as well as Manoj Narula versus Govt of India 2014, which tackled the decriminalisation of politics in India. Additionally, he mentions Joseph Shine versus Union of India, 2018, which centred on adultery, and the Young Lawyers' Association versus the state of Kerala or the Sabarimala Case.

During the speech, the speaker quoted Justice AP Shah in the Delhi High Court's judgment, paragraph 86, which stated that constitutional morality must outweigh the argument of public morality, even if it is the majority belief. The speaker also quoted another judgment that equated constitutional morality with good governance for the government. However, the speaker questioned whether reliance solely on constitutional morality was enough, as it was not a coherent principle and left room for discretion, making it difficult to maintain uniformity in implementation.

The speaker then connected this to affirmative action, which is evolving with the Constitution. The more people brought within the scope of affirmative action, the more they associate themselves with the Constitution and protect its ethos. The speaker emphasised that if citizens stand to defend their Constitution, no political system can outrightly reject its

existence. This enhances the Constitution's legitimacy. After the speaker's presentation, the students asked some questions, and then a vote of thanks was given. The program concluded with a photo of the speaker, other guests, and the students.



UNDER THE HEADING OF LECTURE, INCLUDING DR AMBEDKAR MEMORIAL LECTURE

"DR. AMBEDKAR'S VIEW ON EDUCATION AND CASTE" ON 28TH FEBRUARY 2024

Professor Umesh Bagade delivered a captivating and thought-provoking lecture on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's visionary perspectives on education and caste. The event was held on February 28th, 2024 and was hosted by the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial at Symbiosis International Deemed University in Pune. The event was held in a hybrid format, with 91 participants attending online and 100 attending in person. The audience included students and scholars from SPPU, Fergusson College, ILS Law College, SNDT, and Symbiosis International University. The event began with a garland ceremony honouring Dr Ambedkar's portrait, and Mrs. Sanjeevani Majumdar emphasised that Dr. Ambedkar used education as a tool for social transformation.

During a recent discussion, Professor Jyoti Chandiramani emphasised the significance of equity and education in contemporary society and delved into inclusive education. Dr. Ajay Choudhary also joined the conversation, highlighting the interconnectedness between education and other institutions, such as Caste, that have a significant impact on various aspects of Indian society. He further elaborated on how educational institutions tend to reinforce social norms, thereby perpetuating existing social inequalities.

Professor Bagade delivered a captivating lecture on the intersection of education and caste, drawing a diverse and engaged audience eager to delve deeper into these critical issues. He began by contextualising the life and legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, highlighting his tireless advocacy for social justice and equality. Professor Bagade drew connections to Immanuel Kant's philosophy, finding evidence of its influence in Dr Ambedkar's writings. He explained that Indian Enlightenment thinkers, such as Mahatma Phule and Dr Ambedkar, were radical structuralists who proposed new ideas about education, drawing inspiration from Bertrand Russell's work. Professor Bagade emphasised Dr Ambedkar's view that reason alone cannot dismantle the caste system, which is built on a foundation of forced labour. He then discussed the ideas of Chokhamela and Buddha, who believed that knowledge is an ever-evolving process and that no knowledge is final.

Professor Bagade connected these ideas to the concept of Buddha's eradication of Avidya, which became the mission of Mahatma Phule and Dr Ambedkar to eradicate caste-based ignorance.

During his lecture, Professor Bagade provided a comprehensive explanation of Dr. Ambedkar's sophisticated understanding of caste and its impact on Indian society. The audience was particularly moved by Dr. Ambedkar's disapproving assessment of the caste system as a deeply rooted form of subjugation, prompting reflection on the ongoing obstacles that vulnerable communities face. Following the presentation, the talk sparked lively discussion, with attendees eagerly engaging in Q&A and sharing their own thoughts on the significance of Dr. Ambedkar's teachings in their personal lives. At the conclusion of the program, the session's Chair, Prof. Surendra Jondhale, expressed his concerns regarding the ongoing issue of Caste and the current state of education. Prof. Jondhale underscored the relevance of Dr. Ambedkar's ideas in modern times and emphasised the significance of Indian thinkers such as Mahatma Phule and Dr. Ambedkar, particularly in conversations about philosophers like Foucault and Derrida. Professor Umesh Bagade posed critical, self-reflective, and thought-provoking questions about issues such as the exploitative nature of untouchability and the potential for modern spaces to eliminate the caste system. Following the lecture, a Vote of Thanks was presented, expressing sincere gratitude to Professor Bagade for his enlightening speech, to all attendees for their active participation and contribution to the dialogue on this crucial topic, and to the audience for their enthusiastic participation. Guests and attendees then explored a student poster exhibition and visited the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Museum. Professor Bagade's lecture highlighted the relevance of Dr Ambedkar's vision in guiding efforts to create a just and inclusive society. Through his insightful analysis and engaging discourse, Professor Bagade left a lasting impact on all who attended, reaffirming Dr. Ambedkar's status as a beacon of hope and inspiration for future generations.





SURVEY CONDUCTED ON 31 DECEMBER 2023 AND 1 JANUARY 2024

The Dr. Ambedkar Chair conducted an extensive survey from December 31, 2023, to January 1, 2024, to gauge public understanding of education. The survey targeted visitors to the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial during the Bhima Koregaon Shoury Din Remembrance event on January 1, 2024. The survey was conducted by both the Chair Professor and Assistant Professor, along with four library students on the first day and two on the second day.

Over the two days, thirty-two forms were filled out, with an additional eight submitted online. The survey included questions in both English and Marathi, although the majority of responses were in Marathi. The questions covered various aspects, including socio-demographic profiles, definitions of education, opinions on the current education system in India, desired changes, educational thinkers to be taught in schools and colleges, views on the New Education Policy 2020, challenges and difficulties faced by students, dropout rates, and suicide rates among SC/ST students, particularly in higher education.

The survey also included questions on youth employability, the role of ordinary people in strengthening the education system, and opinions on increasing women's participation in education and employment. The library students who actively participated in collecting survey responses provided valuable observations and insights. The survey received a positive response, fostering informal discussions and dialogues on education. People expressed interest in associating with the Dr. Ambedkar Chair and displayed curiosity about its work. Some photos have been attached to this report to provide a visual context for the survey.



PAMPHLET OF AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF DR AMBEDKAR CHAIR

We have included the attached pamphlet and photos to raise awareness of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair and to perpetuate his ideas on educational philosophy and other issues. We aim to facilitate and welcome stakeholders who are interested in learning more about Ambedkar's philosophy and its relevance today.



ACTIVITY UNDER DISCUSSION/DIALOGUES

"Implementation of New Education Policy-2020 with respect to Schools of Maharashtra" on 23rd March 2024

Dr. Ambedkar, Chair at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), hosted a well-informed and compelling seminar on the implementation of the New Education Policy-2020, with a focus on schools in Maharashtra. The seminar took place on March 23rd, 2024, in a hybrid format that allowed presenters to share their experiences, analyse related topics, and initiatives concerning NEP 2020 through both online and offline channels. Attendees included students and academics from Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) and SNDT, as well as a few professionals. The event began with guests paying tribute to Dr. Ambedkar by garlanding his portrait, followed by a welcome address from the Guest of Honour, Mrs. Sanjeevani Majumdar, who wished the program success. The special guest, Prof. Jyoti Chandiramani, discussed the importance of providing quality education.

The gathering, led by the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Professor Ajay Choudhary, emphasised the importance of critically engaging with the New Education Policy 2020 and understanding its implications. He also highlighted the crucial role of language and rational thinking in ensuring that education is integrated into society. The day-long program was divided into three sessions, with the first two featuring presenters who discussed their analyses of the policy. The final session was an open roundtable discussion, and the insights gathered will be presented to the Government of Maharashtra to ensure the comprehensive and effective implementation of NEP 2020.

Professor Surendra Jondhale led the inaugural session, and Mr. Amit Narkar gave the opening presentation. His talk, entitled "Bridging the Gap: An Assessment of School Infrastructure in Adivasi Areas of Maharashtra," focused on the promises outlined in the Karachi Congress Resolution of 1931. Narkar then discussed areas for improvement in implementing these policies on the ground, including infrastructure and teacher-to-student ratios. He based his analysis on a survey conducted amongst Zila Parishad schools in the Mokhada Taluka area of Palghar district.

The second speaker was Mr. Kishore Darak, who spoke about Samoo Shala (Mis)reading the NEP to deny RTE, pointing out that Bankers and Managers handle

education.

During the "Symbiosis: A Journey into Foundational Frolics" event, Dr. Gargee Mitra discussed the educational initiatives outlined in the NEP. Specifically, she highlighted the changes to Symbiosis Schools' structure, which now offer a flexible learning pathway for holistic development over 5+3+3+4 years. Additionally, she shared the success of Vidya Pravesh, a play-based preparation module for Grade 1, which focuses on three key areas: good health and well-being, effective communication, and involved learning. Symbiosis Schools also follow a five-step pedagogy, which includes Prior Knowledge Assessment / Provocation, Concept building, Reinforcement, Assessments, and Reflection. The session ended with audience members sharing their experiences and asking informed questions.

Mr. Amit Narkar chaired the second session.

In her presentation, Rupali Kadlak explored the decoding of NEP 2020 education and the pedagogy of school education. She analysed the shift from previous educational policies to the current one, highlighting the changes that NEP 2020 aims to implement in the system. These changes are significant, marking a departure from earlier policies.

Priyanka Kadlak - राष्ट्रीय शैक्षणिक धोरण २०२० भविष्य वेधि शिक्षणं

A primary school teacher from ZPPS Kaman in Pune shared her valuable insights on working in government schools in rural Pune. During her narration, she expressed concern about the students' educational and economic status. Additionally, she highlighted the importance of parental awareness towards their children's education. Moreover, she discussed the implementation of the NEP in such situations.

Rajashri Tikhe will be talking about the Application of the NEP in the context of tribal residential ashram schools.

Mandar Shinde's primary focus was on Chapter 3 of NEP 2020, which aimed to reduce dropout rates and promote universal access to education through SARTHAQ and the RTE Act of 2009. He conducted a thorough analysis of various government drafts, highlighting how the final draft undermined the Right to Education Act, particularly concerning the provision of free and compulsory education.

Following lunch, during the third session, the presenters

and audience engaged in an open round table discussion on implementing the NEP and submitting a report to the Government of Maharashtra. Prof. Jondhale called attention to the need for a perspective from the margins that addresses the concerns of SCs/STs and dropouts, and proposed solutions to prevent them. Mr Mandar Shinde emphasised the importance of referring to students as "left out" of school rather than "dropping out" and highlighted a lack of self-initiative among children as a contributing factor. Poverty was not identified as the sole cause of the dropout rate among children, and the issue of urban migration from rural regions was also discussed. The Academic Bank of Credit system was another focal point of the conversation. Ultimately, a consensus was reached that the right to education and constitutional values are non-negotiable, and participants agreed to collaborate on implementing an inclusive New Education Policy.



Within the four months (December 2023 to March 2024), we have organised the following programme as per the prescribed activities mentioned in Annexure I-C and submitted the progress report to your esteemed office, Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, New Delhi.



1. MEETING CUM DISCUSSION WITH LIBRARY STUDENTS ON DECEMBER 12TH, 2023

On December 12th, 2023, an engaging and productive meeting took place at the auditorium hall of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial. Students actively participated, and the presence of Prof. Ajay Choudhary and Dr. Hemangi Kadlak from the Dr. Ambedkar Chair provided valuable contributions to the discussion. The topics covered were essential for informing and involving students about the work and goals of Dr. Ambedkar, the Chair, and for providing an overview of the Chair and its objectives, establishing a fundamental understanding, and encouraging student involvement and participation. An open-floor discussion allowed students to share their perspectives, creating a collaborative and inclusive environment. Forming student committees for specific tasks provided a structured approach to involving students, enabling them to make meaningful contributions.

Question-and-answer sessions clarified doubts and addressed concerns, ensuring students clearly understood their potential involvement. It was encouraging to see some express interest in volunteering for the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. The attached photos and list of interested students are documentation for future reference.

Overall, the meeting was well-organised and informative, setting a positive tone for student engagement with the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. As a result, a WhatsApp group named 'Dr Ambedkar Chair Library Students Symbiosis Pune' was created, comprising students interested in working with the Chair professor and assistant professor.



2. 'REVIEW OF LITERATURE OF DR AMBEDKAR'S WRITING AND WRITING ON AMBEDKAR BY OTHER WRITERS ON THE ISSUE OF EDUCATION.' (JANUARY 2024 TO MARCH 2024)

This project is part of the Research conducted by the Chair Professor and my team. Our research is almost complete, and we are currently working on the rough draft to make it available to the academic community. Our findings show that Ambedkar expressed various themes related to education, state formation, and standard of living, including health, social, and economic issues. His educational ideas were formulated in the form of university functions and aims, primary and higher education, family planning, working-class education, and entrepreneurship.

To support our efforts, we have appointed a Research Associate, Mr Vir Pratap Singh Gautam, M.Phil., JNU, who is currently pursuing his Ph.D from the same university, for two months from February 2023 to March 2024. Mr. Gautam's responsibilities include gathering and comparing data, reviewing Ambedkar's ideas on education, coordinating the program's activities, including seminars and conferences, and assisting in writing and creating a summary of the project.

We aim to publish a comprehensive work on Ambedkar's educational ideas that will serve as a reference point for the academic community. Although we encountered some limitations, such as the need to pass references to Ambedkar's educational ideas in other scholars' literature, we have been able to explore various aspects of his ideas, from technical education to higher education, and how education can be used as a tool to effect social change.

3. INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION ON 8 MARCH 2024

The celebration of International Women's Day took place on 8th March 2024 as a collaborative effort between the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial and the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. Mrs. Mujumdar, the director of the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, led the event. It was an event exclusively for female students. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, an Assistant Professor with the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University), gave a speech titled 'The lessons to be learned from the struggles of women who fought for their rights in Europe, and our responsibilities as educated, empowered women.' Following her speech, several students shared their reflections on the topic.



Report from April 2024 to March 2025

RESEARCH WORK (LONG / SHORT TERM AND FIELD-BASED)

The research work was initiated on 16 August 2024 and ended on 15 March 2025.

The objectives of the study are the following.

- To comprehend the current social and educational status of disadvantaged groups in Maharashtra
- To identify the issues hindering the social and educational attainment of these groups
- To evaluate the effectiveness of existing government policies and programmes in addressing the needs of marginalised communities
- To provide recommendations for policy improvements and interventions to promote disadvantaged groups' social and educational empowerment.

RESEARCH WORK (FIELD-BASED-SHORT TERM)

The research work was initiated on 16 August 2024 and ended on 15 February 2025.

The objectives of the study are the following.

- Understanding the functions, dimensions, and internal realities of government and private schools in Pune.
- Assessing and comparing students' performance in government versus private sector schools.
- Analysing the availability and impact of scholarship programs on students in both sectors.
- We are identifying the challenges students face in accessing quality education and scholarship opportunities.
- We are developing recommendations and presenting them to policymakers to bridge the gap in educational quality and scholarship distribution.

b. Supervision of PhD, etc.

- i. **Title of the Thesis** - Exploring Determinants of Dropout: A Study of Decline in Enrollment in Higher Education in Maharashtra

Name of the Scholar - Monalisa Behera

Date of Joining- 02 Dec 2024

Date of Completion - 02 December 2027

- ii. **Title of the Thesis** - Educational Status of Katkari Community in Pune District: a Sociological Analysis

Name of the Scholar - Deepali Kamble

Date of Joining- 02 Jan 2025

Date of Completion - 01 January 2028

ORGANISING SEMINARS/CONFERENCE/CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF AMBEDKAR AND OTHER SAINTS, ETC. - DEATH ANNIVERSARY, NATIONAL CONFERENCE

- a. Commemorate the death anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar on 6 December 2024. The program was organised with the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial and the Dr. Ambedkar Chair.
- b. A national conference on 'Reimagining Educational Equality: Contemporary Applications of Dr. Ambedkar's Educational Philosophy' was organised on January 23 and 24, 2025. Prof. Gopal Guru, former Chief Editor of EPW, graced the event as the chief guest. The two-day conference featured seven sessions, including 'Education and Equity'; 'Pedagogy and Curriculum in Education'; 'Special Lecture: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Education: Decoding Epistemology and Pedagogy'; 'Education and Marginalised Communities'; 'Status of Women in Education'; 'Education in Contemporary Societies'; Book Release (final session). A total of 41 participants, comprising academicians and research scholars, presented their papers during the conference.



LECTURES, INCLUDING DR AMBEDKAR MEMORIAL LECTURE, ETC.

First Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture on 'Reparative Epistemology: Rethinking Education for Social Justice' organised on 13 December 2024. The guest speaker was Prof. Suresh Babu, a faculty member at the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, JNU, New Delhi.



Need to make current education more inclusive & equitable: Prof Babu

Pune, Dec 14 (UNI) Prof Suresh Babu, an esteemed faculty member of Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, on Saturday highlighted the need to recognise and repair the current education system to make it more inclusive and equitable.

Addressing Dr Ambedkar Memorial Lecture organised by Dr Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International

(Deemed University) in collaboration with Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies here, he delved into the idea

of reparative epistemology and its relevance in rethinking education for social justice.

Elaborating on the purpose of caste-based reservations, he explained that its aim was to reduce social inequalities, but it does not necessarily lead to annihilation of caste or dismantling of hierarchical structures within society.

He advised new generation to develop skills.

Prof Babu also examined critical questions such as the role of education in fostering social justice and whether reservation policies alone are sufficient for achieving equality, or if deeper structural and social reforms are required.

UNI SP 55

Tags: #Need to make current education more inclusive & equitable: Prof Babu



• १५ : शिक्षण
व्यवस्था (सर्व शिक्षा अभियान)
द्वारा जो संकेत देता है
: सामाजिक न्याय
व्यवस्था सुनिश्चित, जो
सर्व शिक्षा अभियान, सर्व
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व्यवस्था

PUBLICATION OF BOOKS/ARTICLES/JOURNALS/OTHER SCHOLARLY MATERIALS

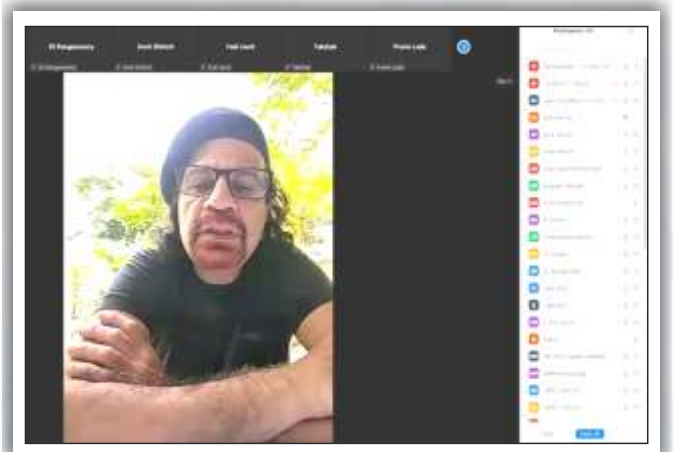
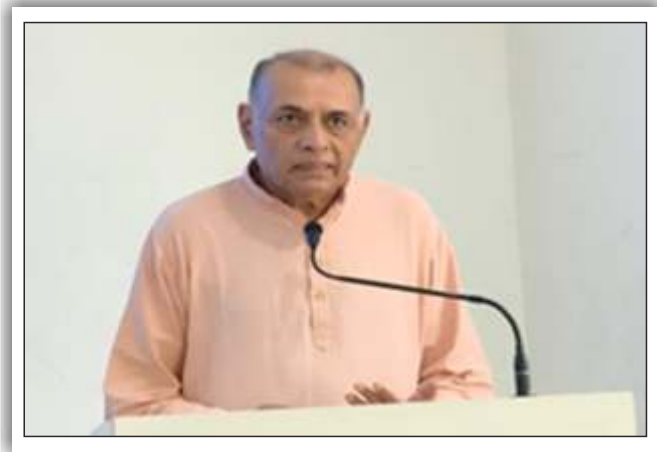
1. Mahamanav Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Yanche Jeevan Charitra Marathi Book by Mrs. Sanjivani Mujumdar

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Shrimati Dr. Savita (Maisaheb) Ambedkar Anekanchya Marathi Book by Mrs. Sanjivani Mujumdar.

AWARENESS/EXTENSION/TRAINING PROGRAMMES (ONLINE AND OFFLINE)

a. Public Talk by Prof Anand Kumar, JNU Professor, on Friday, 20 September 2024, 'Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Legacy and Contemporary Challenges in India.'

b. Dr. Ambedkar Chair and Department of Sociology and Marathi Hislop College, Nagpur, organised a collaborative webinar on 'Educating Humanity' by Prof Murzban Jal on 18 October 2024.



c. Organised a webinar on "The Indian Middle Class and Caste: The Dalit Question" by Dr. Renu Vinod, Adjunct Lecturer, Sociology in-charge, Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts, Symbiosis International Deemed University, on 21 November 2024.



f. Organised a workshop on "Unpacking Cinema from the Caste, Class and Gender Lenses to Create an Educational Consciousness" on 15 March 2025. The facilitators were Mayura Saavi (Independent Journalist & Development Communications Professional, Media Trainer), Nikhil Lata Gajanan (Independent Researcher, Journalist, Media & Development Professional), and Mayur Dhamapurkar (Film Maker, Writer and Creative Professional).

d. Organised a talk on "Lower Castes' Political Consciousness Formation in North-West India: Analysing the Ad-Dharm Movement in Punjab' by Prof. Ronki Ram, Haheed Bhagat Singh Chair Professor of Political Science at Panjab University, Chandigarh, on 27 November 2024.



PARTICIPANT IN SEMINARS / CONFERENCES / MEETINGS OF THE CHAIR PROFESSOR AND THEIR STAFF

- a. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak was invited to talk on the condition of sanitation workers at the coalition meeting on 'Collective Initiative for the Rights of Sanitation Workers: Policy Reforms & Social Protection,' organized by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) and the Ambedkar Centre for Action and Research (ACAR), in collaboration with Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) and strategic partners on 4 October 2024, in Pune.



- b. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak reviewed a paper for the 'PLOS ONE' Journal in November 2024.
- c. Prof. Ajay Choudhary delivered a talk on "Understanding Human Agency" on 15 November 2024. The talk was organised by the Department of Liberal Arts & Department of Learning and Development at MIT World Peace University, Pune.

MIT WORLD PEACE UNIVERSITY | PUNE
 Department of Liberal Arts & Department of Learning and Development (HR)
 Jointly organizes
5-Days Faculty Development Program for All Faculty, MIT-WPU
Understanding Human Agency: A Confluence of Humanities, Social and Behavioural Sciences

SPEAKERS

- Prof. Dr. Vishwanath Kadak, Director in Charge, School of Liberal Arts, MIT-WPU, Pune
- Mr. Siddharth Kulkarni, Asst. Director in the Directorate, Public International Film School (PIFS), MIT-WPU, Pune
- Prof. Dr. Sanjay Kumar Parashar, Professor, School of International Studies, JNU, Delhi
- Dr. Pankaj Sharma, Associate Professor of Psychology, Department of Social Sciences, VIT-AP, Vellore
- Dr. Anshu Datta, Assistant Professor of English, School of Liberal Arts, MIT-WPU, Pune
- Dr. Jyoti Mahra, Associate of the Centre for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, IIS, Pune
- Prof. Dr. Ajay Choudhary, Head, Institute Chair, Department of Learning and Development, Pune

Platform: **webex**
 Scan to Register

11th November to 15th November 2024 | Venue: MIT-WPU, Kothrud, Pune

- d. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak delivered a talk on 'Amplifying Voices - Sanitation Workers' Rights' on 20 November 2024 in Mumbai, organised by the CREA organisation.



e. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak delivered a talk on Dr. Ambedkar as a Thinker beyond Borders: Global Influence of his Philosophy on 6 December 2024, organised by the Ambedkar Society for South Asia and the Jinnah-Ambedkar Chair.



f. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak has been invited as a Resource Person for a webinar on 'Social Entrepreneurship' by Parul University, Gujarat, on 2 January 2025.



g. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak was invited from 'Common health' for the Second regional webinar for the 'Dalit Women Talking (DWT)' Phase II initiative, scheduled for 25 January 2025.

h. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak was invited to provide expert comments by the CREA organisation at the inaugural session of their certificate course on Gender and WASH, developed in collaboration with the Transforming M Ward Project, TISS, Mumbai, on 8 February 2025.

i. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak delivered a talk on 'Gender-Inclusive Entrepreneurship Development' during the 'Awareness Creation Workshop on Entrepreneurship Development' for women, organised by ACCESS Development Services, on 8 February 2025.

j. Dr Hemangi Kadlak delivered a talk on 'Women Empowerment' organised by Soulful Academy, Bengaluru, on 16 February 2025.

k. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak delivered a "Casework / Working with Individuals: Exploring New Pedagogical Approaches" session at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai on 24 February 2025. The session was conducted for Social Work faculty members from Naypyitaw State Academy, Myanmar, in collaboration with the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

l. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak chaired a session and presented a research paper on 21 March 2025 at the National Seminar on "Social Equity: Inclusion, Problems, and Challenges." The two-day seminar, held on March 21-22, 2025, at Parul University, Vadodara, Gujarat, was organised by the Faculty of Social Work, Parul University, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Sciences, New Delhi.

m. Prof. Ajay Choudhary was invited as the keynote speaker at the conference titled 'The State and Direction of Ambedkarite Politics: A Social Reflection', organised by the All India Independent Scheduled Castes Association (AIISCA), on 21st July 2024.

n. Ajay Choudhary delivered two lectures, a public talk on 'Classroom, Pedagogy and Caste Encounter' on 22 August 2024 and a Special lecture on 'Issues and Problems For Stigmatised Researcher: Ethnographer's Experiences in the Field' at Zakhir Hussain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, JNU, New Delhi, on 23 August 2024.

o. Dr. Hemangi delivered a webinar talk on 'Life in the University: Managing the Academic World' by Sanghamitra Collective, Nalanda Academy, on 26 July 2024.

p. Dr. Hemangi has been invited to speak at a workshop and conference from August 22nd to 25th, 2024. She will talk about the topic 'What is the existing evidence on AMR and SDOH through community dialogues' at the 6th National Conference & Workshop on Antimicrobial Stewardship Practices in India (ASPICON 2024), hosted by the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh. Her research paper for presentation at this conference is 'Infectious Diseases and the Status of Women in India with a Specific Emphasis on the Caste Aspect.'

PURCHASE OF BOOKS / JOURNALS/RESOURCE MATERIALS / RESEARCH AND TRAINING AIDS / SOFTWARE

| | | | | |
|-----------|--|-----------------|----------------|----------|
| 12-Dec-24 | 49105001 - Books Books4901(Nil) BEING INVOICE NO.86 DT.09.07.2024 RECD FROM SADHANA PRAKASHAN TOWARDS PURCHASE OF BOOKS FOR LIBRARY AT DR.AMBEDKAR CHAIR (0.1% TDS RS.1/- IS DEDUCTED ON RS.555/-) | Purchase - SCRI | SCRI/2425/1286 | 555.00 |
| | | | | 555.00 |
| 11-Dec-24 | 49105001 - Books Books4901(Nil) BEING INVOICE NO.2610 TO 2613 DT.06.07.2024 RECD FROM SUGAVA PRAKASHAN TOWARDS PURCHASE OF BOOKS FOR LIBRARY AT DR.AMBEDKAR CHAIR (0.1% TDS RS.14/- IS DEDUCTED ON RS.14039/-) | Purchase - SCRI | SCRI/2425/1269 | 14039.00 |
| | | | | 14039.00 |
| 11-Dec-24 | 49114018 - Food, Tea & Refreshment Expenses BEING INVOICE NO.SB924SCAS1540 DT.24.09.2024 RECD FROM SHRI LAXMI CATERERES TOWARDS REFRESHMENT FOR GUEST VISIT AT DR.AMBEDKAR CHAIR ON DT.20.09.2024 (2% TDS RS.28/- IS DEDUCTED ON RS.1392/-) | | | 1461.60 |
| | | | | 1392.00 |
| 11-Dec-24 | 49114039 - Office Expenses (Educ) Books4901(Nil) BEING AMOUNT REIMBURSED TO DR.AJAY CHOUDHARY BY NEFT ON DT.11.12.2024 TOWARDS PURCHASE OF BOUQUET FOR GUEST VISIT ON DT.09.07.2024, NEWS PAPER BILL FROM APRIL TO SEPT 2024 & PURCHASE OF BOOKS FOR DR.AMBEDKAR CHAIR | Purchase - SCRI | SCRI/2425/1272 | 5097.00 |
| | | | | 4737.00 |
| | | | | 360.00 |

DISCUSSIONS / DIALOGUES / MEETINGS

- a. The ST/NT/DNT program was organised on 13 July 2024 - the topic was "Educational Problems of Scheduled Tribes, Nomadic and Denotified Tribes". The discussion started with three panel discussions in the morning and a roundtable discussion in the afternoon. Ten guest speakers delivered their lectures on different aspects of this topic. Around 100 participants attended the program.



INTER-CHAIR COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMME

- a. Organised an Inter-chair Collaboration Program, 'Skills, Professional and Higher Education,' on 31 January 2025. The program was organised in collaboration with the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, R.T.M. Nagpur University, Nagpur. The chairperson and chief guest of the program was Prof. S. K. Thorat, Professor Emeritus. Dr. Swati Mujumdar, Pro-Chancellor, Symbiosis Skills and Professional University, Pune, and Pro-Chancellor, Symbiosis University of Applied Sciences, Indore, delivered the keynote address.



OTHERS

- a. Attended Online Program on Pledge Against Drug Abuse - This year's NMBA theme is: 'Viksit Bharat ka Mantra, Bharat ho Nashe se Swatantra'. The online program was organised on August 12, 2024.
- b. Organised a cleanliness drive, 'Swachhata Hi Seva 2024', in collaboration with the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, on 2 October 2024.





Report from April 2025 - March 2026

RESEARCH WORK (LONG / SHORT TERM AND FIELD-BASED) TO BE CONDUCTED BY THE CHAIR PROFESSOR AND THEIR TEAM

1. Socio-Cultural and Educational Context of Schooling: An Assessment on the Learning Environment of Students in the Urban Peripheries of Pune

Two-Day Workshop on Research Methodology in Education Studies

Date: 3rd-4th July 2025

Organised by: Dr Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International (Deemed University)

Theme: Field, Fieldwork, and Field Experiences in Education Studies

A two-day national workshop on "Research Methodology in Education Studies" was conducted on the 3rd and 4th of July 2025 under the aegis of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International (Deemed University). The workshop focused on exploring research methods through direct field experiences, with particular emphasis on urban marginalities and educational challenges, followed by the study of university spaces as evolving academic and political fields. The event was inaugurated by Prof. Ajay Chaudhary, Chair Professor of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, who addressed the team and introduced the workshop's objectives and the scope of the Ambedkar Chair's ongoing research projects.



On Day 1, the discussions revolved around urban transformation and marginalisation, particularly the schooling and educational experiences in urban slums across Delhi, Mumbai, and Pune. In the first session, Prof. Jyoti Dalal from the University of Delhi delivered a compelling lecture on "Contours of Ethnographic Knowledge," drawing from her extensive fieldwork in Delhi's slums. She delved into the anthropology of marginalised communities, emphasising that ethnographic knowledge emerges from field immersion

rather than theoretical abstraction. She challenged the binary of good and bad data, urged scholars to "let the field talk," and illustrated how schooling systems could be inherently violent for marginalised groups. Her reflections on urban slums revealed the state's simultaneous presence and failure, portraying slums not as peripheral but integral to the city's functioning. She highlighted contradictions in ethnographic relationships, sensory encounters with space, and the importance of language and everyday life in shaping knowledge.



The second session, led by Dr. Pradeep Shinde from JNU, drew on his 22-month ethnographic research in Dharavi, Mumbai. He emphasised the importance of writing field notes immediately during or after fieldwork and advocated for researchers to connect with communities while maintaining analytical distance emotionally. His presentation detailed the presence of Adivasi communities, the role of Shiv Sena women, and the significance of non-Brahminical deities in local educational and social imaginaries. He further stressed that education should be contextually and linguistically grounded to be meaningful for marginalised communities.



In the third session, Dr. Rajeshwari Deshpande from Savitribai Phule Pune University presented a data-rich reflection on Pune's slum communities. Her study, which involved over 6,000 households, analysed intergenerational mobility, caste-based occupational changes, and housing conditions. She explored how caste continues to shape urban education and livelihood in contemporary contexts, using longitudinal data to trace the journeys of first-generation learners and the impact of stigmatised occupations on access to education and housing in suburban Pune. Her presentation emphasised the nuanced connections between caste, space, politics, and educational mobility.



On Day 2, the focus shifted to studies on university spaces. The day began with a session by Prof. L.N. Venkataraman of MIT, Pune, who spoke on "Inclusion, Diversity, and Excellence." He underscored the importance of preparing oneself with contextual knowledge of the locality before engaging in fieldwork. He introduced the method of triangulation and advocated for researchers to "invisibilise" themselves in the field, immersing without dominating, sometimes metaphorically described as "marrying the locals." His lecture explored the delicate balance between detachment and empathy, as well as the role of multiculturalism and inclusion in higher education. He emphasised the interplay between micro and macro perspectives and the negotiation between individual and collective identities in the university space.



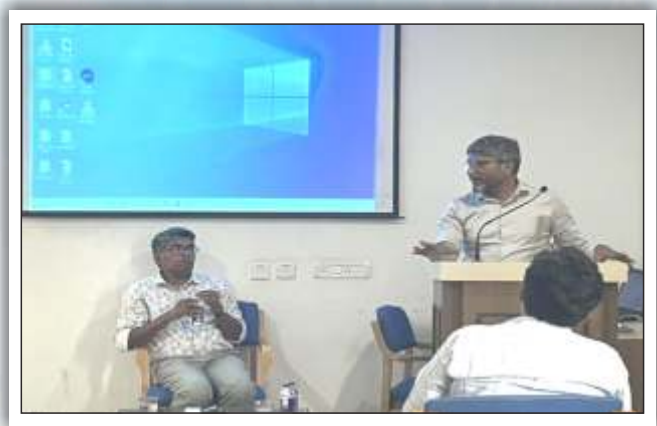
The second session was led by Prof. Neeta Inamdar, who shared her transformative field experience in CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) and bilingual teaching. Citing her collaboration with Prof. Ganesh Devi and work among the Koraga community, she highlighted how her theoretical research proposals underwent drastic change upon entering the field. The ground realities, she asserted, are often starkly different from academic assumptions. She also referenced the influence of scholar Creg Whitsed on her evolving approach to fieldwork, particularly in terms of bilingual pedagogies and language politics.



Prof. Suresh Babu G.S., from JNU, conducted the third session of the day, sharing his experience researching the Narmada Movement. He offered reflections on village-based activism and discussed how the university must be seen as a social institution capable of producing and sustaining resistance. Drawing from field experiences in politically charged rural areas, he emphasised that all information gathered from the field is valid; its categorisation as "useful" or "not" should come later. He stressed the importance of capturing the political and emotional climate of villages, asserting that understanding local contexts is fundamental for meaningful research in education and development.



The workshop concluded with a Vote of Thanks by Prof. Ajay Chaudhary, who extended his gratitude to all the participating scholars and institutions. He proudly noted that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment had recognised the Ambedkar Chair as the most active among all its chairs across the country, and he appreciated its commitment to critical research and field engagement.



This two-day workshop provided rich insights into educational research methodology, primarily through the lens of fieldwork. It not only bridged theoretical approaches with grounded realities but also offered a platform to rethink educational research as a profoundly political, social, and immersive process.



FIELD-BASED RESEARCH THROUGH PG AND PHD STUDENTS UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE CHAIR PROFESSOR

2. Inclusion, Diversity and Excellence: A Comparative Study on the Public and Private Universities in Maharashtra

b. Supervision of Ph.D, etc.

i. Title of the Thesis - Exploring Determinants of Dropout: A Study of Decline in Enrolment in Higher Education in Maharashtra

Name of the Scholar - Monalisa Behera

Date of Joining- 02 December 2024

Date of Completion - 02 December 2027

ii. Title of the Thesis - Educational Status of Katkari Community in Pune District: a Sociological Analysis

Name of the Scholar - Deepali Kamble

Date of Joining- 02 January 2025

Date of Completion - 01 January 2028



ORGANISING SEMINARS / WORKSHOPS / CELEBRATION OF AMBEDKAR AND OTHER SAINTS, ETC.

NATIONAL SEMINAR ON "EDUCATING THROUGH AMBEDKAR'S BIOGRAPHY: INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO LIFE, KNOWLEDGE, AND LIBERATION"

The One-Day National Seminar on "Educating Through Ambedkar's Biography: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Life, Knowledge, and Liberation" was held on September 4, 2025, at the iconic Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial in Pune. The event brought together scholars, researchers, students, and distinguished guests, organised by Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies, Dr Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), in association with Pragatik Itihas Sanstha. The seminar's primary objective was to encourage an interdisciplinary examination of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's life, connecting historical biography to current issues of social justice, knowledge dissemination, and liberation. The serene location was charged with anticipation and reverence for Ambedkar's enduring legacy, as conveners welcomed participants and acknowledged the vital support of the collaborating organisations.

The inaugural function featured a formal welcome, in which the conveners outlined the goals of engaging academia and society alike in meaningful dialogue on Ambedkar's intellectual contributions. Professor Umesh Bagade, an eminent scholar in Dalit studies and Ambedkarite thought, was the chief guest. He was honoured with symbolic gifts and highlighted Pune's historical significance in Ambedkar's journey, emphasising the seminar's thematic relevance to contemporary times. The Guest of Honour Prof Jyoti Chandiramani, Director, Symbiosis School of Economics & Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, The keynote address by Mr. Samrat Phadnis, titled "Dr B. R. Ambedkar as Editor," set an introspective tone for the day. Mr Phadnis described Ambedkar's biography as a dynamic curriculum, one that imparts resilience, knowledge, and principles of liberation. He explored how Ambedkar's life, when studied as a biography, continues to offer valuable lessons for ongoing struggles against inequality and for democratic consolidation. He underscored the responsibilities biographers have to maintain ethical standards of representation, balancing archival rigour, personal memory, and lived social struggles.



The seminar transitioned into three major academic sessions, each led by renowned chairpersons and structured to address different thematic aspects of Ambedkar's biography. The first session, led by Professor Umesh Bagade, focused on philosophical and critical reflections. Professor Ramesh Kamble delivered an evocative paper on "The Dilemma of the Ambedkarite Intellectual," illustrating how contemporary Ambedkarite thinkers navigate the boundaries between rigorous scholarship and activist commitments. He positioned biography as a central site for negotiating intellectual responsibilities and public involvement. Dr. Pradeep Aglave's paper, "Ambedkar's Biography: Struggle of Human Rights," highlighted Ambedkar's pioneering global contributions to human rights, demonstrating how his battle against caste discrimination links biography to the universal values of dignity and freedom. Professor Avinash Phulzele conducted a critical review of Dhananjay Kheer's famous biography on Ambedkar, discussing both its foundational strengths and ideological limitations, and pointing to the gaps addressed by more recent research. Dr. Santosh Suradkar concluded the session, examining Ashok Gopal's recent archival scholarship and its role in reconfiguring our understanding of Ambedkar's intellectual evolution. The vibrant question-and-answer segment enabled participants to debate the methodology of biographies, the politics of representation, and Ambedkar's dual role as an activist and thinker.

During the second session, chaired by Professor Ramesh Kamble, the focus shifted to contemporary biographical interventions and reinterpretations. Mr. Keshav Waghmare discussed "Iconoclast: A Reflective Biography of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar" by Anand Teltumbde, assessing its intellectual rigour and critiquing its interpretative frameworks. Dr. Ramratan Dhupal emphasised that Ambedkar's biography transcends a single narrative, advocating the view that he must be understood as comprising distinct roles: jurist, economist, reformer, Buddhist, and innovative modern intellectual. This multi-layered approach enriches the discourse around his life. Dr. Prabodhan Pol concluded the session with a paper highlighting how innovative biographical works adapt Ambedkar's image to suit digital and globalised contexts. He urged scholars to ensure that new biographical studies remain relevant for current and future generations. The rich dialogue in this session demonstrated that biographical writing is not static; rather, it reflects evolving generational concerns and academic reinterpretations.



The seminar's third session, led by Professor Neeta Inamdar, spotlighted emerging student research and demonstrated the seminar's commitment to pedagogical engagement. Apeksha and Shrushti from Christ University presented joint research on "Reclaiming Dalit Female Identities Through Documentaries," analysing how visual narratives such as "Dr. Ambedkar Now and Then (2023)" and "Writing with Fire (2021)" offer novel ways to interpret Ambedkar and reclaim voices of the marginalised. Dr. Deepa Nitin Jamnik focused on the enduring lessons from Ambedkar's autobiographical writings, proposing that his legacy serves as a model of perseverance for Indian students. Mohammad Amir M. H. Khan contributed a comprehensive book review of Teltumbde's "Iconoclast," situating the work within the broader Ambedkarite discourse. Dr. Nalini Waghmare presented research on Ambedkar's views on education and the eradication of untouchability, delving into how his educational philosophy is critical for addressing present-day inequalities. Dr. Mihir Ranjan Das closed the session by synthesising approaches from history, philosophy, sociology, politics, and cultural studies, demonstrating that Ambedkar's biography demands and rewards interdisciplinary analysis. The presentations highlighted the pedagogical and emancipatory power of Ambedkar's biography, as well as the methodological diversity emerging within the field, ranging from film analysis to textual critique.



The valedictory session was marked by a memorable address from Mr. Ashok Gopal, who discussed the challenges of narrating Ambedkar's biography, including the scarcity of archives, the dangers of myth-making, and the omnipresence of gaps in historical records. Gopal urged scholars to adopt critical methodologies that balance the need for archival thoroughness with interpretive imagination. The concluding remarks by Professor Umesh Bagade underscored the need for ongoing research into Ambedkar's life and promoted interdisciplinary

approaches, especially among younger scholars. He commended student presenters for their fresh perspectives and called for greater documentation, not only of Ambedkar's personal narrative but also of the progressive movements his life inspired.

Throughout the seminar, participants engaged in dynamic discussions that showcased wide-ranging scholarship from classical biographical reviews to cutting-edge reinterpretations, and from student-led film analyses to the deployment of new interdisciplinary frameworks, the event provided vision and inspiration during its inaugural session, displayed methodological rigour and ethical responsibility within its academic panels, and closed with a reaffirmation of Ambedkar's pedagogical significance.



Notably, the collaborative organisational endeavour created a genuinely vibrant platform for reflection and dialogue, strengthening the scholarly community's resolve to continue interrogating and learning from Ambedkar's extraordinary legacy. As the event ended with a heartfelt vote of thanks, the importance of the seminar became clear: it advanced academic research, reaffirmed the emancipatory promise of Ambedkar's biography, and brought together public intellectuals, established and emerging researchers, and students from across India. The national seminar decisively demonstrated that Ambedkar's biography is not simply a historical record but a living resource for education,

social reform, and the ongoing struggle for justice in the 21st century.

DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR JAYANTI CELEBRATION, 14TH APRIL 2025

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti was celebrated with great enthusiasm and reverence on 14 April 2025 at Symbiosis Society's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial in collaboration with Dr Ambedkar Chair. The program commenced at 11:20 A.M., honouring the life, legacy, and vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The Chief Guest for the event was Shrimati Madhuritai Misal, Minister of State for Urban Development, Maharashtra. For security reasons, only a few photos were taken, and only a few people were allowed to meet her.

Dr. S. B. Mujumdar coordinated the event, and the dignitaries on stage included Dr. Vidya Yeravdekar, Dr. S. B. Mujumdar, Shrimati Madhuritai Misal, Mrs Sanjeevani Mujumdar, Dr. Swati Mujumdar, and Dr. Ramkrishna Raman. Dr. Swati Dixit gracefully hosted the program.

The event began with a heartfelt and insightful speech by Mrs. Sanjeevani Mujumdar. She spoke passionately about her efforts in establishing the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, emphasising that it is a living, evolving space. Every year, something new is introduced to keep the spirit of Babasaheb alive, such as holograms of Dr. Ambedkar, new exhibits, and interactive digital features.



She shared a personal story about how, as a Hindu woman, she met Dr S. B. Mujumdar, a Buddhist, and how their mutual admiration for Dr Ambedkar led to the creation of the museum. Mrs Mujumdar also spoke about Dr Ambedkar's remarkable educational journey, highlighting his extraordinary effort and discipline in achieving multiple degrees despite countless challenges. She touched upon essential moments from his life, including the Kalaram Mandir Satyagraha. She

detailed the rich collection housed in the museum—from books and artefacts to personal belongings and rare photographs.

She urged the audience to draw inspiration from Dr Ambedkar's lifestyle, which embodied simplicity, dedication, and service. She spoke about initiatives like the Darshan App, the Ambedkar Chair, and other annual innovations introduced at the museum to engage younger generations. She concluded by requesting further support from the Maharashtra Government to expand and maintain this vital space of knowledge and remembrance.



At 11:31 A.M., Shrimati Madhuritai Misal was felicitated by Dr. S. B. Mujumdar. Following this, Dr. Mujumdar delivered a powerful speech centred on women's empowerment. He praised Dr. Ambedkar's role in advocating for women's education and rights, drawing parallels with the work of Mahatma Phule and Savitribai Phule. He noted that while several Indian states have had female Chief Ministers, Maharashtra still awaits its first, and he expressed hope that this would change soon. He also acknowledged the contributions of contemporary leaders, such as Varsha Gaikwad, in carrying forward Ambedkar's legacy.

In her address, Chief Guest Shrimati Madhuritai Misal expressed heartfelt gratitude to Symbiosis International (Deemed University), the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial and the Dr. Ambedkar Chair for inviting her. She fondly recalled her time as a former Symbiosis student, sharing that it was an emotional and proud moment to return as a guest. She deeply appreciated Mrs. Sanjeevani Mujumdar's vision and tireless efforts to build and grow the museum, which is now a hub of education and innovation.

Shrimati Misal commended the museum's commitment to preserving Dr. Ambedkar's values and assured that the Maharashtra Government will support its initiatives. She shared stories about inclusivity in her political work, proudly mentioning the number of Dalit professionals

working under her leadership, and emphasised the importance of continued educational development. She lauded the Dalit community's progress in education and proudly shared that she supports the education of at least 10 underprivileged children.



Reaffirming her belief in Dr Ambedkar's vision of an educated and empowered society, she emphasised the need for new policies and programs that would ensure inclusive growth and social harmony. She concluded with a powerful note: "Let us walk in Babasaheb's footsteps and continue his mission of justice, equality, and education. Jai Bhim!"

The program concluded with a warm and sincere Vote of Thanks by Dr. Swati Dixit, who expressed gratitude to all the dignitaries, guests, and participants for making the event a grand success and a fitting tribute to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's timeless legacy.

COMMEMORATION OF THE DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF MATA RAMABAI AMBEDKAR

Date: 27th May 2025

Venue: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, Pune

Organised in collaboration with Symbiosis's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials, Pune

On 27 May 2025, the death anniversary of Mrs Ramabai Ambedkar, the revered wife of Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, was solemnly observed at Symbiosis's Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, Pune. The event was organised in collaboration with the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials. It was attended by academicians, research scholars, staff, students, and members of the public who came together to pay their respects and reflect on the extraordinary life and legacy of Ramabai Ambedkar.

Mrs. Ramabai Ambedkar, affectionately known as "Ramai", was born in 1896 in a modest Mahar family. Her life was one of relentless struggle, silent resilience, and unwavering support. Married to Dr B.R. Ambedkar at the young age of nine, she became his pillar of strength throughout his personal and public battles. Living through poverty, health struggles, and personal loss, including the death of four of her five children, Ramabai bore each hardship with extraordinary dignity and grace. Though she remained away from the public eye, her role in Babasaheb's life was monumental. She took care of the household, endured long absences, and supported his academic pursuits abroad, all without complaint. Dr. Ambedkar himself acknowledged her contribution in his writings, deeply mourning her untimely death in 1935 and crediting her sacrifices as foundational to his mission for social justice and reform. Ramabai's life, therefore, is not merely that of a wife, but that of a silent revolutionary, whose emotional and spiritual support allowed one of India's greatest minds to fulfil his destiny.



The event commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, a traditional symbol of knowledge and reverence, by Mrs Sanjeevani Mujumdar, Director of Dr Baba Saheb Museum and Memorial, and Prof. Ajay Choudhary, Chair Professor of Dr Ambedkar Chair. This marked the beginning of a profoundly heartfelt and contemplative program.



Mrs Sanjeevani Mujumdar delivered the inaugural speech, sharing emotional reflections on Ramabai Ambedkar's silent yet monumental role in Indian history. She spoke of the need to bring women's sacrifices, especially those of historical figures, into the mainstream narrative, as their contributions often remain overshadowed by those of their male counterparts.

She recalled the personal challenges Ramabai endured while living in poverty, while Dr. Ambedkar was studying abroad, raising children under challenging conditions, and staying emotionally grounded despite life's relentless hardships. Her speech emphasised Ramabai's spiritual strength, her unwavering patience, and her deep moral character. Two students associated with the memorial's library then took the stage to offer their individual tributes. Speaking from a younger generation's perspective, they highlighted how Ramabai's quiet courage and resilience offer timeless lessons in strength, humility, and sacrifice. They also reflected on how historical figures like her deserve more recognition in academic and public spaces. Their heartfelt words expressed admiration and the need for youth to reconnect with such role models whose values remain relevant in contemporary society. The final address was delivered by Ms Deepali Kamble, Research Scholar at the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International (Deemed University). In a well-researched and poignant reflection, she emphasised Ramabai Ambedkar's cultural and emotional significance in Ambedkarite discourse.



Ms. Kamble pointed out how Ramabai's life is often confined to domestic references, but a closer examination reveals a woman of immense inner strength and resilience. She urged researchers, scholars, and academic institutions to document and study Ramabai's life with the seriousness it deserves, suggesting that her lived experiences offer insight into the gendered dimensions of social reform and the personal cost of revolutionary work.



She concluded her address by calling for the inclusion of Ramabai's story in academic curricula, especially in courses on gender studies, social reform, and Indian history.



The program concluded with a vote of thanks extended to all the dignitaries, speakers, participants, and organisers. Special appreciation was given to the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University) for its continued commitment to research, education, and social awareness related to the legacy of Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Attendees left the venue with a sense of reflection and inspiration, reminded of the importance of remembering not just the faces of change but also the hearts that quietly fuelled those revolutions from behind the scenes.

COMMEMORATION OF THE DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR

On the occasion of the death anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar at Symbiosis's Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials. The program was organised by Symbiosis's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials and the Dr. Ambedkar Chair to pay a respectful tribute to her memory on 29 May 2025. As part of the program, floral tributes were offered to a photograph of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar by Mrs. Sanjeevani Mujumdar, Director, Symbiosis's Dr. Babasaheb

Ambedkar Museum & Memorials, and Dr Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, symbolising collective remembrance and gratitude for her contributions.



Dr. Maisaheb Ambedkar, also known as Dr. Savita Ambedkar, was the second wife of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and a dedicated supporter of his mission for social justice and equality. A medical doctor by profession, she stood by Babasaheb during the most critical phases of his life, providing care and emotional support, especially as his health declined. After their marriage in 1948, she became an integral part of his personal and public life, including the historic moment of their conversion to Buddhism. Beyond her role as a life partner, she played a crucial part in preserving Babasaheb's legacy by safeguarding his writings and personal belongings. Her quiet but powerful contributions continue to be remembered as a symbol of loyalty, resilience, and commitment.



The program featured Dr. Ajay Chaudhary, Chair Professor, Dr Ambedkar Chair; Dr L. N. Venkataraman, Associate Professor, MIT WPU; some Ph.D students; and other members of the Ambedkar Museum & Memorials, as well as MPSC and UPSC aspirants studying at the Ambedkar Library. Their participation underscored the continuing relevance of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's life and work, especially among scholars and youth.



During the Program, Mrs Sanjeevani Mujumdar shared heartfelt memories, highlighting the deep connection between the Mujumdar family and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. She recalled how Maisaheb had entrusted the preservation of Babasaheb Ambedkar's belongings to the Symbiosis institution with great faith and responsibility, reflecting her trust and vision for the future.



Following this, Dr. Ajay Chaudhary spoke about the invaluable contributions of Dr. Maisaheb Ambedkar and reflected on the deep companionship shared between Babasaheb and Maisaheb. He highlighted that the relationship between Dr. Ambedkar and Maisaheb, as husband and wife, was strong and meaningful, and said that today's generation can learn a lot from their bond and take inspiration from how they supported and respected each other.



The program concluded with a renewed commitment to uphold the legacy of both Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Maisaheb Ambedkar, not only through remembrance but also by emulating their values in research, education, and social responsibility.

LECTURES, INCLUDING DR AMBEDKAR MEMORIAL LECTURE, ETC

Dr Ambedkar Memorial Lecture 2025

The Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture was officially convened on October 6, 2025, at the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial on Senapati Bapat Road, Pune. Commencing at 10:30 AM, this year's program focused on the critical theme, "Caste in/and The State Policy: Ascription, Identities and Democratic Politics." The event was strategically designed to bring scholarly attention to the persistent and evolving intersections between caste hierarchies, state-driven policies, and the broader framework of democratic governance in India. The program was organised by Symbiosis International (Deemed University) through the Dr. Ambedkar Chair and the Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies, in close collaboration with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Furthermore, the event received significant institutional support through sponsorship from the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India.



The lecture was attended by a distinguished panel of academics and experts who provided a multidimensional perspective on the subject. The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Surinder S.

Jodhka, a renowned Professor of Sociology from the Centre for the Study of Social Systems at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. Prof. Jyoti Chandiramani graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour, while Prof. Murzban Jal presided over the academic session as the Chairperson. The proceedings were hosted and chaired by Prof. Ajay Choudhary, holder of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, who facilitated the transition between the program's segments. The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks presented by Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, who expressed gratitude to the sponsors, organisers, and participants for their contributions to the successful execution of the lecture.



The primary mandate of the Dr. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture was to establish a rigorous intellectual platform for critical discourse regarding the role of caste within contemporary Indian policy. Central to this objective was the intent to honour and perpetuate the intellectual legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, specifically his pioneering scholarship on social justice and structural equality. The lecture sought to encourage a high-level scholarly debate on the challenges Indian democracy faces in addressing deeply entrenched caste-based discrimination.



Beyond historical reflection, the lecture aimed to examine the "evolving nature" of caste, particularly how it adapts to modernisation, economic reforms, and changing democratic tactics. By fostering an academic dialogue on policy frameworks, the event intended to provide actionable insights for social transformation and the realisation of more inclusive governance. By integrating academic theory and policy analysis, the lecture served as a vital forum for reimagining a social order aligned with democratic ideals of equity and representation.



PUBLICATION OF BOOKS / ARTICLES/JOURNALS / OTHER SCHOLARLY MATERIALS (ELECTRONIC AND HARDCOPY)

1. Publication will be done for the two projects that are in progress
 - Socio-Cultural and Educational Context of Schooling: An Assessment on the Learning Environment of Students in the Urban Peripheries of Pune.
 - Inclusion, Diversity and Excellence: A Comparative Study on the Public and Private Universities in Maharashtra
2. Rethinking Gross Enrollment Ratio: A Review of Higher Education Access in Maharashtra by Monalisa Behera and Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, published in Economic and Political Weekly on 31 Jan 2026.
3. Digital Pedagogy and Enrolment in Maharashtra After NEP 2020: Opportunities and Barriers for Marginalised Learners by Monalisa Behera in the journal Educational Waves: A Monthly International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (E.W.M.I.J.M.R.) Peer-Reviewed -Refereed Journal in September 2025
4. Published Chapter "When Data Divides: The Digital Gap in Math Education and Its Moral Cost" in the book "Mathematics Education in the Era of Education 4.0" by Monalisa Behera, by KBD Publication in Nov 2025
5. "Widening or Bridging the Divide? The Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-Driven Educational Technologies in Shaping the Gross Enrollment Ratio in Underprivileged Communities in India" in the edited book "Navigating Ethical Complexities for Responsible AI Integration in Education," by Monalisa Behera and Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, accepted in Springer Nature Switzerland AG
6. "Empathy-Focused Teaching Practices to Highlight Retention and Enrollment of Students in Blended Learning Environments" Accepted in the edited book "Empathy-Driven Learning: Harnessing Emotional Intelligence in Educational Technology" by Monalisa Behera and Dr. Hemangi Kadlak in Springer Nature
7. "The Role of Democratic Leadership in Shaping Employee Experience and Institutional Culture: Towards Sustainable Academia" accepted in "IGI Global edited volume" by Dr. Hemangi Kadlak and Dr. Ratan Sarkar.

8. Published one article on the Stop Dowry System: the Vaishnavi Hagawane case, Pune, by Deepali Kamble in Marathi in Sakal Newspaper on June 9, 2025.
9. The policy discussion on 'Language in Education: A Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on the Three-Language Formula' on 5 July 2025, was organised by the Dr. Ambedkar Chair in collaboration with the Symbiosis Centre for Higher Education Research and Policy Advocacy (SCHERPA). The report will be published on the respective Centre's website.

LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION: A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER POLICY DIALOGUE ON THE THREE-LANGUAGE FORMULA IN MAHARASHTRA 2025

Executive Summary

India's linguistic diversity, encompassing 1,369 languages, 270 mother tongues, and countless dialects, has long shaped its educational, cultural, and political life. Language is not only a tool of communication but also a marker of identity, social belonging, and artistic preservation. The Three-Language Formula (TLF), introduced in the 1968 National Policy on Education and reaffirmed in National Education Policy 2020, was envisioned as a framework to balance regional identity, national integration, and global connectivity. Yet, its implementation remains inconsistent and contested, even in states such as Maharashtra, where the politics of Marathi identity, resistance to Hindi, and neglect of

tribal and minority languages complicate its outcomes.

This report, jointly prepared by SCHERPA and the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, explores these complexities through a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue involving students, teachers, parents, policymakers, and policy observers. Insights reveal deep concerns, including the continued preference for English, the recognition of the mother tongue as essential for cognitive and cultural development, and structural inequities in government and private schools. The study also highlights the limited inclusion of tribal and minority languages and an acknowledgement of Hindi's perceived relevance in certain regions. In Maharashtra, the recognition of Marathi as a singular linguistic identity ignores the plurality of "Marathis" spoken by Dalit, Adivasi, and nomadic communities, whose linguistic and literary contributions remain under-recognised. Structural challenges, such as shortages of multilingual teachers, a lack of culturally responsive materials, weak digital infrastructure, and disparities between urban and rural schools, further impede the practical realisation of the TLF's objectives.

The report recommends measures such as flexible curricula and culturally responsive pedagogy, teacher training, resource development, assessment reforms, equity-focused financing and establishment of language resource centres at schools. Revitalising the TLF requires moving beyond symbolic policy to genuine linguistic justice, valuing diversity, protecting endangered languages, and ensuring equitable access to education in Maharashtra's multilingual classrooms.

AWARENESS / EXTENSION/TRAINING / TEACHING PROGRAM (ONLINE AND OFFLINE)

ONE-DAY FREE OFFLINE WORKSHOP ON THE TOPIC "FROM CONVERSATION TO PUBLICATION: THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND AI IN ENHANCING RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION IN DR AMBEDKAR THOUGHTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES"

The Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), in collaboration with the Department of Education, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), successfully organised a One-Day Free Offline Workshop titled "From Conversation to Publication: The Use of Technology and AI in Enhancing Research and Publication in Dr. Ambedkar Thoughts and Social Sciences" on Saturday, 24 January 2026, at the Multipurpose Hall of the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, Pune. The workshop

was conceptualised as a focused academic intervention aimed at strengthening research, writing, collaboration, and publication capacities of Ph.D scholars working in the domains of Dr. Ambedkar Thoughts, Social Sciences, and interdisciplinary research.



In the present academic landscape, research practices are increasingly shaped by digital technologies and artificial intelligence. Recognising this transformation, the workshop aimed to sensitise scholars to the ethical, responsible, and effective use of AI-driven tools in academic research. The programme sought to bridge the gap between scholarly discussions and concrete publication outcomes by familiarising participants with contemporary research technologies that support idea development, literature review, drafting, revision, and publication strategies. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that technological support enhances academic rigour without compromising originality, critical thinking, or ethical standards.

The workshop was designed as a full-day academic programme and was open exclusively to Ph.D scholars working in Social Sciences, Dr. Ambedkar Thoughts, and related interdisciplinary areas. Participation was limited, and selection was based on the relevance of applicants' research themes to the workshop's objectives. The programme was offered free of charge, reinforcing the Chair's commitment to inclusive and accessible academic capacity-building. All selected participants were provided with lunch and were required to bring their personal laptops to facilitate hands-on learning during the sessions.



The workshop's academic structure comprised two intensive sessions, strategically divided into a pre-lunch and post-lunch format to ensure conceptual clarity, followed by practical application. The first session, conducted in the morning before lunch, was delivered by Dr. Krishnakantha Roy from the Symbiosis Institute of Economics. This session focused on the theoretical and ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence in academic research and publication. Dr. Roy elaborated on how AI can assist researchers in refining research questions, structuring arguments, and strengthening literature reviews, while also cautioning against over-dependence and unethical practices such as plagiarism

and uncritical content generation. He emphasised the importance of transparency, citation practices, and academic accountability when using AI tools, especially in social science research that engages with sensitive themes such as caste, gender, inequality, education, and marginalisation.

The second session, held after lunch, was conducted by Dr. Ajittha Deshmukh from MIT World Peace University, Pune. This session was highly interactive and application-oriented, focusing on the practical use of AI- and digital research tools across the research process. Participants were introduced to tools such as Mind Mapping applications for conceptual clarity, ChatGPT for drafting and refining academic text, Perplexity for research-based information retrieval, ScienceSpace for navigating and understanding scholarly articles, and Xtract for extracting and organising academic data. Through live demonstrations and guided explanations, Dr. Deshmukh illustrated how these tools can be integrated into research workflows for literature review, argument development, and publication preparation, while maintaining ethical and scholarly standards.



Following the academic sessions, a structured discussion and interaction were held with the Dean of the Department of Education and Research, Professor SCHERPA, and Professor Neeta Inamdar. This interaction focused on the need to build sustained academic communities among Ph.D scholars across institutions. The discussion highlighted the importance of regular scholarly interaction, collaborative research initiatives, peer learning, and idea-sharing platforms, particularly for scholars engaged in Ambedkarite and interdisciplinary social science research. Participants actively engaged in the discussion and shared their perspectives on how institutional support and digital platforms can facilitate continuous academic exchange beyond formal workshops.

The concluding segment of the programme included the

distribution of participation certificates to all attendees, formally recognising their engagement and learning outcomes. As a distinctive and enriching component of the workshop, participants were taken on a guided visit to the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial. The visit allowed scholars to engage with the life, ideas, and legacy of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar through curated exhibits. A special highlight of the visit was the hologram presentation of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, which offered an immersive, reflective experience, reinforcing the intellectual and historical grounding of the workshop's academic themes.



In conclusion, the workshop was successfully conducted and met its intended objectives. It provided Ph.D scholars with a comprehensive understanding of how to ethically and effectively integrate technology and artificial intelligence into academic research and publication practices. The programme fostered interdisciplinary dialogue, enhanced methodological awareness, and strengthened academic networking among participants. The combination of expert lectures, hands-on training, interactive discussions, and experiential learning through the museum visit made the workshop academically rigorous, engaging, and impactful. The initiative significantly contributed to capacity building in research and publication in the domains of Dr. Ambedkar Thoughts and Social Sciences, aligning with Symbiosis International (Deemed University)'s broader academic vision.

PARTICIPANT IN SEMINARS / CONFERENCES / MEETINGS OF THE CHAIR PROFESSOR AND THEIR STAFF

- **Chair Professor - 14**
- **Assistant Professor - 09**

Invited lectures (Prof Ajay Choudhary)

1. Invited as a guest in Yuvavani to speak on 'Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitutional Legacy and the Young Generation, organised by Akashvani Pune on 4/04/2025
2. Invited as a keynote speaker at the multidisciplinary national conference on 'Values and Ethics in Education: A Journey from Tradition to Modernisation,' organised by Dhanvate National College, Nagpur, in association with the Indian Indigenous Society on 11/04/2025.
3. Invited as a keynote speaker in the two-day International Conference on 'Dr. Ambedkar's Vision for Developed India', organised by the Department of Marathi and by SC, ST, and OBC employees of Vishbharti, on the eve of the 134th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, from 13/04/2025 to 14/04/2025.
4. Invited as a special guest to speak on 'Persisting Challenges, Emerging Realities: Issues in Indian Society Today,' organised by the Department of Sociology, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee College, New Delhi, and additionally, share my insights with students in the student seminar on 'Issues in Indian Society: Continuity and Change' on 25/04/2025
5. Invited as a one of the speaker to speak on 'The vision of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on Freedom for Women in context of Socio-cultural Practices' at two-days National Seminar 'Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: A Man of the Millennium & A Catalyst for Women Rights and Social Justice.'" organised by Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, dated -29th April, 2025, to 30th April, 2025.
6. Invited as a guest speaker to deliver a lecture on the " Dr. Ambedkar's Idea of Social Equality" and 'Methodology of Social Sciences,' which are dated 9th and 10th July, 2025, respectively, organised by Dr. Ambedkar Chair, RTM Nagpur University.
7. Invited as a Guest speaker in the Mahatma Ayankali Memorial lecture organised by the

Ayankali Institute of Historical Studies, Trivandrum, dated 17th and 18th August 2025

8. Invited as a Guest speaker to deliver a lecture on "Doing Research on Caste: Methodological Triangulation," organised by Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kerala, dated 20th August, 2025
9. Invited as a Guest speaker to deliver a lecture on Dr Ambedkar's philosophy of education, organised by Kerala Dalit Panther, PANTHERCAMPUS, MUTTEL, MANNAR, ALAPPUZHA, KERALA - date: 21st-22nd August, 2025.
10. Invited as a Discussant- "Ongoing Research and on the Book' Culture of Learning" organised by Government Degree College, Nobra, Union Territory of Ladakh on 16th September, 2025
11. Invited as a Guest Lecture on the topic 'Students and the sites of learning in higher education: critical reflections on India's Education Policy' organised by the Department of Sociology, Govt. Eliezer Joldan Memorial College, Leh on 18 September 2025
12. Invited as a Guest Lecturer on the topic "New Education Policy (NEP) focusing on its challenges and Prospects in higher education," organised by Government Degree College, Ladakh, 19th September 2025.
13. Invited to participate and present a paper at the National Conference on "Buddhism and Local Knowledge System in Central Asia" organised by the Department of Earth Sciences, Institute of Mountain Environment, Bhaderwah Campus, University of Jammu, dated 22nd & 23rd September, 2025
14. Invited to participate as a discussant in the EI Asia-Pacific Conference on Academic Freedom and Democracy, 15-17 October 2025, Kochi, Kerala.

Dr. Hemangi Kadlak

1. Delivered a talk in an International Conference on Compassion, Peace and Transformation as a guest of honour on the topic "Culture and Social Reconciliation: A Pathway for the Reclamation of Human Personality" organised by the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, International Association of Educators for World Peace, Confederation of Indian Universities and the Global

Peace Foundation at Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, Leh, Ladakh from 23 to 25 August 2025.

2. Delivered a talk in a one-day workshop as a chief guest on the topic "The Social Work Profession: A Pathway to Self and Social Reconstruction" at Orange City College of Social Work, Nagpur, on 12 August 2025.
3. Conducted a session on "Reconstructing the Self and Society through the Lens of Sociology and Social Work Education" at the Department of Sociology, RTM Nagpur University on 11 August 2025
4. Guest speaker for three organisations, the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development, Krantisiha Bahuddeshiya Sevabhavi Sanstha, and Rashtramata Centre, jointly organised a series of talks in Jalna on May 3 and 4, 2025. The first session was aimed at students preparing for competitive exams and focused on career planning and personality development.
5. The second session addressed women, covering topics such as entrepreneurship development and menstrual hygiene. The third session featured an open discussion with community leaders.
6. Delivered a talk as the chief speaker on the occasion of the 134th birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, organised by Vikramshila Prabodhini, Pune, on 14 April 2025.
7. Conducted a session for Shri Navalmal Firodia Law College, Pune, students on 'Youth Contribution and Start-up' in a NSS Camp on 21 January 2026.
8. Became Editor in the Journal Contemporary South Asia, Taylor & Francis, from 14 November 2025.
9. Invited to participate in 'The vision of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on Freedom for Women in context of Socio-cultural Practices' at a two-day National Seminar 'Dr B.R. Ambedkar: A Man of the Millennium & A Catalyst for Women Rights and Social Justice' organised by Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, dated 29th April, 2025, to 30th April, 2025.

TWO-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR ON DR. AMBEDKAR AND THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION: PATHWAYS TO SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUALITY, AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

Prof. Ajay Choudhary and Dr. Hemangi Kadlak participated in this seminar. The two-day National Seminar on "Dr. Ambedkar and the Indian Constitution: Pathways to Social Justice, Equality, and Inclusive Development in Contemporary India" was organised by the Dr Ambedkar Chair, Andhra University, in collaboration with IIM Visakhapatnam, under the scheme of the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. The seminar was held on 14 and 15 November 2025 at the IIM building on the Andhra University campus in Visakhapatnam, as part of the national celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India and the campaign "Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Swabhimaan." The overall vision of the seminar was to bring together all Dr Ambedkar Chairs across the country on a single platform so that their research, teaching, and outreach efforts could be shared, discussed, and strengthened collaboratively. The mission was to link the diverse thrust areas of individual Chairs, such as social justice, education, gender equality, digital empowerment, environmental justice, tribal welfare, and inclusive development, with the values and spirit of the Indian Constitution as envisioned by Dr B.R. Ambedkar. The organisers also aimed to build stronger bridges between academia and policymaking, so that the insights generated in universities could inform public policy and, at the same time, government initiatives could be critically and constructively discussed by scholars. An essential outcome of the seminar was a published volume of proceedings with an ISBN, serving as a permanent scholarly record of the contributions of various Chair Professors and researchers.

The inaugural session on Day 1 commenced in a formal and dignified manner with an invocation, the lighting of the lamp, and the singing of "Vandemataram." This created a solemn atmosphere, reminding everyone of the constitutional values and the legacy of Dr. Ambedkar. The Organising Secretary welcomed all the dignitaries, Chair Professors, paper presenters, and participants, and briefly introduced the seminar's theme and objectives. Bouquets and mementoes were presented to the guests, acknowledging their contribution and presence. Senior academic leaders, including the Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University and the Director of IIM Visakhapatnam, addressed the gathering and underlined the importance of Ambedkar's ideas in shaping

contemporary higher education, governance, and social policy. They also highlighted that Andhra University, with its long history and centenary celebrations approaching in 2026, and IIM Visakhapatnam, a newer institution focused on innovation and ethical leadership, together provided an appropriate setting for such a national-level dialogue.

The inaugural programme featured a special address by an invited speaker who situated the seminar within the broader context of India's social and economic transformation. This talk emphasised that Ambedkar's journey from fighting untouchability and caste oppression to drafting the Constitution offers a robust moral framework to understand current inequalities and to design policies that genuinely promote social justice. A central highlight of the inaugural session was the Chief Guest address by Shri Amit Yadav, IAS, Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, who joined the seminar online. In his virtual speech, he focused on the theme "From Welfare to Empowerment: Building a Future-Ready Social Justice System." He explained how India's social justice agenda has gradually shifted from a purely welfare-based approach focused mainly on relief and protection to an empowerment-driven approach that builds capabilities, confidence, and dignity among marginalised communities. He stressed that real inclusion means viewing citizens not as passive recipients of aid, but as active participants and nation-builders. Shri Amit Yadav underlined the role of scholarships, skilling programmes, entrepreneurship support, and digital public infrastructure in enabling long-term empowerment. He also highlighted how data-driven governance, transparency, and accountability can make welfare delivery more effective and inclusive. After his online address, the new online portal for Dr. Ambedkar Chairs was formally launched, symbolising the government's commitment to networking and supporting Chairs across Indian universities.

Following the inaugural, Day 1 moved into the technical sessions. The first technical session, on the theme "Constitutional Vision and Social Justice," was introduced by Prof. Y. Satyanarayana, Founding Vice-Chancellor of Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University. He placed Ambedkar's contribution to the Constitution at the centre of India's democratic project and spoke about constitutional morality as a guiding principle for both institutions and citizens. The research papers in this session addressed different dimensions of Ambedkar's idea of justice. One paper examined Ambedkar's philosophy of social justice and applied it to contemporary environmental inequality, arguing that

issues such as pollution, water scarcity, and displacement affect Dalits, Adivasis, and the poor in disproportionate ways. Another paper discussed the universal principles of the Indian Constitution, showing how equality, liberty, and fraternity can act as common threads that bind a diverse nation. A third paper explored the role of education and constitutional provisions in shaping anti-caste pedagogy, pointing out that classrooms and curricula remain key sites for challenging caste hierarchies. There were also presentations on the "soul of the Constitution," particularly the centrality of dignity in constitutional adjudication, and on the evolution from protection to participation in governance for particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs). Together, these papers reaffirmed that the Constitution is not only a legal document, but also a moral charter aimed at restructuring Indian society on egalitarian lines.

The second technical session on Day 1, on the theme "Equality and Human Dignity: Empowering the Marginalised," moved the discussion from theoretical frameworks to more grounded issues. The introductory address by the invited speaker emphasised that constitutional safeguards such as reservations and special provisions are not charity, but instruments of compensatory justice that seek to correct historical wrongs. Papers in this session covered a wide range of topics. One paper revisited Ambedkar's vision for discriminated groups, tracing the long history of Dalit struggles for human dignity and political representation. Another presentation analysed caste representation in Indian media and showed how upper-caste dominance in newsrooms often leads to under-reporting or distorted reporting of caste-based violence and discrimination. A quantitative, policy-oriented paper evaluated social equity in the Jal Jeevan Mission, highlighting that access to safe drinking water remains unequal across regions and social groups. Other papers studied the influence of women and youth social entrepreneurship on community development, the socio-economic conditions of handloom weavers in Tamil Nadu, and the relevance of Ambedkar's democratic socialism in the era of neo-liberal globalisation. These contributions indicated that caste, class, region, and gender intersect to shape people's life chances, and that Ambedkar's insistence on equality, fraternity, and dignity remains highly relevant.

After the intensive academic discussions of Day 1, participants were taken on a city tour of Visakhapatnam, often described as the "Jewel of the East Coast." The tour introduced them to the city's beaches, hills, and urban development, and also provided an informal setting for

networking and further discussion among Chair Professors and researchers. In the evening, a special networking dinner was organised at the Shore Front on Vizag Beach. This gathering allowed participants to build professional relationships, explore opportunities for future collaboration, and exchange experiences of running Ambedkar Chairs across different institutional environments in India.

Day 2 began with fresh energy and a continued focus on connecting Ambedkar's vision to present-day challenges. The third technical session, on the theme "Inclusive Development and Nation Building," started with an introductory talk by Prof. Balacharan, an economist with international experience. He reflected on Ambedkar's idea of economic democracy, emphasising that political democracy cannot survive without social and economic equality. The papers in this session explored Ambedkar's conception of social and economic democracy as rooted in the principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity. One paper discussed how Ambedkar viewed democracy as a way of life that requires the annihilation of caste and the removal of structural barriers to opportunity. Another paper analysed "The Constitution and Inclusive Development in Contemporary India," arguing that Articles such as 14, 17, and 32, along with affirmative action provisions, create a legal framework for inclusive growth, but that implementation gaps and entrenched social prejudices still limit their full impact. Several papers focused on tribal communities and rural populations: one examined awareness, access, and agency regarding government financial schemes among tribal communities in West Bengal, while another evaluated welfare policies aimed at the Baiga and Gond tribes in Madhya Pradesh as instruments of economic development and empowerment. There were also contributions on women's empowerment in Uttarakhand, inspired by Ambedkar's writings, and on the challenges posed by new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, to constitutional democracy, calling for a careful balance between innovation, rights, and accountability.

The fourth technical session, on the theme "Digital India to Social India: Reinterpreting Ambedkar in the 21st Century," addressed the rapidly changing technological landscape and its implications for justice and equality. In his introductory remarks, the invited expert from the Software Technology Parks of India explained how properly designed digital public infrastructure can improve transparency and inclusion, but also warned that technology can deepen inequalities if it reflects existing social biases. The papers in this session addressed topics such as social justice in the age of

algorithms, the risks of digital discrimination in welfare delivery, and data inequality. One paper revisited Ambedkar's stress on representation and anti-bias principles and applied them to automated decision-making systems, pointing out that algorithmic tools used in welfare, policing, or recruitment can unintentionally reinforce caste, class, and gender inequalities if they are not carefully designed and regulated. Another contribution examined Ambedkar's views on empowering marginalised, weaker sections and related them to contemporary digital policy debates. A philosophical paper reflected on the journey "from divine kingship to constitutional morality," connecting Ambedkar's reinterpretation of sovereignty and citizenship to present concerns in a digital republic. The session also included a paper on the Preamble of the Indian Constitution as the philosophical foundation and "living spirit" of Indian democracy and a paper on the Constitution in the digital age, arguing that constitutional morality must guide governance and rights interpretation in the era of rapid technological change.

In the afternoon of Day 2, the valedictory session brought the seminar to a formal close. The Co-convenor welcomed the guests and participants, and the Organising Secretary presented a brief seminar report summarising the two days of deliberations, the number of papers presented, and the main themes that emerged. Certificates were distributed to participants and presenters, acknowledging their contributions. A few participants were invited to share their feedback, and they expressed appreciation for the opportunity to interact with Chair Professors and experts from across the country and various disciplines. A senior representative from the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment addressed the gathering, appreciated the work of the Dr. Ambedkar Chairs, and stressed the Ministry's commitment to supporting such initiatives in the future. The valedictory session ended with the National Anthem, followed by high tea and informal conversations as participants prepared to disperse.

Over the two days, the seminar successfully achieved its aim of creating a national convergence platform for all Dr. Ambedkar Chairs. The discussions showed that Ambedkar's thought continues to offer powerful tools for understanding and addressing contemporary challenges, ranging from caste discrimination, tribal marginalisation, and gender inequality to environmental injustice, digital exclusion, and the ethical use of technology. The event underlined that social justice in India must be understood as a continuum rather than a one-time outcome, requiring constant effort,

monitoring, and rethinking of policies and practices. It also demonstrated the value of collaboration-between universities, government departments, and civil society in keeping the Constitution a living document and in translating Ambedkar's ideals of equality, liberty, fraternity, and dignity into concrete policies and everyday practices. The forthcoming proceedings volume, containing the full papers presented at the seminar, will further consolidate this work and serve as a resource for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners who are committed to building a more just, inclusive, and democratic India.

REPORT ON NATIONAL-LEVEL "CONSTITUTION DAY PROGRAMME - 26 NOVEMBER 2025

The national-level "Constitution Day Programme - 2025" organised by the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, as the concluding ceremony of a year-long celebration of the adoption of the Indian Constitution on 26 November 2025. Conceptually, the programme is framed around the overarching theme "The Living Constitution: 75 Years of Democracy, Dignity and Development," presenting the Constitution not just as a legal charter but as a living, evolving framework that continues to shape governance, rights, development and public morality in contemporary India. The report-format design of the document combines an official invitation, thematic notes, panel structures and expected outcomes, reflecting both ceremonial and substantive academic-policy objectives.



The first central strand of the function is a National Conference with Panel Discussion I, titled "The Living Constitution in Action: Democracy, Dignity, and Development in the 21st Century," which aims to revisit 75 years of constitutional practice through the lens of transformation, adaptability and resilience. The background note explains that while the Constitution

articulated the ideals of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, the real test has been their translation into lived realities for all citizens, particularly under conditions of rapid digitalisation, struggles for social inclusion, evolving federal relations, and pressing environmental and gender justice concerns. Accordingly, the key themes proposed include the evolution of constitutional interpretation in response to social, political and technological change; the role of constitutional safeguards and institutions in sustaining democracy; the Constitution as a guarantor of human dignity through judicial interpretations of fundamental rights and expanding personal liberties; and the challenge of balancing economic growth with equity through welfare measures, affirmative action and inclusive governance.



The stated focus of Panel Discussion I is to critically analyse how the Indian Constitution has functioned as a "living instrument" of socio-economic and digital transformation, and to foreground the link between constitutional dignity and human development with an emphasis on marginalised communities. It explicitly seeks to open deliberation on new frontiers of constitutionalism such as environmental justice, data privacy, digital rights and gender equity, recognising that emerging technologies and globalised economic processes create novel rights questions and governance dilemmas. To facilitate this, the session is designed as an interdisciplinary dialogue among legal scholars, public policy experts, academicians, and students on the interplay between law, democracy, and development, positioning the conference as a site where constitutional theory, institutional practice, and policy debates intersect.



In terms of structure, Panel Discussion I follows a tightly organised session flow of 1 hour 30 minutes, beginning with a five-minute moderator's introduction that sets the context and introduces the panel, followed by a ten-minute opening address by the chairperson providing an intellectual framing of "The Living Constitution" and challenges of implementation. This is followed by a first round of panellist remarks (around eight minutes each) on designated sub-themes—evolution of constitutional interpretation, democratic safeguards and institutional resilience, rights and dignity, and constitutionalism in technological and social transitions—ensuring thematic coverage across doctrinal, institutional and socio-technological dimensions. A 20-minute moderated question-and-answer round, a 10-minute audience Q&A segment, and brief concluding reflections from each panellist and the chairperson complete the session, combining expert input with participatory engagement from students, Ambedkar Chairs, and faculty.



The second central strand is Panel Discussion II, titled "Constitutional Pathways to Social Justice and Inclusive Development: Realising Dr. Ambedkar's Vision in Contemporary India," which shifts the analytical focus squarely to social justice, inclusive development and Ambedkarite constitutionalism. The contextual note foregrounds Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's conception of the Constitution as a social covenant for equality and justice

that has underpinned India's democratic, developmental and social transformation, while also acknowledging enduring inequalities and the centrality of social justice to India's future. This session situates contemporary constitutionalism in relation to rapid digitalisation, changing social structures and emerging economic challenges, arguing that constitutional principles must remain at the core of any development paradigm that aspires to eradicate inequality, empower marginalised communities and ensure equitable growth.

The key themes identified for Panel II include "Social Justice as the Soul of the Constitution," with emphasis on the operationalisation of equality, affirmative action and participatory governance; the "Constitutional Mandate for Inclusive Development," examining interlinkages between Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles and Sustainable Development Goals; and "Dr. Ambedkar's Vision for a Just Society," especially its relevance for addressing caste, gender and regional disparities. The note also stresses "Bridging the Digital Divide". It views Digital India as an instrument for constitutional empowerment and participatory democracy, foregrounding the role of digital infrastructures in either reinforcing or dismantling structural marginalities. Contemporary challenges such as automation, urbanisation and environmental crises are framed as tests for safeguarding social justice. At the same time, the future vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047" is articulated as a horizon for building a just, inclusive and equitable India inspired by constitutional morality.



The focus of Panel II is threefold: to explore how the Constitution functions as a catalyst for social transformation and economic justice; to discuss the convergence between constitutional governance and sustainable development; and to assess how Ambedkar's ideas can guide India's pathway toward social equity in a digitally mediated democracy. The session team reflects deliberate interdisciplinarity, comprising a moderator who is a professor of computer science and AI and an Ambedkar Chair, a vice-chancellor of a national law

university as chairperson, and panellists drawn from civil society (NGO founder) and senior advocacy at the Supreme Court, thereby bringing technology, law, activism and policy experience into a shared conversation. The time allocation mirrors Panel I, with structured introductions, an opening conceptual framing, panellist interventions on equality and affirmative action, constitutional inclusion, digital empowerment, and environmental and socio-economic justice, followed by a question round, audience interaction, and concise concluding messages.

The document culminates in an explicit articulation of expected outcomes and significance, which reveals the normative and policy ambitions underlying the function. Expected outcomes include policy-oriented insights that can inform integration of social justice imperatives into development planning and governance; enhanced engagement of students and youth with the Constitution's social and moral dimensions; and systematic documentation of the proceedings in the form of a summary report and key takeaways to be published in a National Conference compendium for dissemination across universities and policy institutions. The significance note frames the panel as embodying Dr. Ambedkar's understanding of the Constitution as a "social gospel for justice and equality." It asserts that by aligning constitutional principles with inclusive development goals, the programme contributes directly to the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment's core objectives, thereby linking academic discussion, public pedagogy, and state policy in a single constitutional event.



DISCUSSIONS / DIALOGUES / MEETINGS

The one-day consultative workshop titled "Three-Language Formula," convened by the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, on July 5, 2025, provided a high-level platform for the critical examination of India's linguistic roadmap within the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The proceedings were grounded in the historical evolution of the formula-tracing its roots from the 1968 policy through its current iteration-which mandates a trilingual approach involving the mother tongue, a second Indian language (often Hindi or a regional alternative), and a third global language (typically English). The primary objective of the session was to move beyond the theoretical merits of multilingualism and confront the practicalities of fostering national unity through a curriculum that balances regional identity with global integration.



A significant portion of the discourse focused on the socio-pedagogical challenges inherent in current implementation strategies. Student participants and social activists highlighted a troubling trend where English is increasingly viewed as a "prestige language," often resulting in the systemic neglect of mother tongues and tribal dialects. This was starkly illustrated through documentary evidence from the Mulshi Taluka, which revealed a widening educational divide in rural and tribal regions due to a critical lack of bilingual resources and trained instructional staff. Educators and researchers argued that while English is an indispensable tool for social mobility and global communication, its early imposition should not come at the expense of students' primary linguistic foundation. Scientific consensus during the sessions reaffirmed that cognitive development and conceptual clarity are most effective when the medium of instruction aligns with the learner's home language.



Furthermore, the workshop addressed the structural and policy-level bottlenecks that hinder the successful rollout of the Three-Language Formula. Policy makers and researchers noted that the closure of Marathi-medium and other regional government schools is often a direct consequence of a shortage of qualified language teachers and inadequate infrastructure. The dialogue underscored that the NEP 2020's principle of "flexibility over uniformity" is essential; however, this flexibility requires significant state-level investment in human resources and curriculum development that reflects local cultural contexts. The consensus among the panels-comprising diverse voices from Kannada, Bhojपुरi, Banjara, and Ahirani speakers-was that language learning must be an inclusive process of discovery rather than a rigid administrative requirement.



In its final analysis, the workshop concluded that the Three-Language Formula is a vital instrument for maintaining India's pluralistic fabric, provided it is implemented with sensitivity and equity. The delegates inferred that for the policy to be successful, it must empower students to be "rooted and global" simultaneously. This involves treating all Indian languages with equal dignity while providing the necessary scaffolding for English proficiency. The event

concluded with a call for collaborative action among the state, educational institutions, and civil society to leverage India's linguistic diversity as a cognitive and social asset, ensuring that no student is marginalised because of their linguistic background.



INTER-CHAIR COLLABORATION PROGRAMME

INTER CHAIR COLLABORATION PROGRAM

The National Level One-Day Inter Chair Program, held on 28 October 2025 under the auspices of the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation in collaboration with the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Chair at Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University and Dr Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, was a comprehensive academic gathering devoted to the theme: "The History of Education & the Emancipation of Dalits, Adivasis, and Women." The event commenced with a symbolic candle-lighting ritual in front of Dr. Ambedkar's portrait, echoing the reverence for his transformative legacy and setting a profoundly reflective tone. The audience united in the RTM college song, reinforcing a collective spirit rooted in Ambedkarite values.

Dignitaries on the dais included renowned academic leaders and scholars. Dr. Avinash Fulzele formally introduced the guests and established the program's focus. Dr. Ajay Choudhary then contextualised the day's theme, outlining the intersection of educational history, social emancipation, and contemporary policy challenges. The inaugural session, presided over by Prof. Ashok Borker, Head of the Department of Sociology, welcomed keynote speaker Prof. Suresh Babu G. S., a distinguished scholar from Jawaharlal Nehru University. Prof. Babu delved into what it truly means to be educated, drawing on personal and academic dimensions of learning and self-realisation. He discussed the pervasive influence of caste in Indian society and education, referencing sociologists such as Emile Durkheim and exploring how morality, initially shaped by religion, now finds its ethical grounding within education. Prof. Babu also reflected on Ambedkar's intellectual journey, his transition from psychology to social psychology, pursuit of academic excellence (completing 52 courses in three years), and his transformative period at Columbia University under the mentorship of John Dewey. Key themes included institutional reforms, the principle of sociological imagination (that all problems are social rather than personal), and the multidimensional pursuit of freedom defined both as self-liberation and broader social emancipation.





After lunch, the program proceeded to a panel discussion, again chaired by Prof. Suresh Babu. Mayur Kudupale presented on conceptualising backwardness as an analytic category in educational research, tracing the evolution of debates in the field. Dr. L. N. Venkataraman engaged with the crossroads and challenges of contemporary higher education in India, examining policy gaps, access barriers, and the complexities of equity and transformation at institutional and systemic levels. Monalisa Behera provided an empirically grounded analysis of the digital divide and its tangible consequences on the educational opportunities and trajectories of marginalised women, focusing on key indicators such as gross enrollment ratio (GER), dropout rates, and access issues specific to Dalit and Adivasi communities.

The program resumed with Session II, chaired by Dr. Ajay Choudhary. Dr. Prachi Patil presented a nuanced analysis of Savitribai Phule's enduring legacy in Indian education, weaving in African American feminist scholarship (Patricia Hill Collins), the concept of "maternal pedagogy," community mothering, anti-caste consciousness, and Savitribai's poetic advocacy for girls' and women's education in English. Dr. Milind Ghate's presentation intensely interrogated the structural and systemic barriers facing Dalits in both school and higher education, emphasising issues of discrimination, exclusion, and policy failures. Dr. Dhananjay Sontakke concluded the session by examining the continuing fight against patriarchy in women's educational experiences, linking access, curriculum, and social mobility to the broader struggle for gender justice.



Throughout the day, the discussions integrated critical themes such as anticaste pedagogy, intersectionality, digital and structural inequalities, institutional reforms, the labour of "mothering" as educational work, and the urgency of democratising educational spaces. The interplay of historical legacy, philosophical analysis, and contemporary evidence-based critique reinforced the need for reforms that centre marginalised voices and experiences in policy and practice.



equity, justice, and emancipation through education. The program succeeded in catalysing scholarly dialogue, policy reflection, and institutional networking for the urgent project of inclusive education in India's evolving social landscape.



The event concluded with an articulate vote of thanks by Dr. Avinash Fulzele, who synthesised the day's deliberations, thanked the speakers, and emphasised the collective responsibility of scholars and educators to carry forward the mission of Dr. Ambedkar in advancing

OTHER WORK (ONLINE LECTURES)

1. A SPECIAL LECTURE ON "DR AMBEDKAR AND NAVAYANA BUDDHISM: OPENING NEW FORMS AND APPROACHES TO LIBERATION"

A Special Lecture on "Dr. Ambedkar and Navayana Buddhism: Opening New Forms and Approaches to Liberation" was organized on Friday, 9 May 2025, at 09:00 hours by the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies, Symbiosis International (Deemed University) under the auspices of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, a scheme of the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. The event was held online via Zoom, and the guest speaker was Dr. Santosh Raut, a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Harvard Divinity School, USA. The lecture aimed to explore Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's reinterpretation of Buddhism and how it opened new forms and approaches to liberation in modern India.



At 9:10 hours, the session was formally inaugurated by Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, assistant professor at the chair, who began with a warm welcome and a brief introduction to the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, highlighting its purpose to promote academic discourse and research on the works and legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Following this, the chair professor, Prof. Ajay Chaudhary, offered an insightful introduction to Buddhism in the context of

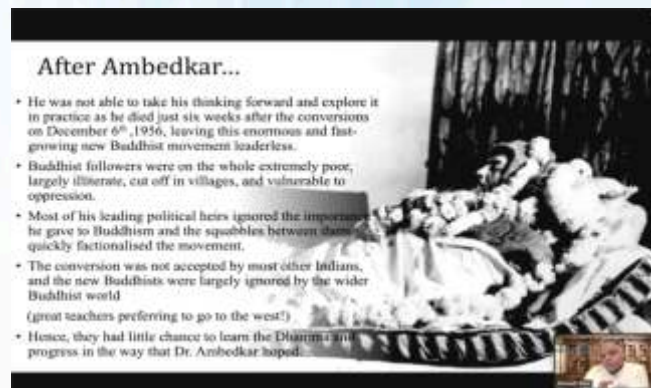
Ambedkarite philosophy and set the tone for the lecture by welcoming Dr. Santosh Raut, appreciating his academic contributions and scholarly engagement with the intersection of Buddhism, caste, and modern democratic values.



Dr. Santosh Raut began his lecture at 9:15 hours, extending his heartfelt wishes for the country's safety and well-being. He dedicated his talk to the Mahabodhi theme of Bodh Gaya, symbolising spiritual awakening and social responsibility. Dr. Raut then introduced the central theme of the lecture-Navayana Buddhism, or the "New Vehicle," conceptualised by Dr. Ambedkar as a modern, socially engaged form of Buddhism. He began by discussing the restoration of peace and traced the history of Buddhism, its disappearance, and reappearance in India through Ambedkar's radical reimagining.



Dr. Raut elaborated on Dr. Ambedkar's socio-political journey, particularly his work alongside Gandhiji and his critique of caste-based occupations that dehumanised vast sections of society. Dr. Raut emphasised Ambedkar's dream of an equal India, rooted in liberalism and social justice, where Buddhism could serve as a transformative force. He linked Ambedkar's democratic ideals to an ethical and mental attitude, citing examples from his writings such as Annihilation of Caste and The Riddles of Hinduism.



Dr. Raut spoke extensively about the intellectual and spiritual foundations of Ambedkar's thought. He referred to the Kalama Sutta, which encourages critical thinking and rational inquiry, and Ambedkar's metaphor of the "Flame of Reason", which symbolises enlightenment through awareness and responsibility. He further discussed Ambedkar's ecumenical approach, stressing the need for a religion that is rational, moral, and socially useful. In Ambedkar's view, Buddhism needed to be recast to meet these three criteria and serve as a vehicle for collective liberation.



One of the central themes of the lecture was the equality between monks and laypeople, which Ambedkar emphasised in his reinterpretation of the Buddhist Sangha. Dr. Raut highlighted the idea of an inclusive Sangha and its role in building a democratic society. Drawing from Thich Nhat Hanh, he discussed the provocative notion that "the next Buddha may be the Sangha", suggesting that collective spiritual awakening and social responsibility are more important than individual salvation.



Dr Raut also referred to Maisaheb Savita Ambedkar's reflection on her husband's conception of the Buddha. She recalled that Dr Ambedkar preferred depictions of the Buddha with open eyes, in a preaching posture, as a symbol of active engagement with the suffering of humanity, rather than passive meditation. This visualisation of Buddha mirrored Ambedkar's own ethical and political philosophy-compassionate, rational, and engaged.



The lecture then addressed the question of leadership in Buddhism, with Dr Raut explaining that Ambedkarite Buddhist leadership must strike a middle path, balancing spiritual depth with social transformation. He warned against the dangers of doctrinal extremism on one hand and individualistic spirituality on the other. According to him, spiritual and social efforts must be intertwined, functioning together to bring about justice, peace, and liberation.



Dr Raut also reflected on Ambedkar's views on law and constitutional morality. He quoted Ambedkar's warning that political democracy cannot last without social democracy, emphasising the importance of ethical governance guided not just by legal frameworks but also by society's social and moral conscience. He stressed the need for constitutional morality to uphold the values of liberty, equality, and fraternity.



Towards the end, the lecture touched upon the threefold structure of Navayana Buddhism: Buddha (leadership), Dhamma (ideology), and Sangha (institution). He elaborated on how these elements translate into lay activism, a commitment to social justice, and institutional engagement through movements, NGOs, media, and education. Dr Ambedkar's vision of the Sangha was not merely monastic but humanistic, a model community striving for the transformation of both individuals and society.



The session concluded with a vibrant Q&A segment, where participants posed insightful questions. One prominent question was, "Do we need the Buddha to practice Buddhism?" To this, Dr Raut highlighted the importance of Constitutional Morality, stating that Buddhism is not about idol worship but about the practice of ethical living guided by compassion, reason, and democratic values.



The event ended with a Vote of Thanks by Prof. Ajay Chaudhary, who appreciated Dr. Raut's thought-provoking lecture. Finally, Dr. Hemangi Kadlak concluded the session, expressing gratitude to the guest speaker and the attendees for their participation, and reiterating the importance of engaging with Dr. Ambedkar's legacy in the pursuit of a more just and equal society.



2. ONLINE LECTURE SERIES ON "DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR'S IDEA ON EDUCATION."

First Online Lecture on Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Idea on Education: Title- Dr. Ambedkar and Education

On 25 July 2025, at 10:00 A.M. at Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), a scheme of Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, successfully started an insightful online lecture series titled "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Idea on Education." This lecture marked the inaugural session of their curated online series dedicated to exploring the multifaceted educational philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, titled "Dr. Ambedkar and Education".



The session opened with a warm welcome and introductory remarks delivered by Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor at the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. She introduced the lecture series as a fresh initiative by the university, emphasising its aim to bring Dr. Ambedkar's profound thoughts on education to a broader audience and highlighting the transformative scope of his ideas. Dr. Kadlak also provided background on the Dr. Ambedkar Chair itself, established in December 2023 as the first such chair at a private university in India, envisioned as a hub for research and dialogue on Ambedkarite thought, especially its application in education.



Following this, Prof. Ajay Choudhary, Chair of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University), addressed the audience, stressing the relevance and urgency of understanding and disseminating Ambedkar's vision of education. He described how Dr. Ambedkar perceived education not merely as the acquisition of knowledge, but as an indispensable tool for social transformation and individual and collective empowerment, particularly in the context of India's entrenched caste system.

The principal lecture was delivered by the distinguished guest, Prof. Pradeep Meshram, Principal and Head of Sociology at J. M. Patel College, Bhandara. Prof. Meshram, known for his extensive research and leadership in social studies, women's studies, and academic administration, brought deep intellectual rigour to the discussion. He began by tracing Dr.

Ambedkar's conceptual understanding of education, highlighting how Ambedkar positioned education as the cornerstone of the annihilation of caste and as an essential vehicle for social mobility for historically marginalised communities in India.



Throughout his address, Prof. Meshram elaborated on Ambedkar's argument that the progress of any community is intimately tied to the spread and democratisation of education. He underscored Dr Ambedkar's advocacy for the education of women and the so-called 'Shudras' (lower castes), stressing that access to education could disrupt the mechanisms used historically to maintain caste-based oppression, such as the control of knowledge and sexuality by dominant religious groups. Prof. Meshram drew on Ambedkar's seminal works, including "Annihilation of Caste" and "Revolution and Counter-Revolution," to illustrate that for Ambedkar, educational reform was inseparable from social and cultural revolution.

A key aspect discussed was Ambedkar's insistence on critical thinking and the nurturing of a scientific temper through education. Prof. Meshram explained that Dr. Ambedkar did not view education as a mere end in itself, but rather as a means to equip individuals to question, reason, and transform unjust traditions and practices. He contended that this vision is especially relevant today, as policymakers and educators grapple with issues such as privatisation, unequal access, and cultural exclusion within the contemporary education system.



Prof. Meshram then explored Ambedkar's perspective on economic empowerment, illustrating how education was integral to improving people's livelihoods, enabling them to assume influential roles within bureaucracy and governance, and thereby actively participate in shaping society. The discussion further touched on the importance of inclusivity and the use of language to democratise education, echoing Ambedkar's own commitment to secular and equitable educational practices.

In the interactive Q&A session that followed, participants raised pertinent questions about the National Education Policy (NEP) and its alignment with Ambedkarite values. Prof. Meshram responded by critically analysing the policy, outlining the challenges posed by inadequate budgetary provisions, the risks of increasing privatisation, and the persistent exclusion of marginalised groups. He called for deliberate efforts to infuse policies with a scientific outlook and an inclusive ethos, as propounded by Dr. Ambedkar.

The program concluded with enthusiastic acknowledgement from attendees, many of whom expressed keen interest in further engaging with Ambedkarite thought and pedagogy in their own academic and professional contexts. Several thanked Prof. Meshram for his illuminating lecture and requested his contact details for continued dialogue.



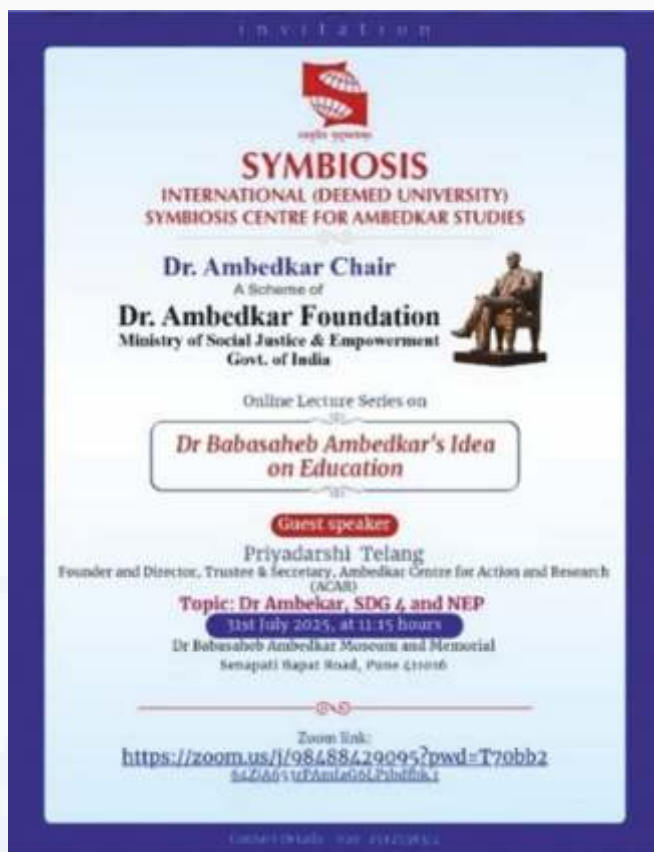
Overall, the event not only broadened understanding of Dr. Ambedkar's educational philosophy among the participants but also created a platform for ongoing critical engagement with questions of equity, social justice, and policy in Indian education. Prof. Ajay Choudhary and Dr. Hemangi Kadlak expressed their gratitude for the robust participation and reaffirmed their commitment to arranging more such dialogues in the future.



SECOND ONLINE LECTURE: DR. AMBEDKAR, SDG 4 AND NEP

Guest Speaker: Adv. Priyadarshi Telang, Founder & Director, Trustee & Secretary, Ambedkar Centre for Action and Research.

Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, welcomed the guest speaker and all participants, explaining the purpose of the lecture series and highlighting the Dr. Ambedkar Chair's activities. Following her, Prof. Ajay Choudhary, Chair Professor of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, formally welcomed the guest speaker and talked about the lecture series on Dr. Ambedkar's ideas on Education. Dr. Hemangi Kadlak then introduced Adv. Priyadarshi Telang, the session speaker, and handed over the virtual floor to him to begin his lecture.



The Dr. Ambedkar Chair organised an online lecture series on Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Idea on Education. Adv. Priyadarshi Telang, Founder and Director of the Ambedkar Centre, delivered the second lecture in this series, titled Dr. Ambedkar, SDG 4, and NEP, for Action and Research (ACAR) on 31 July 2025.

In his lecture, Telang sir stressed that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's educational philosophy remains highly relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and India's National Education Policy (NEP 2020). Ambedkar's idea of education was inextricably linked to his struggle for social justice; he saw education as the most potent tool for lifting the oppressed, particularly Dalits, Adivasis, women, and the working poor. His economic works also reflect this, with him repeatedly framing education as essential to social democracy and economic equality.

Adv. Telang sir linked this legacy to SDG 4, which seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." He described how SDG 4 is based on seven core targets, such as universal primary and secondary education, equal access to vocational and higher education, and the

abolition of gender disparities, as well as three means of implementation, including teacher training, scholarships, and safe educational environments. These are directly compatible with Ambedkar's vision of an equal society, facilitated by universal, high-quality education.



In relation to the NEP 2020, Telang sir stated that, while the policy promotes flexibility, multilingualism, and inclusivity in general, the imposition of Hindi remains a sensitive problem. States such as Tamil Nadu have opposed the Three Language Formula, preferring their own two-language strategy based on regional linguistic pride. Similarly, Karnataka has developed an educational language policy to preserve its cultural identity. This demonstrates that the state heavily influences the NEP's implementation and must be analysed in light of Ambedkar's concepts of decentralised government and linguistic justice.

The lecture highlighted significant gaps in governance and data systems, particularly in the UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education) and SDG tracking mechanisms. For example, data on Nomadic and De-notified Tribes (NT-DNTs), as well as Scheduled Tribe students in urban areas such as Pune, is either lacking or inaccurate. During the COVID-19 pandemic, PMC schools struggled enormously, although this was not represented in official reporting. In Pune, Scheduled Caste student enrolment in higher education is approximately 12%, although this is not clearly reflected in the UDISE database or SDG statistics. There is an apparent disparity between ground realities and government numbers.

Furthermore, Maharashtra, which is generally thought to lag behind Delhi or Kerala, has demonstrated leadership by investing 10-12% of its budget in education and releasing an SDG tracker in 2018. Pune's legacy in girls' education, founded on the contributions of Mahatma Phule and Savitribai Phule, was acknowledged. Still, the speaker also revealed caste-based exclusion even in

municipal records; for example, the name of the PMC Commissioner responsible for education governance was not found in any official documents, showing the systemic invisibility of marginalised voices.



The lecture also addressed the failure of School Management Committees (SMCs) to function correctly, despite being legally required to audit school budgets. In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, parents actively participate in these committees, but this model is not commonly replicated in Maharashtra. Institutions like District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) remain understaffed and underfunded, stifling NEP implementation at the grassroots level.

The digital divide and health disparities affecting indigenous and rural students received significant attention. Many households lack access to digital devices, but education programs assume universal connectivity. The absence of vocational and skill-based education, insufficient transportation subsidies, and a lack of mental health and nutritional support in schools further isolate vulnerable pupils. Even projects designed for manual scavenger groups require caste certificates, which are sometimes not documented in municipal records, barring them from privileges. Such concerns are indicative of a broader crisis in education policy, including documentation, accountability, and the invisibility of caste.



Finally, the lecture argued strongly that educational systems should be evaluated not only by enrolment rates or test scores, but also by how well they embody Ambedkar's revolutionary vision of equity, dignity, and liberty. Bridging the gaps between SDG 4, the NEP 2020, and Ambedkar's ideas requires not only structural improvements but also careful consideration of data systems, local administration, and caste-sensitive implementation. The discussion concluded with pressing issues: the need to improve tribal students' access to higher education, particularly in urban areas like Pune, and to create data systems that accurately reflect their presence, progress, and challenges.

THIRD ONLINE LECTURE "AMBEDKAR'S VISION ON EDUCATION AND CURRENT SCENARIO IN INDIA- PROGRESS AND GAPS."

Guest Speaker: Mr Sanjay Ganghaw, Advisor to the Ministry of Labour

Date: 07 August 2025, Time: 10:30am

FOURTH ONLINE LECTURE "DR. AMBEDKAR'S SYNTHESIS OF PRAGMATISM AND SOCIAL REFORM (FROM WESTERN THOUGHTS TO INDIAN REALITY)"

Guest Speaker: Dr. Preeti Oza, Principal of LRMC- University of Mumbai

Date: 14 August 2025

The online lecture series on "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Idea on Education" continued with its fourth lecture titled "Dr. Ambedkar's Synthesis of Pragmatism and Social Reform (From Western Thoughts to Indian Reality)." Dr. Preeti Oza, Principal of LRMC, University of Mumbai, delivered the lecture. She provided a rich and thought-provoking analysis of Ambedkar's intellectual journey and his transformation of philosophical pragmatism into a tool for social reform in India.

Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor at the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, officially opened the program. She welcomed the distinguished guest speaker, Dr. Preeti Oza, Principal of LRMC, University of Mumbai, and participants from various institutions. In her opening remarks, Dr. Kadlak shared the vision and goals of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. She mentioned that the Chair focuses on encouraging academic discussions about the philosophy of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. Dr. Kadlak highlighted that the lecture series aims to provide a space for meaningful engagement with Ambedkarite ideas. It

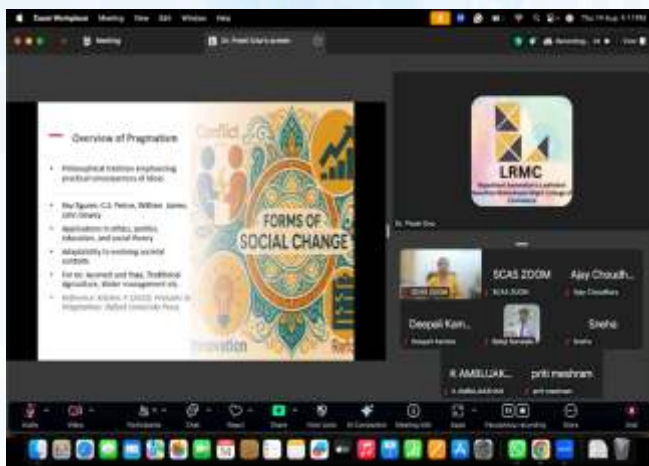
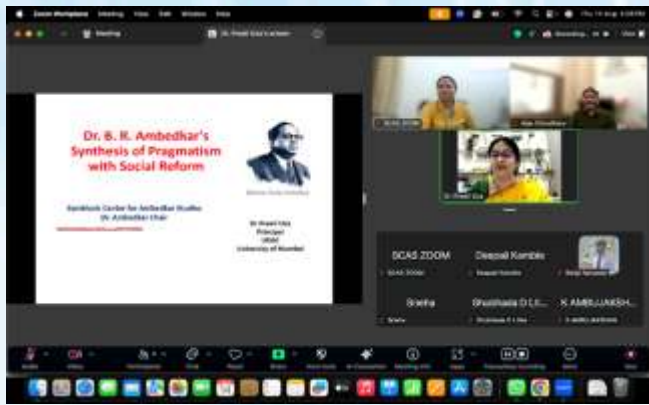
also seeks to promote discussions on educational equity, social justice, and democracy. Her introduction established the context for the lecture, linking it to a larger intellectual effort to connect Ambedkar's philosophy with current issues in education and society.



Following the introduction, Dr. Ajay Choudhary, Chair Professor of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, shared his insights on the purpose of the lecture series. Dr. Choudhary noted that the series is not just an academic activity; it is also an essential space for discussion that links Ambedkar's ideas to current issues. He highlighted the need for ongoing debate and reflection on Ambedkar's legacy, especially regarding urgent matters of educational policy, equity, and practice today.



Dr. Oza began her talk by placing Ambedkar within the broader context of global intellectual history. She highlighted how his formative years in the United States, especially at Columbia University under John Dewey's mentorship, gave him a solid foundation in pragmatism. Dewey emphasised that democracy should be an active way of life, involving a constant re-evaluation of experiences and problem-solving through experimentation. This exposure led Ambedkar to believe that democracy should be more than just a constitutional form; it must evolve into a social ethic rooted in equality and justice.



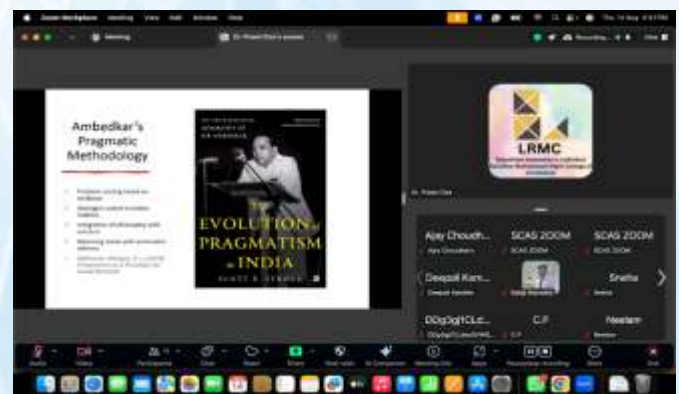
Dr. Oza emphasised that while Ambedkar absorbed Dewey's pragmatism, he did not follow it without question. Instead, he adapted it critically to fit the Indian context, where the rigid structures of caste and religious orthodoxy presented significant challenges. Unlike Dewey's gradual approach, Ambedkar argued that some institutions, like the caste system, could not be reformed; they needed to be dismantled entirely. In this way, his pragmatism had a radical quality. Dr. Oza referred to Ambedkar's Annihilation of Caste as a key text that showed his refusal to accept oppressive traditions. In this work, Ambedkar effectively combined rational critique, historical analysis, and moral courage to argue that Indian society could only progress by dismantling caste at its roots. Dr. Oza pointed out that this blend of philosophy and action made Ambedkar's thought uniquely transformative.



The lecture then addressed Ambedkar's intellectual synthesis beyond Dewey. Dr. Oza noted how Ambedkar drew inspiration from various thinkers and reformers, including Mahatma Jotirao Phule, Kabir, the Buddha, and the Fabian socialists. Each influence contributed to the depth of Ambedkar's vision. He inherited a strong awareness of caste oppression from Phule, rejected ritualism via Kabir's humanism, learned about economic redistribution from the Fabians, and discovered a rational and compassionate ethical framework from the Buddha. Dr. Oza emphasized that Ambedkar was not just a borrower of ideas or a passive recipient of intellectual trends. He acted as a synthesizer, integrating diverse traditions into a practical philosophy that directly addressed the struggles of marginalized groups in India.



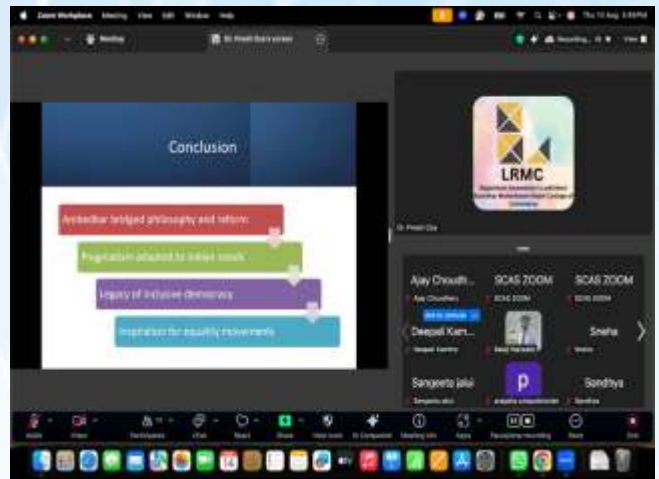
A significant focus of Dr. Oza's lecture was Ambedkar's reinterpretation of Buddhism into Navayana. She explained that this was not merely a change in religion but a conscious act of social reconstruction. Ambedkar saw Buddhism as embodying values like equality, fraternity, compassion, and rationality, which could be reinterpreted for modern society. By rejecting metaphysical speculation and emphasizing ethical action, Ambedkar transformed Buddhism into a practical tool for liberation. Dr. Oza stressed that Navayana represented the peak of Ambedkar's blend of pragmatism and reform; it offered a spiritual foundation for social democracy and enabled Dalits to reclaim their dignity and identity outside of the oppressive Hindu framework.



In addition to outlining Ambedkar's philosophical journey, Dr. Oza highlighted his rhetorical and political strategies. She noted that Ambedkar's writings and speeches combined clear reasoning with passionate moral arguments. His approach to persuasion relied on reason, historical evidence, and ethical appeal, always aiming to inspire action. For Ambedkar, ideas held little value if they remained confined to books; they needed to fuel social movements, shape legislation, and transform institutions. Dr. Oza highlighted Ambedkar's critical role in drafting the Indian Constitution as the most practical application of his ideas. He institutionalized the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity in the Constitution. In her view, it was not just a legal document but also a social charter reflecting Ambedkar's vision of democracy as a living moral practice.



In her closing remarks, Dr. Oza emphasized the current relevance of Ambedkar's synthesis. In a time when caste inequality, social exclusion, and democratic deficits persist, Ambedkar's approach offers vital insights. His philosophy teaches that social reform should combine intellectual critique with practical strategies that traditions should be re-examined rather than blindly followed, and that democracy requires a daily commitment to justice. Dr. Oza argued that Ambedkar's integration of Western pragmatism with Indian realities created a living philosophy of freedom that continues to guide movements for equality today. The lecture concluded with a call for students and scholars to not only study Ambedkar as a historical figure but also to engage with his ideas as a practical guide for confronting contemporary challenges in India.



3. ONE-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE: DR. AMBEDKAR'S LEGACY IN LAWYERING, ADVOCACY, AND CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Symbiosis Law School, Pune, a constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), in collaboration with the Symbiosis Centre for Advanced Legal Studies & Research (SCALSAR) and the Dr Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies, successfully hosted a One Day National Conference on "Transformative Justice: Dr. Ambedkar's Legacy in Lawyering, Advocacy, and Constitutional Reforms" on 30th August 2025. The conference witnessed the participation of more than 100 students, faculty members, and paper presenters from across the country.



Prof. (Dr.) Ajay Choudhary further elaborated on Ambedkar's perspective that law must emerge from society's lived experiences and serve as an instrument of justice rather than domination. He stressed Ambedkar's faith in committed lawyers to drive social transformation and explained how Ambedkar interpreted Buddhism as a moral philosophy centred on equality and compassion. **Dr. Ramratan V. Dhumal** emphasised that Ambedkar saw law as a tool to address

human suffering and insisted on active citizen participation, meaningful social reforms, and democratisation beyond politics to ensure the effectiveness of rights.

The conference also featured an engaging second session of student and scholar paper presentations on diverse themes, including reservation policies, social and political democracy, the Uniform Civil Code, a caste census, labour rights, federalism, and manual scavenging. Participants critically examined Ambedkar's legacy in light of contemporary challenges, linking constitutional provisions with ongoing struggles for justice and equality. Noteworthy presentations included discussions on reservations as substantive justice, Ambedkar's vision of federalism amidst linguistic disputes, the persistence of caste-based inequalities, and the need for stronger labour rights in the gig economy. Innovative research also explored the intersections between Ambedkar's thought and contemporary issues, such as artificial intelligence in education. Eleven papers were presented on the theme of the conference. The paper presentations sparked active discussions, with experts offering valuable feedback to young researchers. The Q&A sessions reflected the vibrant engagement of students and highlighted the continuing relevance of Ambedkar's ideas in addressing systemic inequalities.

The day-long event concluded with a vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to the speakers, organisers, and participants. The conference succeeded in fostering meaningful dialogue among scholars, students, and practitioners, reaffirming Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's enduring vision of justice, democracy, and equality. It underscored that Ambedkar's philosophy is not merely a historical legacy but a living framework that continues to inspire social and constitutional transformation in India and beyond.



3. PROGRAM: SWACCHHA BHARAT ABHIYAAN



On Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti, the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials organised the Swaccha Bharat Abhiyaan Program. This event was in collaboration with the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis International (Deemed University) in Pune on 01 October 2025. The program began with a brief introduction that highlighted the importance of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of cleanliness in today's India. It also connected this philosophy to the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan launched by the Government of India.



The initiative saw active participation from Mrs Sanjivani Mujumdar, Director of the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials; Prof. Ajay Choudhary, Chair Professor of the Dr Ambedkar Chair; and Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. All staff members of the Museum and the Chair, Ph.D scholars, and students from the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Library joined them. Together, all participants worked to clean the institution's premises, Common areas, Corridors, and Open spaces, removing litter and plastic waste. It shows a strong sense of unity and shared responsibility while honouring Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of cleanliness and community service. With the active involvement of staff, faculty, research scholars, and students, the program successfully fostered awareness about the importance of hygiene, cleanliness, and collective action.



5. REPORT ON THE LECTURE ON "MINDFULNESS AND STRESS RELIEF."

Organised by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials, Occasion: Senior Citizens' Day - 1 October 2025

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials, Pune, organised a special lecture on the theme "Mindfulness and Stress Relief" on Senior Citizens' Day, celebrated on 1 October 2025. The program was thoughtfully designed to address the mental and emotional well-being of senior citizens, while also engaging students and staff members in practices of mindfulness for healthier living.

Key Dignitaries and Participants

- Chairperson: Mrs Sanjivani Mujumdar, Director, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorials
- Guest Speaker: Dr. Datta Kohinkar, Chairman of Vipasana Centre Pune



Special Invitees:

- Dr. Shubhada Sharma
- Dr. Priradarshani Kulkarni
- Prof. Ajay Choudhary, Chair Professor, Dr Ambedkar Chair
- Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor, Dr Ambedkar Chair
- Participants: Senior Citizens, Students, and Staff Members of Dr. Ambedkar Chair and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum & Memorials

Proceedings of the Program

The program commenced with a warm welcome by Mrs Sanjivani Mujumdar, Director of the Museum and Memorials, who emphasised the importance of celebrating Senior Citizens' Day as a tribute to the contributions, wisdom, and experiences of the elderly. She highlighted how the values of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar inspire inclusive programs that focus on both intellectual and emotional well-being.



Following this, she briefly addressed the gathering, underscoring the significance of mindfulness in today's fast-paced, stressful lifestyle. He stressed that mindfulness practices not only support senior citizens but also equip students and younger generations with coping mechanisms for life's challenges.

The highlight of the program was the lecture delivered by Dr. Datta Kohinkar, the Guest Speaker. He presented an insightful and engaging talk on "Mindfulness and Stress Relief." His session combined scientific explanations with practical exercises, guiding participants on how mindfulness techniques such as deep breathing, present-moment awareness, and meditation can reduce stress, improve emotional balance, and promote overall health. Dr. Kohinkar also emphasised that mindfulness is not limited to any age group, but has special significance for senior citizens, as it helps reduce anxiety, loneliness, and age-related stress.

During the interactive session, participants - particularly the senior citizens - shared their personal challenges and expressed how mindfulness practices could be beneficial in their daily lives. The session also included simple guided mindfulness practices, which participants found calming and energising.

CONCLUSION

The event concluded with a Vote of thanks, appreciation for the relevance of the topic, and gratitude to the speaker, dignitaries, and participants. The program received positive feedback from senior citizens, students, and staff alike. It successfully created an atmosphere of reflection, learning, and collective well-being, making Senior Citizens' Day not just a celebration but also an opportunity for nurturing mental health and mindfulness.

6. SPEECH COMPETITION HELD ON THE OCCASION OF AKASHVANI'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY

On 10 October 2025, the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial served as the distinguished venue for this collaborative event, organised jointly by Akashvani (All India Radio), Dr. Ambedkar Chair and Symbiosis Society's Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial. This gathering not only commemorated nine decades of Akashvani's cultural legacy but also recognised its extraordinary contributions to education, governance, and public discourse in India.



The chief guest for the event was Mrs. Sanjeevani Mujumdar, whose presence added gravitas and warmth to the occasion. Professor Ajay Choudhary, esteemed Chair Professor of Dr. Ambedkar Chair, honoured the gathering as the guest of honour. Their insightful addresses highlighted Akashvani's journey from its foundation in 1935 to becoming the largest radio network in the world, broadcasting in 23 languages and 179 dialects to 99% of India's population. Their words celebrated radio's unique capacity to unify communities, champion democratic values, and inspire lifelong learning, emphasising how Akashvani has historically bridged the rural-urban divide and created platforms for marginalised voices.





The event's theme, "Education, Society, and Governance: Akashvani," framed the speech competition as an opportunity for participants to explore the transformative impact of broadcasting across every stratum of Indian life. Participants were encouraged to speak not only about historical milestones such as Akashvani's role in promoting literacy, facilitating communication during major national events, and supporting governance, but also about contemporary challenges and digital transitions in public service broadcasting. Staff from Akashvani, including Dhiraj Kedari, Sanjay Bhujbal, Prasad Karadkar, and Jyoti Kolwan, coordinated the event, ensuring seamless logistics and hospitality. The panel of judges featured Dhiraj Kedari and Professor Ajay Choudhary, whose expertise guided the evaluation process and nurtured a thoughtful academic atmosphere.



A competitive yet collegial spirit marked the contest, with each participant delivering well-researched speeches enriched by examples, data, anecdotes, and creative interpretations. The winning entries stood out for their originality and relevance:

- **First Prize:** Tanmay Kadam, whose speech skillfully linked Akashvani's reach in remote rural regions to improved educational opportunities and more effective governance.



- **Second Prize:** Dr. Divya Kadam, who analysed the evolution of social responsibility in radio broadcasting and its intersections with grassroots development.



- **Third Prize:** Sushil Kadam, whose speech highlighted the role of Akashvani in celebrating linguistic diversity and fostering social cohesion.



All participants were formally recognised with participation certificates, in appreciation of their commitment, preparation, and academic rigour. The event concluded with a reflective dialogue among the audience, staff, and distinguished guests on the enduring relevance of Akashvani in an era increasingly defined by digital media, emphasising the institution's adaptability and continued cultural significance.



Overall, the speech competition celebrated the profound legacy of Akashvani, marking its 90 years as a "voice from the sky" that continues to inform, educate, and unite India. Through such meaningful events, Akashvani's impact on the nation's social fabric and intellectual life remains as vital as ever.



RE-READING SAVITRIBAI PHULE: GENDER, PATRIARCHY AND EDUCATION IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA.

The program held on 2 January 2026 at the Multipurpose Hall of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, Pune, was organized by the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), in collaboration with the Museum, to commemorate the 195th birth anniversary of Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule through a thematic lecture and interactive discussion on "Re-reading Savitribai Phule: Gender, Patriarchy and Education in the Contemporary Era." The event began with a formal welcome by the student anchor, who located the programme within Savitribai Phule's legacy as a revolutionary teacher, poet and social reformer who transformed education into a means of liberation, and connected this to the mandate of the Ambedkar Chair on "Dr. Ambedkar's thought and contribution to education in India." Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, then delivered the welcome address, introducing the origin and objectives of the Chair,

outlining its activities such as seminars, workshops, conferences, group discussions and guest lectures, and explaining why celebrating Savitribai Phule's birth anniversary was central to a Chair committed to Ambedkarite perspectives on education, equality and social justice. She emphasised that the programme was conceived not merely as a commemorative ritual but as a reflective space to revisit Savitribai's ideas on education as a "third eye" and as reclamation of human personality, and to engage younger generations in critical dialogue on caste, patriarchy and women's empowerment.



Following the welcome, the dignitaries were formally introduced and felicitated. The chief guest, Mrs. Sanjeevani Mujumdar, Honorary Director of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial and founding member of Symbiosis Society, was presented as a long-standing educational and social leader whose work in building the museum into a vibrant centre of culture and empowerment resonates with both Ambedkarite and Phuleite visions. The guest speaker, Dr. Sneha Gole, Assistant Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies, Savitribai Phule Pune University, was introduced as a feminist scholar specialising in gender, higher education, feminist theory and movements, with extensive publications and a Fulbright-Nehru postdoctoral fellowship. At the same time, the chairperson, Dr. Pratima Pradeshi, was profiled as an academic and public intellectual rooted in the Satyashodhak tradition, working on social equity, gender justice and the eradication of caste discrimination. After felicitation of the chief guest, guest speaker and chairperson, Mrs. Mujumdar delivered a brief reflective address in Marathi, linking Savitribai's struggle and Ambedkar's insistence on education, equality and social justice, and symbolically marked the celebratory spirit by announcing the distribution of chocolates to students on the occasion of the birth anniversary.



The core academic component of the programme was the guest lecture by Dr. Sneha Gole, who deliberately shifted focus from a biographical recounting of Savitribai Phule to a critical exploration of her contemporary relevance in the context of gender, patriarchy and higher education in India. Drawing on current AISHE data, she highlighted the "silent revolution" of near gender parity in higher education gross enrolment. She contrasted it with stark gender gaps in political representation, labour-force participation, and leadership, arguing that the apparent numerical progress masks deep inequalities along caste, class, region, and discipline. By disaggregating enrolment across caste groupings, types of institutions, and fields of study, she demonstrated that upper-caste urban women disproportionately benefit from greater access to higher education. In contrast, women from Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and OBC communities remain severely underrepresented, and women are still marginalised in elite STEM institutions, central universities, institutions of national importance and senior academic positions such as vice-chancellors.



Interweaving this empirical picture with Savitribai's poems, such as "Go, Get Education," Dr Gole contrasted her radical vision of education as a tool for breaking the chains of caste and patriarchy with contemporary tendencies to re-domesticate women's education

through programmes that frame women as "good housewives" or "campus mothers." She critiqued initiatives such as the "campus mothers" scheme in a premier technical institute as examples of how public institutions reinscribe gendered care roles instead of addressing structural issues of mental health, exclusion and institutional casteism. Situating Savitribai and Muktabai's writings against present-day experiences of Dalit, Bahujan and Adivasi students, she connected the promise of higher education with the reality of hostile, Brahminical academic spaces that have produced institutional murders such as those of Rohith Vemula, Payal Tadvi and Delta Meghwal, and called for reclaiming education in the Ambedkarite-Phuleite sense as a process that makes students critical, fearless and capable of rejecting casteist divinity itself.



In her chairperson's remarks, Dr. Pratima Pradeshi deepened the historical and ethical framing by returning to Satyashodhak traditions and local histories of struggle, underscoring how Savitribai's work went far beyond literacy to cultivating critical consciousness among children from oppressed communities. Drawing on episodes such as Muktabai's essay on the "grief of the Mangs and Mahars," she elaborated how Satyashodhak education encouraged oppressed girls to question religiously sanctioned untouchability and to reject any God who legitimises human hierarchy, insisting that contemporary education systems must revisit these radical pedagogies instead of merely inserting Savitribai and Ambedkar into symbolic curricula. Her speech, largely in Marathi, also emphasised that patriarchy remains deeply entrenched in intimate and everyday practices visible in honour killings, gendered violence and unequal health access and argued that without confronting caste-patriarchy jointly, neither women's liberation nor constitutional promises of equality can be realised.

The formal academic session concluded with an interactive question-and-answer segment, where participants engaged the speakers on themes such as the

widening gap between state policies and citizens' needs, the shrinking of public funding and autonomy in education, and the implications of neoliberal, user-fee-driven governance for constitutional morality and social justice. Students and participants reflected on the distance between high-level discourses and ground realities in rural areas, and one participant explicitly connected budgetary centralisation and erosion of welfare to theoretical debates in political economy, thereby reinforcing the relevance of Ambedkarite and Phuleite perspectives for analysing current policy shifts. The programme ended with a vote of thanks by the student anchor, who expressed gratitude to the guest speaker, chairperson, chief guest, institutional leadership, technical staff, research scholars and student volunteers. It reiterated that the true success of such events lies in internalizing constitutional morality and Savitribai's emancipatory educational vision in everyday conduct, institutional practices and future initiatives of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair.



The program reached an inspiring close with the felicitation of two exceptional young achievers, Sanskruta Thakur and Aditi Sonawane, students from DES Shri Navalmal Firodia Law College (SNFLC), Pune, whose accomplishments embodied Savitribai Phule's enduring vision of women's empowerment through education, discipline and resilience-Sanskruta Thakur, pursuing B.A. LL.B., was recognised as a dedicated table tennis player, representing Savitribai Phule Pune University for four years, with a West Zone gold medal, All-India Inter-University participation, Khelo India tournaments, and multiple state-level successes. Aditi Sonawane shone as an international fencer since 2016, earning two bronze medals across five Senior National Championships, scoring 21 points in the team event at Khelo India University Games (Rajasthan), representing India at the 2017 Asian Fencing Championship, and earning selection for the upcoming Khelo India Games, crediting fencing for balancing elite sport with legal studies. This heartfelt

segment, prefigured by Dr. Hemangi Kadlak's remarks on nationally acclaimed students, reinforced the Dr. Ambedkar Chair's ethos of linking Phuleite pedagogy to contemporary triumphs over gender and caste barriers, transitioning seamlessly into the final vote of thanks.



CASTE AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

On 17 January 2026, the Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies hosted a comprehensive guest lecture titled "Caste and Ethnic Diversity in Private Enterprise Development". The program, which was conducted in a hybrid mode, began with an opening by Deepali Kamble. The formal proceedings included a series of honours, during which Prof. Harsh Jagzap facilitated the guest speaker, Prof. Rajendra P. Mamgain, and Hemangi Kadlak subsequently facilitated Prof. Harsh Jagzap. The lecture aimed to dissect the intersectional challenges of geography, caste, and gender in the context of India's economic development, with a specific focus on the state of Uttarakhand.



Prof. Mamgain, the Dean of the School of Social Sciences at Doon University, opened the session by discussing the structural transformation of Uttarakhand since its formation in 2000. He noted that while the state has achieved impressive growth, tripling its GSDP and per capita income and ranking first among top SDG performers in 2025, deep regional disparities remain.

The hill regions, which account for 86% of the state's land, contribute less than 27% of the GSDP. This economic imbalance has led to the phenomenon of "ghost villages," where entire settlements are abandoned due to a lack of local jobs and climate stress. Prof. Mamgain highlighted that while manufacturing is a high-growth sector that contributes 37% to the GSDP, the majority of the hill workforce is stuck in low-income agriculture. To bridge these gaps, he introduced the "3A" framework, stressing that opportunities must be Accessible, Affordable, and Available.



The discussion then shifted to the social and gender dimensions of education and labour. Prof. Mamgain presented data showing that, while the Gender Parity Index in higher education varies, significant gaps persist at prestigious Institutes of National Importance, where enrollment for marginalised groups remains lower than in state universities. He pointed out that Scheduled Castes (SC) face particularly high dropout rates, and women across all groups, especially within the OBC category, experience lower labour participation rates. Currently, women's workforce participation stands at only 24%, and Prof. Mamgain argued that high participation rates among certain groups, such as Scheduled Tribes (ST), do not always equate to prosperity but often reflect a lack of choice.

In the final segment of the report, Prof. Mamgain analysed enterprise ownership trends, revealing that the share of private enterprises owned by SC and ST individuals is disproportionately low relative to their population share. He identified that OBCs are often concentrated in trading, while SCs are frequently found in "service castes," earning significantly less than salaried employees or their upper-caste counterparts. These disparities are fueled by discriminatory processes, including entry barriers to business, a lack of social networks, and difficulty in securing credit or initial orders. He concluded that economic support alone is insufficient; social and political support, alongside mentorship and training, are vital for true

empowerment. Following the lecture, Prof. Harsh Jagzap concluded the session by summarising the diverse viewpoints and offering a token of appreciation to both Prof. Mamgain and himself, marking the end of the program.

The session concluded with Prof. Harsh Jagzap offering a summary of the diverse discussions and a difference of opinion on certain political representations. The program finished with a token of appreciation presented to both Prof. Mamgain and Prof. Jagzap.

ONLINE LECTURE ON "A LIGHT OF WISDOM: AMBEDKAR'S CRUSADE FOR EDUCATION AND DIGNITY"

Guest Speaker: Dr. Dhananjay D. Mankar, Assistant Professor at the School of Health Systems Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai

Date: 23 December, 2025

Time: 2:30 PM

As part of the Online Lecture Series on "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Idea on Education" organized during the Commemoration Month of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies hosted a distinguished lecture by Dr. Dhananjay D. Mankar on "A Light of Wisdom: Ambedkar's Crusade for Education and Dignity." The lecture aimed to revisit Dr. Ambedkar's revolutionary educational philosophy and its centrality to the struggle for dignity, social transformation, and democratic empowerment. The session commenced at 2:30 PM (IST) on December 23, 2025.

The program opened with a welcome address by Ms. Monalisa Behera, a Ph.D scholar, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International Deemed University, Pune. She shared thoughtful insights on why Ambedkar's ideas remain relevant in both academic and social contexts. She explained that Ambedkar viewed education not just as formal schooling but as a philosophical journey aimed at uplifting oppressed communities. Following this, she briefly introduced Dr. Dhananjay D. Mankar, an Assistant Professor at the School of Health Systems Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai; she highlighted his diverse academic background and dedication to social justice. Her introduction effectively framed Dr. Mankar's lecture in both historical and modern academic contexts.

Dr. Mankar delivered an insightful and structured lecture focusing on the evolution, intent, and contemporary relevance of Dr. Ambedkar's educational philosophy. In his lecture, Dr. Mankar presented a

deeply analytical interpretation of Dr. Ambedkar's belief in education as the central pillar of social upliftment. He emphasized that Ambedkar, having himself struggled against structural barriers and caste discrimination, recognized education as the most transformative force for marginalized communities. According to Dr. Mankar, Ambedkar did not limit education to literacy or formal schooling; instead, he viewed it as a dynamic process through which individuals cultivate rational thinking, develop self-respect, and acquire the intellectual courage needed to challenge systemic injustice. He reiterated Ambedkar's view that denial of education was historically used as a strategic tool to maintain caste hierarchies, and therefore access to education becomes an act of resistance and reclamation of dignity. He quoted Ambedkar's famous phrase, "Educate, Agitate, Organize," explaining that this slogan outlines a path to empowerment: education raises awareness, agitation demands rights, and organization facilitates collective change.

Dr. Mankar further examined how Ambedkar linked education to dignity, democracy, and citizenship. Ambedkar advocated for a scientific approach, encouraging people to question social norms, superstitions, and oppressive practices. For him, rational inquiry was not only a method but also a moral obligation that enables people to reject dehumanizing ideologies. Dr. Mankar said that Ambedkar considered education essential for genuine democracy because only educated citizens can protect constitutional values and resist authoritarianism. He also highlighted Ambedkar's strong advocacy for women's education, noting that Ambedkar believed empowering women through education was vital for changing family dynamics, social norms, and community development. He pointed out that Ambedkar recognized the connection between gender equality and educational access, viewing women's literacy as crucial for societal progress.

Connecting Ambedkar's philosophy to today, Dr. Mankar expressed concern about the ongoing inequalities in education in India. Many marginalized communities still face barriers related to language, finances, culture, and infrastructure. He argued that privatization, commercialization, and insufficient public investment threaten to undermine education's potential to democratize society. He urged students and scholars to critically evaluate current educational policies through an Ambedkarite lens and to advocate for accessible, fair, and dignified educational environments that uphold constitutional values.

After the lecture, an interactive discussion followed, where participants raised questions about applying Ambedkar's principles in higher education, the challenges faced by tribal and Dalit students, and the relevance of Ambedkar's ideas in fighting discrimination in today's academic institutions. Dr. Mankar provided clear and thoughtful responses, emphasizing that Ambedkar's work serves as guidance for both marginalized communities and all citizens dedicated to equality and justice. He concluded by reminding students that education only matters when it serves as a force for human dignity and social change.

The program ended with a Vote of Thanks from Ms. Deepali Kamble, a PhD scholar, Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis International Deemed University. She expressed sincere gratitude to the speaker, participants, and organizers for fostering a space for reflection and discussion. She highlighted how the lecture highlighted that education, infused with dignity and equality is a tool for liberation rather than simple certification. Her closing thoughts reaffirmed the ongoing significance of Ambedkar's educational philosophy in the rapidly changing social and political landscape today.

In summary, the online lecture offered significant academic engagement, encouraging participants to view education as an ongoing struggle for dignity, equality, and justice. The session not only educated attendees about Ambedkar's pivotal role in democratizing education but also inspired them to imagine a future where learning actively combats oppression and fosters critical awareness. Through its intellectual depth and interactive approach, the program underscored that Ambedkar's educational philosophy remains a vital source for creating a more inclusive and compassionate society.

CONSTITUTIONAL MORALITY: ENDURING LEGACY OF BABASAHEB DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR.

The Dr Ambedkar Chair, Symbiosis Centre for Ambedkar Studies, at Symbiosis International (Deemed University), organised a hybrid special lecture on 27 December 2025 as part of the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Commemoration Month, on the theme "Constitutional Morality: Enduring Legacy of Babasaheb Dr B. R. Ambedkar." The programme was held at the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Museum and Memorial, Senapati Bapat Road, Pune. It was attended simultaneously by participants from across the country via an online platform, reflecting both the academic reach of the Chair and the broad interest in the theme among practitioners,

students, and citizens. The hybrid mode enabled law professionals, researchers, students, and interested members of the public who could not be physically present due to the holiday season to engage meaningfully with the lecture and subsequent discussions.



The session began in the afternoon with a brief welcome and introduction by research scholar Ms Deepali Kamble, who warmly greeted the participants in the auditorium and those connected online. It situated the event within the broader activities of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. She announced the topic of the day's lecture. She underlined its contemporary relevance, noting that constitutional morality speaks not only to lawyers and scholars but to all citizens concerned with justice, democracy, and equality in India. She then invited Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor at the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, to deliver the formal welcome address and set the intellectual context of the programme.

In her welcome address, Dr. Hemangi Kadlak explained that the Dr. Ambedkar Chair at Symbiosis was established in December 2023 as part of a national network of chairs instituted by the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, to work on "Dr. Ambedkar's thought and contribution to education in India." She mentioned that Symbiosis is the first private university to host such a Chair and that this is the 23rd Ambedkar Chair in the country, mandated to promote rigorous academic engagement and public outreach on Ambedkarite perspectives. Dr Kadlak also shared how the Chair maintains dedicated WhatsApp groups for students and the general public, and invited those interested to stay connected with future programmes by sharing their contact details with the research scholars.

Dr. Kadlak then extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guest speaker, Professor Subrata Sankar Bagchi, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Chair Professor in the Department of Anthropology, University of Calcutta,

and to the chairperson of the session, Professor Surendra Jogdle, former Professor of Political Science at the University of Mumbai, who was described as an integral "family member" of the Chair's activities. She briefly introduced Professor Bagchi's rich academic profile, highlighting his work as an eminent social anthropologist whose teaching and research cover development, social exclusion, urban poverty, marginalisation, child labour, human rights, and qualitative research methodology with a strong ethnographic orientation. His leadership of funded projects on tribal development, backward communities, and even the gut microbiome of tribal populations, along with more than forty research papers, seven authored or edited books, and numerous book chapters, as well as fellowships of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland and the Royal Anthropological Institute, were underlined as evidence of his deep commitment to social justice and scholarly excellence.

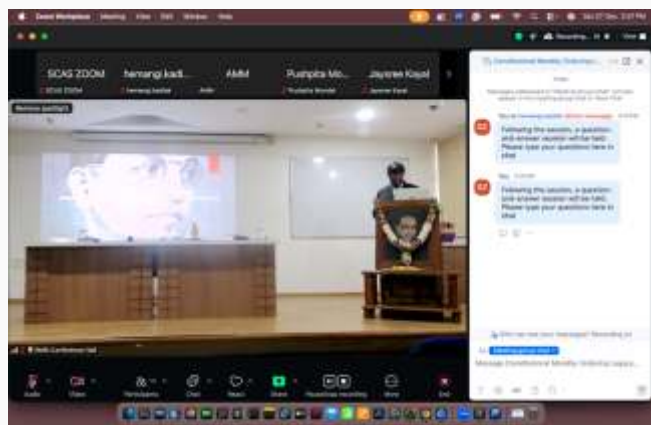


To frame the theme for the audience, Dr. Kadlak read from the Preamble to the Constitution and reflected on how the values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity constitute not just legal provisions but the moral and political compass of Indian democracy. She argued that if India is to progress socially, economically, and ethically, constitutional education must be integrated into school curricula not merely as a subject to be memorised, but as a way of learning to live together with equality, respect, and responsibility. She then linked this educational imperative to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's speech "The Constitution and Social Revolution" (1949), in which he articulated the concept of constitutional morality and emphasised that it has since become a cornerstone for understanding India's democratic project and its institutional architecture. With this conceptual grounding, she formally invited Professor Bagchi to deliver his lecture.

In his extensive and thought-provoking address, Professor Subrata Sankar Bagchi began by noting that

constitutional morality is the essence of any constitution and that, in India, it represents one of Dr. Ambedkar's most essential and enduring contributions to modern political life. He defined constitutional morality as the set of principles and values underlying a constitution, and as a moral stance that guides both the actions of the state and the conduct of citizens, going beyond individual or personal morality. Tracing the term's genealogy, he first cited its use by the 19th-century classicist George Grote, then Ambedkar's adoption and creative reworking of the concept in the Indian context, emphasising that, for Ambedkar, constitutional morality "is not a natural sentiment; it has to be cultivated."

Professor Bagchi then elaborated on Ambedkar's framework of constitutional morality, identifying key elements such as self-reliance, respect for plurality, deference to constitutional procedures, and the cultivation of a robust culture of criticism. Self-reliance, in this context, meant a belief that conflicts should first be resolved within the constitutional framework and through institutional mechanisms before resorting to agitation or street protest, even though Ambedkar never rejected agitation in principle. Respect for plurality, he argued, lies at the core of the Indian Constitution, which is premised on multivocality and rejects authoritarian claims to represent the singular "will of the people," making space for differences, dissent, and minority voices.



The speaker stressed that genuine faith in constitutional procedures must translate into deference to processes rather than to personalities or instant populist appeals, and that Parliament must function as the central platform for daily scrutiny and criticism of the executive if democracy is to survive. Quoting Ambedkar's famous assertion that "constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment" and that Indians have yet to learn it, he clarified that this is not a comment on the intelligence of the people but on the absence of consistent practice of constitutional norms in everyday life. Constitutional morality, he reiterated, is a habit that requires conscious,

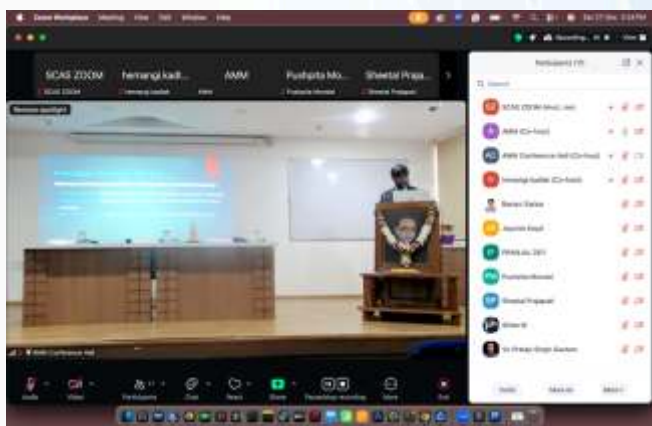
continuous cultivation, similar to owning books without reading or practising what they contain, which renders them meaningless as moral guides.

Professor Bagchi then turned to the core pillars of constitutional morality embedded in the Indian Constitution, beginning with the foundational values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity as articulated in the Preamble. He identified the rule of law, democratic participation and accountability, fundamental rights, separation of powers, checks and balances, principled constitutional interpretation, and ethical governance as essential components of this moral architecture. He explained that under the rule of law, everyone, including the "top brass" of the country, must be subject to and accountable under law; that democratic principles require meaningful citizen participation; that fundamental rights constitute an inviolable core protecting equality and freedom; and that the separation of powers between legislature, executive, and judiciary is non negotiable for preventing abuse.

The lecture illustrated how checks and balances are built into constitutional design to ensure that none of the three branches can monopolise power or trample citizens' rights. It emphasised that constitutional interpretation must remain faithful to the framers' moral intent, even as the Constitution adapts to evolving societal needs through amendments. Professor Bagchi stressed that while amendments are possible, they cannot alter the basic structure or underlying morality of the Constitution, and that transparency, accountability, and integrity must guide every article and institutional practice as part of ethical governance. He also pointed out that although the term "constitutional morality" does not appear explicitly in the document, it is inherent in the architecture of the Preamble, Fundamental Rights (Part III), Directive Principles (Part IV), and the Supreme Court's fundamental structure doctrine, which collectively protect the Constitution from being hollowed out.

A substantial portion of the lecture was devoted to the tension between constitutional and public morality, particularly in a diverse, often majoritarian society. Professor Bagchi explained that constitutional morality is rooted in constitutional values and protects minorities by transcending transient public opinion, whereas "public morality" usually reflects prevailing customs or majority preferences that may discriminate against minorities and cannot legitimately serve as the basis for restricting rights. Using landmark Supreme Court judgments, he argued that the Court has repeatedly affirmed the primacy of constitutional morality over public morality, as in the decriminalisation of

consensual same sex relations under Section 377, where the Court clarified that constitutional morality is not equivalent to prevailing social morality.



He discussed in detail several key judgments such as the Keshavananda Bharati case, which articulated the fundamental structure doctrine and placed limits on Parliament's amending power; the "judges' cases," which protected judicial independence and led to the collegium system; the Manoj Narula case, where the Court advised the Prime Minister to avoid appointing ministers with serious criminal charges; the Sabarimala case, where bans on women of menstruating age were struck down for violating equality and religious freedom; and more recent decisions on electoral bonds and parliamentary immunity for accepting bribes, which insisted on transparency and rejected the use of privilege to shield corruption. Through these examples, he showed how constitutional morality functions as the Supreme Court's compass for safeguarding equality, minority rights, institutional independence, and the rule of law against populist or majoritarian impulses.



At the same time, Professor Bagchi candidly acknowledged persistent challenges to constitutional morality in contemporary India, including political interference in institutions, tensions between judicial activism and restraint, gaps in enforcement, weak public awareness of rights, and deeply entrenched social

structures rooted in religion, caste, and regional divides. He recalled Ambedkar's stark warning that "democracy in India is only a top dressing on an Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic." He argued that blind devotion to leaders and movements that abandon constitutional methods can slide into authoritarianism. He also cited Ambedkar's provocative remark that if the Constitution were grossly misused, he would be "the first to burn it," interpreting this not as an attack on the text but as a powerful call to protect the Constitution from being turned into a tool of oppression contrary to its own spirit.



In the final part of his lecture, Professor Bagchi proposed a set of concrete ways forward to strengthen constitutional morality today. He emphasised the need to strengthen institutions through genuine judicial independence, transparent, non-coterie-based appointments in bodies such as the judiciary and the Election Commission, and meaningful financial and administrative autonomy, so that institutions are not punished through funding cuts for exercising their mandate. He called for promoting civic and constitutional education at all levels, from schools and universities to civil service training, so that constitutional values, rights, and duties become internalised, and criticised the gap between formal training and actual practice among public officials.

He argued that access to justice must be enhanced by improving legal aid, reducing judicial delays, and expanding effective alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as mediation, arbitration, and Lok Adalats, while ensuring that such mechanisms truly benefit the poor and marginalised rather than primarily the middle classes. Drawing on his own fieldwork in West Bengal, he shared examples of how legal aid services often fail the most disadvantaged, and how provisions like the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act risk being weakened when safeguards and judicial interpretations do not adequately protect genuine victims. He insisted

that technology, through e-courts and virtual hearings, should be harnessed to make justice more accessible, without allowing digital divides to produce new exclusions.

Ethical leadership was identified as another critical area, in which Professor Bagchi urged political leaders and public officials to embody integrity, transparency, and accountability in governance rather than succumb to majoritarian or purely electoral compulsions. He advocated reinforcing Ambedkar's vision of morality as the foundation of constitutional democracy, calling on both ruling and opposition parties to adhere to constitutional norms and to be equally accountable for any misuse. Citizen participation beyond voting, support for civil society and independent media, and fostering peaceful dialogue and dissent were highlighted as necessary to bridge the widening gap between state and society and to keep democracy as a "mode of associated living" rather than a mere mechanism of electoral competition.

In closing, Professor Bagchi extended Ambedkar's insights to contemporary issues such as data protection, artificial intelligence, environmental justice, and the governance of technological change, arguing that constitutional morality must guide these new domains as well. He urged that the Constitution be treated as a living document rather than a decorative volume on a bookshelf. He reiterated Ambedkar's insistence that rights without corresponding duties cannot be sustained in the long run. Returning to Ambedkar's potent formulation that "democracy is not merely a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience," he argued that only when citizens see themselves as ethically connected and mutually responsible can constitutional morality become a lived reality rather than an abstract ideal.



After the lecture, Professor Surendra Jondhale, as chairperson, offered insightful remarks that situated the talk in the current crisis of constitutional democracy and reflected on whether contemporary India is truly carrying forward Ambedkar's legacy of constitutional morality. He underscored that the Indian Constitution is a living text rather than a sacred or frozen scripture, and raised critical questions about whether constitutional provisions have been effective in reducing structural inequalities and discrimination in a profoundly unequal world marked by violence, segregation, hatred, and exploitation. His comments also highlighted the tension in Ambedkar's thought between parliamentary democracy and Marxist critiques, and how this tension led Ambedkar to insist on constitutional morality as an ethical framework reconciling law, democracy, and social revolution.

The hybrid nature of the programme was evident during the interactive segment, where questions and reflections came from both in-person participants and online attendees, including students of political economy who connected the lecture to current debates on federalism, budgetary autonomy, and neoliberal economic policies. The discussion touched on the shrinking role of the welfare state, the aggressive implementation of neo-classical economic reforms, the levying of user fees for basic services, and the mismatch between citizens' needs and governments' priorities, primarily focused on winning elections. Professor Bagchi responded by linking these concerns to Ambedkar's and Nehru's original vision of a public-oriented, Keynesian-inspired developmental state and warned that the erosion of public responsibility undermines both social justice and constitutional morality. The formal vote of thanks was delivered by Dr Hemangi Kadlak, who expressed deep gratitude to Professor Bagchi for his illuminating and rigorously argued lecture and to Professor Jogdole for his nuanced chairing and contextual reflections. Thanks were also extended to the Dean, Dr. Sanjeevani Mujumdar, for institutional support, to the administrative staff, technical team, and student volunteers whose efforts ensured the smooth conduct of the hybrid event, and to the research scholars and participants whose engaged presence signalled a genuine commitment to constitutional values. The organiser drew attention to a recurring critique that academic events often remain at the level of "only talks" without influencing ground realities, and responded by affirming that discussions on constitutional morality must translate into everyday practices, particularly in rural and marginalised contexts where injustices are acute. In her concluding reflections, the organiser

reiterated three concrete educational priorities that should be pursued from an early age: systematic study and practical internalisation of the Constitution, thoughtful teaching of sociology to unpack caste and gender, and strengthening financial literacy so that citizens are better equipped to navigate economic life. She emphasised that constitutional morality should be reflected in daily interactions, in how people handle each other's emotions and problems, and in how institutions respond to the needs of the most vulnerable. The programme concluded with a collective resolve, carried forward by both onsite and online participants, to embody Ambedkar's vision of a just, equal, and humane society by consciously practising constitutional morality in thought, action, and public life.



Internship Program

Started the Internship program on 15 December 2025 for the students of Graduation, Post-graduation and Ph.D. in both online and offline modes.

REPORT ON ACADEMIC VISIT

Report on Academic Visit of 44 Students and 4 Faculty Members from Rani Channamma University, Belagavi to Dr. Ambedkar Chair, SIU and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Museum & Memorials, Pune on 13 February 2025

The academic visit for students of P.G Diploma in Ambedkar studies belonging to various disciplines such as English Literature, Sociology, Social Work, Political Science, Commerce and Kannada Literature and 3 faculty members from the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Study Chair, Commerce and Marathi Department at Rani Channamma University in Belagavi took place on 13 February 2026 at 9:15 a.m. The purpose of the visit was to encourage academic exchange, hands-on learning, and a better understanding of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's life, ideas, and contributions to education and social justice. The group received a warm welcome from the Dr. Ambedkar Chair team at Symbiosis International University, where tea and snacks were provided.



The Dr. Ambedkar Chair team coordinated the entire program. This included showing a documentary film about the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Museum and Memorials. The film provided important historical and intellectual insights into Dr. Ambedkar's life, struggles, and legacy, helping attendees understand his role in shaping modern India. After the screening, the students and faculty members toured the museum and memorials, engaging with archival materials, photographs, manuscripts, and exhibits that highlight Dr. Ambedkar's contributions to education, constitutional values, democracy, and social equality.



During the visit, Dr. Hemangi Kadlak, Assistant Professor at the Dr. Ambedkar Chair, gave a lecture about the activities, initiatives, and academic programs of the Dr. Ambedkar Chair. She discussed Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's significant impact on education, particularly his view of education as a means for empowerment, social justice, and inclusive

development. The lecture sparked a lively academic discussion and encouraged students to think critically about Ambedkarite ideas. Overall, the visit offered valuable academic insights, strengthened partnerships, and highlighted the ongoing significance of Dr. Ambedkar's thoughts in today's academic and social spheres.



FIELD VISIT ON 18 FEBRUARY 2026

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING AT SYMBI STARS

The visit commenced at Symbi Stars, where the focus is firmly on foundational skill development through structured learning stations. The curriculum emphasises higher-order thinking skills, actively integrating Bloom's Taxonomy into daily activities to move beyond rote memorisation.



The pedagogical approach blends sensory-motor development with Montessori methods, ensuring a holistic early learning environment. The facility is well-equipped with dedicated spaces, including a gymnastics room, a painting room, and a thematic dramatic room featuring a shopping area, sleeping quarters, and spaces for both free and guided play. Daycare themes rotate weekly to maintain engagement. Notably, qualitative, proprietary assessment methods are used up to the second grade. The institution also emphasizes continuous professional development, offering specialized training for teachers and running a one-year diploma course that includes practical classroom conduction with children. Additionally, Symbi Stars extends its resources to the community by offering evening computer classes for outside students.

Inclusive Education And Rehabilitation At Kamayani Vidya Mandir.

The session at Kamayani Vidya Mandir began with a welcome address by psychologist Narayan Sinde. Established 62 years ago in 1964 by Shindutai Joshi with just two students, the institution has grown to support the education and rehabilitation of 500 students across its three branches. Admission requires children to be at least six to eight years old, potty-trained, and recommended by a civil surgeon. The process begins with a six-month clinical observation to accurately assess the child's abilities, followed by targeted therapy



for basic motor skills and the creation of an Individualised Education Program (IEP) for every student. The primary classes foster confidence, evidenced by the students performing dances and delivering their own introductions on stage. Kamayani also excels in the rehabilitation of autistic children and proudly leads Pune's oldest Ganpati performance. For students over 18, the school provides vital vocational education in separate departments, teaching practical skills like notebook binding alongside therapeutic activities. The institution runs a diploma program in special education for intellectual disability, maintains a separate research wing, and actively shares success stories to build awareness among parents.

papers, and provides dedicated career guidance for 9th and 10th graders.



Strategic Frameworks: Presentations By Dr. Gargi Mitra And Dr. Sophia Gaikwad

Nep 2020 Implementation At Symbiosis School, Prabhat Nagar

The visit concluded with insightful presentations on curricular strategy. Gargi Ma'am detailed the foundational stage (3-6 years) under NEP, emphasising experiential learning and a child-centric, content-driven approach rather than a marks-driven one. After four years of NEP implementation, the school utilises a backwards-mapped FLN framework up to grade two, incorporating multilingualism, a 360-degree assessment model, and a strong "reflection drive." The curriculum is designed to amplify student voice and choice while maintaining cultural rootedness. Key initiatives include the three-month "Vidya Pravesh" guidance module for students, "Bagless Wednesdays," and dedicated DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time. Finally, Sophia Ma'am summarised the leadership philosophy required to sustain these educational reforms, advocating for a unified, proactive approach grounded in deliberate and informed actions.

Symbiosis School provided a strong example of an SSC state board school actively transitioning its curriculum to align with the National Education Policy (2020). Starting from the first standard, the school employs a play-way method and play-based learning, utilizing Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) workbooks developed in-house by the teachers, alongside standard Balbharti textbooks. Instruction is driven by a copyrighted five-step pedagogy and the PKA (Previous Knowledge Reflections) strategy. Worksheets are meticulously mapped to NCF 2021 standards and focus on LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing) skills. To support this massive shift, extensive post-NEP teacher training has been provided, ensuring differentiated learning designs and a robust mix of formative and summative assessments are utilised. The academic framework includes detailed annual and lesson plans integrating visual thinking, while students maintain reflective sheets. From the third grade onward, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are woven into the curriculum. The school also emphasises practical application with "Fabulous Friday" vocational skills, maintains an exhaustive library archive of past question



TEAM

Chair Professor

DR. AJAY CHOUDHARY

from 1 December 2023 to 30 November 2025

Assistant Professor

DR. HEMANGI KADLAK

from 1 December 2023 to Present



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DR. AMBEDKAR CHAIR

SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY), PUNE

SYMBIOSIS SOCIETY'S

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