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Press Release

JMI organises Webinar on Challenges and Opportunities in Polar Research

A webinar on “Challenges and Opportunities in Polar Research”, was organized by Jamia Millia Islamia(JMI), New Delhi on 10th December 2020 as part of the university’s Centenary Celebrations. The webinar got overwhelming response from the academia, researchers and students from JMI and other institutes/universities all over India and more than 700 participants registered for the webinar.

Prof. Najma Akhtar, Vice Chancellor, JMI was the Chief Guest and Prof. Azizuddin Khan, Psychophysiology Laboratory, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay was the Guest of Honour. Mr. Mirza Javed Beg, Scientist G and Group Director (Antarctic Operation & Infrastructure), National Centre for Polar & Ocean Research, NCPOR, Goa) and Dr. Prabir Ghosh Dastidar, Senior Scientist and Advisor, Ministry of Earth Sciences (GOI) were the expert speakers.

In her inaugural address Prof. Najma Akhtar appreciated the theme of the webinar, an area comparatively lesser talked/discussed in public domain. Once considered remote and isolated, the Polar Regions are now part of global political, social, economic security and geopolitical landscape. There are many stakeholders in these regions including governments, corporations, environmentalists, scientists and right groups. Therefore, this area needs to be understood properly in every aspect. This reality requires research and policy analysis related to Polar Regions now more than ever. She further said that the webinar will provide the detailed information regarding future scope, opportunity and institutional support in the emerging and challenging area of polar research for budding scientific community.

Prof. Akhtar also expressed satisfaction over the success story of JMI which is now top among the Central universities and exhorted all the Jamia fraternity to work harder to make it among the premier university of the world.

The Guest of Honour Prof. Azizuddin Khan who has been the initiator and key driving force in organising this event has spoken of relevance of Polar Studies and introduced the Key speakers Mr. Mirza Javed Beg, and Dr. Prabir Ghosh Dastidar.

Both the expert speakers Mr. Mirza Javed Beg, and Dr. Prabir Ghosh Dastidar, delivered very exciting, fascinating and inspiring talks on polar research. The speakers were wonderful and made a comprehensive presentations of the challenges and opportunities in Polar research. They virtually

took the participant to a virtual tour to Antarctica including the two research stations Bharati and Maitri. They also dwelt upon the various aspects of Polar Regions, research activities and future

scope, Expeditions to Antarctica, National Centre for Polar & Ocean Research (NCPOR). The financial and institutional support for polar studies were also elaborated.

The contribution of late Dr Syed Zahoor Qasim, and former Vice-Chancellor of JMI, a doyen in Indian polar program, who successfully led India's first Antarctic expedition in 1981 was highly acknowledged with reverence. He has been commemorated for his contributions to the Indian polar programme in a special issue of Polar Science in 2019. They suggested that the newly department of environmental science may be dedicated to Prof. S.Z. Qasim that will be a befitting tribute to him.

The Questions and Answers session was moderated by Prof. Zahid Ashraf, Director-Research and Prof. Quamrul Hassan from Civil Engineering Department.

The Convener of the Program was Prof. Kafeel Ahmad, Director-Research while the program was anchored by Ms Zareen Fatima, M.Tech. Student of Environmental Sciences & engineering.

The webinar came to an end with the presentation of vote of thanks by Prof. Quamrul Hassan, the co-ordinator of the Webinar.

Ahmad Azeem
PRO-Media Coordinator