

GNLU launches a new Centre of Excellence for Disability Studies

Gandhinagar, Oct 02, 2019: On the occasion of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) launched a new centre “GNLU Centre for Disability Studies.

The launch ceremony was graced by GNLU Director, Dr Shanthakumar and Dr Amita Dhanda, Professor of Law and Dean Academic at NALSAR University of Law Hyderabad, who also heads the renowned Centre for Disability Studies at NALSAR. Dr Dhanda is widely acclaimed for her work on disability rights, mental health, child rights and feminism.

Announcing the launch of the centre, Dr Shanthakumar said that GNLU Committee for Persons with Disabilities (GCPWD) is already functional since 2017 as an enabling unit to cater to the needs of persons with disabilities, and to sensitize the GNLU community about disability rights, and shared challenges. The Committee has done wonderful work on a wide range of issues including facilitating admission of students with disabilities, helping out in reasonable accommodations for academics and examination, developing accessible infrastructure and creating an inclusive environment, amongst others. “The decision to convert the committee into a full-fledged centre of excellence is in line with the GNLU’s vision of creating an inclusive space not only in the social sphere but also for academic discourse,” said Dr Shanthakumar.

In her key-note address, Dr Amita Dhanda emphasized on how disability is merely a matter of perception, and advised everyone present, to concentrate on how “exercising support for capacity does not negate capacity” to generate discourse within the academy, and to talk in terms of inclusion during pedagogic intervention. Her views seeded the poignant belief that optimism is the faith that leads to achievement, and therefore the “the advocacy for equality must begin at home”. Her able guidance to the listeners was that it’s the repetition of affirmations that leads to belief. And once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen.

The centre will work for disability rights and social justice through the promotion of teaching and research in the interdisciplinary areas of sociology, law, social work and policy.

Through curriculum development, research projects and disability studies, the Centre would attempt at doing meaningful contribution in the areas of disability and human rights, disability and society, accessibility and reasonable accommodations, inclusive education, gender and disability, amongst others.

The Centre would also bring together academicians, researchers, scholars, lawyers, practitioners, activists, students and other stakeholders to foster dialogue on the increasing relevance of disability studies and research.



Gujarat National Law University

Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India

On this occasion, the new centre also organized a Sensitization Workshop “Dialogue in the Dark,” in which many students and faculty participated.

With this new centre, GNLU has now 16 centres of excellence dedicated to interdisciplinary research in the field of Intellectual Property Rights, Law & Economics, Corporate & Competition Law, Environment & Sustainable Development, Banking & Finance Law, Sports & Entertainment Law, Foreign Policies & Security Studies, Law & Society, Public International Law, Business & Public Policy, Private International Law, Constitutional & Administrative Law, Disability Studies, Law & Technology and Air & Space Law.

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