



University of Mumbai

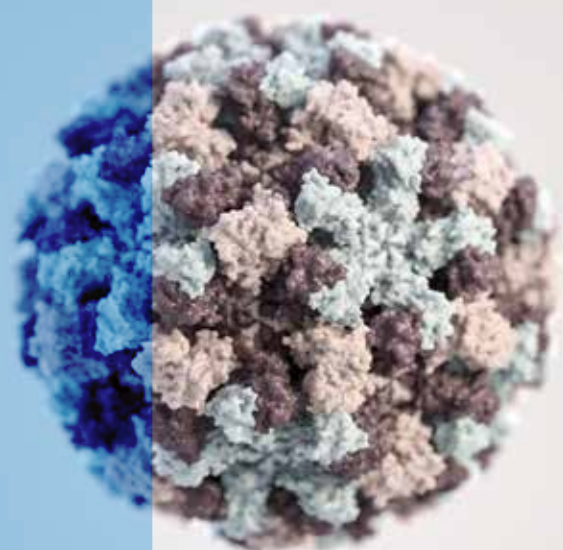


S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

A Free Open Access Peer-Reviewed Bilingual Interdisciplinary Journal
of the University of Mumbai

INAUGURAL
I S S U E

महाराष्ट्र दिन



Special Theme:
COVID-19 and RESPONSES

Volume 01 | Issue 01
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S a m b h ā ṣ a ṇ

A Free Open Access Peer-Reviewed Bilingual Interdisciplinary Journal

On the occasion of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's 129th birth anniversary on 14th April 2020, the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities, University of Mumbai has launched a free open access online journal, Sambhāṣaṇ / संभाषण. This interdisciplinary and bilingual journal hopes to bring diverse disciplines in dialogue with each other through critical reflections on contemporary themes.

संभाषण

मुंबई विद्यापीठाचे मुक्त-प्रवेश नियतकालिक

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या १२९व्या जयंतीचे औचित्य साधून १४ एप्रिल २०२० रोजी अधिष्ठाता, मानव्यविद्याशाखा, मुंबई विद्यापीठ यांनी 'संभाषण' हे मुक्त-प्रवेश नियतकालिक प्रस्तुत केले आहे.

या आंतरविद्याशाखीय व द्विभाषिक (इंग्रजी व मराठी) नियतकालिकाच्या माध्यमातून विभिन्न विद्याशाखांमधील सद्यःकालीन प्रश्नांबाबत टीकात्मक व सखोल विचारमंथनाद्वारे संवाद प्रस्थापित करण्याचा एक प्रयत्न आहे.

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Sambhāṣaṇ / संभाषण or conversation as an art of dialogue has been crucial to the development of both Indian and Western thought. Dialogos in Greek literally means “through word”, where one establishes relationships on the basis of conversations to initiate processes of thinking, listening and speaking with others. Thinkers such as Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, David Bohm, Hans Georg Gadamer, Anthony Appiah and Martha Nussbaum have projected shared dialogue as a way of understanding the relationship between the individual and society. While Jyotiba Phule, Savitribai Phule, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, Pandita Ramabai, Jürgen Habermas, Paul Ricoeur, Patricia Hill Collins and Judith Butler, to name a few, have started out anew through ruptures in conversations. The inevitability of conversation in academic life emerges from its centrality to human development and ecology. Conversations are not restricted to any single territory, but are enacted between global and the local topographies. This online bi-lingual journal aims at continuing and renewing plural conversations across cultures that have sustained and invigorated academic activities.

In this spirit, Sambhāṣaṇ (संभाषण) a bilingual (English and Marathi) interdisciplinary monthly online journal endeavours to:

-  be an open platform, where scholars can freely enter into a discussion to speak, be heard and listen. In this spirit, this journal aims at generating open conversations between diverse disciplines in social sciences, humanities and law.
-  preserve and cultivate pluralism as a normative ideal. Hence, it attempts to articulate a plurality of points of view for any theme, wherein there is both a need to listen and to speak, while engaging with another's perspective.
-  act as a springboard for briefly expressing points of view on a relevant subject with originality, evidence, argument, experience, imagination and the power of texts. It hopes that these points of view can be shaped towards full-fledged research papers and projects in the future.

संभाषण

संभाषण : मुंबई विद्यापीठाचे महाजालावरील पहिले नियतकालिक.

डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या १२९व्या जयंतीचे (१४ एप्रिल २०२०) औचित्य साधून अधिष्ठाता, मानव्यविद्याशाखा, मुंबई विद्यापीठ यांच्या कल्पनेतून 'संभाषण' हे सर्वाना महाजालावर मुक्तपणे उपलब्ध होऊ शकणारे नियतकालिक प्रकाशित होत आहे.

या आंतरविद्याशाखीय द्विभाषिक (इंग्रजी आणि मराठी) नियतकालिकाच्या माध्यमातून विभिन्न विद्याशाखांमध्ये समकालीन प्रश्नांबाबत टीकात्मक चर्चा सुरू व्हावी व सखोल विचारमंथनाद्वारे संवाद प्रस्थापित व्हावा, असा हेतू आहे.

प्राचीन काळापासून भारतात आणि पाश्चिमात्य विचारविश्वात वैचारिक आदानप्रदानासाठी 'संभाषण किंवा संवाद' ही महत्त्वाची पद्धती म्हणून उपयोजिली गेली आहे. 'Dialogos' या ग्रीक भाषेतील शब्दांचा अर्थही 'शब्दाद्वारे' (through words) असा होतो. शब्दांच्या माध्यमातील संभाषणाला येथे 'डायलॉग' म्हटले आहे. अनेक महनीय व्यक्तींनी उदाहरणार्थ, मोहनदास करमचंद गांधी, रवींद्रनाथ टागोर, सरोजिनी नायडू, डेव्हिड बोहम, Hans-Georg Gadamar, अँथनी अपिहा, मार्था नुस्सबॉम आदींनी व्यक्ती आणि समाज यांच्यातील नातेसंबंध समजून घेण्यासाठी सामायिक संभाषण आणि संवादाच्या पद्धतीचा वापर केलेला आहे. जोतीराव फुले, सावित्रीबाई फुले, डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर, पंडिता रमाबाई, Jürgen Habermas, Paul Ricoeur, Patricia Hill Collins and Judith Butler अशा अनेक विचारवंतांनीही आपल्या वैचारिक मांडणीद्वारे संभाषणाची नवी स्फुरणे जन्माला घातली.

संभाषणाच्या माध्यमातून एखादी व्यक्ती दुसऱ्या व्यक्तीसोबत विचारांची देवाणघेवाण करते. तसेच ऐकण्याची आणि बोलण्याची प्रक्रिया सुरू करण्यासाठी संवादाचे नाते निर्माण करत असते. शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रातील संवादाची अपरिहार्यताही त्याच्या मानवी विकासातील केंद्रवर्ती स्थानामुळे निर्माण झाली आहे. कोणतीही संभाषणे ही केवळ विशिष्ट भूप्रदेशाशी मर्यादित किंवा संबंधित नसतात. तर ती एकाच वेळी स्थानिक व जागतिक स्वभावचरणांनी घडलेली असतात. अशा विभिन्न संस्कृतीतील संवादाच्या आधारे जग समजून घेणे, शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रातील सर्जनशीलतेला जपणे याच भूमिकेतून 'संभाषण' या द्विभाषिक आंतरविद्याशाखीय 'ऑनलाईन' नियतकालिकाचा प्रवास सुरू झाला आहे.

Framework

- This journal is open to contributions from established academics, young teachers, research students and writers from diverse institutional and geographical locations.
- Papers can be empirical, analytical or hermeneutic following the scholarly culture of critique and creativity, while adhering to academic norms.
- Commentaries and reviews can also be submitted.
- Submissions will be peer-reviewed anonymously.
- Some of the issues will publish invited papers and reviews, though there will be a call for papers for most issues.
- There would be an occasional thematic focus.

Guidelines for Submission

- Original, scholarly, creative and critical papers with adequate references.
- All references to the author should be removed from the submission to enable the anonymous review process.
- There can be a limit of approximately 3500-4000 words (for papers) and 1500-2000 words (for commentaries) and 1000-1200 words (for reviews).
- Essays should follow the Times New Roman font in size 12 with double space.
- Marathi contributions should be typed in Devnagari with Arial Unicode 12 font.
- All contributions should follow the author-date referencing system detailed in chapter 15 of The Chicago Manual of Style (17th Edition). The style guidelines in this journal can be consulted for quick reference.
- Authors should submit a statement that their contribution is original without any plagiarism. They can also, in addition, submit a plagiarism check certificate.
- The publication of research papers, commentaries and book reviews is subject to timely positive feedback from anonymous referees.

Publisher

Office of the Dean of Humanities, University of Mumbai, Ambedkar Bhavan, Kalina Campus, Vidyanagari, Mumbai-400098

This journal accepts original essays that critically address contemporary issues related to social sciences, humanities and law from an interdisciplinary perspective.

अधिष्ठाता, मानव्यविद्याशाखा यांचे कार्यालय, मुंबई विद्यापीठ, आंबेडकर भवन, कलिना कॅम्पस, विद्यानगरी, मुंबई – ४०००९८.

हे नियतकालिक समाजविज्ञान, मानव्यविद्याशाखा आणि विधी या विद्याशाखांमधील सद्यःकालीन प्रश्नांना आंतरविद्याशाखीय दृष्टिकोणातून भिडणाऱ्या अभिनव आणि टीकात्मक निबंधांचा स्वीकार करते.

“In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared... In other words there must be social endosmosis.”

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Foreword from Honorable Shri Uday Samant

Cabinet Minister for Education

Government of Maharashtra
Mumbai- 400032



मंत्री
उच्च व तंत्रशिक्षण
महाराष्ट्र राज्य
मंत्रालय, मुंबई ४०० ०३२
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डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकरांच्या १२९ व्या जयंतीनिमित्ताने मुंबई विद्यापिठाचे "संभाषण" हे ऑनलाईन नियतकालिक सुरु करणे ही आनंदाची घटना आहे. महाराष्ट्राच्या वैचारिक परंपरेला साजेसे असे हे पाऊल आहे. "संभाषण" या नियतकालिकातून महाराष्ट्रातील अभ्यासक, विचारवंत, संशोधक, विद्यार्थी यांनी आपले चिकित्सक लेख प्रसिध्द करावेत. सामाजिक, राजकीय, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक क्षेत्रांतील विविध विषयांवरील हा लेखसंग्रह महत्वाचा दस्तऐवज ठरावा, अशा सदिच्छा देतो.

आज संबंध जग कोरोनाच्या आपत्तीमुळे संक्रमण अवस्थेमधून जात आहे. अशा या जगबदलाच्या काळात साक्ष ठेवून आपण हाती घेतलेला हा उपक्रम प्रशंसनीय आहे. आपला पहिलाच अंक " कोव्हीड १९ ला प्रतीसाद " या विषयावर प्रकाशित होत आहे. ही उल्लेखनिय बाब आहे. जीवनव्यवहाराची अनेक अंगे-उपांगे ठप्प पडलेली असताना आपण आपली सामाजिक, शैक्षणिक, नैतिक जबाबदारी ओळखलीत आणि मूल्ययुक्त कृती केलीत त्याबद्दल मी माननीय कुलगुरु, "संभाषण" चे संपादकीय मंडळ आणि सर्व लेखक, अभ्यासक यांचे मनापासून अभिनंदन करतो. आंतरविद्याशाखीय शैक्षणिक, सामाजिक वर्तुळातील अभ्यासकांचे इंग्रजी आणि मराठी या दोन्ही भाषांमधून विपूल संशोधनपर व दिशादर्शक असे लेखन "संभाषण" या नियतकालिकामधून प्रकाशित व्हावे अशी मनोकामना व्यक्त करीत या उपक्रमाच्या यशासाठी सदिच्छा देतो.

(उदय सामंत)

Foreword from Vice Chancellor

Prof. Suhas Pednekar

University of Mumbai



University of Mumbai
Mahatma Gandhi Road, Fort, Mumbai 400032, Maharashtra, India
Phone: +9122 2265 0403, 2265 6789 • Fax: +9122 2267 3579
Email: vice-chancellor@mu.ac.in • Website: http://www.mu.ac.in

Prof. Suhas Pednekar
Vice Chancellor

29th April, 2020

A Foreword from the Vice Chancellor

I am extremely pleased to foreword the first publication of *Sambhāṣaṇ* / संभाषण a free open access peer-reviewed bilingual (English and Marathi) interdisciplinary journal of this great university. The University of Mumbai has always been at the forefront of creating knowledge through excellence, scholarship and innovation. Hence, it is a great honour to its highest standards that on the 129th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, the Office of the Dean, Humanities has launched this bi-lingual interdisciplinary journal. It is an equal privilege that the first issue of the journal is released on 1st May, 2020 which is Maharashtra Diwas. I am happy that the Dean Humanities, Hon Editor of the online journal along with his team of Editor, Co-editors, Assistant Editors, Review Editors, Web Designer, Board of Consulting Editors and Advisory Committee gave material shape to *Sambhāṣaṇ* / संभाषण.

With this pioneering initiative, the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities has opened the space for developing an academic culture of dialogue across disciplines to strengthen the environment of research at the University. Such dialogical spirit has been characteristic of humanities as a field. This journal will provide a platform to humanities to come together and voice their views on various aspects of social sciences, literature and law. This initiative will make a significant ripple in the academia. Having observed the growth and impact of its creation, I can say that it has offered University academic life a much-needed impetus.

The journal is in tune with Dr. Ambedkar's belief that the "cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence". *Sambhāṣaṇ* / संभाषण as discourse, conversation, dialogue and interaction will go a long way to cultivate minds. Academic discourses respond to the challenge to enhance and stimulate the minds of all those who are involved in teaching, research and learning. As Bryant McGill rightly said, "Where wise actions are the fruit of life, wise discourse is the pollination".

I have gone through the research papers, both in English and Marathi, as well as, the commentaries and reviews. Given the current context of one of the most challenging periods in human life, this journal embarks on a multidisciplinary journey to discuss academic responses to COVID-19 in its first few issues. The inaugural issue largely focuses on its impact on Maharashtra, although many of the robust deliberations by scholars examine allied contexts that expand to the human condition itself. I am sure that this journal will generate meaningful responses to continue its reflections on this theme and several others to come.


Prof. Suhas Pednekar
Vice Chancellor
University of Mumbai

Foreword from Pro-Vice Chancellor

Prof. Ravindra Kulkarni

University of Mumbai



Prof. Ravindra D. Kulkarni
M. Tech. Ph. D.
Pro-Vice-Chancellor

University of Mumbai
Fort, Mumbai - 400 032.

Foreword

PEER REVIEW Publishing is the backbone of academic discourse. Novel ideas, scientific results, innovative theories, analytical interpretations, applied case studies and critical analysis are all pivotal to the growth of academic and research culture. It is essential that they are duly disseminated via online/print publications to share, corroborate and critique leading to the growth of disciplines. As Bharatratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar observes, “An idea needs propagation as much as a plant needs watering. Otherwise both will wither and die”.

The mission of research and publication is the circulation of evidence-based, factual inquiry and critique of its work through discourses and conversations. I am pleased that the Office of Dean of Humanities, the Honorary Editor and other members of his team have, through their collective efforts and wisdom, is releasing the first of its kind online bilingual and interdisciplinary peer-reviewed Journal ‘Sambhāṣaṇ /संभाषण’. The journal will initially focus on the specific theme of responses to COVID-19 from diverse disciplinary perspectives.

Having read the contents of the inaugural issue of the journal, I am pleased that it was announced on the 129th Birth Anniversary of Bharatratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, with the first issue being released on May 1st, Maharashtra Day on the special theme of COVID-19, as suggested by the Honorable Vice Chancellor, University of Mumbai. Such conversations and dialogues are crucial to universities at a time when the entire world is facing a number of challenges, which need to be addressed and require ground-breaking, innovative and socially inclusive solutions.

The Office of the Dean of Humanities, along with its team, has opened the possibility for teachers, researchers, social scientists, students and professionals from across the globe to have interdisciplinary conversation. I extend congratulations to the Editorial Team for smooth initiation of publication of the scholarly Journal and hope that the journal will accomplish greater heights and milestones in due course.

Prof. Ravindra D. Kulkarni

Date: 29/04/2020

Editorial Note

The power of dialogue or Sambhāṣaṇ / संभाषण or to be able to surreptitiously slip into a discourse in a way Foucault would have liked us to and create a platform for an exchange of unsuppressed thoughts and views has been the motivating force in the inception of a free open access online journal of the University of Mumbai. If the 129th birth anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar on 14th April, 2020 has initiated the process of this dialogue, 1st May, 2020 witnesses the digital publication of the inaugural issue.

COVID-19 has ushered in a new phase in human life. The quotidian world shuts itself in a lockdown or turns into a containment zone in the face of grim forms of existence. On the other hand, state surveillance tends to become the new normal. Under these trying conditions the arts and the humanities all over the world, even so at the University of Mumbai seek to open avenues for deliberations to reflect, imagine, critique, meditate. As we gear up to different ways of living and social distancing, the virtual space has become a relevant representation of communication. In this

framework the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Humanities of the University of Mumbai aims to disseminate ideas and semiotics through this peer-reviewed bilingual journal.

The inaugural issue focuses on "COVID-19 and Responses" with a main focus on its impact on Maharashtra, as suggested by our Vice Chancellor Prof. Suhas Pednekar. However, given the global nature of the pandemic the commentaries engage with the global contexts of China and Nepal as well. Its key exploration is whether COVID-19 is exceptional, given the many epidemics and pandemics that have ravaged modern India since the colonial period. The possibility of coping with disease through digital technology is undoubtedly unique to the present pandemic. However, it also reveals the presence of social disparities that often translate into the digital sphere. Questions of privilege arise where weak public health systems repeat history in providing succour only to the privileged. The outbreak of the plague in erstwhile Bombay in August 1896 led to a two decade long destruction. The influenza unleashed in 1918 carried out its devastation without even sparing Gandhi. Colonial institutions of frail public health could not protect masses of Indians from the ruin of mass disease. A cursory glance at the history of the social dimensions of disease in India reveals that vulnerabilities of caste, gender and class impacted a section of Indians more adversely than others during the colonial era pandemics. This is evident in the way Savitribai Phule and her son Dr. Yashwant Rao both died while healing a casteist society from the ravages of plague. In 1867, Pandita Ramabai wrote to the British administration about the challenges that women faced due to the appalling conditions in plague shelters. Similar questions of social inequality, social welfare, psychological trauma and ecology have arisen as we combat a pandemic a century later in India in quarantine. These themes are explored by the papers on history, politics, migration and gender in this issue. Moreover, the present pandemic also poses questions to open up possibilities of living together in egalitarian, enabling and empowering ways. The papers in philosophy and literature also pursue a poignant question since Camus's *The Plague*: To what extent does a contagious disease compel human beings to engage with existentialist questions of renewing life with creativity and imagination,

while being haunted by their own mortality?

Keeping in mind the interdisciplinary approach of the journal, the papers, commentaries and reviews in this issue are both in English and Marathi. They include multifarious perspectives to lend diverse dimensions to the current crisis in the context of Maharashtra. The writings in this issue cover a wide range from history, political science and migration studies to philosophy and literature. Maharashtra is interpreted as a broad notion to include both context and location. Some of the essays engage with Maharashtra directly, while others engage with wider global and philosophical themes emerging out of the present crisis. We have received an overwhelming number of submissions on this inaugural theme. Hence, we will be continuing to deliberate on the COVID-19 in the humanities in our forthcoming issues as well.

As we explore the digital site through Sambhāṣaṇ / संभाषण special care has been taken to make the journal OCR-friendly.

Sambhāṣaṇ / संभाषण has striven to create new channels of communication at the University of Mumbai and opened a gateway for an academic discourse amongst subject experts and young research scholars. The editor and the co-editors are grateful to the authorities of the University of Mumbai, especially to Prof. Suhas Pednekar, Vice Chancellor and Prof. Ravindra Kulkarni, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for their encouragement and support. We would also like to express our gratitude to all the contributors of this issue, who have shown alacrity in timely submission of the articles. We thank our Advisory Committee and Board of Consulting Editors for their timely advice. We are obliged to our Review Editors for their creative suggestions and constant help. We thank our reviewers who went beyond the call of duty in providing their expertise and invaluable feedback, often at very short notice. We are indebted to our young and robust team of Assistant Editors who worked tirelessly round the clock in making this journal a reality. Our *dhanyavaad* to our Designer and Artist, Ms. Prajakti Pai for her creative design. Needless to add, without her immense talent and indispensable efforts this journal would not have reached a fruitful culmination.

Letter to the Honorary Editor: Rajesh Kharat

Dr. Anuradha Majumdar

*B Pharm, M Pharm, PhD Tech (Pharmacology)
Dean of Faculty of Science and Technology, University of Mumbai.*

April 25, 2020

At the outset I congratulate my colleague, Dean of Faculty of Humanities University of Mumbai, Prof Rajesh Kharat for releasing the first issue of the Journal *Sambhāṣaṇ*. I wish him and the editorial team the very best and hope this endeavour promotes and bolsters intellectual exchanges and fruitful deliberations. May it help augment the scientific tempo across the different faculties and departments, especially in the Humanities, and crystallize a think tank of editorial teams and authors through rigorous, scientific and rational *Sambhāṣaṇ*.

The world is going through an unprecedented trying time due to the global outbreak of Covid-19. These gripping times have shaken geopolitical alignments, tested the health care systems, and the drug and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) stock of countries across the globe. India too is facing this daunting contagion and its outbreak. With our population of

more than 1.3 billion, we have managed to keep our numbers low by the timely policies and its execution by the State and Central Governments including isolation, testing and contact tracings. To speak in a lighter vein, 'the containments have contained' the spread of the contagion. On 22nd March 2020, the clarion call of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for "Janta Curfew" got nationwide support followed subsequently by the imposition of nation-wide lockdown with only essential services running.

Covid-19 is a virus, a sub-microscopic entity. Any virus needs a host cell to survive which can belong to any living organism including mammals, birds, plants and even bacteria. Viruses have proteins and genetic material (DNA and RNA) which enter host cells and use or usurp the host cellular machinery for self-replication. Thus, when infected, a host cell is forced to rapidly produce thousands of identical copies of the virion.

In the last two decades we have come across limited outbreaks or epidemics of Nipah Virus, SARS, Zika Virus, Ebola, Chikungunya, and Dengue. Some we have witnessed in our communities and some we heard or read of in the news as happening in far flung lands. The world has faced epidemics such as the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (SARS-CoV) in 2002 to 2003, H1N1 Influenza in 2009 and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in 2012. However, the current outbreak of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has changed our lives. The infamous name of CoVs, which is an RNA virus, is due to the crown like appearance it owes to the presence of spike glycoproteins on the envelope. The virus primarily infects the upper and lower respiratory tracts and spreads easily by coughing and sneezing.

Globalization has shown the flip side in the form of rapid spread of the virus across continents. The virus, seeking host cells, crossed international boundaries through the hosts by airways, roadways and waterways especially in the early months. From Wuhan, China where the virus originated, it has now spread to 210 countries and territories with more than 2.7 million confirmed cases and 195,000 deaths. India has declared close to 24,500 positive cases and 775 deaths. The silver lining in

all this is the recovered cases where the patients have immunologically combated the virus, depicting active immunity. They now harbour antibodies against the antigenic determinants of the virus in their blood.

On 11th February 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) Director General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, announced the acronym “Covid-19” for the emerging novel coronavirus. After assessing the extent of the global spread of the contagion, the WHO in its announcement on 11th March 2020 characterized the covid-19 outbreak as a pandemic. Our generation had never witnessed a pandemic of this scale before. In 1918, when the WHO did not exist, the Spanish Flu too was classified as a pandemic which went on till 1920 with an estimated 500 million people infected. The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that the strain of the Spanish flu was H1N1 with genes of avian origin.

It's essential that we understand the evolution of life forms on our planet. It has been grossly estimated that the earth was formed around 4.5 billion years back. The prokaryotic bacterial species came into existence around 3.5 billion years back followed by the eukaryotic unicellular species traced back to around 2.5 billion years ago. Sometime later, viruses evolved with the simplest of structures which helped them to mutate and swap genetic material easily to sustain. Fossil evidence reveals that *Homo Sapiens* existed since 6 million years indicating that we are pretty new in the evolutionary timeline. The micro-organisms were very much entrenched in the ecosystem of our planet when we arrived and have survived for millions of years before us.

Current clinical management includes infection prevention and control measures and supportive care, including supplemental oxygen and mechanical ventilatory support when indicated. The national task force for Covid-19 constituted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommends the use of hydroxychloroquine, a classical anti-malarial drug, as a possible prophylaxis for doctors and other frontline health workers. What works essentially to fight the virus is our own White Blood Cells (WBCs), and in the process the lymphocytes aid in development of natural immunity against it. This is the very principle of vaccines

which triggers artificial immunity. Across the globe a few vaccine trials have been initiated. Clinical studies are also rolled on to evaluate newer potential anti-viral drugs. However, typically any clinical trial to prove safety and efficacy of a new vaccine or molecule has to go through the required phases and it will take at least 6 to 18 months before we can see the pipelined options getting regulatory approval. Yet another approach is plasma therapy using the antibody-rich plasma of cured covid-19 patients. This explores the use of convalescent plasma collected from individuals who have recovered from Covid-19. The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) cleared the clinical trial of plasma therapy in Covid-19 patients. However, we have to remember that the virus is out there in nature, it's now up to herd immunity or exposure immunity, with some nonspecific drugs and interventional support, till we have effective vaccine/s or specific anti-viral drug/s in the anvil. Till then all precautions have to be in place.

To this effect, it is essential to promote balanced nutrition rich diet and vitamin supplementation to bolster our immunity. It is of paramount importance to maintain social distancing and respect containments, to use PPEs like mask and gloves when we do venture outdoors, and civic bodies and organizations should maintain sanitation as directed by the government. As governments all over the world struggle to balance their decisions and commitments to the lockdown, to health and security, and measures for economic and financial stability, we academicians are also facing major questions on completion of academic commitments, holding of end semester examinations and starting the next academic year. Many institutions and faculty have adopted online teaching platforms during these trying times. However, the digital divide hampers universal adoption and equitable access to these tools. Pragmatic set of directives is soon expected from UGC and MHRD regarding future planning which Universities can adopt.

I believe that in the post-Covid-19 world there would be a new normal on many factors of global concern like geopolitical strategies, alignments and dynamics, indigenous manufacturing and supply chains, respect for life forms, medical preparedness, health care policies and prediction

systems and so on. This crisis will create a ripple effect in challenging norms and creating new thought processes. It will change our ways of life forever. These gripping times have dispelled the conjecture that 'we are in control'.

Today, in his mail to all the teachers and colleagues, the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of University of Mumbai, Prof. Suhas Pednekar wrote, "A multi-pronged strategy is necessary to manage current and future crises". He added, "It appears that there will be drastic change in overall dynamics of the higher education system in future". He also said, "Friends, we need to prepare for all the unknown possibilities of tomorrow". How well he has summarised the impact of the Covid-19 crisis! He knows it goes beyond and deeper than just the rescheduling of examinations and preparing for the next academic year. This is expected to initiate calls for paradigm changes in higher education and, more precisely, thinking in terms of borderless higher education. We will all have to brace ourselves for the imperative changes in higher education and gear up for driving it.

I believe that Prof. Rajesh Kharat and his editorial team of writers and researchers, are on the first of many steps to making such transformations happen – through conceptual innovation, thinking and analysis, and ever-new and fruitful *samvaad* and *Sambhāṣaṇ*.

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I have made extensive use of the official websites of organizations like the World Health Organization (www.who.int), The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov), Indian Council for Medical Research (www.icmr.nic.in), and the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (cdsco.gov.in)

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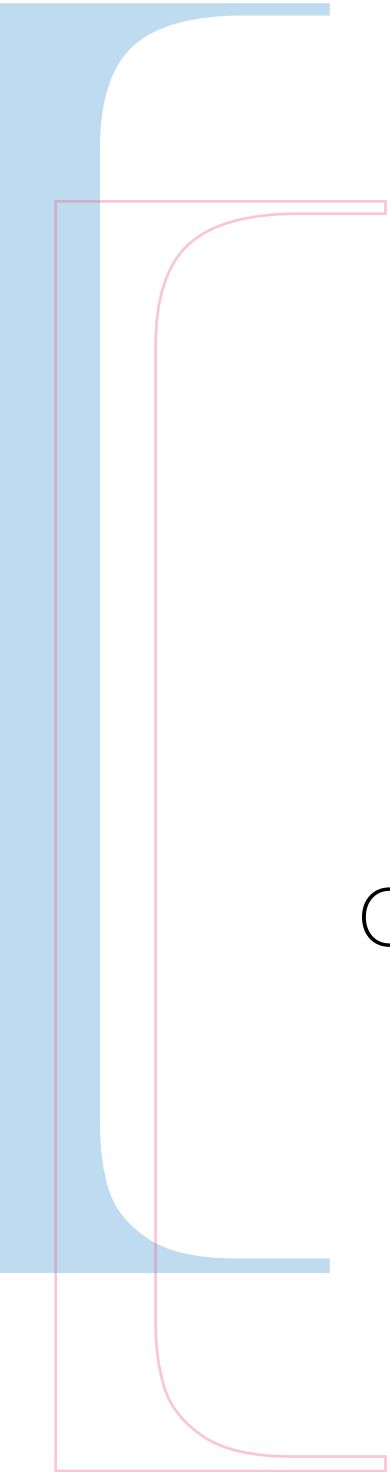
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“Dedicated to the doctors, nurses, ASHA and health care workers, sanitation staff, police personnel, as well as, all others, many of who have lost their lives at the frontlines of the resistance to COVID-19”



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