

Department of History and Culture
Faculty of Humanities and Languages
Jamia Millia Islamia
New Delhi

Invites you to a lecture

By

Upinder Singh

On

The Problem of War: Ancient Indian Perspectives

22nd August, 2013 (Thursday)

12.15 PM

Venue: Seminar Room, Department of History and Culture, JMI

Dr. P.K.Basant, Department of History and Culture will chair the session

Violence in its various manifestations has characterized all human history, and the ways in which societies grappled with this phenomenon is therefore an important historical issue. The larger question that this paper addresses is: if violence was pervasive in ancient Indian (as in all) societies, how did these societies deal intellectually with this problem? The specific focus will be on one particular form of political violence, namely war, in two specific contexts – those of the Maurya (4th-2nd century BCE) and Gupta (c. 3rd to 6th century CE) empires. Three sources will be taken up for discussion -- the inscriptions of Aśoka; a political treatise called the *Nītisāra*; and a very beautiful and powerful poetic work – Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa*. A close reading of these very different kinds of texts reveals the intersection between political thought and practice, and overlapping as well as distinctive ideas about the relationship between politics, violence and war.

About the Speaker:

Dr. Upinder Singh is Professor in the Department of History, University of Delhi. She has written on ancient Indian history as well as the modern histories of ancient sites and monuments. Her books are *Kings, Brahmanas, and Temples in Orissa: An Epigraphic Study*, *Ancient Delhi*, *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology*, and *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the Twelfth Century*. She has edited *Delhi: Ancient History*, *Ancient India: New Research* (co-edited); and *Rethinking Early Medieval India* (2011).