

Chairman's Message

I have great pleasure in presenting this volume of papers presented in the **seminar on BIOETHICS** held under the auspices of VPM's Arts and Commerce College on 24 and 25 January 2007.

All institutes of VPM organize at least one national seminar on a subject which is related to the modern developments in Sciences and Humanities, which may not be a part of their syllabus. This gives an opportunity to students and teachers to interact with experts in the given topic, and learn more about it. We have put all volumes of previous seminars on our website <http://www.vpmthane.org> for the benefit of students and teachers within and outside the country.

The topic of this year's seminar has aroused interest in the teaching community to learn more about this subject. We already had two workshops on the topic for better understanding and orientation about the subject.

It is relatively a new subject from the point of view of public awareness and public policy making. The subject principally includes ethical questions in relation with biology and medicine, and other disciplines like philosophy, politics, law, and theology. Every country in the world has already formulated laws and guidelines in this respect or is in the process of formulating them. This has given rise to a large amount of academic material. Dozens of academic and popular journals and books are now available on Bioethics. There are specialized undergraduate and postgraduate courses available in the Western universities. Newer medical techniques like IVF, cloning, stem cell research, euthanasia, organ donation etc. are posing newer cultural problems every day. As many of these issues are culture related, there are no simple and standard answers, and every country may have to formulate laws suitable according to its own religion and cultural make up. This requires better education and understanding of this subject, at least among literate people. A mature opinion and consensus in the citizens can influence political leadership to legislate proper laws and provide guidelines to the society at large.

This seminar is a step in that direction, and I am sure the deliberations of two days will help us move forward. I hope this process of inquiry will continue so that at least few students may think of making a career in this subject.

Thanking you for your cooperation and with warm regards.

Dr. Vijay Bedekar
Chairman
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