

## **A report on “A critical overview of Mahasweta Devi’s plays” conducted by**

**Dr. Latha Kumari**

Dr. Latha Kumari took an interesting **two-hour** session titled “A critical overview of Mahasweta Devi’s plays” on **18th September 2018** in the **LIFE** hall for the students of 3rd year BA English Literature. She began her seminar by giving a brief overview about the author and the themes that she predominantly dealt with in her works. She talked about the power of writings and theatre and that it is a medium through which changes can be brought into the society. She approves that theatre critiques the social evils and that Mahasweta Devi’s works were a prime example. Her plays primarily dealt with the downtrodden sections of the society, the tribals and the others who were considered as outcasts. Their grievances were highlighted through her plays. Specifically, her play “**Bayen**” was discussed. It portrayed the plight of a woman named “ChandidasiGangadasi” who was separated from her husband and her son after being labelled as a witch or a “Bayen”.

Most of the characters in the play were uneducated and their code of conduct extensively revolved around age old superstitious beliefs. The play uses flashback techniques and is a “play within a play”, which successfully grips the audiences and moves them with the character’s conflicts. To add to that, video clips from the Marathi film “**MaatiMaay**” which is a film adaptation of the same play was screened. After the end of her lecture, a Q/A session was conducted where the students and the teachers asked various pertinent questions regarding the play and thus brought an end to the guest lecture that was part of the major core paper titled “**Women’s Writings**”.

