

NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY  
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## Netaji Subhas Open University

School of Social Sciences

DD 26, Sector I, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700064

Website: www.wbnsou.ac.in

Chandan Basu  
25/03/2022

### Report of the International Webinar on Caste, Social Formation and Political Mobilization held on 14th March 2022

The International webinar on *Caste, Social Formation and Political Mobilization* was organized by the NSOU Centre for Social Studies (NSOU CSS) in collaboration with The School of Social Sciences, NSOU on March 14, 2022, and held virtually on the zoom platform. It was very well received by the academicians, scholars and participants who participated whole-heartedly. The webinar witnessed scintillating presentations made by the speakers who elaborated on the various dimensions of the issues surrounding caste.

Under the esteemed patronage of the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, NSOU, Prof. Subha Shankar Sarkar, and chief mentorship of Professor. Chandan Basu, Director, School of Social Sciences NSOU, the webinar began at 10.30 am IST, with the welcome address being delivered by Professor Basu, followed by the Keynote address by the respected international scholar.

The Keynote address was delivered by Dr. Kenneth Bo Nielsen Associate Professor - Department of Social Anthropology Coordinator Asianettverket - Centre for Development and Environment University of Oslo, who delivered an enlightening presentation on the question of Caste and Dispossession, especially in the context of West Bengal and India, in his address titled 'WHY CASTE MATTERS TO INDIA'S NEW LAND WARS'.

The Keynote Session was chaired by Professor Rup Kumar Burman, Professor, Department of History, Jadavpur University, who was also kind enough to chair the First Technical Session. The Second Technical Session was chaired by Professor Manosanta Biswas, Professor of History, Sidhu Kanho Birsa University. Both Prof. Barman and Prof. Biswas appreciated the diverse range of papers presented on the theme and deliberated on each of the papers to make the two sessions more engaging and riveting. The two technical sessions were enriched by papers being presented on diverse themes ranging from sacred to profane, prostitution to marriage, twice born *Dwijia* castes to untouchables, ethnicity to democracy and what not. The two technical sessions stood out for its versatility, malleability and academic potency to deliver on such a variety of eye-opening topics within a given time frame. Not just the diversity and heterogeneity of the presentations but the pre-eminence of the topics was out of question for they touched the most vital and relevant public issues of the contemporary times.

The technical sessions displayed the tenacity to shift gaze from one topic to other with a quick resilience and an élan rarely noticed in seminars on such themes. It was not a hackneyed session with papers read out in monochrome but extremely rich and promising that engaged the audience to the fullest. The two technical sessions covered almost all the aligned themes across the social fora that one could have conceived of while addressing the most vital issue of caste in the Indian scenario. The two technical sessions came to an end with a question answer and discussion phase at the conclusion of each session, which invited thought provoking questions from the participants, and the speakers were happy to oblige the audience with their well-researched and argumentative but of course constructive responses.

The webinar comprised of around twenty-one paper presentations out of the scheduled twenty-three, and yet concluded right on time at around 4.50 pm, thanks to the efforts of the technical



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coordinators Dr. Manoj Kumar Halder and Mr. Anupam Roy and Organizing Secretary of the webinar, Mr. Debajit Goswami.

The webinar concluded with the vote of thanks delivered by Mr. Debajit Goswami, Assistant Professor of Public Administration, NSOU, with a reminder of the ongoing work for the forthcoming edited volume, comprising of the full papers presented at the webinar, which would be published at the earliest and a unanimous declaration of the assembly, to take forward the academic collaboration ignited by this webinar.

Report prepared by Dr Srabanti Choudhuri, Assistant Professor of Sociology, SOSS, NSOU and Dr Debajit Goswami, Assistant Professor of Public Administration, SOSS, NSOU.

Placed before the Vice-Chancellor, NSOU for his kind consideration and necessary perusal through the Director, School of Social Sciences, NSOU.

Chandan Basu

Chandan Basu

Director, School of Social Sciences

NSOU

24/03/2022

Perused the report, as aforesaid; it may please be kept on record. However, a copy of the report may be

sent to the Dir CIQA for n.a. at his end.

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Dir/SOSS

24/03/2022