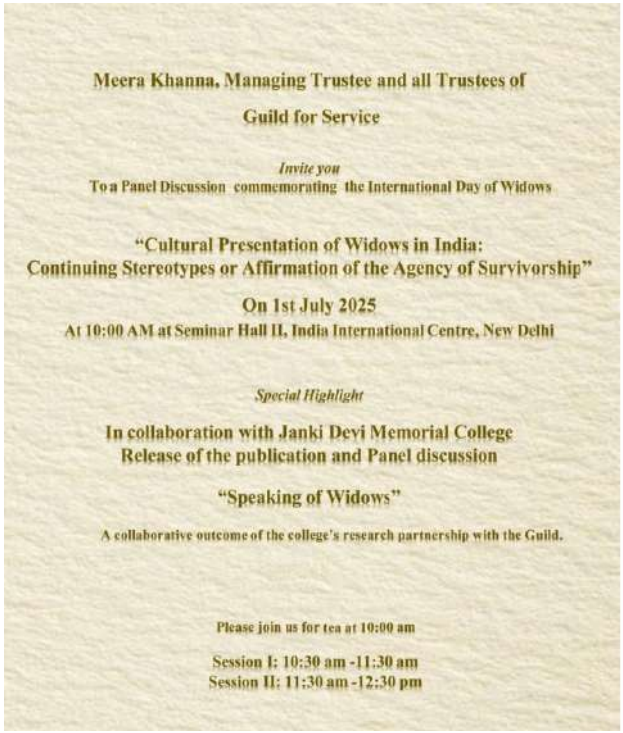
Centre for Gender Equity Studies 2024-2025

The Centre for Gender Equity Studies addressed issues affecting women's personal and professional lives through promoting research, awareness raising activities and activism.

Book Launch of *Speaking (of) Widows*

On July 1st, 2025, the Centre for Gender Equity Studies and WDC, JDMC, conducted a Book Release of the faculty-student book *Speaking (of) Widows*, at IIC, as part of the celebration of the International Day of Widows by the Guild of Service.

The book was a culmination of a two year research project and collaboration between JDMC and the Guild of Service and 30 students from JDMC participated in the research project. Presentations were made by the editors, Namita Sethi, V. Rajyalakshmi and Tarun Sharma. The students also shared their experiences in the form of speeches and visual presentations that moved all present. Prof. Swati Pal, Principal, JDMC, and Meera Khanna, President of the Guild, addressed the audience and stressed the need for continued intervention for the cause of widows in India. Also present were Prof. Malashri Lal , who chaired the session, Ms. Kaul, editor of Vitasta, and Ms. Usha Munshi, librarian of IIC.



Invitation for Book Launch of *Speaking (of) Widows*



Glimpses from the Book Launch of *Speaking (of) Widows*



Glimpses from the Book Launch of *Speaking (of) Widows*



Glimpses from the Book Launch of *Speaking (of) Widows*



Glimpses from the Book Launch of *Speaking (of) Widows*



Glimpses from the Book Launch of *Speaking (of) Widows*

International Women's Day Interactive Workshop

In celebration of International Women's Day, the Women's Development Cell and the Centre for Gender Equity Studies of Janki Devi Memorial College, organized an interactive workshop on mental wellness, self-discovery, and empowerment on March 6th, 2025. The event aimed to equip students with tools and insights to build inner strength and discover joy within. It featured a film screening, engaging discussions, and a special meditative session led by renowned playwright and director Mrs. Nisha Luthra.

The workshop commenced with a warm welcome and introductory remarks highlighting the significance of International Women's Day. Mrs. Nisha Luthra was felicitated by the convenors, marking the official inauguration of the event. This was followed by a screening of her thought-provoking film *Brinda*, which explored themes of self-discovery and inner happiness, resonating deeply with the audience.

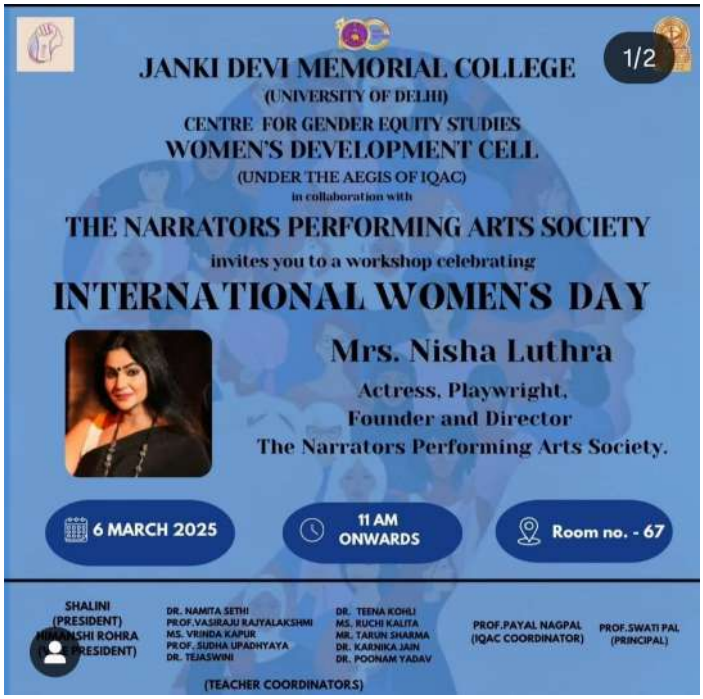
Post-screening, students engaged in a lively discussion with Mrs. Luthra, sharing their interpretations of the film's visual storytelling and underlying messages. The interactive session provided a platform for students to delve deeper into the film's meaning and connect with the director's artistic vision. Mrs. Luthra emphasized the importance of finding joy within and

avoiding dependence on external validation for self-worth—a message that left a lasting impact on the participants.

The heart of the workshop was a dynamic meditative session designed to foster mindfulness, emotional well-being, and self-connection. Mrs. Luthra guided the students through a series of interactive activities:

- **Deep Breathing & Mindfulness:** The session began with deep breathing exercises, encouraging students to connect with their individuality and cultivate mindfulness.
- **Body Sound Patterns:** Students explored inner vibrations through body sound patterns, enhancing sensory awareness.
- **Movement & Concentration:** Verbal commands guided students through various movements—sitting, walking, slow walking, and fast walking—promoting concentration and presence of mind.
- **Soulful Connections:** Paired activities, including eye contact and fingertip touch, facilitated silent interaction and deeper connections with others.
- **Stress Release & Friendship:** Back-to-back swaying symbolized the release of stress and underscored the importance of fostering supportive friendships.
- **Creative Expression:** Students engaged in spontaneous poses depicting various situations, stimulating imagination and storytelling.
- **Symbolic Poses:** Pairs and groups formed poses representing deities such as Lord Shiva, Ma Durga, and Lord Krishna, as well as life situations—showcasing strength, grace, divinity, teamwork, and creativity.
- **Deep Meditation:** The session culminated in guided deep meditation, promoting mental clarity and inner peace.
- **Group Lock & Sisterhood:** The workshop concluded with a symbolic group lock by holding hands, reinforcing solidarity, empowerment, and the spirit of sisterhood.

The event effectively conveyed the message that happiness originates from within and that external validation should not define one's self-worth. The positive and uplifting atmosphere fostered a sense of support, strength, and mindfulness among the participants.



Poster of the International Women's Day Interactive Workshop



Glimpses from the International Women's Day Interactive Workshop



Glimpses from the International Women's Day Interactive Workshop



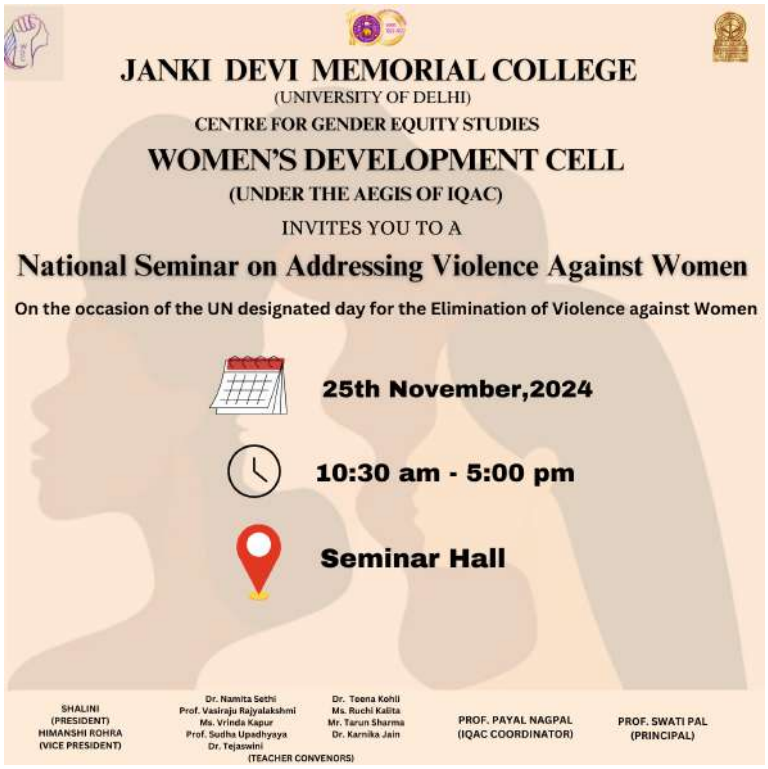
Glimpses from the International Women's Day Interactive Workshop

National Seminar on Addressing Violence Against Women

On November 25th, 2024, the Women's Development Cell and the Centre for Gender Equity Studies of Janki Devi Memorial College, commemorated the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women by hosting a National Seminar on “Addressing Violence against Women”. The event featured panel discussions, student presentations, and a film screening. The first session began with a thought-provoking address by the Principal, Prof. Swati Pal, who stressed the importance of moving beyond discussions on violence against women to actively contributing to its eradication.

The resource persons for the event were Professor Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya (Professor, MIT, World Peace University and Global fellow at Peace Research Institute, Oslo), Dr. Shweta Singh (Associate Professor, South Asian University, International Relations), Dr. Savitri Singh (Associate Professor, Jamia Milia Islamia), and Ms. Rashmi Anand (Author, Counsellor and Consultant). They shared their expertise on women empowerment, peace, and the complexities of violence. The speakers emphasized the need to redefine the concept of violence, acknowledging its various forms, and highlighting the importance of integrating men into the journey of women's empowerment and promoting sisterhood.

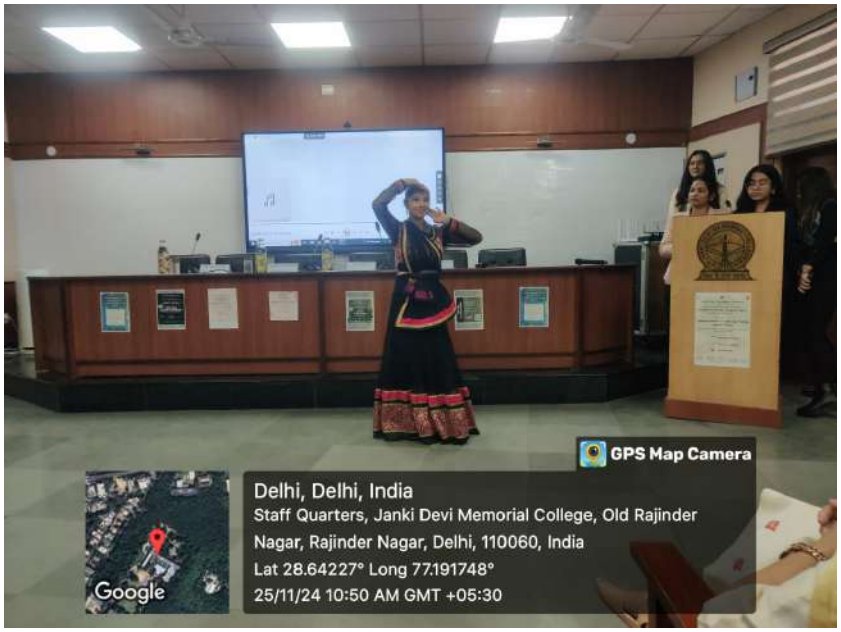
The third session featured paper presentations by members of Rhetorque, the English Debating Society of the college, with two faculty members as evaluators, Mr. Zubeer Ahmed and Mr. Dinesh Kataria, along with debates focusing on violence against women, with a particular emphasis on rural areas. The session concluded with a focus on solutions and interventions, including financial independence, strengthening the justice system, and community education. The documentary film "Girl in the River" by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy was also screened, highlighting the story of a young girl who faced honor-based violence. The seminar provided valuable insights and perspectives on addressing violence against women.



Poster of the National Seminar on Addressing Violence Against Women



Glimpses from the National Seminar on Addressing Violence Against Women



Glimpses from the National Seminar on Addressing Violence Against Women



Glimpses from the National Seminar on Addressing Violence Against Women



Glimpses from the National Seminar on Addressing Violence Against Women



Glimpses from the National Seminar on Addressing Violence Against Women

Poster Making and Slogan Writing Competition to Celebrate International Day of the Girl Child

On October 9, 2024, Janki Devi Memorial College celebrated the International Day of the Girl Child with vibrant competitions organized by the Women's Development Cell and the Centre for Gender Equity Studies. The event featured a poster-making competition and a slogan-writing competition held from 12 PM to 1 PM. It focused on themes such as Educating the Girl Child, Soft Power, Gender Preference and Nurturing Girl Health to name a few. The competitions attracted 63 enthusiastic participants.

Members of WDC were present throughout the event, creating a supportive environment that encouraged creativity and self-expression. It fostered a sense of community engagement among participants and contributed to the broader discourse on women's empowerment. By providing a space for creativity and expression, the event underscored the essential role of education and awareness in championing gender equality and supporting the rights of girls worldwide.

Winners of the Slogan Writing Competition:

1st Place: Ananya (B.Sc. Hons. Mathematics)
2nd Place: Anjali Yadav (B.Sc. Hons. Mathematics)
3rd Place: Aarti Singh (B.Sc. Hons. Mathematics)
Special Mention: Priyanka (B.Sc. Hons. Mathematics)

Winners of the Poster Making Competition:

1st Place: Kouser Khan (B.A. Prog.)
2nd Place: Priyanshi (B.A. Hons. Political Science)
3rd Place: Sanjana (B.Com. Prog.)
Special Mention: Nidhi Tripathi (B.Com. Hons.)





Posters of the Competitions held to Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child



Glimpses from the Competitions held to Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child



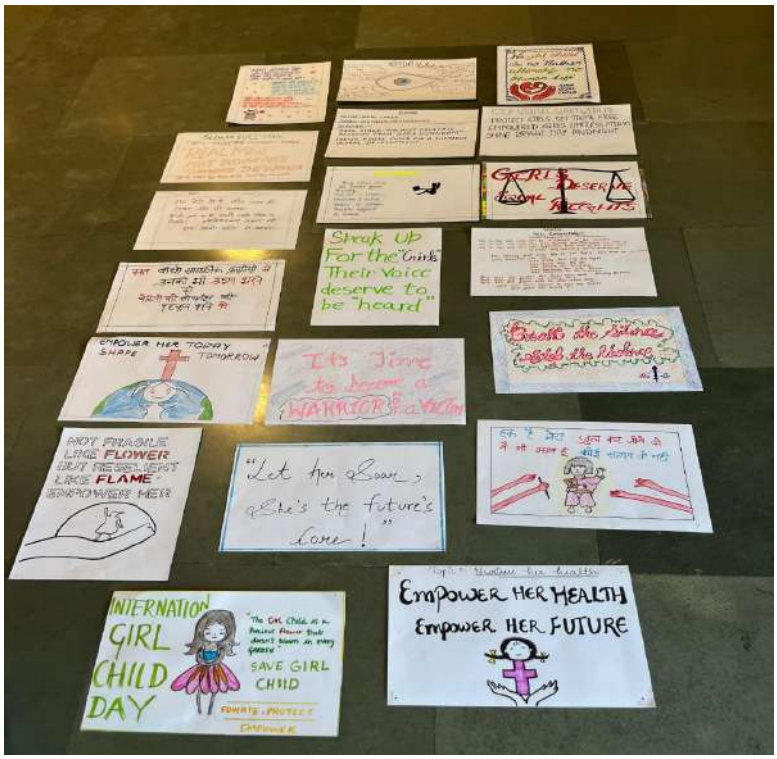
Winners of the Poster Making Competition held to Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child



Winners of the Poster Making Competition held to Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child



Winners of the Slogan Writing Competition held to Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child



A Display of the Students' Entries for the Competitions to Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child

National Conference on Policies for Encouraging Women to Remain in the Workforce in India: Leave Policies and Addressing Violence at the Workplace

The Women's Development Cell and the Centre for Gender Equity Studies of JDMC, collaborated with the Bystander Programme and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), to organize a National Conference on “Policies for Encouraging Women to Remain in the Workforce in India: Leave Policies and addressing Violence at the Workplace”. The two -day National conference was organized at JDMC on 25th and 26th September 2024. The inaugural session was chaired by the Principal, Prof. Swati Pal, and the keynote address was delivered by Dr Vibhuti Patel, after a speech by Ms. Gayatri Sharma of FES. On the first day, Prof Rajyalakshmi chaired a session in which Dr Abha Yadav, Mr. Shankar Aggarwal and Ms. Yagna Parmar were the panelists. This session was followed by an inter-college debate organized jointly by WDC and Rhetorque.

On the second day, the session on addressing violence at the workplace was introduced by Ms. Vandana Madan and chaired by Dr Namita Sethi. The resource persons included senior advocate Jayna Kothari, Ms Lora Prabhu, the Director of CEQUIN and Ms Neeruju Gupta of Safetipin. The succeeding session on preventing sexual harassment was chaired by Ms Mitali Nikore and the panelists included Ms Anweshaa Ghosh and Ms Mandvi Kulshreshtha from FES. The afternoon session included a break away session on Bystander intervention followed by a film screening. The Conference saw a host of issues being raised and discussed including paternity leave, menstrual leave, harassment at workplace and gender and late night shifts.

Renowned speakers, including Ms. Gayatri Sharma and Dr. Patel, delivered thought-provoking presentations. Ms. Sharma stressed democracy and listening to diverse voices and also enlightened us with the priorities of FES, while Dr. Patel discussed women's workforce participation, pay disparities (29.4% less than men), and inherent biases. Dr. Patel also highlighted Kiran Bedi's pioneering efforts in challenging discrimination and emphasised the importance of decision-making power, education, and addressing institutional barriers.

The Principal, Prof. Swati Pal, concluded Session 1 by emphasising the need to challenge stereotypical representations of women, reevaluate paternity leave policies, and prioritise women's health. The conference brought together experts, academics, and stakeholders to discuss critical issues surrounding women's empowerment and workplace equality.

Session 2 of the National Conference on "Empowering Women in the Workplace" saw a series of thought-provoking speeches from esteemed speakers. Prof. Rajyalaksmi emphasised the need

for policies supporting women's careers, highlighting that women constitute 50% of India's population but are underrepresented in the workforce. She also stressed the impact of menopausal issues on women's health.

Dr. Abha Yadav introduced the concept of the "purple economy" and "care economy," noting how technology has empowered women. However, she pointed out that women still face exploitation and are often expected to work 10% harder than men, despite being equally capable. Dr. Yadav emphasised the importance of equality, care, and shared responsibilities for women's development in the workplace.

Prof. V Rajyalakshmi further emphasised the state's role in providing a safe environment and adequate maternity benefits, highlighting the disparity between government and private sector benefits. Mr. Shankar Aggarwal reflected on India's progress over 75 years, stressing the need for quality education, healthcare, and sanitation to ensure meaningful development.

Ms. Yagna Parmar, director of Vacha Trust, shared her experience working with young women, discussing menstrual leave as an option for women to take breaks due to discomfort. While Bihar and Kerala have adopted maternity leave, there is no specific law governing this leave. In 1948 Japan, only 0.8% of women took maternity leave. Many women still struggle to openly discuss menstruation. The session concluded with a call for creating inclusive environments, reducing stigma, and addressing unnoticed issues like sanitation.

The second day of the National Conference commenced with Session 1, addressing the critical issue of violence in the workplace. Ms. Vandana Madan set the tone, emphasising the need to recognize women's contributions and change societal mindsets. She stressed that policies remain ineffective without altering the social and political environment.

Dr. Namita Sethi introduced the panelists, comprising renowned experts in law, social justice, and women's rights. Ms. Jayna Kothari presented on equality and anti-discrimination legislation in India, highlighting fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution (Articles 14, 15, 16, and 21). She emphasised substantial equality, non-discrimination based on sex, and equal opportunities in public employment.

Ms. Lora Prabhu expanded on the limitations of the term "workspace," stressing that gender discrimination stems from patriarchal stereotypes. She advocated for reimagining power structures and understanding women's rights through normative standards and international

treaties like CEDAW. Ms. Prabhu also highlighted the importance of distinguishing between equality and equity.

Ms. Neeruja Gupta discussed creating smart cities that facilitate women's participation in the workforce. Despite a 13% increase in women's participation over 68 years, India still fails to account for domestic work. She introduced the SAFETIPIN app, a tool for generating data to build safer workplaces. Ms. Gupta emphasised the need for inclusive public spaces, public infrastructure, and addressing pink tax and transportation issues.

The session concluded with a thought-provoking Q&A round, followed by a vote of thanks and group photography.

The next session of the conference focused on empowering women in the workplace. Ms. Mitali Nikore recapped key discussions, highlighting labour force participation data showing 41% female participation. She emphasised women's workforce participation as the main goal and addressed harassment, digitalization's impact on safety, and city-level authority experiences.

Ms.Anweshaa Ghosh presented on organisations supporting women in informal labour,citing 2020 data. She discussed time poverty, intersectional identity, and violence, including domestic laws and policies like GBV workplace, POSH Act, and ILO C 190. Ms.Ghosh shared quotes from ISST studies, illustrating challenges in implementing the POSH Act, such as lack of awareness and penal repercussions.

Ms. Mandvi Kulshreshtha (FES advisor) discussed gender justice, safeguards, equal rights, and code of conduct. FES promotes equal representation, provides resources, and introduces gender-neutral policies. Ms Kulshreshtha stressed awareness and linking social organisations with those needing safety, particularly agriculture wage labourers, who face significant challenges. Ms. Mitali Nikore concluded the session by highlighting the importance of recognizing intersectional identities, addressing time poverty, and intimate partner violence. Despite laws and policies, harassment persists, requiring continued efforts to create safe workplaces.

The session concluded with a question-answer round, a short movie screening by Lumiere, and a vote of thanks by Dr Debahuti Brahmachari.

The two day conference highlighted key challenges and solutions, emphasising the need to address harassment, violence, and biases, and promote awareness, education, and inclusive policies. Women's workforce participation, currently at 41%, must increase, and policies like POSH Act and ILO C 190 must be effectively implemented. Recognizing intersectional

identities, addressing time poverty, and providing resources and support for women are crucial. Despite progress, challenges persist, including lack of awareness, limited policy implementation, underreported harassment, and time poverty. Sustained efforts are necessary to empower women and create safe, inclusive workplaces.



Poster of the National Conference on Policies for Encouraging Women to Remain in the Workforce in India: Leave Policies and Addressing Violence at the Workplace



Glimpses from the National Conference on Policies for Encouraging Women to Remain in the Workforce in India: Leave Policies and Addressing Violence at the Workplace



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Silent March to Protest Against Kolkata Horror

The Women's Development Cell and the Centre for Gender Equity Studies of Janki Devi Memorial College organized a Silent March on August 23rd, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., to protest against the Kolkata horror and to stand in solidarity against rape, brutality, violence and abuse. The march was led by the Principal, Prof. Swati Pal, accompanied by the society's conveners and members, with a large group of JDMC students following. Nearly 400 participants joined, reflecting their solidarity and strong condemnation of the heinous crime. The march commenced in the college premises and proceeded along Ganga Ram Hospital Marg, covering 3 kilometers. JDMC protested against the Kolkata horror, hopefully inspiring other colleges in the university to follow. Despite heavy rain, the determined marchers carried on, and the event ended smoothly without disrupting traffic.

The CMO of City Hospital, Dr. Chakraborty, visited the college to express his solidarity. He appreciated the college's initiative and praised its efforts to raise awareness about all forms of violence against women.



Poster of the Silent March



A Glimpse of the Silent March



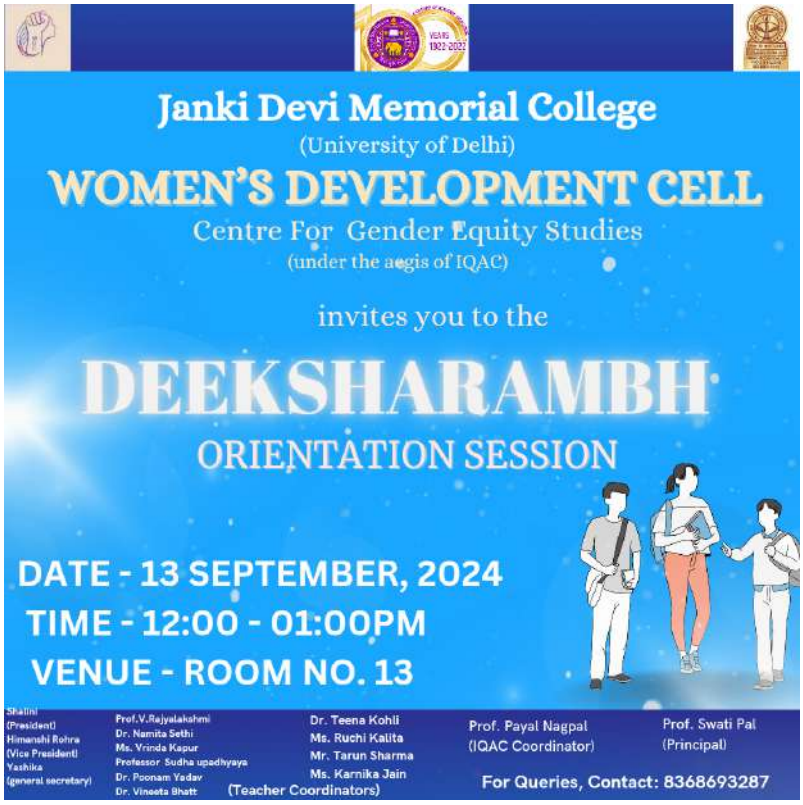
Participants at the Silent March



The CMO of City Hospital at JDMC

Orientation Program

The Women's Development Cell and the Centre for Gender Equity Studies of Janki Devi Memorial College organized an Orientation program for the first year students on September 13th, 2024 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m., to raise awareness about women's rights and opportunities while promoting leadership skills among female students. The session provided practical insights into career planning and personal development.



Poster of the Orientation Session



Glimpses of the Orientation Session



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Glimpses of the Orientation Session



Glimpses of the Orientation Session