

# **Faculty Development Program on Tobacco and Substance Abuse, Sexual Minorities, and Gender Sensitisation.**

On July 6, 2024, St. Joseph's University hosted a Faculty Development Program (FDP) focused on critical social issues such as tobacco abuse, alcohol and drug abuse among students, the inclusion of sexual minorities on campus, and gender sensitisation. The program, organized by the Gender Sensitisation Cell, was designed to equip faculty members with the knowledge and tools to foster a safer, more inclusive academic environment.

The FDP commenced with an informative session on tobacco and substance abuse. Mr. S J Chander, CEO of the Foundation for Sustainable Health, and Dr. Jayant Mahadevan from NIMHANS, provided insights into the prevalence and impact of tobacco and substance abuse among students. They discussed preventive measures, treatment options for addiction, and the importance of laws related to tobacco prohibition. Their expertise helped faculty understand their roles in supporting students facing such challenges.

The second session addressed sexual minorities and gender sensitisation. Noted transgender rights activist, Akkai Padmashali, shared her experiences, stressing the importance of accepting diverse gender identities and fostering inclusivity. A panel discussion led by activist Madhu Bhushan further delved into these issues, emphasizing the need for respect and self-determination in matters of gender.

The program concluded with remarks from Rev. Dr. Victor Lobo SJ, Vice Chancellor of St. Joseph's University, reinforcing the institution's commitment to a tobacco-free future and gender equality. The FDP was instrumental in enhancing the faculty's understanding of these important issues, ensuring they are better prepared to create a supportive and inclusive campus environment.

For the Images of The Faculty Development Program on Tobacco and Substance Abuse, Sexual Minorities, and Gender Sensitisation, kindly refer to the Photo Gallery: <https://www.sju.edu.in/gallery/99>