Comprehensive Report of Activities

Women's Studies Centre, Bethune College

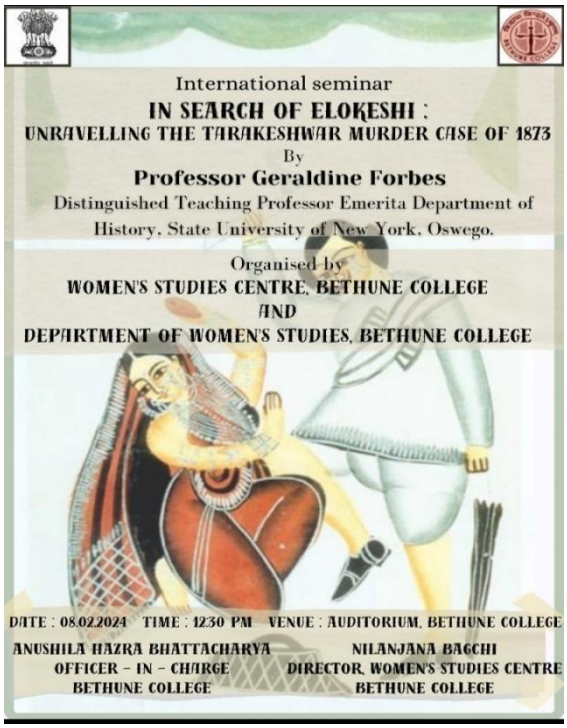
Introduction

The Women's Studies Centre at Bethune College, Asia's first women's college established in 1879, serves as a vital platform for gender discourse and activism. Honoring Bethune's pioneering legacy in women's education, the Centre fosters critical engagement with gender issues through an interdisciplinary approach that connects academic inquiry with community action. This report documents the Centre's extensive activities from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, demonstrating a sustained commitment to feminist pedagogy, community engagement, and social transformation.

February 2024

International Seminar: In Search of Elokeshi (8th February 2024)

- **Resource Person:** Prof. Emerita Geraldine Forbes
- **Location:** Bethune College, Kolkata



Focus & Objective: This international seminar engaged in academic exploration of historical women's narratives and colonial gender dynamics, specifically examining the story of Elokeshi, a 19th-century Bengali woman whose murder case became a landmark moment in colonial legal and social history. The programme aimed to recover marginalized women's stories from historical archives, analyze how colonialism intersected with patriarchy to shape women's experiences, and demonstrate the importance of feminist historiography in understanding gender relations across time and context.

March 2024

Seminar on Importance of Sleep for Women (7th March 2024)

- **Collaboration:** Institute of Sleep Science
- **Location:** Bethune College, Kolkata



Focus & Objective: This specialized health seminar addressed women-specific sleep needs and the critical role of sleep in overall wellness, recognizing that women's sleep is often disrupted by caregiving responsibilities, hormonal changes, and the mental load of managing households. The programme aimed to educate women about the health consequences of sleep deprivation, strategies for improving sleep quality, and the importance of prioritizing rest as self-care rather than selfishness. By focusing on sleep, the initiative challenged cultural expectations that women should sacrifice their wellbeing for others.