

# Karvan-E-Fikr

Annual festival organised by, Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi  
**Inter-University Students' Seminar- 30<sup>TH</sup> March 2017**

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## Theme - Decoding Dissent

(To Conform or Not to Conform?)

### CONCEPT NOTE

Social life is regulated at all levels from the inter-personal to the national and the global by a set of rules, conventions, laws and customs. At all these levels, people find themselves at crossroads where they are faced with the question of either abiding by or not abiding by this control system. This generates a very unique dynamism which percolates all aspects of human existence.

To understand this dynamism, there is a set of concepts available to us which includes disagreement, non-conformity, protest, resentment, discomfort and dissent. In this seminar, we would like to debate and discuss the questions that arise at these crossroads. Is all disagreement the same as non-conformity? When does it lead to deviance? Is all deviance necessarily rebellion and protest? When does discomfort develop into resentment and resentment into conflict?

In the recent times, it has been observed that these forms of negotiation of boundaries have been more oriented towards the reaffirmation of norms rather than reinterpreting or breaking away from them. This prompts us to suggest that in contrast to all the above listed forms of negotiation, dissent stands apart. It may be considered as:

A Mode of Social Relationship

A Mode of Generating Knowledge

A Mode of Being in the World;

Which cuts across spheres of peer group, family, neighbourhood, civil society, region, nation and across nations.

Even though it's efficacy is usually challenged, many of us do believe dissent to be the soul of healthy progression.

In a social system where dominantly held ideologies constantly try to crush any deviant voices, let alone be receptive to dialogue; and even thrive on social exclusion, how fundamental is it to let each individual find a right to self-expression? Also, who sets the limits as to how one can exhibit it.

Keeping the above ideas central, we invite papers on the following themes:

**1. The non-conformist individual in the contemporary times.**

The post-modern individual is hailed to be non-conformist in essence. Does the society stand as its biggest barrier?

**2. Accommodating dissent in a suffocating university space.**

The onus of developing the ability to question critically lies upon the university space. Does it render to the struggles of power dimensions and interactions in a political and gendered sphere?

**3. The fractured family: dissent and conformity.**

The concept of sexuality and sensuality are no longer relegated to the private sphere. Is the new contested space negotiable enough? What role does state play in accommodating the unphenomenal?

**4. The rational-liberal individual on the crossroads of spirituality.**

The liberal discourse and the paradoxes that emerged with it have been questioned time and again. Can spirituality and modernity go hand in hand or are they mutually exclusive? Are we turning back time or redefining it?

**5. One dimensional idea of progress.**

The human race is constrained with a monologous idea of development which has been challenged to be elitist, hazardous to the environment, capital, patriarchal and hence, one dimensional in nature.

**Guidelines for Paper Presenters:**

Please note that the outlined themes are indicative and suggestive only. Papers touching upon other relevant issues around the theme can also be considered for presentation. Participants may inform the organisers under what theme they want their paper to be presented. The call for papers is open to Undergraduate and Postgraduate students, Research scholars or Research assistants/associates studying in government approved educational institutions from all streams. The presentations may use audio visual materials wherever relevant. The expected length of the final paper to be submitted may range from 2500 to 4000 words to be presented in 15 minutes. The interested participants should email an abstract of 250-300 words to be screened by the Faculty of the Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia at [sociologyjamia@gmail.com](mailto:sociologyjamia@gmail.com) by 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2017.

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