

April 7, 2021

Press Release

Interdisciplinary Public Lecture Series 2021 begins at JMI

Prof. Akeel Bilgrami who is the Sidney Morgenbesser Professor of Philosophy, and Professor, Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University, USA delivered the inaugural lecture on 'Indian Secularism and Art' on 6th April, 2021 in the online Interdisciplinary Public Lecture Series 2021 initiated by the Centre for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies (CJNS) Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI).

Prof. Najma Akhtar, Vice Chancellor, JMI chaired and inaugurated the online Public Lecture Series 2021 which was screened by FTK-CIT of the university and was attended by faculty members, research scholars/students of JMI and other Universities.

The programme started with Prof. Rumki Basu, Director, CJNS introducing the Vice Chancellor and the speaker.

The Vice Chancellor welcomed Prof. Akeel Bilgrami and said that 'he is the quintessential public intellectual with whom I am glad the interdisciplinary series has started today'. She spoke about JMI's Centenary year and Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary and recalled how the university celebrated both in the year 2020 with equal fervour and enthusiasm.

Prof. Akhtar announced that Jamia Millia Islamia has secured the first position amongst all the Central Universities in the country with accordance to the assessment parameters of the Ministry of Education with a score of 90% in 2020. With her decades old experience as a Professor of Education and Educational Administrator, she welcomed the recently announced New Education Policy as aimed at 'Integrated pedagogy and inclusive digital education'.

After the Public Lecture, Prof. Rumki Basu gave her comments and observations on the lecture. She said that Prof. Bilgrami has truly echoed the mandate of the Centre by speaking on interdisciplinary issues touching upon the disciplines of History, Politics, Philosophy, Sociology of Art and Art History. She thanked him for delivering such a thinking and thought provoking lecture where he illuminated our understanding of identity and belief, fearlessly touching on volatile issues of politics and art in contemporary India.

She also said that Prof. Bilgrami did not fail to remind us of India's long history of lived pluralist traditions and more recent history of secular nationalism almost nudging us to believe that we need to understand our colonial past and our constitutional history in order to plan for our political future. One of the main take home messages of this lecture, she said was to bring into conversation the dilemmas of secularism in contemporary politics and art history.

Prof. Rumki Basu who was also the Moderator, then invited questions from the participants. The programme ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. Etee Bahadur, a Faculty Member at the Centre who also declared the event to be closed.

Public Relations Office
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