

## हरियालीतीज (Haryali Teej)

On 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023, Baba Mastnath University celebrated *हरियालीतीज* (Haryali Teej), a cultural fest organized by the Women Studies Centre under the Faculty of IQAC. This event, which marks a significant cultural occasion for women in many regions of India, was celebrated to honor the spirit of togetherness, the vibrancy of nature, and the empowerment of women. The event was convened by Prof. (Dr.) Aruna Anchal and co-convened by Dr. Monika Chahar, drawing participation from all sections of the university community. It provided a platform to celebrate the cultural traditions while addressing social issues related to women's empowerment.

The event was a lively celebration filled with traditional music, dance, and other cultural performances. A series of fun-filled activities, including a variety of folk dances, traditional games, and art displays, were organized to showcase the importance of Haryali Teej, which is also a symbol of marital happiness and devotion. The participants, including students and faculty members, engaged in cultural performances that resonated with the essence of Indian traditions while promoting unity and understanding across the university community.

Prof. (Dr.) Aruna Anchal delivered an insightful address about the significance of the occasion, emphasizing the role of such cultural festivals in preserving traditional practices and promoting gender equality. Dr. Monika Chahar also highlighted how such events encourage women's participation in cultural activities, thus empowering them through the celebration of their identities and contributions to society.

*हरियालीतीज* was not only an occasion for celebration but also a reminder of the strength and resilience of women in society. Celebrating such events reinforces the importance of women's participation in both cultural and societal spaces. The festival also symbolizes the deep connection between nature and women, particularly in rural areas, where women are often seen as the primary custodians of natural resources and sustainability. The event, thus, promoted the message of preserving our cultural and natural heritage while empowering women to be active participants in their communities.

This aligns directly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 15 (Life on Land). By celebrating women's roles in preserving cultural and environmental traditions, this event contributed to the broader global efforts to foster gender equality and sustainable living practices. It underscored the importance of a society where women's contributions are recognized, and their rights and participation in all aspects of life are celebrated.

The cultural fest witnessed active participation from students, faculty, and staff, with a total of 30 participants engaging in various activities. It created an atmosphere of joy and solidarity, offering an opportunity for the participants to experience the richness of Indian cultural practices while raising awareness about women's roles in society. It also helped highlight the value of women's collective actions in the preservation of traditions and natural resources, ultimately contributing to fostering a supportive and inclusive campus environment.

The *हरियालीतीज* celebration at Baba Mastnath University was a wonderful fusion of cultural heritage and social empowerment. By celebrating the role of women in cultural and environmental stewardship, the event created a space for dialogue on gender equality, cultural preservation, and sustainable living. The festival reinforced the university's commitment to promoting gender equality and social inclusion, contributing to the realization of the global Sustainable Development Goals. The celebration of *हरियालीतीज* helped foster a sense of community, encouraged women's participation, and underscored the importance of gender equality in shaping a sustainable future.