



**Office of the Media Coordinator
Jamia Millia Islamia**

December 29, 2016

Press Release

JMI holds seminar on ‘Probing Non-violence: A Dialectical Approach’

A Seminar on ‘Probing Non-violence: A Dialectical Approach’ was today held at the Department of Biosciences, Jamia Millia Islamia in collaboration the Society of Scientists & Technologists for Non violent World Order.

Five speakers elaborated on the definition and categories of violence and the various definitions of non violence ranging from Gandhian philosophy of achieving peace to the Che Guevara’s approach to the achieving peace and egalitarianism.

Prof Nishat Quaiser, Head, Department of Sociology, JMI stated that the questions of Violence and Non-violence have been one of the central questions both philosophically and methodologically in social theory. These have also acquired crucial significance within the domains of political action where state occupies as one of the central actors.

Prof Janaki Rajan, Department of Education, JMI explored the thinking post World War II particularly the Frankfurt School. She elaborated on the linkage between non-violence and justice. She argued that justice requires a measure of truth and ethics and how all this plays out in a diverse multicultural plural humanity? She highlighted the significance of non-violence in contemporary societies especially among the youth in India.

Dr Madhu Prasad, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Zakir Husain College, University of Delhi delivered a talk on ‘Non-Violence: An Ethical Form of Democratic Protest’. She delved on the ethical character of mass protest arguing that the principle of non-violence is a means to ‘restrain’ or limit mass protests which by their character and spontaneity naturally tend towards spiralling into violent expression to achieve radical aims.

Dr Harpreet Kaur Jass, Department of Education, JMI, gave a talk on the ‘Reminders from Guru Nanak’s Dialogical approach’. She said that Guru Nanak the first Guru of Sikh religion was a spiritual poet revered by other sects equally. The socio political situation of Nank’s time, his life and incidents made him point in case to probe his method. Her talk highlighted ‘ways’ of Guru Nanak, that he undertook to interact with various groups.

Dr Sonali Vaid, Senior Improvement Advisor, University Research Co. Ltd. spoke about ‘Women’s reproductive rights and the concept of structural violence - Exploring a lens for social justice’. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1971 is a relatively liberal abortion law and abortion facilities are available at most hospitals and health centres. Yet there are an estimated 20 lakh - 35 lakh unsafe abortions every year in India leading to about 10,000 deaths annually.

So why are women dying despite liberal laws and availability of services? Dr Sonali presented a case study that explored specific coercive family planning practices and lack of reproductive choice in India through the lens of 'structural violence'.

The seminar was presided over by Shri Aftab Niazi, former Chairman, Bharat Petroleum, and was convened by Prof Arif Ali, Department of Biosciences, JMI and also the President of the 'Society of Scientists & Technologists for Non violent World Order'. Dr S C Sharma, Treasurer of the Society briefed the participants about the history and objectives of the society.

Dr Sarwat Ali, Department of Education, JMI summarized the proceedings and later proposed a vote of thanks to the organizers, facilitators, the speakers and the participants.

Prof. Saima Saeed

Hony. Deputy Media Coordinator

9891 22 7771