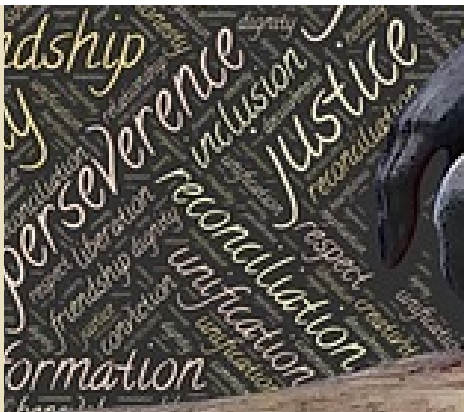


benevolence inclusion community education

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI



ABOUT

Mahatma Gandhiji's life was indeed multi-dimensional; he had built up his own concepts and principles worth considering in almost all walks of life, especially in cultural, economic, educational, political and social fields. The Satya - truth of the universal unity remains as the nucleus in views of Gandhiji. The universal unity calls for equality of everyone and the welfare of one and all. Every living being is essentially included in the broad concept of equality of all. However, in this, man, as the superior being of the entire creation, who possesses extraordinary qualities like intellect and creativity, remains in priority. On the basis of these qualities, he is through the large scaled co-operation of fellow beings capable of paving the way of welfare of all. This basic spirit of the Gandhian ideas establishes Gandhiji as a Mahatma - a Great Soul, a Saint. The colossal brotherhood concept of Mahatma Gandhi - a broad outlook-based approach of fraternity of humankind could be well comprehended in his ideas related to equality centered freedom. A pure spirit of human welfare was intact in Gandhiji's thoughts. It is, in fact, the essence of his ideas and the identity of his saintliness. Keeping aside all prejudices each and every one, general or elite, needs to comprehend the ideas and works actions of Mahatma Gandhi. Further, having the basic spirit of ideas and actions of the Mahatma intact, they could be refined -made conducive as per the demand of time and space and adopted for getting freedom, justice and rights, all necessary for human equality.

Anthropology is a holistic science of human kind. The role of anthropologists and social scientists has become relevant in the sphere of human welfare. The planning of social behaviour is not particularly new in human history and some sort of vision of welfare is present in every human society in different forms. The anthropologists study mankind in totality following a holistic approach. Thus, anthropological knowledge may be utilized for the service of man.

With an aim to understand the role of Gandhian ideologies in promoting human welfare, the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi organized a one day webinar on 'Gandhian Thoughts and Human Welfare' on 25th August 2020. This webinar was organized as a part of the Government of India's initiative of celebrating the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi by holding 150 Lectures/Symposia in 150 reputed foreign universities jointly with 150 reputed Indian institutions/universities.



MAHATMA GANDHI

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

A one day international webinar on "**Gandhian Thoughts in Human Welfare**" was organized by the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi under the chairmanship of Prof. M. P. Sachdeva, on 25th August 2020. Following is the list of members of the organizing committee:



Prof. M. P. Sachdeva
Chairperson



Dr. K. N. Saraswathy
Convenor



Dr. R. P. Mitra
Co-Convenor



Dr. Avitoli Zhimo
Co-Convenor



Dr. Vipin Gupta
Co-Convenor

COORDINATORS

1. Program management : Mr. Arun Kumar
2. Logistics & Communication : Mr. Imnameren Longkumer
3. Report Compilation : Mr. Vineet Chaudhary

RAPPORTEUR

Session 1: Mr. Imnameren & Ms. Suryasnata Majumdar
Session 2: Mr. Arun Kumar & Ms. Joycy Vungneihchoi
Session 3: Mr. Kevingu Khate & Ms. Varsha Singh
Session 4: Ms. Sunanda Rajkumari & Mr. Vineet Chaudhary

RESOURCE PERSONS

The webinar was addressed by eminent academicians and thinkers from India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. There were eleven speakers in total. The list of speakers along with the titles of their talks is given below.



Prof. V. K. Srivastava

Director, Anthropological Survey of India
Topics: The Mahatma and Anthropology



Prof. Salil Misra

Dean, School of Law, Governance and Citizenship
PVC-II, Ambedkar University
Topic: Gandhi's relevance in contemporary world



Prof. I. S. Marwah

Professor (Retd.), Department of Anthropology,
University of Delhi
Topic: An Anthropologist's view of Gandhi



Prof. Abha Pal

Dean and Professor, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla
University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh
Topic: Gandhian concept of women
empowerment



Prof. Anton Piyarathne

Senior Lecturer (Grade I), Anthropology/Sociology,
The Open University of Sri Lanka
Topic: Lessons Sri Lanka can learn from Gandhian
thinking to assure human welfare



Dr. Bharat Pd. Badal

Visiting Lecturer, Central Department of Rural
Development (TU Kritipur), Nepal
Topic: Gandhian model of rural development



Dr. R. P. Mitra

Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology,
University of Delhi
Topic: Gandhi and homo humanus



Dr. Pankaj Singh

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Dr.
Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar, M.P.
Topic: Revisiting Gandhian thoughts in 21st
century



Dr. H. C. Behera

Assistant Professor, Sociological Research Unit
(SRU) ISI GRIDIH
Topic: Gandhian approach to community
development and its contemporary relevance



Dr. Rajkumari Nonibala Devi

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology,
University of Delhi
Topic: Gandhiji's and self-sufficient economy
during COVID-19 crisis: A case of Ema market in
Manipur



Ms. Sohini Sinha

PhD Research Scholar, Department of
Anthropology, University of Delhi
Topic: Perspectives on health and hygiene: An
Anthropological insight on Gandhian thoughts

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Date: 25th August 2020 | Venue: Google Meet App

Participant Entry 09:15 AM – 09:30 AM	
Opening Session 09:30 AM – 09:45 AM Session organizer: Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo	
Welcome Address	Prof. M. P. Sachdeva
Address by PVC, University of Delhi	Prof. P. C. Joshi
Session 1 09:45 AM – 11:00 AM Session organizer: Dr. R. P. Mitra Moderators: Dr. P. R. Mondal & Dr. N. Kiranmala Devi Rapporteurs: Mr. Imnameren & Ms. Suryasnata Mazumder	
<i>Name of the speaker</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Prof. Salil Misra	Gandhi's relevance in contemporary world
Dr. Anton Piyarathne	Lessons Sri Lanka can learn from Gandhian thinking to assure human welfare
Dr. Rajkumari Nonibala Devi	Gandhiji's and self-sufficient economy during COVID-19 crisis: A case of Ema market in Manipur
Session 2 11:00 AM – 01:30 PM Session organizer: Dr. K. N. Saraswathy Moderators: Dr. Manoj K. Singh & Dr. Chakraverti Mahajan Rapporteurs: Mr. Arun Kumar & Ms. Joycy Vungneihchoi	
<i>Name of the speaker</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Dr. Bharat Prasad Badal	Gandhian model of rural development
Prof. I. S. Marwah	An Anthropologist's view of Gandhi
Prof. Abha Pal	Gandhian concept of women empowerment
Session 3 02:15 PM – 03:30 PM Session organizer: Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo Moderators: Dr. Benrithung Murry & Dr. M. Kennedy Singh Rapporteurs: Mr. Kevingu Khate & Ms. Varsha Singh	
<i>Name of the speaker</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Dr. Hari Charan Behera	Gandhian approach to community development and its contemporary relevance
Dr. R. P. Mitra	Gandhi and <i>homo humanus</i>
Ms. Sohini Sinha	Perspectives on health and hygiene: An Anthropological insight on Gandhian thoughts
Session 4 03:30 PM – 05:00 PM Session organizer: Dr. Vipin Gupta Moderators: Dr. R. P. Mitra & Dr. Shivani Chandel Rapporteurs: Mr. Vineet Chaudhary Ms. Sunanda Rajkumari	
<i>Name of the speaker</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Dr. Pankaj Singh	Revisiting Gandhian thoughts in 21 st century
Prof. V. K. Srivastava	The Mahatma and Anthropology
Closing Session 05:00 PM – 05:30 PM	
Closing Remarks	Dr. Vipin Gupta
Vote of Thanks	Dr. K. N. Saraswathy

WEBINAR SUMMARY

Highlights:

- Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, organized a one day international webinar entitled "**Gandhian Thoughts in Human Welfare**" on 25th August 2020, as a part of the Government of India's initiative of celebrating the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi by holding 150 Lectures/Symposia in 150 reputed foreign universities jointly with 150 reputed Indian institutions/universities.
- The webinar was addressed by eleven national and international academicians and thinkers. International speakers were from two neighboring countries Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- The Webinar was attended by nearly 125 attendees from India, Nepal and Sri Lanka making it a huge success.

The Webinar was inaugurated by **Prof. P.C. Joshi**, Pro-Vice Chancellor of University of Delhi and Former Head of Department of Anthropology. Addressing the topic of the webinar to the participants, Prof. Joshi said that Mahatma Gandhi and Anthropology reminds him of Verrier Elwin. For, it is during his stay at Sabarmati Ashram, Elwin understood the importance of ethnography by observing the simple lifestyle of Mahatma Gandhi. He further proceeds by referring to Gandhi in that sense as a 'Great Ethnographer' because he used to understand problems by withstanding and experiencing them. This was the basis of Gandhi's philosophies and actions. Inspired from Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave came up with the idea of 'Sarvodaya' and Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay came up with 'Antyodaya' which are nothing but off-shoots of Gandhi's philosophy. Gandhi's book "Experiments of Truth" is worth reading and reflects that he was one who dared to experiment with truths of his life. Prof Joshi further says that unfortunately, we have never been able to apply Gandhi's philosophy to its core probably because we are having weak souls but he is sure about the efficacy of Gandhi's philosophies in contemporary times and in this webinar the application of Gandhian philosophies for human welfare will be primarily focused on highlighting the Gandhi's actions and Applied Anthropology. He then wished the speakers good luck and wished for path breaking conclusions coming up from this webinar. It was then handed over to the moderators of Session 1 for taking the webinar forward.



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Photo: Address by PVC, University of Delhi Prof. P. C. Joshi



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Photo: Dr. R. P. Mitra initiating the Session-1

Session 1, Time: 9:45 PM to 11:00 PM

The first session of the webinar was organized was Dr. R. P. Mitra and was moderated by Dr. P. R. Mondal and Dr. N. Kiranmala Devi. The session was addressed by **Prof. Salil Misra, Dr. Anton Piyyarathne** and **Dr. Rajkumari Nonibala Devi**.

The first speaker of the webinar **Prof. Salil Misra** deliberated on the topic “**Gandhi’s Relevance in Contemporary World**.” He initiated the lecture by making a distinction between the 20th and 21st century with the previous centuries. According to him both- the state and the people have been empowered in last two centuries leading to more conflicts between the state and the people ranging from minor conflicts to civil wars. Moreover, the profile of conflict has become more varied but the even more problematic part is that the nature of the conflict is also different. The modern conflicts are not for wealth but also for rights, entitlements, and for ideas. Possibility of victory is rarest in such cases because the people never give up their ideas or beliefs. People may get defeated but they will never compromise on their ideas. He further mentions that, “We don’t know what victory means in such cases where the sentiments, resources are involved.” Referring to Mahatma Gandhi, he says that Mahatma Gandhi has often mentioned about the human mind. He often said that all the things, good or bad, comes from human mind. Gandhi thought he had perfected in that. Gandhi had faith in all of us. All kinds of violence are artificial creation but deep inside we all are good and therefore there is always a chance of transform.

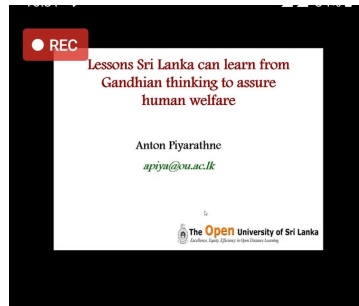
Next Speaker **Prof. Anton Piyyarathne** spoke on the topic “**Lessons Sri Lanka can Learn from Gandhian Thinking to assure Human Welfare**.” Prof. Piyyarathne highlighted the ethnic and religious diversity in Sri Lanka and the politicization of ethnicity and increased demand for linguistic and religious boundaries that led to the outbreak of war. He presented that independent Sri Lanka, increasingly produced politics of ethnonationalism, leading to crisis situation, and identifies four underlying issues: 1) Dilemma regarding selecting the language, 2) unemployment of youths, 3) population boom accompanied the reduced capacity to cater the needs of people in third-world weak economy, and 4) the problem with religiosity to secular nation and state building in the west. Moreover, post-independent crisis arose from major uprising such as JVP, a class struggle of a Marxist-Leninist Community political party (introduction of armed struggle/violent political ideology), Tamil militant movement and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Dr. Piyyarathne also presented the similarity between Gandhi and Darmapala in highlighting the poor economic situation of their people. Gandhian principles for assuring human welfare was discussed presenting the Gandhian trinity of Sayagraha, Ahimsa, and Sarvodaya. He emphasized to follow Gandhi’s footprints to live a simple and minimal life, eat simple food, dress simply, lead a stress free life, leadership, persistence, and also truth and non-violent. These are the lessons people can learn for assuring human welfare.

The last speaker of the first session **Dr. Rajkumari Nonibala Devi** gave a lecture entitled “**Gandhiji’s and Self-sufficient Economy during COVID-19 Crisis: A case of Ema Market in Manipur**.” Giving a brief idea about Manipur and its ethnic and economic significance to the participants, she moved forth to explain in details about the Ema Market. ‘Ema Keithel’ is a market place situated in the city of Imphal. Here, the word ‘Ema’ means ‘mother’ and ‘Keithel’ means ‘market place’ and she mentions that it is not just a place of economic significance but it is “embedded in the social structure” of the Manipur. This market is run and managed only by women of the state. It is the amalgamation of women from various ethnic groups who manufacture goods and sell them in the market and create a kind of self-sufficient economical

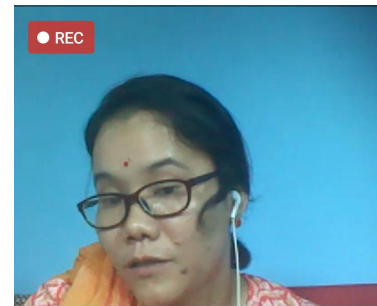
set up. Thus, this market place is a symbol of economic, political and social empowerment of the women of Manipur. In the crisis caused due to Covid-19 across the world, there is a rise in the entrepreneur spirit and self-sufficiency in the state which has proved to be advantageous during this kind of crisis and has been supported by the Government bodies in the state of Manipur.



(125) Photo: Prof. Salil Misra



(132) Photo: Prof. Anton Piyarathne's Presentation



(115) Photo: Dr. Rajkumari Nonibala Devi

Session 2, Time: 11 AM to 1:30 PM

This session was organized by Dr. K. N. Saraswathy and was moderated by Dr. Chakraveti Mahajan. The distinguished speakers of the session were **Dr. Bharat Prasad Badal**, **Prof. I. S. Marwah** and **Prof. Abha Pal**.

The first speaker of this session **Dr. Bharat Prasad Badal** deliberated on the topic "**Gandhian Model of Rural Development**". He started with explaining the term Universalism; universalism is the norms and values accepted by the entire universe. The universal truths are that we are Born, we Live and we Die. He stressed on how one should not be greedy by using Mahatma Gandhi's quote "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not any man's greed." He explained how greed causes violence- Greed comes from ignorance, ignorance creates illusion, illusion creates attachment, attachment creates lust, lust creates greed and greed creates violence. He stated that Gandhi is the entire philosophy himself. Gandhiji have a holistic and people centered approach to India's rural development relying on truth, non-violence and goodness of human beings. He further bring up the contradictions between Gandhiji's goal versus modernism, the former believes in self-sustaining and optimum utilization of natural resources while the later emphasized on more and more profits. He further added that Gandhiji is also very famous in Nepal; a social organization following his philosophy was set up in 1927 AD to protect and uplift untouchables as well as women. In conclusion, he explained how to make India an Incredible India, for this, rural development is a must which can be achieved by 'Gandhian model of sustainable development.' This simply means to develop a non-profit programs designed for the people as prescribed by Gandhi.

The second speaker Prof. I. S. Marwah enlightened us with the first-hand information about Gandhiji's life. The title of his talk was "An Anthropologist's View of Gandhi". His talk revolved around how, as an anthropologist, he was impressed by Gandhiji and his life. He started his discourse by underlining the fact that how Gandhiji was born and brought up from an orthodox Hindu family, yet he loved experimenting. Dress, food, language, religion were Gandhiji's field of

experimenting but he never forget his roots. He explained how Gandhiji studied law and further gives detail of his back and forth journey to England, South Africa and India. During this time, Gandhiji witnesses numerous life events including racism, gender inequality and so on which were also contributing factors to his fight for Human Rights. He emphasized on how Gandhiji was a great anthropologist as he experiment with life, built a rapport with the nation, lived with the outcast people. He also added that religion was very personal to Gandhiji and felt that state should be neutral towards religion. One thing the speaker is proud of till now is that he saw the three great leaders of Independent India-Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhai Patel together.

Last speaker of the session **Prof. Abha Pal** discusses was on the topic "**Gandhian Concept of Women Empowerment.**" Prof. Pal talked about how women have been facing social and religious inequality for long time, yet there was an awakening in the 19th century. Such awakening is a pre-requisite of emancipation and emancipation is the pre-requisite of empowerment. She emphasized on how Gandhiji taught women to boost their self-confidence and self-esteem and asked them to participate in the Non-violence movement. Gandhiji supported women empowerment and asked women not to be a slave of their own fancies and men. She added that Gandhiji believed that home is the best place for women as they are most powerful at home, yet they should not be domestic slaves. Gandhiji was against dowry, child marriage and promoted girl's education. She further explained how Gandhiji had said that he has so much to learn from women after reflecting on his wife's as well as several other women's life. He said that women have a giving nature yet expects nothing in return. She concluded by saying that Gandhiji awakened the spirit of nationalism among women masses, making it the golden ear in the history of emancipation of women.



Photo: Dr. B. P. Badal's Presentation



Photo: Prof. I. S. Marwah



Photo: Prof. Abha Pal

Session 3, Time: 2:15 PM to 3:30 PM

Session 3 was organized by Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo and was moderated by Dr. Benrithung Murry and Dr. M. Kennedy Singh. The session was addressed by **Dr. H. C. Behera, Dr. R. P. Mirta** and **Ms. Sohini Sinha.**

The first speaker of this session, **Dr. H. C. Behera** presented his talk on "**Gandhian approach to Community Development and its Contemporary Relevance.**" Dr. Behera started his lecture by giving definitions of "village" as coined by various thinkers and scholars. He suggested that a village is simply a cluster of settlement. According to him the Gandhian approach towards

community development was a holistic and integrated approach, covering all dimensions of human life such as agriculture, livelihood, etc. Dr. Behera also drew similarities between Gandhian approach and Anthropology both being holistic and focusing on the grass-root level of communities. He also gave light on self-sufficiency and self-reliance among communities in facets such as food and dairy production. He also stressed on “Inter-dependence” among community members in tackling issues and strengthening communal harmony. Dr. Behera said that Gandhi was of the view of developing equality and inclusion of every member within a community. Gandhi was also seen to be against exploitation of natural resources, alienation, and dispossession, invasion of village and community spaces, corruption, non-cleanliness, non-accountability and non-transparency. Gandhi was for democratic participation and power for people, for a better and sustainable environment and labor for all.

Next speaker **Dr. R. P. Mitra** deliberated on the topic titled “**Gandhi and Homo Humanus.**” Dr. Mitra talked on transformation from Homo sapiens to homo humanus in regard with Gandhian ideas and teachings. Dr. Mitra started his lecture by saying that the idea of “Non-violence” was mentioned by other scholars in the past but Gandhiji was the first to put it into practice. He pointed out that basic human nature is brutish, violent and self-centered, according to reports by studies. However, violence and aggression is believed to have played a big part in the evolution of man, which makes us think if violence is embedded in our DNA. He says that male aggression has played role in human selection. He also pointed out that War, Warfare and Conflict has become more prominent over the last 1200 years. Now Gandhi believed that Optimism is combination of spirituality and rationality. He meant that if one can understand one’s feelings, one can control one’s actions, as Gandhi stressed on self-control, discipline and learning. Dr. Mitra also gave light on the vows which were fostered by Gandhi such as not to shy away from the truth, to practice non-violence, to do away with greed and scheming evil and not to focus on non-possession meaning not to be accumulative of the physical aspect in nature. In conclusion, it is Truth and Non-violence that will move us from Homo sapiens to homo humanus i.e. to be more ‘humane’.

The final speaker of the session **Ms. Sohini Sinha** presented her talk on “**Perspectives on Health and Hygiene: An Anthropological Insight on Gandhian Thoughts.**” Ms. Sohini stressed on the importance of sanitation and its impact on public health. Cleanliness being one of the important ideas of Gandhiji is a major issue of the present day in India. Sohini stated that unhygienic practices, mainly outdoor defecations, which are still found in India, are resulting to stunting growth among the children. And for this, studies have shown that Indian children are the worst affected compared to other developing countries. Women also face many issues when it comes to outdoor defecations such as sexual harassment. The sicknesses related to this are also seen to be a major health issue such as Dengue, Malaria, and other intestinal problems. Schemes such as Swachh Bharat are good initiatives to end unhygienic practices but each and every Indian should do their part to achieve the goal of Clean India.

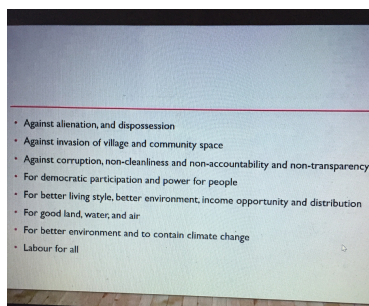


Photo: Dr. Hari Charan Behera's Presentation



Photo: Dr. R. P. Mitra

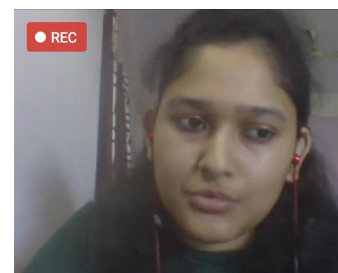


Photo: Ms. Sohini Sinha

Session 4, Time: 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

The last session of the webinar was organized by Dr. Vipin Gupta and was moderated by Dr. R. P. Mitra and Dr. Shivani Chandel. The eminent speakers of the session were **Dr. Pankaj Singh** and **Prof. V. K. Srivastava**.

The title of **Dr. Pankaj Singh's** talk was **"Revisiting Gandhian Thoughts in 21st century."** Dr. Singh began his talk by stating that people usually concentrate on one dimension of Gandhi's life, pertaining to his contribution in the Indian freedom movement. There are others who try to build controversy around Gandhi by selectively quoting him out of context. Both are doing disservice to Gandhi. Gandhi's personality is multifaceted and transparent. Apart from a freedom fighter, Gandhi was a thinker and a reformer too. He pointed out that today when we are aiming to become self-reliant, revisiting Gandhi becomes a necessity. For, it was Gandhi who came up with the concept of 'Gram Swaraj.' Today we are talking about smart cities, but what about smart villages? He asserted that until we have self-reliant villages, we won't be able to realize the dream of self-reliant India. Further, he talked about 'Swadeshi.' He categorically mentioned that Swadeshi doesn't mean manufacturing of products in Indian factories controlled by a handful of industrialists; rather it means establishment of micro and cottage industries in the villages. In the garb of globalization we have given the way to capitalism in India, which made people greedy. Today, technology is replacing labors, which is leading to unemployment. He concluded his talk by reiterating Gandhi's commitment for social justice, ecology and education.

The final speaker of the session and the webinar **Prof. V. K. Srivastava** spoke on the topic, **"The Mahatma and Anthropology."** Prof. Srivastava introduced the lecture by highlighting that Gandhi was a prolific writer. Gandhi's writings reflect that his ideas have evolved over his life time. He, then, introduces the notion of analysing the writings of Gandhi through anthropological lens. According to him, Gandhi is embodiment of Indian lifestyle and values. He tried to classify Gandhi's personality into two domains: 'Abstract Gandhi' and 'Concrete Gandhi' former being a theorist and later being the practitioner of his own theories. Hence Gandhi exemplifies the unity of theory and practice. Yet, Mahatma always called himself a 'common man'. Nirmal Kumar Bose's books written on Gandhi give a great insight to Gandhi's life. Reflecting of Gandhi's writing, Prof. Srivastava emphasized that Gandhi wrote not just for others, but for himself as well. Writing allows one to come face to face with their thoughts. Mahatma, apart from everyone else, was also writing from his self-clarification. He further talked about Gandhian philosophy that 'Truth is God' and truth can be found in the hut of poor. Based on his discussion, Prof. Srivastava underlined that students of Anthropology can learn a lot from Gandhi's life: his inquisitiveness, faith in ground work, methods of working with the people, engaging people in dialogues and not imposing his own viewpoints on anyone. Analysis of Gandhian writing, his words, his deeds, and the institutions that he founded, the memoir written by the people who lived in his company, interpretation of his strategic words are noteworthy for students of anthropology.



Photo: Dr. Pankaj Singh



Photo: Prof. V. K. Srivastava

The webinar concluded with closing remarks by Dr. Vipin Gupta and vote of thanks by Dr. K. N. Saraswathy.



 (114)  
Photo: Dr. Vipin Gupta giving the closing remarks



 (113)  
Photo: Dr. K. N. Saraswathy giving the vote of thanks

GALLERY



Photo: Dr. P. R. Mandal



Photo: Dr. B. P. Badal



Photo: Dr. Chakraverti Mahajan



Photo: Dr. Hari Charan Behera



Photo: Dr. Benrithung Murry



Photo: Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo