Orientation Programme on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment against Women at the Workplace (POSH) Act, 2013

Organised by: Internal Committee (IC), International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai
Date: Thursday, 20 August 2026
Time: 5:00 PM-6:00 PM
Venue: MSD Classroom, 2nd Floor, Library Building, IIPS, Mumbai

The Internal Committee (IC), International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), organised an **Orientation Programme on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment against Women at the Workplace under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act)** on 20 August 2026. The programme was primarily organised for the newly admitted students of IIPS, with faculty members, staff, research scholars, and other members of the IIPS also invited to participate.

The orientation aimed to create awareness about sexual harassment, the provisions and objectives of the POSH Act, the role and functioning of the Internal Committee, and the institutional mechanisms available for prevention, support and redressal of complaints. The programme also sought to promote a culture of dignity, respect, safety and inclusiveness within the Institute.

The programme commenced with the welcome address by Mr. Anubhav Verma, who welcomed the Director, members of the Internal Committee, faculty and staff members, research scholars and students. He briefly outlined the purpose of the orientation and highlighted the importance of awareness regarding sexual harassment and the institutional mechanisms available for prevention and redressal.

The Director and Sr. Professor, Dr. Sanjay Kumar Mohanty, addressed the gathering and highlighted the importance of the Internal Committee as an important and legal institutional committee. He emphasised that creating a safe, respectful and inclusive academic and working environment is a collective institutional responsibility. He noted that the role of the Internal Committee extends beyond addressing complaints and includes prevention, awareness generation and sensitisation. The address reinforced the Institute's commitment towards maintaining an environment where students, faculty and staff can pursue their academic and professional responsibilities with dignity and without fear of harassment or discrimination.

The Director, Sr. Professor Dr. Sanjay Kumar Mohanty, addressed the participants.

Dr. Dipti Govil introduced the Internal Committee of IIPS to the participants. The session familiarised the newly admitted students with the composition of the Committee and the different categories of members represented within the IC.

Dr. Dipti Govil introduced the members of the Internal Committee.

The Presiding Officer of the Internal Committee, Prof. Aparajita Chattopadhyay, provided an overview of the evolution of the legal framework concerning the prevention of sexual harassment, leading to the enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The session focused on the role, responsibilities and functions of the Internal Committee as an institutional mechanism for the prevention and redressal of sexual harassment. Participants were introduced to the Committee's inquiry-related functions, including receiving complaints, conducting inquiries, considering relevant evidence and making recommendations in accordance with the applicable legal and institutional framework. The session also emphasised that the Internal Committee is not merely a complaint-handling mechanism but has an important proactive role in prevention, awareness and sensitisation and in contributing towards a safe, respectful and inclusive institutional environment.

Prof. Aparajita Chattopadhyay, Presiding Officer, spoke on the evolution of the POSH Act and the role of the Internal Committee.

Ms. Priti Thakkar conducted a session on “Breaking the Silence”, focusing on the distinction between sexual harassment, inappropriate behaviour, and other forms of interpersonal or workplace conduct. Through discussion and examples, participants were encouraged to understand what kinds of behaviour may constitute sexual harassment and what matters fall within the scope of the Internal Committee. She highlighted the importance of recognising unwelcome behaviour, respecting personal boundaries and understanding that sexual harassment may occur through physical, verbal, non-verbal, digital and remote modes of communication. Particular attention was given to the fact that inappropriate behaviour and workplace disagreements should not automatically be equated with sexual harassment. The nature and context of the behaviour, including whether it has a sexual dimension and whether it is unwelcome, are important considerations in determining whether a matter falls within the mandate of the Internal Committee.

Ms. Priti Thakkar conducted the session on understanding sexual harassment, inappropriate behaviour and related concerns.

As part of the sensitisation programme, an oath on maintaining a safe, respectful and dignified academic and working environment was administered to all participants. The oath was led by Ms. Asmita Parab, Member, Internal Committee, IIPS, and participants reaffirmed their commitment to abide by the Institute's policy on prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment and to refrain from any form of sexual harassment, gender discrimination or inappropriate behaviour. Following the oath, signatures of the participants were obtained on the Undertaking Form as an acknowledgement of their having read, understood and agreed to abide by the relevant institutional policies, rules and applicable legal provisions.

The programme concluded with the Vote of Thanks delivered by Dr. Pradeep Salve. He expressed sincere gratitude to the Director, the Presiding Officer and members of the Internal Committee, faculty members, staff, research scholars and students for their participation and support. Special appreciation was extended to the newly admitted students, for whom the orientation was primarily organised, as well as to the wider IIPS community for participating

in the programme. The organising and support staff were also acknowledged for their contribution to the successful conduct of the programme and for making the necessary logistical and technical arrangements.

Dr. Pradeep Salve delivered the Vote of Thanks at the Orientation Programme.

The Orientation Programme on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment against Women at the Workplace (POSH) Act, 2013 successfully concluded with active participation from members of the IIPS community. The Internal Committee, IIPS, remains committed to strengthening awareness, sensitisation and preventive measures and to contributing towards an academic and working environment based on dignity, equality, safety, respect and inclusiveness.

Glimpses from the Orientation Programme on Prevention of Sexual Harassment against Women at the Workplace (POSH) Act, 2013, organised by the Internal Committee, IIPS, on 20 August 2026.

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