Tuesday Lecture 4: 25th August, 2026

The Internal Quality Assurance Cell of Bethune College organised the Tuesday Lecture for the month of August on 25 August 2026 at the College Auditorium. The lecture was delivered by Dr. Bhumika Kanjilal, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy.

The lecture examined Protagoras as a Sophist and his well-known dictum, “Man is the measure of all things; of what it is, that it is, and of what is not, that it is not.” The speaker argued that the dictum takes an ethical turn and finds support in J. L. Mackie’s moral subjectivism. On this view, there is no necessity to conform to any objective value. Truth may instead be understood, as William James understood it, by placing full stress on the value of Man, as a process that happens to an idea.

The speaker further observed that metaphysics may be set aside. Man is a terrestrial being who measures the good, the bad and the ugly, and who takes as true what works for him. Nothing lies beyond phenomena and appearances, and the soul need not be treated as a metaphysical reality, being merely the sum of mental life. People accept or reject philosophies according to their needs and temperaments rather than any objective truth. Philosophical speculation, therefore, should not disturb our hopes but should guide our terrestrial existence.

The lecture offered the audience a thought-provoking link between ancient Sophistic thought and modern pragmatism, in keeping with the IQAC’s aim of promoting academic enrichment and intellectual engagement within the college community.



