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This event is organized by the American Center, which regularly runs 'diplomatic simulations' for Indian students, providing them with the opportunity to practice problem-solving and diplomatic skills. This month, the British Council and the British High Commission are partnering with the American Center on a simulation focusing on an Ebola outbreak.

The invitation was extended to the program coordinator of the MA Gender Studies at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, requesting interested students to register for the event. Oindrilla Ghosh, Prashanti Rai, and Garima Joshi, all 3rd-semester students, were selected to participate in this invaluable learning experience.

Prior to the event, students were informed about the scenario and the specific roles they would play. The detailed materials for the simulation, including scenario descriptions and fact sheets for the stakeholders, can be accessed <u>here</u>

The simulation involved six stakeholders: the US State Department, the Government of the UK, the World Health Organization (WHO), Doctors Without Borders (International NGO), and the National Ebola Response Centers of Farfelu and Anyep (NERC Farfelu & NERC Anyep). Each participant was assigned one of these roles, with approximately 50 participants divided into groups of 7-8 members per stakeholder role. Oindrilla, Prashanti, and Garima were assigned the roles of the US State Department, the Government of the UK, and WHO, respectively.

The event began with introductions and a welcome from senior diplomats from the US and UK, who shared their experiences and encouraged participants to pursue careers in diplomacy. Following this, the facilitator directed participants to engage in informal group discussions to prepare their opening statements for the formal discussion among all stakeholder groups. These discussions focused on clarifying each group's objectives and expectations based on their assigned roles.

Participants then entered into informal negotiations to address the Ebola crisis affecting Farfelu and Anyep. They considered various factors, including cultural differences, staff and public safety, funding, research issues, corruption, and the provision of medical and humanitarian aid. The aim was to collaboratively find solutions to the crisis while honing communication, negotiation, and diplomacy skills.

As Gender Studies students, we highlighted how crises can reveal gendered realities and social inequalities, emphasizing the need for special attention to underprivileged groups. This event allowed us to apply our academic knowledge to an international simulation, enhancing our problem-solving and diplomacy skills while working towards peace, safety, and protection for all.