

**Media Coordinator's Office
Jamia Millia Islamia**

February 20, 2017

Press Release

**“You can't have Social Sciences without Democracy” – Prof. Dipankar Gupta, Former
JNU Professor at Dept of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia**

Underscoring the importance of democracy, **Prof Dipankar Gupta**, former Professor in the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University who was the Chief Guest at the International Conference on 'Social Work Education and Practice' said today that students must aim to be exceptionally good and not mediocre social workers.

“Social work gets its charge from the belief that other people matter. The idea of society comes from the notion of modernity, democracy and modern notions of citizenship which again emanate from the belief that other people matter” Prof Gupta, who has been Professor Emeritus, JMI added.

He further said that modernity is not a static project and citizenship too is a moving project so more hard work is needed to nurture them.

“If Social Work was to be understood as distillation of the idea of society then it was not about altruism or charity instead it was a solid discipline where others become very important” he said

Prof. Talat Ahmad, Vice Chancellor JMI, presiding the inaugural session, congratulated the department on organizing the conference and getting participants from different countries. He hoped that the conference will be very useful for students and researchers pursuing social work discipline as it facilitates peer-to-peer learning, liaisoning and discussion.

Citing the example of JMI's Centre for Early Childhood Development and Research which has signed an MoU with UK-based Rainbow Fostering to introduce the concept of foster care in India, Prof Ahmad said that JMI has always been in the forefront of collaborating with NGOs to address various social needs.

Prof. Ushvinder Kaur Popli, Head, Department of Social work, welcomed the participants and gave a brief introduction about the Department of Social work and its 50 years of academic journey. She added that the Department has come a long way as a pioneer in professionalization of social work education and practice and to cater to the emerging demand of social work profession in India. The Department has transformed its pedagogy to focus more on skill building and capacity building. It has also signed MOUs and entered into associations with Universities of different countries.

Prof. S. M. Sajid, Conference Director and Professor at the Department, introduced the theme of the conference. He brought out the challenges in Social Work Education and Practice and called for close collaborative relationship between practitioners and educators. There is an urgent need for the development of indigenous literature and methods more suited to particular socio-economic contexts and social work interventions to be more precise and incisive with a higher degree of professionalism, Prof Sajid added.

Prof Sajid said that it was worth noting that transitory problems of our society have become perennial and the State was only shrinking. He said that despite rapid liberalisation people have limited access to safe drinking water, healthcare and education. Poverty, inequality and social injustice are issues that need to be addressed by the social work profession, Prof Sajid added.

The Department is organizing the conference as part of its Golden Jubilee Celebrations marking 50 years of its establishment and contribution to the discipline. The conference proposes to review the situation, learning and issues around social work education and practice in India and abroad over the last 50 years.

Prof. Saima Saeed

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Attachment: Pictures

WORK EDUCATION AND

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DIPANKAR GUPTA



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(UGC Centre of Advanced Study)
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
International Conference
SOCIAL WORK: EDUCATION AND PRACTICE
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