

Office of the
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Press Release

Secularism in India is a result of a pragmatic necessity that arises from the pluralist nature of the country: Prof. Sumantra Bose

Professor Sumantra Bose, who teaches at the Department of Government, London School of Economics and Politics delivered a lecture titled 'India, Turkey and Secularism' on 7 August, 2018 in the Faculty of Law, Jamia Millia Islamia.

A prolific writer and scholar of great repute and knowledge, Prof. Bose spoke about the commonalities and differences that exist between the conceptualisation and implementation of Secularism in Turkey and India. His latest book *Secular States, Religion Politics: India, Turkey and the Future of Secularism* by the Cambridge University Press explores the same theme. Tracing the evolutionary trajectory of secularism in Turkey and its evident decline according to Prof. Bose could be attributed to two factors. According to him, the extremely simplistic and infantile outlook that has been deeply entrenched in the Europhile approach of the nation-builders during the Kemalian period has been one of the two factors responsible for the creation of a form of secularism that is bound to be challenged and over-run by counter-revolutionary forces. The second cause of the decline of secularism, according to Prof. Bose was the top-down model of its implementation. Prof. Bose asserted that a borrowed and forcefully imposed idea of secularism to replicate the West has further alienated people accepting it in their socio-political lives. According to him, the spectre of recent resurgence of religiosity in the political sphere of Turkey is pointing towards to ensuing shift against secularism in Turkey.

On the other hand, according to Prof. Bose, secularism in India is a result of a pragmatic necessity that arises from the pluralist nature of the country. He further asserted that the idea of secularism has been constructively accommodated in India due to the existence and continuance of the practice of acceptance and co-existence that has been a part Indian intellectual and philosophical tradition and has been adopted by the people of sub-continental nation in their day to day lives.

Concluding his lecture, Prof. Bose pointed out that while secularism in Turkey is prone to be dismantled completely in near future; in the Indian case, despite continuous onslaughts by the Right in the recent times, it would continue to survive and flourish because of its indigenous roots and quality to adapt to prevailing realities. Post his highly stimulating and enlightening lecture, Prof. Bose further engaged with the students of the Faculty and other Departments of the University through a vigorous question and session.

The programme was chaired by Professor Nuzhat Parveen Khan, Dean of the Faculty of Law. Prof. Khan introduced the distinguished speaker to the audiences and elaborated on the theme of the lecture. The programme concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Dr. Faizanur Rahman, Assistant Professor and Subject Advisor, Faculty of Law.

(Ahmad Azeem)

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India, Turkey and Secularism







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