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PRESS RELEASE

WEBINAR ON DIGNIFIED MENSTRUATION

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Stressing on the need to understand the issue of menstruation with the lens of dignity without confining it to hygiene, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen has organized a webinar. The event was organised to mark the Menstrual Hygiene Day (May 26) in association with Global South Coalition for Dignified Menstruation (GSCDM).

Speaking at the webinar which lasted for two hours, honourable minister of Women, Children and Senior Citizen, Parbat Gurung stated that traditional narratives of menstruation have to change and dignified menstruation should be understood with a holistic approach. Minister Gurung highlighted the fact that the stigma of menstruation was also impacting the fight against gender inequality. “The government is against any sort of gender-based violence including any violence associated with menstruation,” he added. He further stressed that the government was continuing its effort to make Nepal free of menstrual huts (*chhaupadi*) mainly by mainstreaming dignified menstruation in all the relevant plans and policies.

Chairperson of Women and Social Committee Niru Devi Pal informed that the government has taken strict action against by criminalizing the action and dismantling the huts and was committed to fighting against menstrual taboos.

Similarly, secretary of the ministry Yam Kumari Khatiwada expressed commitment to fight against all the gender-based ill and harmful practices including the stigmas and taboos associated with the menstruation.

Chairperson of Nepal Human Rights Commission Anup Raj Sharma said that issues of menstruation should be understood as the issues of human rights.

“Presenting a research paper, founder of GSCDM and a pioneer Menstruation activist highlighted the overlapping links of menstruation to gender-based violence, child marriage along with various issues of education, health and various aspects of human rights. “It is a big achievement that the government of Nepal is organizing an event purely dedicating to dignified menstruation. This speaks a volume about the government’s commitment in fighting against all the stigmas, taboos and restrictions related to periods,” she further said that each individual and organisation should also join hands with the government in this effort.

The event was participated by more than 400 participants including politicians, activists, I/NGO workers and journalists from Nepal and abroad.

The ministry was previously planning to organize an international workshop on Dignified Menstruation with the slogan “Menstrual Talk, Dignity Frist”, which however was limited to webinar because of the Covid-19.

The practices of forcing women to menstrual huts have significantly gone low following the various initiatives of honourable minister Gurung including a week-long awareness campaign in Sudur-Paschim, Karnali and Bagmati province early this year.