

**Public Relations Office
Jamia Millia Islamia**

Press Release

February 14, 2025

CSSI, JMI conducts a two-day 'Gender Sensitization' workshop; former SC Judge delivers the keynote address

New Delhi, February 14, 2025: The Centre for the Study of Social Inclusion (CSSI), Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) in collaboration with the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and the Office of the Dean Students' Welfare, JMI, successfully organized a two-day 'Gender Sensitization' workshop which commenced on February 13, 2025 at FTK-CIT Hall of the university. The purpose of the workshop was to foster awareness on gender issues, promote inclusivity, and strengthen legal understanding of gender-related rights and policies. The convenors of the programme were Dr. Mujibur Rehman and Dr. Arvind Kumar, eminent scholars and faculty members at CSSI, JMI. The event was coordinated by Dr. Masroor and Mr. Sheikh Mohammed Farhan.

The event was graced by Prof. Mazhar Asif, Vice-Chancellor, JMI who was the Chief Guest on the occasion along with the Guest of Honour, Hon'ble Justice A.K. Patnaik (Retd.), Former Judge, Supreme Court of India. Dr. R. Manoj Kumar, Joint Secretary, UGC, could not join the session but sent a congratulatory note praising the initiatives of CSSI.

The inaugural session began with a welcome address by Prof. Tanuja, Director of CSSI who also emphasized the role of the Indian Constitution in ensuring equality, highlighting that gender justice is essential for society as a whole. She underscored the significance of education—recognized by both the UGC and NEP—in fostering inclusivity.

In his keynote address, Justice A.K. Patnaik elaborated on the constitutional provisions such as Articles 14, 15, and 16, reinforcing the State's responsibility in safeguarding gender rights. He cited landmark cases and legal advancements, including the Vishakha Guidelines, the POSH Act, and the decriminalization of Section 377, which have significantly contributed to gender justice.

Building upon these points, Dr. Satya Prakash, OSD to the Vice Chancellor referenced Simone de Beauvoir's famous statement, "*One is not born a woman, but becomes one,*" emphasizing the need to re-examine societal nurturing practices and the role of knowledge and education in achieving gender sensitization.

Prof. Mazhar Asif, the Vice Chancellor, quoted *Surah Al-Nisa*, from the Holy Quran, stating that every child is born as a human being and that gender divisions are socially constructed. He noted that while religious scriptures advocate for women's empowerment, these principles are often ignored in practice. He further expressed concern that educated individuals sometimes display hypocrisy in their actions. Prof. Asif shared that Jamia has actively promoted women to administrative positions and assured that the university would address any concerns related to gender inequality.

Prof. Neelofer Afzal, Dean of Student Welfare, issued a call to action, acknowledging the presence of constitutional provisions but stressing that laws alone cannot change deeply ingrained mindsets. She emphasized that achieving true gender equality requires shared responsibility between men and women.

Dr. Arvind Kumar read a message from the Special Guest, Dr. R. Manoj Kumar, Joint Secretary of the UGC, who highlighted the importance of including all stakeholders in the collective pursuit of "*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*" (collective effort, inclusive growth).

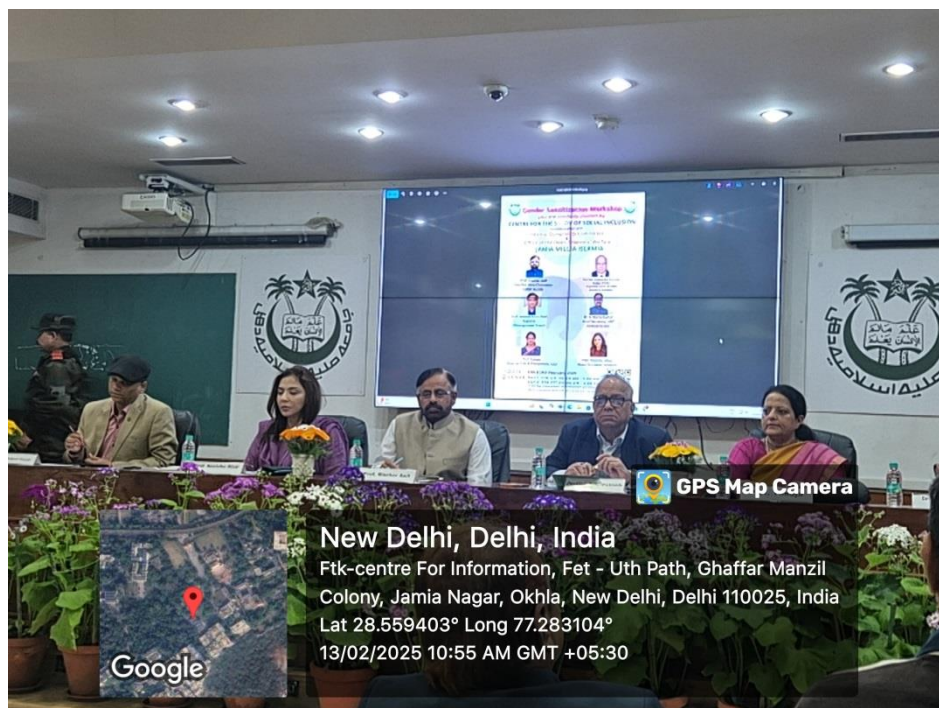
The first Technical Session started with Prof. Charu Gupta providing historical insights into women's contributions to traditional medicine, focusing on the work of Yashoda Devi. Dr. Anamika Priyadarshini discussed social capital as a tool for women's empowerment, while Dr. Hem Borker presented her research on educational aspirations among girls in *madrasa* education.

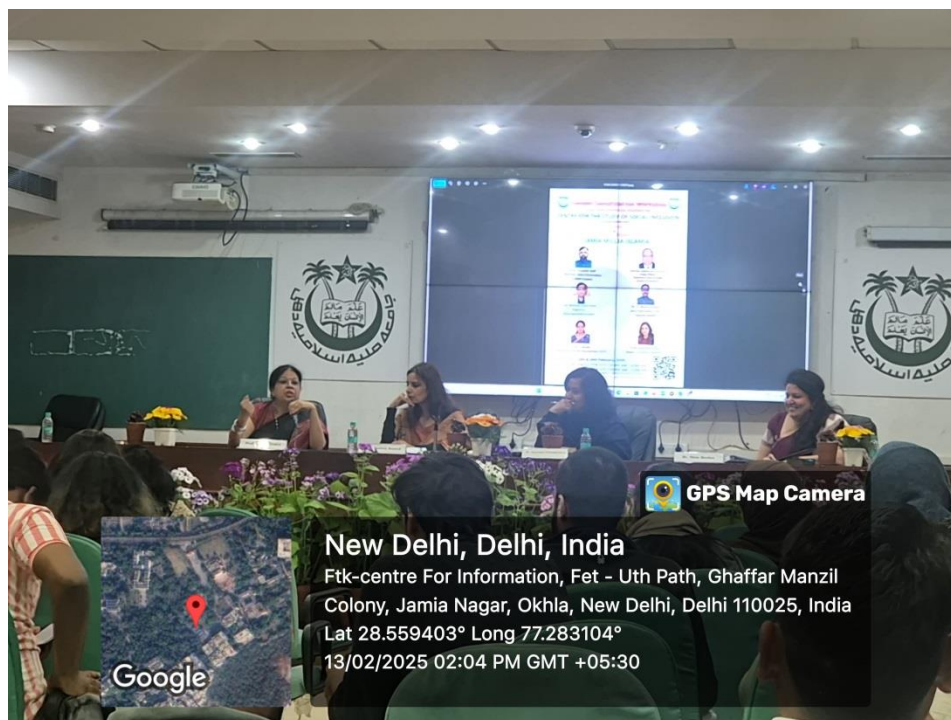
The second technical session explored gender, space, and intersectionality. Prof. Kulwinder Kaur emphasized the need for gender-inclusive public spaces and the unique challenges faced by Dalit and transgender individuals. Dr. Smita M. Patil analyzed caste and gender from a Dalit-Bahujan perspective, highlighting power imbalances. Anish Gawande from Pink List India spoke about LGBTQ+ advocacy in digital spaces, and Miss Kayalvizhi discussed strategies for reclaiming educational spaces for women while shedding light on issues such as child marriage, child sexual abuse, and menstrual taboos.

The session concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Arvind Kumar, followed by an interactive Q&A session that reinforced the need for collective action in dismantling gender biases. Participants emphasized the importance of policy reforms and community-led initiatives in achieving true gender inclusivity.

This workshop marked a significant step towards raising awareness and fostering discussions on gender sensitization, encouraging institutions and individuals alike to advocate for a more inclusive society.

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