

Kamala Bhasin – a feminist icon, poet, writer and a fine orator passed away on 25th September, 2021, after a period of prolonged illness. She was widely acclaimed and was a tall figure in the Indian Feminist movement. Born in West Pakistan, just before partition, her family moved to Rajasthan, where she completed her schooling and college, and later travelled to Germany to pursue her research. She worked in the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization for 27 years and founded 'Sangat' – a feminist collective. Her writings and books have been an essential part of our everyday feminist classrooms. Her writings could convey the nuances and complexities of feminism and its myriad practices in a language that was lucid and relatable. Her books

on 'Understanding Gender', 'What is Patriarchy', 'Feminism', 'Exploring Masculinity' are replete with examples drawn from the everyday life. Her simple essays and articles, with charts and sketches, became useful readings for students. With her writings, feminism was no longer the heavy theoretical jargon-distant and alien to students, but something that connected deeply to their everyday lives.

She became a household name when she appeared on Aamir Khan's television show 'Satyamev Jayate' in 2014 and spoke about patriarchy and masculinity. She was involved in creating and nurturing networks of solidarity among activists, artists and academics across South Asia's borders, through her work with the

Food and Agriculture Organisation, United Nations, Asian Cultural Forum for Development, South Asian Network of Gender Activists and Trainers, Jagori and One Billion Rising.

several constituencies and have richly contributed to the feminist movement in India.

I vividly remember my first meeting with Kamala Bhasin, way back in 2002, at the Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS) Conference in Bhubaneswar. When I walked up to her and introduced myself, she fondly put her arms around my shoulder as we walked on the lawns, discussing feminism. I was struck by her warmth and affection, and witnessed her spirited and vivacious self over the course of the next three days. She leaves behind a rich legacy of poems, speeches, songs and slogans. Her thoughts and ideas will continue to resonate in our classrooms. Despite humongous challenges and adversities in her personal life, she worked relentlessly deriving strength and succor from feminist solidarities.

Notwithstanding the criticisms of the absence of an intersectional focus in her writings and her inability to look beyond the binary of men and women, that also saw her being embroiled in a controversy some months before her death, her writings and her activism spoke to

