

Writers' Workshop – 'Her Story' Inaugurated at AMU Murshidabad Centre

A three-day writing workshop for women from 16th to 18th December, 2016 was inaugurated at AMU Murshidabad Centre today in association with Pratichi Institute (an institute promoted by Noble Laureate, Prof. Amartya Sen), SNAP Association, and Action Aid. The workshop is attended by more than 60 women participants including the students, social workers, research scholars and budding writers from various parts of West Bengal. It includes sessions on general writing skills, write-ups for cinema, gender in writing, formal report writings, field visits, and discussions of field experiences & written pieces.

The inaugural function started with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran by Mr. Monirul Islam, Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration. Dr. Badaruddoza, Director, AMU Murshidabad Centre welcomed the distinguished guests and participants to the workshop.

Mrs. Dayabati Ray, Senior Research Associate, Pratichi Institute explained the aims and objectives of the workshop. She informed that she came across many cases in which books written by Muslim women did not get wide publicity and acceptance because of poor training and lack of guidance. She elaborated that this workshop will help the participants in reaching more people by their writings in the form of articles or books and can prepare their own platform where they can express their own feelings and emotions about the society in their own tongue and words.

Dr. Badaruddoza in his presidential address explained that females are emotionally much stronger than males. Drawing references from genetics he explained that males have XY chromosomes whereas females are gifted with XX chromosomes. This peculiar trait makes them more self-reliant and emotionally tolerant.

He also informed the audience that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the first person in India who opened the doors of modern education for Muslim women. He said it is because of the efforts of Sir Syed and his close associates like Sheikh Abdullah that Aligarh Muslim University is today offering state-of-art facilities to girls for pursuing higher education. He pointed out that AMU is the only university in India that is charging lesser fee from girl students in comparison to boys. He elaborated that AMU is ranked 2nd best University in India and is providing equal opportunities to girls and boys in their longing for knowledge and education. He informed that Women's College of AMU is now universally considered as a great seat of learning for women.

Ms. Jaya Mitra, writer and social activist, expressed that for better exchange of ideas it is pertinent for all the budding writers to write continuously on a daily basis and to gradually improve their writing skills. She said a prolific writer is one who has the ability to express the same thing in different ways through writing. She explained that there is a difference between writing and publishing, and young writer should try to create a place for themselves in various magazines and newspapers.

Ms. Miratun Nahar, Ex-Principal of Victoria Institution, Social Activist and Noted Writer equated writing an original piece of work with the pain that a mother suffers during child bearing. She explained that it is necessary for women to write and express their feelings freely for creating a vibrant society.

Dr. Gurudas Gupta, Director, MDI Murshidabad said that not many years back women hardly got a chance to express themselves and this resulted in a male dominated society in India. He explained that the situation has improved considerably mainly because now women are able to communicate their suffering through writing and cinema. He urged the young women participants to write directly from their heart and should devote time towards getting training of the language in which they write.

Mr. Ashokendu Sengupta, Ex-Chairman of State Commission for Protection of Child Rights and Advisor, Pratichi Institute congratulated all the participants for making it convenient to attend this highly valuable and informative workshop.

Dr. Tahir Ali, President SNAP Association expressed that women can make a mark in this largely patriarchal society by writing about themselves. He encouraged the young women writers to overcome their lack of information and to get knowledge about their rights. He said that this will help them in applying for various scholarships, government and private sector jobs and will truly emancipate and liberate them from the shackles of oppression and subjugation.

Mr. Bhabesh Das, Ex-News Editor, Parsar Bharti; Mr. Kumar Rana, Project Director, Pratichi Institute; Mr. Dilip Ghosh, IAS also interacted with the participants.

The program was conducted by Mr. Sabir Ahmed, Research Coordinator and Fellow at Pratichi Institute. Mr. Amirul Alam, Coordinator, SNAP Association presented the vote of thanks.