

EPISTEME

ANNUAL MAGAZINE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA

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Is Jamia Secular?

FEATURE

The Walls that Speak

PHOTO FEATURE

Confusion made my Life

PERSONAL

Security State & Jamia Millia Islamia

ESSAY



It gives me immense pleasure to announce that the Subject Association of the Department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia, has decided to publish the second issue of the magazine Episteme. The magazine I hope, will be a forum for discussion, debate, diversity and creativity. It will encourage both talent and opinion, and will create a vibrant public space for students and faculty alike.

I hereby congratulate the Editorial board as well as the Subject Association for this exemplary endeavor, and wish them all the very best

Prof. Mohammad Badrul Alam
Head of the department of Political Science
Jamia Millia Islamia



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Note from the Editors

To sustain any endeavor is an achievement. It reveals commitment and dedication. This very revelation shows the impetus that is behind such efforts. Thus, with great pleasure we announce the second issue of our yearly departmental magazine, Episteme.

Last year, we battled pessimism, student unconcern, and financial considerations and came out with the first issue of the departmental magazine. It was the first of its kind in the university. From the beginning we were clear about the nature of the magazine: a platform through which students could share their experience in the campus. The magazine, with all its flaws and perfections, was out in the public domain, though with a low overall readership.

Reactions were varied. While the design and photo feature of the magazine was lauded, yet some had manifested displeasure for the e-zine form of the magazine. But the curious thing was when some of our readers pointed out that they expected academic write-ups on the subjects like religion, democracy, international politics, gender and violence, caste, and so on.

Considering the views of our readers and students, this issue of Episteme carries a variety of write-ups on secularism, campus politics, hostel life and the like. There is a photo feature as well. The magazine is, thus, a milieu of both academic and journalistic write-ups. We have a story on 'Secularism in Jamia' which features as our cover story.

We have been fortunate to have comparatively better student participation than last year. Some of the pieces were exceptionally good. The editorial team was really in a difficult situation to choose the articles. Some tough decisions had to be taken. Thereafter, the editorial process was rigorous in the sense we wanted to maintain a high standard.

We hope this year the response is better and the readership increases.

We dedicate this issue of the magazine to the Students of the Department.

Student Editors

Samreen Mushtaq
Iymon Majid
Anshul Bhamra
Sadiah Hussain
Faiza Nasir

Editorial Advisor

Dr Krishnaswamy Dara

Politics in Universities

Politics in Jamia is played in a way that is different from how conventional politics plays itself out in other universities



Anshul Bhamra
Final Semester, M.A.
Public Administration

Delhi, apart from being the political capital of India, rich in its Mughal historical legacy, is also home to large number of aspiring youth of the country who come to the capital in the quest of knowledge, exposure and experience of the metropolitan to study in the universities in Delhi. The three prestigious central universities of the country, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University and Jamia Millia Islamia are located in this very city, which makes it a flourishing hub of budding Social Scientists.

Being the capital of the country along with being the center for all high bureaucratic and diplomatic exchanges, Delhi becomes more attractive and exciting with its higher possibilities of having direct discussions and deliberations with the political executives, and people in the government. These universities, despite being pretty similar in their geography, demography have certain strikingly different orientations in their environment evolving out of divergent perceptions of polity that the three campuses practice in their way of life.

Walking through the Jamia campus, one will find various students who have done their previous degree from Delhi University. Many more have informally experienced the entire life of JNU or Delhi University and have friends at all places making them feel more a part of the global universities in Delhi than their local university, Jamia Millia Islamia. All of them have different experiences, good or bad, consensual or nonconsensual. One fact, however, that almost everybody agrees with is that there is a huge difference in the political living of all the three universities.

Ang Chuk, a student of political science department, who has pursued his graduation from Ramjas College, North Campus Delhi University, one of the most politically charged colleges of

the varsity, finds a tremendous shift in the atmosphere of both the places. "Ramjas is an example of active, aggressive and typical Indian politics, where political groups are usually based on regions and the success or failure of the events in a college year largely depends on whether the elected president wishes to work or not. Everyone who's passed out from this college has for once, definitely seen a fight between two groups usually for political reasons," he says.

Jamia Millia Islamia, on the other hand, according to him, is peaceful and more importantly consistent with the achievements of an academic year in terms of activities and fests organized. Sadia Khan, another political science student in Jamia Millia Islamia, credits the consistency in the performance of Jamia largely to the stable system of working and administration by the faculty that helps in and hence sustains good organization with their experience. This is lacking in case of Delhi University where an absolutely new and inexperienced group of people is elected, who take time in accommodating themselves. "And may be sometimes they are inefficient, as they have to start from ground zero all the time," Sadia says.

Aamir Wani, a student of Architecture from Jamia Millia Islamia, who is very fond of JNU and loves spending a good amount of his time there, explains that the two campuses have their own charm about them. "There is no possible comparison of the two places and one alone can possibly become monotonous for a person and that is why switching the two on and off gives a nice change," Aamir says.

The polity of JNU is volatile, high ended and the left orientation sometimes makes it too vague to relate it with reality, but the kind of presence of politics in the atmosphere is fascinating. "The rallies with popular, rhyming, sometimes satir-

ical jingles and the legacy of grand presidential speech prior to elections makes the students feel the vibes of the politics in their real life," says Aamir.

For Aamir, Jamia is more realist and the kind of controlled politics that Jamia follows, prevents it from the extremes of Left and Right politics that JNU and DU respectively play according to him. Nehal Ahmed, another political science student from Jamia Millia Islamia, with a deep love for JNU, is, however, more critical of the politics at Jamia. He thinks the students should be given a freehand in the organization of fests, events etc. "The examples of Delhi University Societies must be adopted in a way that we can learn from their experiences and the same should be implemented here, even if an election seems to be a farfetched idea for electing a Student Union here," he says.

Politics in Jamia is played in a way that is different from how conventional politics plays itself out in other universities. There is politics in what apparently seems 'de-politicization' to most students. The politics in Jamia Millia Islamia, according to Azeemah Saleem, another political science student, is a colloid of electoral, representative as well as academic politics, where there are electoral as well as representative heads, and scope of discussions, which are not extremely tilted to either left, or right, but a collusion of all, is greater.

The politics at the three university campuses in Delhi is of different spices and flavors but what is certain is that whatever be the attire of it in these three universities, politics does play a massive role in structuring the daily experiences of students. It is perhaps not possible to rank this political functioning in hierarchical order because of the subjectivity involved and the pros and cons on every side. However, it can be, easily and affirmatively, stated that students who study in any of these universities and reach out the opportunity of experiencing 'global' universities are fortunate to live in the three existential political systems in the same city.

Tryst with Inner Self



Wind roared and tempest howled vociferously.

I came out to have a feel of

its vigorosity and let it blow over my body, over my face and over my spirit.

Cold gusts bereft me of the warmth till I could feel the numbness of my fingers and dampness of my cold face.

I could hear the rustling of evergreens as wind passed combing them.

I could see the naked boughs trembling and

prostrating before its grandeur.

I could perceive

the trepidation of little hearts of tiny birds crouched in their nests that quivered against its wrath and fury.

I could

sense the sting as it pierced the heart of murky cirri and tore away gray raiment of the sky.

My heart missed a beat as I was overawed by the splendor of its roar.

'Impetuous one' echoed somewhere.

Mind was pressing to yield to authority, but heart retorted.

I closed my eyes and let my

soul aviate...

Till all notes started fading away

Till I became oblivious of chill and blaze

Till I forgot

everything... home, life, its miseries, the universe and my existence

Till I could see naught save for my spirits sailing in

firmament

Till I could feel

naught save for my soul transcending all confinements

Till I could hear naught save for the loud and clear

clamor of my heart

I am free..

I am free...

Syed Rabe'a Bukhari
Second Semester, M.A.
Public Administration



Confusion made my Life



Afshan Khan
Second Semester, B.A.
(Hons.) Political Science

Sometimes it is fun to be nervous. Because after that, the state of relaxation is like a reverie – a day dream. The might of optimism surely defeats that nervousness. I had recently joined Jamia Millia Islamia for my graduation in political science. The syllabus prescribed flaunted about Philosophy and Western Political Thought. I was excited.

For a few weeks, I was on cloud nine that I was reading big names. The excitement soon vanished like an ice cream melting in the May heat. The exams knocked our doors. It was our first internal assessment. We were asked to study six philosophers in two days. And after that, the teacher would ask us one question—just one question. The thought of it gave me Goosebumps.

Initially, when we started the course I found it very interesting. The philosophy was quite intellectual for me and our teachers helped us develop a likening towards it. After the first lecture itself, I bought the prescribed book. I was enthusiastic.

I read about Plato. It took me three days to go through the text. Then, I again read it. Finally, I made some notes related to the text. I realized that I had dedicated my whole week reading one philosopher. I was not sure whether I had really grasped the context of the text or it just went into my head without creating any ripples.

The day before the test, I had to read five more philosophers –Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Machiavelli. I had been studying all these philosophers but on the last day, I did not get the time to revise.

With every tick of the clock, I was feeling worried. I had no control over my nerves. My father asked for water but in the bewildered state that I was in, I gave it to my brother. Aristotle, Plato and other Philosophers had occupied my mind space and were instructing me to do things with the use of reason and their ideologies. For me, the experience was new, one that had never happened to me before.

I was so perplexed between Aristotle and Plato that I decided to read Rousseau, the super genius. Now another problem arose; I could not study Rousseau because for doing that I should have

read Hobbes and Locke. Finally, I could not resist my sleep after 3 o' clock.

Next morning, I attempted the test. "How was the test?" many people asked.

Well, I did not have any answers for that. I smiled and the tinge of smile was on my face for the whole day. No, it was not because of the test. But it had something to do with the dream. I dreamt about the same philosophers, which I had been studying.

Plato came to me and asked my opinion about the decisions taken by Socrates. I presented an opinion before him. I appreciated him for having great and intellectual thought about an Ideal State. But I scolded him for the concept of communism of wives. Out of anger, he went away.

Next was Aristotle. He was eager to know my opinion about his theories and classifications. I first appreciated him and then criticized his views about women. I said to him, "You have come to me to make a correction. For that matter, I am also a girl, so never under estimate the power of a girl". He became silent and then left my house.

Then I asked my security guard to call Rousseau. He informed me that Locke and Hobbes wanted to meet me first. I asked him to call them.

I appreciated both of them. But I asked Hobbes to learn something from John Locke and be a little liberal. Both of them started debating as Hobbes argued that Locke had copied him. Then I solved their conflict by appreciating both of them for giving great theories of social contract.

My security guard then called Rousseau. I did not praise him rather I got furious. "You know what? You have made us too confused. Your theory on 'General Will' is very tedious to understand. What do you think of yourself?" Then I criticized him for considering women as inferior to men and that they were merely a means to their pleasure.

This dream was the reason for my smile that day. Even now, when I remember it, a smile inevitably comes to my face. This dream made me feel out of this world. I cannot ever meet these extraordinary and highly intellectual philosophers. But my dream made it possible. This happened only because of my confusion. Thus, my confusion made my day.

”

I was so perplexed between Aristotle and Plato that I decided to read Rousseau, the super genius. Now another problem arose; I could not study Rousseau because for doing that I should have read Hobbes and Locke

Being an Outsider

My friend Zahid, a Kashmiri Muslim, once narrated his ordeal to me, one that has been etched deep into his mind. It was about him getting into a verbal duel with his friend Akash, a Hindu Delhiite. Specifying identity in this narrow order must have sounded weird to you but by the end of the story, you will understand my motive.

The triviality of the cause of the fight can be judged from the fact that till date, Zahid does not remember what the fight was all about, or maybe he does not want to share it; whatever might be the case. What he distinctly remembers of the fight are Akash's words that created a stir in his mind and made him rethink his identity, something he thought he knew well. "Why don't you stay with your own people? Go back to your own place, you are not needed here." Though Zahid is good at giving sharp retorts, he says he kept quiet that time. "When the people you consider your own call you an outsider, it hurts", he lamented.

I nodded, though it was difficult for me to comprehend what 'my own people' means. What is the criteria, the parameters, and where to draw the line between one's own people and others? Is it one's genealogy, ethnicity or religion that determines 'one's own group'? Or is it rising above all these socially constructed barriers (as I see them) and accepting 'others' as one's own. Zahid did that. I did that and we both ended up facing 'double edged stereotype'.

Zahid has been living in Delhi since he was a kid. All his childhood memories, hangouts and first love are related to this city. Though he keeps juggling between Delhi and Kashmir, he has a deep attachment and an equal liking for both the places. How can he then be called an outsider?

As for me, I too have a similar story to tell. Sharing ethnicity with my Ladakhi brethren, while home and space with the Kashmiri ones, I have often relished the idea of experiencing multi regional diversity. Where the former has given me my genealogical traits, the latter has induced a sense of being in me. Or rather, it would be more appropriate to say that it has introduced myself to me.

Having grown up in the political turmoil of Kashmir, I empathize rather than sympathize with them (this causes offence to some, though the intention is purely out of respect for the region and its people).

While most of the people have been gracious enough to accept my multi- regional identity, few have shown contempt. I am judged, my intentions doubted, ideas scrutinized. What I fail to understand is that why can't a person love both the places without jeopardizing his sense of patriotism for that place.

Now after entering Jamia, I have faced the same stereotype, though on a broader level. This one is being a Kashmiri (here I use it as a generic term for the indigenous people of J&K) and a non-Kashmiri. For both, again, I am an outsider. My experience of shared home comes as a drawback to me in getting acceptance from the people. I am not a pure 'anything' and therefore can't be trusted. Well my own attitude is also to be blamed. With my Kashmiri friends, I behave as a Ladakhi, with my Ladakhi and non-Kashmiri friends, I behave as a Kashmiri, with my shia friends I try to bring in the similarities between Shias and Sunnis, with my Sunni friends I am found defending Shias. I do not understand why it is so. Also why I am so.

When all the people support one thing, I tend to support the other. Whether this is out of love for the 'other' or a mere show of reluctance to accept the majority especially when hostility is meted out to that 'other' or is it feeling related to that 'other' is a question I often ask myself. I am still looking for the answer. The inability to take a stand (as the 'other' calls it) is what I think makes me look an outsider to my all kinds of friends: Kashmiri, non-Kashmiri, Shia, non- Shia, the list can go on.

I try to shun from being defined by regional stereotype. Not only regional but also all kinds of stereotypes. It is difficult to evade them. I would rather be known through my personal identity than the collective one. However, if my indifference to the socially constructed categories qualifies me as an 'outsider', then I am happily willing to accept the tag. If you cannot defy a stereotype, change the way you look at it.

I have found myself dealing with this dilemma of insider-outsider ever since I started understanding things. To do away with it, I have created a space for myself in my mind, which exists between the outsider and insider thing. This allows me to delve into myself without bothering about my identity. I am no more a hapless soul there.



Faiza Nasir
Second Semester, B.A.
(Hons.) Political Science



Having grown up in the political turmoil of Kashmir, I empathize rather than sympathize with them

'Growing' with Jamia...



Samreen Mushtaq
Research Scholar in
the Department of
Political Science

*It is not often that people get a chance to serve the institution that they believe has nurtured them and made them into who they are. Normally, we move from one school into another college and then go on to work somewhere else. But when we complete our education from some place and then get appointed to render our services at the same place, it is a rare story and how can one not feel blessed about it! **Samreen Mushtaq** had a chance to listen to two such Professors from Jamia, as they went down the memory lane, speaking of Jamia then and Jamia now, of their transition from being students to being professors in the University they absolutely adore.*

At Jamia, he learnt to pronounce the basic alphabet of education. Then he left, only to return to teach and decipher the elementary codes of life here. Professor Zubair Meenai joined Nursery class in Jamia School somewhere around late 1960s, then left to complete his schooling elsewhere. Destiny made him come back in 1985 to join the B.A. course in Social Work at Jamia Millia Islamia and he went on to complete his M.A. and Ph. D from the same department. Last year, he completed his 3-year tenure as Head, Department of Social Work and is currently teaching in the department and also the Director of the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Research at JMI. Ask him how he feels about it, and Prof Meenai says, "I am proud to be a Jamiaite, primarily because I have lived on campus all my life, for my father used to teach at Jamia. I have literally lived the ups and downs of its' academic life. I have grown with it."

For Professor Nisar ul Haq, the feelings are quite similar. He joined Jamia School as a student of Class 11 in 1977 and since then, there has been no looking back. This was followed by his admission to Jamia College for B.A. Honours in Political Science in 1979 and he went on to complete his M.A. and Ph. D from the same department. He is currently teaching at the Department of Political Science and also holding the post of Coordinator at Jamia's

Department of Tourism, Hotel, Hospitality and Heritage Studies. "My M.A. results were declared in August 1984 and on September 21st of the same year, I was appointed as a lecturer in Political Science. Since then, I continue to serve here. Jamia has grown tremendously as an institution and I have grown with it. Every day, Jamia is learning, I am learning with it. It's a priceless feeling", Prof. Haq says.

The Changes, as they see...

Both Prof. Haq and Prof. Meenai take pride in the fact that as an institution, Jamia has come a long way since their transition from students to professors. They substantiate it by speaking of increase in student enrolment and the varied courses that Jamia offers now. However, the two differ in how they look at the changes in entirety. Prof. Haq is all praise for the varsity when he says "I see all changes as positive. Look at the student intake, entrance test standards and especially the discipline that has evolved over time". Of his time as a student, he proudly recollects his contributions as a member of Subject Association from time to time and has nothing but good things to speak of about the varsity. But he sadly adds, "I feel really upset though when I see that Jamia schools aren't as good now as they used to be in old times. I find discipline missing there."

For Prof. Meenai, while some changes are appreciable, he says he

misses what he calls the 'spirit of the institution'. "As a person who has studied here, for me there is this sense of disconnect; the commitment and purpose that was carried by people who laid the foundations of this institution is somewhere missing. People left their cushy jobs to serve in Jamia because it was a mission to be carried out. That environment has sadly gone down largely to the expansion of the University", he laments, adding that keeping Jamia's social purpose in mind, meritocracy can't be perpetuated here. He speaks of his concerns around the varsity's vision, and its' accessibility and affordability for those it was meant to be for.

Ban on Students Union... Justified or Not?

The ban on Students Union elections at Jamia has been in place since 2006. How was it then and are we better off without it, the two Professors are asked. "Unionization in an educational institution, from my perspective, is basically to build up good citizenship, to get students understand their rights and duties as well and learn how to act as adult citizens. It trains you in leadership and articulation. But Students Union is not necessarily the only way of learning this. Although we all are political people, but unfortunately the experience with Students Union in this varsity has not been good", Prof. Meenai opines, adding that the varsity has developed a number of ways on its own where students can learn all these things and that there's a need to strengthen Subject Associations more rather than a political students union.

While he only seems to oppose it for the reason that it didn't prove to be a good experiment in Jamia's case, Prof. Haq has a tougher stance on any

form of politics in educational institutions. “It’s absolutely the right thing to ban students’ politics from campus. Educational institutions are for learning, there should be no space for either students’ or teachers’ politics. It gives a jolt to the discipline of the institution. When there was a students’ union in place at Jamia, I was its Advisor and I remember how disturbing it was. There was so much lawlessness, so many things off schedule”, states Prof Nisar ul Haq

Random Reflections...

What good is one’s job if it doesn’t give one the satisfaction and strength to carry on with renewed vigour! “When I look back, apart from being satisfied with what I teach, what has also given me immense satisfaction is my tenure as the Dean Students Welfare whereby I tried my best to make the administration accessible to students”, Prof. Zubair Meenai says, happiness clearly written over his face. Prof Nisar ul Haq too is satisfied that he has served his almamater through different posts. “I have held posts like the Students Union Advisor, Assistant Proctor, Deputy Proctor, Provost, President of University Football Club, HoD Political Science, Coordinator of B.A. Programme etc. I derive pleasure in knowing that I am contributing to Jamia the best way I can and learning more each day. I have no regrets,” he says, the contentment evident.

Vision for the Future...

Over the years, they have seen Jamia grow and change, so what is it they wish for this institution now? “We have to experiment every day. At a particular time, no experiment is wrong. We need to make department libraries better and Subject Associations stronger”, Prof. Haq says, highlighting some of the immediate targets. Prof. Meenai however has long term goals on his mind. “We have not yet gotten over the job of what we were actually formed for. We have to remain committed to the original aims and objectives of the university so as to be better aligned to its social purpose”, he emphasizes.

While they look at things so differently from their individual perspectives, as is evident, there’s one question where their answers perfectly match. That is, when they are asked to share a moment from their time in Jamia that stands out compared to the rest. Prof. Meenai laughs and says, “There is no single incident that stands out. The journey in its entirety has been a wonderful one and truly memorable”. And Prof. Haq adds, “Each one of the moments is close to my heart. My ‘existence’ in Jamia – all of it – has been memorable.”

Stray Thoughts



At times like these
I think of death more deeply
These moments, pruned of all anti nature murmurs
When tranquil pool of self
Mirrors a sparrows unsoiled conscience
Still asleep in her warm straw bowl,
And heart slows down
To a relaxing rhythm, of faintly dimming stars
Of a pre dawn sky.

At times like these I have thought of death
More rhythmically than any other hour
Of hopelessness or gloom
Flowing or frozen, under a withering plume.

This gray hour
That slices the firmament into two non-identical faces
And stitches my multiple selves into one brittle frame
While weightlessness fills in the fissures
Of a long abandoned game.

I see my doom
Not a whisker away
Than the approaching threads of dawn
Blossoming from black fabric of night
Not a moment far
Than distant Muezzin's morning call
When desires fall flat like dead leaves
Around a glazed sight
And sparrow dusts its papery wings
For a horizonless flight!



Syed Rabe'a Bukhari
Second Semester, M.A. Public Administration

Is Jamia? Secular!



Jamia is perceived to be an Islamic institution broadly at the outset because of its name, culture and the comparatively higher number of Muslims. It is interesting to learn the secular understanding and its existence in Jamia from the people that belong to this place and experience a regular routine



Only few years back, Jamia Millia Islamia got the status of a minority institution with 50% reservation for Muslims – a religious minority in the country. One can possibly see innumerable discussions, formal as well as informal, that encircle religion and its understanding in and about this university.

Jamia is perceived to be an Islamic institution broadly at the outset because of its name, culture and the comparatively higher number of Muslims. It is interesting to learn the secular understanding and its existence in Jamia from the people that belong to this place and experience a regular routine – students and faculty.

How to define Secularism became one of the interesting parts of this story where most of the opinions by the students were based on their own perceptions. As Dr. S.R.T.P. Raju, Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, explains, “There is a difference in the Indian and Western understanding of Secularism. The western secularism prohibits any religious symbol in public and tags religion as a private affair. The Indian experience of Secularism, however, is based on Gandhian thought of ‘Sarv Dharma Sambhava’.” Thus, Indian Secularism allows practices of every religion with equal freedom in the public domain.

Dr. Raju is quite clear that with an understanding along the Indian concept of Secularism, Jamia is a fairly secular place. Sania Jamal, a student in Jamia Millia Islamia for the last five years, however, feels patches of secular and non-secular emotions in Jamia. She explains it by picking examples of differences in attitude and approach of students. The ease with which people can practice their own religion depends on the Department and the group that one particularly stays around. According to her, some ‘conservative’ group of people may not intervene in your right to dress or other similar routine choices but shall speak high of their Islamic dressing, which might alter the comfort zones of the non-Muslims of their choices and actions. She points out her close friendship with a non-Muslim girl and the fact that they have never faced any questions or repercussions, “because it [Jamia] has a symbolic secularism.”

On the other hand, Rohit Raj, a student of Department of Political Science, believes that the contentions of minority institutions was a consequence of state failure as the state was unable to provide inclusive growth to the minorities. Afreen Faridi, a student of Public Administration, elaborates how minority institutions were formed to give preference to one section but this favor should not be seen as subjugation of the others.

Holding the same view, Rohit personally finds a deviance of this vision in the popular student culture of Jamia where most of the discussions amongst students are in defense or offense of a particular religion. He believes that religion, because of its popular misuse, should be kept as a personal affair and its discussions and deliberations should not be allowed in public. With that said, he asserts Jamia to be as non-secular as India.

Noufal C k Para, a hostel resident and another student in the department of Political Science feels the varsity campus to be a secular place. He narrates incidents of hostel where non-Muslims had comfortably carried out their religious rituals or proceedings without much conflict in their hostel premises. Abdul Hadi Barak, an Afghan student in the Political Science Department, holds up a similar view of secularism where he believes that the environment is ‘absolutely’ free for individuals to carry out their religious choices.



Anshul Bhamra
Final Semester, M.A.
Public Administration

Contrary to the views of Noufal and Hadi, Kelvin Olisamuni, an African student, identifies Jamia and its surroundings with beliefs more centric to Islam which is reflected in their routine choices. This university, however, is fairly accommodative with any other religion and hence secular, believes Kelvin. The views are so diverse that Umer Wani, another student feels that the secular nature of Jamia is justified by the absence of Shariah law.

Afreen Faridi further believes that there is evident secularism in Jamia, otherwise an Islamic institute has chances to impose Shariah law which is not the case. The vision of this institution is not to reinforce bias, the result of which can be seen in the good number of non-Muslim faculty and students in Jamia. Afreen points out that discussing religion is a good thing but these discourses should not be taken in such a public set up where beliefs of any individual may get offended.

Dr. Sucharita Sengupta, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, however, questions the very reason of having such a discussion. “Why is this asked only to Jamia? A pertinent issue is, are other universities also faced with the burden of proving their secular credentials?” she questions. She further says that we must, therefore, acknowledge that the prevalence of such a debate can perhaps be another stage where the marginalized have to prove their sincerity to the mainstream.

With that said, it is difficult to conclude an answer to “Is Jamia secular?” in black and white because of the grey shades of responses. But what one needs to understand is that Jamia is a reverse example of the majority-minority debates with respect to India. Hindus derive certain privileges being a majority in this country based on democratic lines that theoretically does not harm secular definitions but surely alters certain practical individual experiences.

It may be in terms of selection and elimination of one’s society and interaction that results in various exchanges, economic and social, that are derivatives of one’s popular identity, which in many cases is one’s religion. Muslims form popular culture in Jamia Millia Islamia which should not be seen as a threat to secularism but surely creates an influence because of the regular rules in the majority-minority games.

The Walls that Speak





Mostafa Ahangarha
Second Semester,
M.A. Political Science



Universities are one of the most important institutions emanating from and catering to a civil society. Yet in many places of this world, institutions, people and the state are in a different relationship with each other. Students' right to unionize and engage with issues facing them and people at large are often ignored. From the place that I come from, the situation is almost reflective of curbs or mind control that young people face today. In Iran, forces try to manipulate political activity and control freedom of student associations and make them subservient to the larger state power. As a result, many students' aspirations of education are cut short as

they conflict with their political ideals.

These curbs and restrictions inside university spaces are also often reflections of outside political atmosphere. In a politically restricted atmosphere, civil society becomes the first casualty of the state. Media also does not function without direct control, hence leaving out or ignoring people's opinions. Internet functions in a controlled manner and disallows people the methods of engagement with rest of the world. However, in a democracy, such mechanisms of state control must be limited.

With this political understanding, in 2012, I came to New Delhi, to join a one year course



in film-making. My college was close to Jantar Mantar near the Parliament Street. Every day I'd witness several protests and demonstrations, whether big or small, there. Jantar Mantar as an idea of a legal protest site impressed me a lot. Then I explored the Jawaharlal Nehru University as the best example of a functional democracy and an epitome of political freedom. There are hardly few walls that do not reflect on the political mood of students or hardly one place empty where posters for a political program are not distributed. For a student who is interested in social and political issues, it is safe to say JNU is their Mecca.

I witnessed this drastic transformation from a politically restricted atmosphere to an open democratic environment. This interaction with India made me serious and dedicated to studying politics in a serious manner. I went through the process of application in many universities and finally I ended up being a student at Jamia Millia Islamia.

In Jamia Millia Islamia, the environment is more clean and beautiful than many other universities in India. Especially during February and March, it is like a garden, with flowers in full bloom. Unlike JNU, there are no posters. Most of walls are clean and nicely colored.





But this is not whole story. Few weeks ago, while I was walking around in the campus, I saw a warning:

“WARNING: YOU ARE UNDER CCTV SURVEILLANCE.”

Why CCTV surveillance? And more importantly, why a warning? Are we actually students in Jamia or some threat there? Are we looking for an opportunity to do something wrong? What exactly are we being warned for? Is there some un-democracy under this thriving democratic capital of India?

There is a famous theory in management developed by Douglas McGregor: Theory X and Theory Y. Simply and briefly, these can be ex-

plained as: in theory X, employees are assumed as lazy people who try to avoid work, while theory Y considers them self-motivated people who enjoy their work. So, there is a kind of mistrust between management and employees in theory X. Therefore in theory X, the management needs to control and supervise employees while in theory Y, the management tries to provide good working conditions for boosting morale of the employees.

Therefore this WARNING signboard, I would say, reeks of the theory X oriented approach in Jamia. Most of the things inside campus represent a kind of fear, whether from the university management or imposed from outside.

Many of my friends feel they are in a military base because of excessive presence of security guards and thorny fences around the campus. Maybe one can justify that the security guards, the fences around the campus and concertina wire on surrounding walls are to protect the university from potential attacks from the outside. But what about the inside?

When you look at Jamia a little more carefully, you see all these flowers are there to hide or reduce the effects of something else. The thing which is somehow visible and somehow hidden within the campus. Walls are not “clean and colored nicely” anymore. These are not like the wall of a university in the capital of the largest democracy in the world as I expected. But these walls are representing a certain enforced de-politicization of the campus.





◀ ▼ Closed door that leads to abandoned student union office





Islamism and the discourse of Democracy

Noufal Konnakattil
Final Semester, M.A. Public Administration

The question on the issue of Islamism has been a prominent discourse of politics of the Middle East. The term 'Islamism' as in the case of the term 'fundamentalism' in its general usage has dualistic applications which are no doubt in contradiction with each other, and that itself being non-real prominent and widely applied. In first, Islamism is a term that has been used to describe the non-violent quest for an Islamic friendly society based on the 'principles of Islam' which can involve a more liberal application of Islamic teachings and tradition or a more strict interpretation. In the second, Islamism is associated with violent extremism, most notably that of Al Qaeda or other extremist groups in promotion of terrorism.

What is important and fascinating to me is that the new political dimensions after Arab Spring have demonstrated the marginalization of the political appeal backed by extremist ideology. The discourse of Islam and its compatibility towards democracy in its own possible outlook is emerging and getting enough attention by inclusion of Islamist political parties

in political process of the countries in the region and by playing important role in the forming of governments.

The discourse of compatibility of Islam towards democracy can be analyzed only after having understood the definitions of the terms used here. It would necessitate a brief analysis of terms such as democracy and Islamism or Islam. It would be better to define democracy at first primarily because of its widespread understanding.

In epistemological route, democracy is a Greek word that means 'people's rule' and it conceptualizes a contradictory stand toward aristocracy and monarchy. Under the democratic system, the power is shared by all people not by a specific class or group (Sarmazdeh 2012). According to Robert A. Dahl, one of the outstanding authorities on modern democracy and administration, "modern democracy is a system of governance with specific practices, strategies and rules. The members of that system treat each other as political equals, govern collectively, and have at their disposal rights, resources and institutions that

guarantee their capacity for self-government. In this political regime, the rulers are held accountable for what they do in the public sphere by citizens and citizens are political actors who act indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives" (Malinova 2012).

The point of deference between both democratic and non-democratic rulers is the procedure by which they come to power and the norms by which they are responsible and accountable of their actions so long as they are in power. When we visualize the basic feature of democracy as this, in its practical sense we are capable of seeing variety of applications with various other features according to the change of circumstances and behavior of people.

We would better discuss its features, which directly or indirectly deal with belief and theology. The concept of secularism gets more attention in this regard especially in a world order where it is assumed as a pre-condition for democracy though it, of course, is not. It was given a face for religions especially like Islam as it is not com-

patible towards democracy by widespread practical notion of the idea all over the world, and especially in West who are considered as the proprietors of modernism including democracy. This widespread notion was a kind of secularism which does hardly accommodate any religion or its identity.

However, nobody can ever deny that democracy with regards to secularism has its own various applications according to the nations and its proportionate population of some religions. In a multi-religious country like India which is the largest democracy in the world, the notion of secularism institutionalized by constitution, is of upholding acknowledgement of special religious identity and special rights, and toleration among these communities regardless of mainstream western notion. In countries like United States, United Kingdom, Israel and Iran, majority religion plays a deep role in democratic politics and its implementation. The Queen being the head of the state is also the head of the Church of England, divinely ordained, rendering United Kingdom far from secular. The US also can be seen as a Christian state, with the official and much repeated line of 'God Bless America', the feared and revered Bible belt that influences the outcome of elections, opposition of abortion and homosexuality on religious grounds. If we take Israel, it is explicitly and unapologetically a Jewish state, slowly disenfranchising the non-Jewish Arab citizenship yet allegedly democratic.

To understand Islamism we need to know the terms like Islam and Sharia. Before coming to the definitions of these terms let me come to the common awareness of today that the term 'Islamism' as discussed in the beginning has two applications. In first, it is an Islamic friendly society based on the 'principles of Islam'. In understanding this notion the real concept of the religion and the term Sharia should be analyzed. In the second, Islamism is associated with violent extremism, and terrorism.

The term Islam can be defined simply as a way of life including rituals, ways of worshipping, rules

regarding social life and belief in the life hereafter, which has been revealed by Almighty Allah to the people by the way of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Quran. It also includes the rules regarding relationship between human being and himself, with God, with nature and with society.

The term Sharia has undergone many interpretations, mis-interpretations and then misunderstandings. As it is commonly known among Muslim believers and practitioners it is a system that aims to uphold, promote and spread goodness and justice. It is the common moral code and religious law of Islam and it deals with many issues including crime, politics, economics and personal matters. In a nutshell it could be called as the legal science of Islam that is mostly developed by religious scholars through the Quran and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (Berger 2006:335-336)

When we come to the political ideology of Sharia, it becomes clear that Sharia does not favor one common political structure regardless of time and place. On the contrary it says of some values and norms which should be preserved across the globe. The major four schools of thought of Islamic jurisprudence clearly developed some categorical methodology on how should be the idea in times. The idea of politics also could be developed and practically established under these structural methods.

When we look back into the Islamic history, from the demise of Hazrat Ali, the fourth caliph, to the the emergence of Umayyad, and then Abbasids, it has seen a number of forms of governing structure: from the city-state of Medina and Khilafah to numerous empires and sultanates. In other words, most diverse ruling political systems have existed in the Islamic world, at present too, like traditional and constitutional monarchies, dictatorships, secular and (at least some) liberal democracies, and Islamic republics. However, it is highly unfortunate enough to see the widespread stigma on Islamic world that its ideological backing is only for authoritarianism.

One of the twisting historical facts is the newly spread idea that emerged

after Arab spring regarding the ideological base of political Islam under Sharia law. The absence of accommodation of democracy in a Muslim majority area and continuous traditional political structure of kingships created an understanding on Islam and its political ideology as being anti-democratic. It was given a common face- that of authoritarianism, and an ideological misconception on its political stand, regardless of its true stand on political structure. The new political history of Arab emergence accelerated the idea through accommodation of democratic system of political process.

What is fascinating here is the question on the character of democracy under Islamist political parties. There is an ongoing discourse on the compatibility of Islam and democracy, started decades ago, upholding negative assumption to the discourse with the prime argument that there can be no pure democracy in Islamic lands given that the philosophical premises of both Islam and democracy are different. The grimmer irony could be seen here, having understood the fact that some sort of synthesis is possible as it is common all over the world. Especially, the mainstream western countries have its own variety in application of democracy.

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Out of Inside



Iymon Majid

Final Semester, M.A. Political Science

Outside one's homeland, people find everything but home; people indifferent, surroundings awry and beguiling curiosity keeps finding some way to make one move on his toes in search of belongingness, trust and most of all that 'inside' which has the everydayness of home.

Universities that welcome foreigners for admission pledge to serve them with knowledge and be their temple of learning, their window to the world. Universities keep issuing scholarships periodically. Students always dream about qualifying these scholarships and joining their courses of interest early. Travelling to unknown lands for studies, sacrificing all comfort, with the hope of academic growth in their mind; applicants keep guessing their prospects until they are in the driver's seat. Slowly they learn to spread their wings, enter this unknown world, get used to it and at a certain point they realize that it has become a home away from home.

Zuhair Zaid, currently working as the Deputy Chief of Mission in the Palestinian Embassy at New Delhi, has spent eighteen long years in an Israeli prison. In 2013, he joined Jamia Millia Islamia for a doctorate program in Political Science due to the limitations of universities back home in the conflict torn land of Palestine. "I couldn't achieve my dreams there, but when I came to India I thought it was a great opportunity and honor to pursue my Ph. D. from Jamia," expresses Zuhair. His diplomatic status was an issue early on but MOFA (Ministry Of Foreign Affairs) put forth 'no objection' in the end which could have otherwise jeopardized his place in Jamia. He is happy to secure his place here and likes the way of teaching and research undertaken by the varsity. Hopes are pretty high from his side.

Khalid, Gabrielle, Kelvin and Tung are other foreign students who are pursuing different courses under the Department of Political Science at Jamia. Their experiences show a contrast of patterns in the ways a university can be viewed. Khalid Yousafzai, a 3rd year student of B.A. (Honours) Political Science, mixes up so well with people here and speaks such good Hindi that one can't probably discern he is a foreigner. Although he maintains he has learnt a lot and never faced any discrimination, he is skeptical about meeting the purpose which he had in mind before coming to the University. He had dreamt his communication skills would be honed, he would develop critical thinking and learn a lot that he could not in his homeland, Afghanistan. "I do feel a bit of regret, though it's not like one of those hard feelings. But I think I should have joined some better university. It's a sense of never being satisfied actually", Khalid admits. He is also dissatisfied with the ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) scholarship funds that he thinks aren't enough to meet all needs of his. He says he also met some insular people that he found troubling but on the whole he didn't mind it, found good friends too and moved on.

Gabrielle Nolin and Tung Nham respectively in the final and second semester of M.A. Political Science are quite happy about how things have turned out for them in Jamia and they expected nothing more. The stoicism is rampant and high, it is the same as it was the day they left France and Vietnam respectively. Gabrielle has joined Jamia only for one semester as part of the exchange program with her French University. She is all praise for friends in Delhi who hosted her until she found a rented accommodation.

"Everybody has been really nice to me. The challenges I faced initially were all overcome with the help of my friends. There is nothing to complain about", says Gabrielle.

Another student Kelvin Olisamuni, who hails from Nigeria and is in the final semester of M.A. Political Science in Jamia, says that the major challenge he faced was the cultural differences between his home country and India. But what helped him to overcome that challenge was his focus on studies instead of entangling himself in the mesh of cultures. He also says that joining Jamia did enrich his understanding of the secular nature of India. For Tung, understanding various cultures has become important after coming here. "There is so much difference among various cultures in India. It is a very diverse country in terms of culture, religion, language. It intrigues me and I want to understand all these differences."

Foreign students would definitely love to stay home and study there only. It's always a constraint that brings them out of their countries, away from familial care and concern, and they do have expectations too. They know they have to do away with some things that could hinder their progress. They leave their homes, the people and the surroundings they have grown amidst... to be accepted 'outside' by the people present and surroundings existing. Sometimes clicks and sometimes compromises come in the scene to manage the sliding, slipping affairs, but overall there is the 'willingness to achieve something' which keeps their spirits high.

Ultimately, education finds homes everywhere. You find loved ones, you find things you want to do, you find the home. It's only a matter of realization.



Afreen Gani
Final Semester, M.A. Public Administration

A Rainbow Greyed

(the apathy of our age)

The Spring Sun has woken from its slumber,
Yet I feel the frosty breath of winter's wrath.

The rainbow has painted the walls anew,
But the greys jeer from between the cracks.

A crowd leaves in droves satiated,
While the hungry pillar engulfs a lonely child.

I stroll arm in arm with ones dear,
Even as others scurry about in silent misery.

My eyes nestle in the warmth of tints,
When cold stares lurk from beneath the hollow frames.

As a golden harvest was cooked to serve,
The glass kept the salivations away.

Some hold to feel the warmth of passion,
Others clutch to keep from the cold.

We splashed to tinkle away the time,
But the pigeons dunk to wash away the shame.

Two worlds divide by a single pane,
One had the rainbow and other the cloud.



Prof. Rumki Basu
Teaches in the Department of Political Science

Light up the Night

The children must
return home every night
and so we did unquestioningly
to come back and sleep

Amidst all such conventions
why is it that we never
asked for the synonyms
of night
I can imagine
what they would
have told us –
darkness, ghosts,
secrets and mysteries,
sleep and lovemaking,
black and unhappy,
of all that is the opposite
of day and light
clear and white

But today, when I
stood up on the terrace,
looking up at the moon and the stars
I begged for light
I then held
my child's hand
and told her to look above,
in moonlit content and
the ready profile of
light infinite
in darkness

Security State & Jamia Millia Islamia



Waqas Farooq Kuttay
Final Semester, M.A.
Political Science

Whenever one comes to Jamia, he will always be stopped by the guard at the entrance and will be asked to show an ID card. It doesn't matter if a student is getting late for the class or exam...

If one googles 'security state' or consults a standard book on the topic, one will find that it means a state that aims to protect itself from any threat. The concept evolved primarily after World War Second when both capitalist and communist blocs treated each other as threats. The threat was in the form of military, ideology and economic fronts.

In recent times, many new dimensions have been added to the concept of national security. In some extreme cases, obsession with national security has proven to be very catastrophic for human rights. Citizens are made to sacrifice in the name of National Security that can be seen as one of the major problems of our contemporary times. Also, states are deliberately creating xenophobia in people through certain actions. Whether you are in Sarojini Nagar or in a Metro train or in our nearby CC market (Community Center), ceaselessly speaker will go on buzzing, " KOI BI LAAWAARIS WASTU BOMB HO SAKTI HAI" (Any unattended article can be a bomb). Hence, continuously putting security issue in the minds of people. This leads to a kind of abhorrence for a particular target group of people, no matter how literate or tolerant one is, and the suspicion stays in the passive minds of the general public. One can say that certain kind of mechanisms are being institutionalized in order to get a sort of legitimacy. The worst part is however that the public becomes complacent with it. Turning to the university Jamia Millia Islamia, there can be a study of the phenomenon of security and its play in its campus.

Whenever one comes to Jamia Mil-

lia Islamia, he will always be stopped by the guard at the entrance and will be asked to show an ID card. It doesn't matter if a student is getting late for the class or exam, because security seems to be under threat by students outside the university which may be so huge that it needs to be kept at high priority. Every time one goes to another part of the campus one has to present the ID card again to the guards. Security, most certainly, cannot be taken as secondary. Indeed security and discipline are the primary concerns but the way it is enforced may not be the most proper way of dealing with the situation. Only the gate of main campus remains open and all other gates remain closed. Where does the contradiction of the reason for having so many gates and keeping a guard employed at all the gates and yet not opening them for students convenience lie?

Opening gates reduces distances considerably in many cases, saving time and energy of the students like the hostel gate, which opened and made the main campus more easily accessible to hostel students was a great initiative by the college authorities. A similar step to open the Batla House and Hostel gate for example will reduce the time of travel from 20 minutes to 3 minutes and will act like a blessing for the students living in the hostel.

Recently, there has been a spurt in fear among the managers, about the untoward incidents in the university. A recent phenomenon which university has witnessed is the installation of CCTV's for 24*7 monitoring of students. Perhaps, days will not be far

when these cameras will be installed in the classrooms.

The intention is not to support vulgarism or vandalism on campus; however, security of every person and property of university that demands important considerations can be altered to a better way. It is alright if the university deems it necessary to have a certain number of guards but checking the card of students every time they enter the campus seems a little out of place. If university wants to make the campus 'no smoking zone' then banners should be pasted everywhere within the campus, it should also be done with problems of ragging. It is a known fact that the more a person is constrained from doing anything by force, one is more probably going to do the same thing. So, a different approach is necessary which promotes and motivates good congenial students' environment in Jamia. In similar ways, other problems can also be handled without causing any inconvenience to any student or any outsider who visits the university. We are in a university and we should feel like being in a university, so every time we look around we should not get the experience of some security establishment or be seen like herd, continuously under surveillance and monitored the whole time we spend in campus.

Instead of being like a security state, which is always obsessed with threats, the university should create a friendly environment by looking at some alternative ways of establishing student friendly policies. Indeed security concerns must be kept in mind but there are other ways through which it can be done.

The Chronicle of Hostel Life



Sadia Hussain
Second Semester,
M.A. Political Science

Life is an adjustment but we do not realise it until we are made to live in a different atmosphere with different people. Sadia Hussain realised this when she moved into the Jamia Girls Hostel three years ago. Here she narrates her own experience and that of some others about the beauty of hostel life.

Every phase in life is a learning experience in itself and without any doubt hostel life is one of those. As you get an opportunity to face life, people and situations all on your own, you are prepared for your life ahead in a more mature and better way. In the beginning, the place feels so strange to you that you wish to run away the moment you step in. You spend countless nights wide awake, staring at the ceiling, wondering when you'll get out of the place that is so alien to you. Gone are the comforts you enjoyed at home. But slowly you learn to adjust to it. Steadily, you start getting accustomed to it and soon enough you fall in love with it. That's my story, I went on from hating it to loving it; and this certainly is a story common to almost everyone who has an experience of living in a hostel.

Hostel life is synonymous with late night chats, long gossip sessions with lots of laughs, late night birthday celebrations, last minute assignments and projects and much more. All residential students would agree that hostel is a home away from home. It is a place where you inspire and get inspired, meet friends, who add bright colours to the white canvas of your lives, who support you through thick and thin, becoming family in the process. Events like freshers and farewell parties, meals and picnics that are integral and unique to hostel life have given me memories that I will cherish for a life time.

Hostel life gives you wings. You become your own master. Hostel life

brings out the manager in you in spite of strict rules and regulations. It teaches you endless things, ranging from rising up early in the morning for breakfast, learning to understand other people's perspectives and adjusting with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures with different lifestyles. Yet, sometimes these adjustments become overwhelming especially compromising on things like eating food not according to your taste, sharing your own space with others, obeying rules which you sometimes feel are difficult to follow.

Personally, for me food is one thing that I find myself struggling with on a regular basis. There is a mountain of difference between the food that I used to eat at home and the kind that I eat here. Be it the style of preparation or the variety of food. But the joy of being amidst friends makes difficult things easier.

In hostel you can also tend to hold on to wrong things. There are chances of being negatively influenced by people and at such times one needs to be strong and that strength comes from friends who are always there supporting and encouraging you.

Everyone has their own experiences to share about their life in a hostel. Here are some of the people speaking out about it:

- "My first year was spent coping with a difficult roommate, but then all hostellers have to suffer tiffs with their new roommates. The trick is to give a little as well as hold a bit of

your own. A change in set routines has to be made from all sides, and however oceanic the differences." - Aamina (Faculty of Law)

- "Aloo Tikki and chai at the hostel canteen is what comes to my mind when I recall my hostel days." - Sana (Faculty of Dentistry)
- "For me the occasional ice-cream treats by the mess staff always makes my day! And though you might not find yourself being pampered with the luxuries of continental and Italian, the hostel mess definitely goes the distance in its Indian culinary efforts." - Iram (Faculty of Engineering)
- "Living in the hostel I learnt to be independent and make my own decisions. You tend to become strong and learn to rely on yourself for your work which in turn develops confidence in your own self because you realise your worth and what you are capable of." - Sama (Department of Social Work)
- "An important thing that I learnt living in the hostel is how to manage my expenses and how to live in a limited budget. It teaches you discipline and being punctual; for example if I am not in the mess by 9.30 I don't get dinner." - Farah (Department of English)

The experiences might be varied, but one can safely conclude that the bag of memories that one collects while living in a hostel is something that'll last a lifetime, to be cherished and to feel blessed about, always.

Textbooks' Copyright Debate Looking for Possible Alternatives



Munshi Zubaer Haq

Final Semester, M.A. Public Administration

In recent times in India, the most precious possessions of students, their textbooks, have resulted in an intense debate of intellectual property rights. When we see any textbook of subjects that are taught in the higher education system, we encounter a statutory notice of warning against copyright violation in the form of reproduction of the contents of the book in electronic form by photocopying of the content.

By and large, the student population in India has never dealt with the statutory warning in a manner that prohibits them from photocopying in huge and small volumes for educational and research purposes. The teachers have been collecting parts of books for a particular course to prepare consolidated course pack for a subject. This has been the practice since the time photocopying became a serious affair in the sphere of higher education for dissemination of knowledge; this happened in the past century, particularly it became popular in 1990s. This practice in higher education was dealt a severe blow by reputed and distinguished publishers in the higher education sector of India. This issue received significant international attention and elicited huge responses from students and academic community alike. In mid-2012, three reputed publishers: Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Taylor and Francis Group partnered together and filed together a petition to address copyright violation of their publication. They said that a tiny, licensed photocopy shop, by the name of Rameshwari Photocopy Services situated on Delhi University campus had distributed "course packs", course packs that contained compilations of their published books. They also contended that this compilation that the photocopiers were distributing had to be stopped immediately as the aca-

demical year had begun and the distribution of such "pirated" copies would increase, thereby causing them losses of revenue. They submitted a legal petition at Delhi High Court, a petition that surely put at stake the future of thousands of students in India. They also claimed approximately \$110,000 in damages caused by infringement of copyrights. Following this, on August 14, 2012 the Delhi High Court had issued an order appointing a local commissioner to visit, without any prior notice, the premises of Rameshwari Photocopying Service. An inventory of all the infringing or pirated copies was to be made and to be seized and handed over to the defendants only on the basis of a surety. The Commissioner was allowed to take the assistance of the police. The Commissioner's fee was fixed at Rs.75,000 along with any out-of-pocket expenses to be borne by the plaintiff. Later, The Association of Students for Equitable Access to Knowledge (ASEAK) also defended the students' interest in the Delhi High Court in the matter of copyright infringement lawsuit filed by publishing houses against Delhi University and its local photocopy shop Rameshwari Photocopy Services. In March 2013, ASEAK became the third party defender in the case, the first being Rameshwari photocopy centre and DU the second. The Delhi High Court has put a stay on the issue and the matter is sub judice as of now. In the aftermath of this incident, the photocopying services were stopped in the photocopy

The issue has received extensive coverage in international media. Different media reports have reacted to it in different approaches. Say, for instance, when we look at the Al-Jazeera English International report on this issue, we found these words, "To photocopy or not to photocopy uni-

versity course material - that's the Hamletian dilemma many students are now confronted with in India." The Hindu newspaper has been assertive on this issue and has also published an article with this following headline; "Why Students need the right to copy", then, when we look at other newspapers we find headlines such as "Legal Solution to Photocopy Row" in The Times of India and "Small university shop at centre of India Publishing row" in NDTV among others. The issue is serious and the legal battle will be following its own track unless and until the High Court of Delhi gives its final decision. The debate is of a very complex nature, there are numerous questions that arise in the context of debate. Henceforth, we decide to analyze the debate and look for certain alternatives to this complex issue.

The Section 52 of The Indian Copyright Act of 1957 addresses the questions of Copyright Exception for Research, Private Study, Libraries, Educational institutions and also takes into question the broader issues of licensing for copyright works. Unless and until, the Delhi High Court gives the final judgement on this legal battle, the future of academic community in India is at stake. The much expected judgement is yet to come.

As of now, there are a significant number of questions that have arisen and we will broadly look at these questions and try to figure out some possible alternatives. Considering the scope of this article, here we choose not to bring the copyright perspective in the international scenario, but we will address some of them. First of all, when there is no statutory definition of "Reproduction", the issue of photocopying remains shrouded in ambiguity. Then, when the interests of publishers are prioritized over the interest of stu-

dents, do not we take a backseat in the path to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of education. Secondly, the quantitative limits on reproduction of books do not safeguard the interest of students. By, using the term "Quantitative Limits", we mean the permissible percentage of the reproduction on the contents of the book. The law of the land, therefore by imposition of scholastic limits, do not safeguard the interest of students. The issue of exorbitant prices of textbooks are also considered here before putting the legally permissible limits in reproduction of contents. Thirdly, we would address an important issue. In the light of photocopying debate, the IRRO (Indian Reprographic Rights Organisation) has come to public notice. The IRRO, a statutory organisation of publishers under HRD Ministry, Govt. Of India has publicly declared that photocopying could be legalized by obtaining a compulsory license in lieu of an annual fee by educational institutions and individuals. When we deal with the issue of licensing, we have to keep in mind, IRRO license does not entail reproduction of all copyright, published works because all publishing corporations across the globe do not constitute the membership of this organisation. It places a phenomenal task in front of a university to follow a rigorous process of obtaining licenses from the IRRO and other publishers, which result in a highly selective process and will make books inaccessible to the students because a university can obtain a maximum of 2 to 3 copies of 1 book, which subsequently necessitates photocopying of books.

The Indian education exception is far wider than its U.S. counterpart. Section 52(1) (a) embodies the "fair use" exception and permits any fair dealing of a copyrighted work for the purpose of research and private study. In addition, unlike the U.S., Section 52(1)(i) embodies a separate exception, under which it is perfectly legal to reproduce any copyrighted work during the course of educational instruction. These exceptions reflect a clear Parliamentary intention to exempt core aspects of education

from the private sphere of copyright infringement. Eviscerating these exceptions at the behest of publishers will strike at the very heart of our constitutional guarantee of a fundamental right to education for all." He also wrote in the same article, "Notwithstanding the egregiousness of this lawsuit, a key advantage is that it forces us to re-examine the current publishing and pricing model that places profit above the interest of students. Academics need to come together and explore alternative open access models in order to break through this private profit monopoly thicket that has come to plague academic publishing. That a majority of educational textbooks are priced above the affordability range of an average Indian student is well known. A recent empirical study done by me along with my students reveals that a vast majority of popular legal and social science titles have no corresponding Indian editions and need to be purchased at rates equivalent to or higher than in the West. Therefore, the claim by publishers that course packs would destroy their market for books and put them out of business is highly questionable.

Given that this is the first copyright law suit to be brought against course packs, one can only assume that the healthy growth figures boasted by the academic publishing industry means that course packs have not done them much damage. If at all anything, the inclusion of extracts of copyrighted works in the course packs is likely to encourage readers to buy the books when they can afford them. In the end, this lawsuit must be seen for what it is: a highly pernicious attempt to fill the coffers of publishers at the expense of students! It must be resisted with all the moral and legal force we have." So, what it stands out to be important, when we will look for alternative policy on copyrights, the students' interest should stand supreme. Costa Rica, a country in Central America, has taken an effective decision in this regard after the copyright debate in textbooks caused a huge uproar among the student community, resulting in large number of protests. The President of Costa Rica has passed an executive de-

cision on this regard by ratifying that no question of copyrights should be applicable for academic purposes. Finally, we should consider here the viewpoint of the author, whose interest the publisher always claims to represent. In the aftermath of this issue, the authors have also reacted to it.

An Al Jazeera English International report says, "Academics - based in countries including the UK, the US, Australia, France, South Africa, Argentina, Egypt, and the occupied Palestinian territories - refute the idea that the publishers are acting in their interests. They also argue this kind of photocopying is within the law, that it is not causing the publishers to lose money, and that it is an essential part of education in India." "The number of academics who've signed the petition should be clear indication that authors do not share these concerns. We want our works to be available as widely as possible," says Nivedita Menon, a professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, who is involved in the anti-lawsuit campaign. Thomas Metcalf, a professor emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, is mentioned in the lawsuit. "As an author whose writings appear to have triggered this controversy, I am happy to accept smaller royalties on sales of my books to widen the audience, especially in a developing country such as India," Metcalf says. It is noteworthy of mention here, that even Bharat Ratna and Nobel Laureate Economist Amartya Sen has not supported the publishers' viewpoint and prioritized the interest of students. So, when the authors are not emphasizing their royalties, so a policy balance that is to be sought here should prioritize the interest of students. In conclusion, we would say the education should not be crippled within a legal framework of copyright laws, it is the students who are the torch bearers of the tomorrow; when they come to the platform of higher institutional education, they hold the potential to impact the future of the nation, they should have equitable access to education because they stand above rest.



प्रतिनिधित्व का अभाव

“

इस बार के चुनाव ने देश के 30 साल के गठबंधन के इतिहास को जरूर बदल दिया पर कुछ सवाल अब भी सवाल बने हुए हैं और उनका जवाब किसी भी दल के पास नहीं है और यह सवाल इस देश के सच्चे प्रतिनिधित्व से जुड़ा है जो कि मोदी के जीत के बाद भी नहीं सुलझा



Tausif Ahmad
Second Semester,
M.A. Political Science

16वें लोकसभा चुनाव सम्पन्न हुए और भाजपा की एक दलीय बहुमत सरकार का गठन हुआ। मोदी प्रधानमंत्री बने और इसी के साथ चुनावी नोक-झोंक, दल-बदल की राजनीति तथा एक दूसरे पर कटाक्ष करने की होड़ खत्म हुई। भाजपा या मोदी की जीत को आज मीडिया लोकतंत्र की जीत बता रही है। इससे पहले यही मीडिया मोदी को फांसीवादी कह कर इसकी आलोचना करती आ रही थी। इस फांसीवादी के चुनाव जीतने से लोकतंत्र की जीत कैसे हो सकती है। पर क्या यह केवल एक दल की जीत है या फिर लोकतंत्र की क्योंकि इस चुनाव में मोदी ने तथाकथित विकास के नाम पर अपनी जीत दर्ज की है। चुनाव से पहले लोग मोदी के गुजरात विकास मॉडल के नाम पर लामबंद हुए पर क्या हम नहीं जानते हैं कि गुजरात के विकास का सच क्या है? गुजरात के अल्पसंख्यक के विकास की क्या हालत है तथा इस देश के अल्पसंख्यक की स्थिति क्या है?

कुछ दिन पहले तक लोग मोदी लहर की बात करते थे पर क्या सच में कोई लहर थी। मेरा मानना है कि मोदी लहर मीडिया द्वारा फैलायी गयी एक ऐसी अफवाह थी जो धीरे-धीरे सच बनती गयी। लोग मोदी के विकास के वायदे के नाम पर एकजुट होने लगे पर फिर भी भाजपा की जीत एवं लोगों के वोट के प्रतिशत से यह भी जगजाहिर होता है कि मोदी ने लोगों के जनमत प्राप्त करने में कितनी सफलता हासिल की। भाजपा ने कुल 283 सीटों के साथ अपनी सरकार बनाने में सफलता

प्राप्त की। परन्तु सच्चाई यह है कि भाजपा को कुल पड़े वोट के प्रतिशत में से केवल 31 प्रतिशत मत ही प्राप्त हो सके।

भाजपा की जीत के पीछे का एक बड़ा योगदान कांग्रेस की असफल नीति एवं धर्मनिरपेक्षता का ढोंग भी रहा है। भारत के लोग खासकर भारत के मुसलमान कांग्रेस की इस कथाकथित धर्मनिरपेक्ष राजनीति को समझ चुके थे। दूसरी तरफ कांग्रेस भ्रष्टाचार के तांडव को खत्म करने, महंगाई पर नियंत्रण करने तथा रोजगार की समस्या को सुलझाने में विफल रही है एवं इस लोकसभा चुनाव में उसके पास केवल एक मुद्दा रहा और धर्मनिरपेक्षता का जो कि अप्रासंगिक सिद्ध हुआ तथा जनमत प्राप्त करने में असफल रहा। पर कांग्रेस की हार की वजह भाजपा की जीत में नहीं थी। भाजपा ने विकास के नाम पर लेकर लोगों का जनमत हासिल किया। यहां की 14 प्रतिशत की आबादी वाला मुस्लिम समुदाय भाजपा से दूर रहा। भाजपा या मोदी को मुसलमानों ने स्वीकार नहीं किया पर फिर भी वह सरकार बनाने में सफल हुए और आज 80 प्रतिशत हिन्दुओं के साथ साथ 14 प्रतिशत मुसलमानों के भी प्रधानमंत्री बने। पर क्या अगर हम सच्चे प्रतिनिधित्व की बात करें तो क्या हम कह सकते हैं कि यह सच्चा प्रतिनिधित्व है।

दूसरी तरफ 'आप' कांग्रेस और भाजपा के विकल्प के रूप में सामने आ सकती थी। दिल्ली के विधानसभा चुनाव के जीतने के फलस्वरूप 'आप' जरूर एक विकल्प था और उसके 49 दिन के सरकार एवं उसके बाद जनलोकपाल के मुद्दे को लेकर उसके इस्तीफे ने लोगों को जरूर निराश किया और उसका परिणाम लोकसभा चुनाव में 'आप' की हार के रूप में हमारे सामने आया। 'आप' भारत के मुसलमानों तथा यहां की एक बड़ी आबादी का विकल्प बन सकती थी अगर 'आप' सरकार दिल्ली में अपने सुशासन को सिद्ध कर पाती पर ऐसा नहीं हुआ। 'आप' को पूरे देश में केवल 4 सीटें ही प्राप्त हो सकी।

भाजपा या मोदी ने विरलय ही इस बार के चुनावी सभा में रामराज को मुद्दा उठाया था पर फिर भी मोदी के पीछे यहां के मुसलमान लामबंद नहीं हुए। मोदी के विकास की बात को लेकर ही लोग भाजपा की ओर उन्मुक्त हुए पर मुसलमानों ने मोदी के विकास मॉडल को स्वीकार नहीं किया। पर क्या हम मान लेंकि यहां के मुसलमानों को विकास नहीं चाहिए। अगर हां चाहिए तो फिर भी मुसलमानों ने दूरी क्यों बना रखी है। इसका जवाब है मोदी वह सम्प्रदायिक चेहरा जो कि 2002 के दंगों के फलस्वरूप सामने आया। कुछ लोग यह भी तर्क देते हैं कि मोदी को जानबूझ कर प्रधानमंत्री पद के उम्मीदवार के रूप में खड़ा किया गया ताकि यहां की एक बड़ी आबादी को सम्प्रदायिकता के नाम पर एकजुट किया जा सके। इस बार के चुनाव को एक सम्प्रदायिक रंग शुरू से ही भाजपा द्वारा दिया गया। दूसरी तरफ कांग्रेस की प्रतिक्रिया ने भी मुसलमानों को भाजपा से दूर रखा क्योंकि मुसलमान कांग्रेस को एक धर्मनिरपेक्ष दल के रूप में देखती है। पर इस बार के लोकसभा के चुनाव में सच्चे प्रतिनिधित्व का अभाव रहा। पूरे उत्तर प्रदेश के 80 लोकसभा सीटों में से इस बार एक भी मुसलमानों का प्रतिनिधित्व नहीं है। बिहार के 40 लोकसभा सीट में से केवल 4 मुस्लिम प्रतिनिधि चुनकर आये। यह वह दो राज्य हैं जो भारत की राजनीति को प्रभावित करते हैं। पूरे देश से संसद के 543 लोकसभा सीटों में से केवल 22 मुस्लिम प्रतिनिधि चुनकर आये हैं। एक बात और है कि मुसलमानों के वोट कांग्रेस और 'आप' के बीच पूर्णरूप से विभाजित हो गई। दूसरी तरफ भाजपा सबसे कम वोट के प्रतिशत को प्राप्त कर भी विजय रही। भारत के राजनीतिक इतिहास में पहली बार ऐसा हुआ है कि किसी विजयी पार्टी को इतने कम प्रतिशत वोट मिले हैं। इस आधार पर क्या हम कह सकते हैं कि यह सरकार भारत के लोगों की सच्चा प्रतिनिधित्व कर रही है और मेरा जवाब होगा नहीं।

There are always Options

There are always options
other than the Jalsamadhi,
you may dip in holy water
get wet and vapoury in the aroma,
then rise and swim slowly,
keeping your body
mind and soul afloat
above sea level

There are always options
other than the Tandava nritya,
you can move with gentler grace,
dance along expected lines
on preconceived designs
and rhythms, after all
the tandava nritya is
the dance of death
no less, no more

There are always options
other than the tsunami,
there is the wind, the rain
the storm that passes you by,
the breeze that bulls and pushes
you out of your inertia,
to greater and newer heights,
but never cracks
the earth beneath your feet
and pulls you underwater

There are always options
other than the tests of fire,
that stretches your endurance
your intuition to warm and
testable limits, not to the puritanical
'highs' of agni pareekshas,
to kill pre-existing demons
in your heart

Prof. Rumki Basu
Teaches in the
Department of
Political Science



Just learn to live,
not leave all that
is beautiful and haunted,
in this world of ours,
in such vain and insane tests
in the name
of love

A Letter to a North-Indian

I come from the North-east. From one of the eight states that form the north-eastern part of India. Before you build an image of mine in your head, let me tell you that I do not possess any 'distinguishable' or 'identifiable' feature that will help you pinpoint me and use the extremely derogatory term that you use to refer to anyone from this part of the country.

I am fluent in my mother tongue in addition to English, Hindi and Bengali. My accent will never give away the state where I come from. Which languages do 'mainstream' (north) Indians have a command over? English and Hindi? Not much to brag about, right?

Western music suits me much better. Sorry Yo Yo Honey Singh. Lungi dance? Not me!

Just because I don't choose to wear salwar kameez doesn't mean I am a 'bad girl'. You have as much right to comment on my choice of outfit or my hairstyle as much I do on yours. Your haww doesn't bother me, not the least bit. Neither does your 'character certificate' decide my character. Your extreme curiosity about "Tum log kya khate ho?" amuses me. No we don't eat worms or cockroaches. Or any other insects. Dal chawal, anyone?

The concept of a 'mainland' is intriguing to my mind. Which part of India is the main? To burst your imaginary bubble of superiority, Delhi doesn't make up the whole of India, nor does north India. Anyone from the southern Indian states is a 'Madrasi', anyone from the

north-east a 'Chinki'. Do you all want to be branded as Punjabis? Or any other highly stereotypical ethnic identity? I guess not. What makes you have such prejudices for the rest of India then?

This is not an outcry against some form of discrimination that I endured recently. I have lived in Delhi for the past five years and I love this city. It's a second home to me. Not a single day have I felt like an 'outsider'. Nor have I faced any discriminatory behaviour. Thanks to my 'mainstream' looks I guess!?!

Yes I am conscious of my regional identity. I am incredibly proud of the region that houses around 220 ethnic groups and an equal number of dialects. I bask in the glory of one of the most culturally diverse and aesthetically pleasing expanses of India. Much to your surprise, I value my national identity before my regional self. I love India as much as you do, probably more. I belong to this country and this country is mine as much as it is yours. Diversity is what India prides itself on. It's a salad bowl where every ingredient holds its own importance but is significant for the whole too. Prejudices, hatred and discrimination against the lesser understood communities in unacceptable. Racism is a big blot in the democratic profile of this incredible land. A little bit of sensitivity and understanding could go a long way in building bridges across the different communities and regions.

-A north-east Indian

Sampurnaa Dutta
Final Semester, M.A.
Political Science



Spilling the Beans...

by Samreen Mushtaq

"There is only one thing worse than a man who doesn't have strong likes and dislikes, and that's a man who has strong likes and dislikes without the courage to voice them."

As humans, we are never satisfied. There are some things we absolutely love and some others that we can't help but feel strong aversion towards. With this thought in mind, Samreen Mushtaq set out to find what students in Jamia Millia Islamia like and dislike about the university and if they'd be willing to voice it.

The question asked to some randomly picked students in the department and on campus was: What's one thing you like the most and one thing you dislike the most about Jamia? One-sentence answers were sought to see how well students could express themselves using fewer words. From studies to food to the number of gates, to serious and funny responses, the answers received were as diverse as the diversity one finds on campus. This is but obvious; choices differ.

Here is what the students had to say:



Rahul Chimurkar
Ph. D Political Science

One of the best places in India to achieve academic excellence

Getting a 5 Rs slip from the canteenwalla instead of change every time, a slip that is accepted in no other canteen on campus

Afsara Shaheen
M. Phil, Academy of Int. Studies

Chilli potatoes served at Central Canteen

Absence of Students' Union

Azeemah Saleem
M.A. Political Science

Student diversity is bindaas

Rules and regulations are atyachaar

Nusrat Geelani
B.A. LL. B. Honours

Considerable freedom as far as studies are concerned

Ban on campus politics

Khalid Jaleel
Ph. D Political Science

Greenery on campus

The canteen food

Anshul Bhamra
M.A. Public Administration

The Shayaraana andaaz that flows in every second person walking in Jamia

Different entry and exit gates; if you enter through exit gate, you are made to exit and enter again

Nehal Ahmad
B.A Honours Political Science

The frequency and quality of seminars

Seems as if indirectly Section 144 is in place

Sampurnaa Dutta
M.A. Political Science

An extended weekend every week

Feels like a school, not a university

Syed Shahinda
B.A. Honours English

Easy access to all teachers, even those specialized to teach Research Scholars

Foreign students made to feel like aliens

Anuvesh Kumar
M.A. Public Administration

Well behaved non-teaching staff, unlike other varsities

Not-so-happening/politically stagnant campus environment

A Note from the Subject Association

The Subject Association of the Department of Political Science Jamia Millia Islamia has always been enthusiastic when it comes to contributing to student welfare, all credit to the collective efforts, dedication and commitment of the students and the faculty. The elections of Vice-President, General Secretary, and Joint Secretary as well as that of the Class Representatives went well with remarkable participation. Thus began a series of meetings where plans were chalked out with regard to the functioning of the Association.

In the academic year 2013-14, the Subject Association organized six programs including seminars, talks and a workshop. To begin with, the first seminar was organized on "Nationalism and India-Pakistan Peace Process" by Dr. Taimur Rehman, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Political Science at the Lahore university of Management Sciences. This was followed by German Professor Michael Becker visiting the Department to discuss "Multiculturalism in Europe" and then keeping in mind the need for discussing culture in the Indian context, Ms. Saumya Verma was invited to talk about "The Role of Cultural Industry in Imaging the Indian Nation". Professor Jagdeep S. Chokkar, a Board Member of the Association of Democratic Reform spoke about "Electoral and Political Reform".

Vimalbhai in the Department festival titled Fikr-o-Fun talked on "Caste, Gender, and Religion". Dr. Ananya Vajpeyi, Associate Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, spoke about "The place of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Modern Indian Political Thought".

The Subject Association provided a platform to the students of the Department of Political Science to engage in discussions and debates on different socio-economic and political issues through the means of media in the form of screening of films and documentaries on different aspects, dealing with varied issues, highlighting different perspectives were screened in the seminar room of the Department. Seven films and documentaries were screened in the Seminar Room of the Department, including 'Being in the World', 'Red Ant Dreams- Maati ke laal', 'The Battle of Algeria', 'Garam Hawa', 'Shahid-

In search for Truth', Jashn-e-azadi and 'Hannah Arendt'. This was a great learning experience for the students apart from classroom lectures.

The Subject Association also organized a three-day educational tour to "Nainital cum Jim Corbett, along with the sightseeing of the Himalayan range". And also a one day trip to Agra.

The first of its kind for the Department, the Subject Association under the guidance of the student advisor, organized a two day intra-university fest "FIKR-O-FUN". It was an educational cum cultural festival of the Department and included a wide range of activities like Debate competition, Quiz Competition, Sudoku competition, Just-a-Minute game, cultural activities, hand painting, collage making and treasure hunt. Close to 250 students from the Department of Political Science and from other departments of the varsity and even other colleges participated in the event. Although planned as an intra-university festival, the participation of students from other colleges made it into an inter-university festival. With the help of around 50 volunteers, and with full support of the Head of the Department, Student Advisor, and the teachers, the fest marked a story of success.

Finally, besides all these cultural and academic activities, what has been remarkable is the release of the Second issue of the Department's annual e-zine 'Episteme' on behalf of the Subject Association. Episteme has provided a platform for students to use their writing skills and creativity to bring out something that not only talks of issues and debates facing the society in general, but also tells the stories of students by students themselves. I, on the behalf of the Subject Association am very grateful to the Editorial team for their tremendous work in making this idea of a magazine turn into reality.

As the academic year has come to an end, the Subject Association expresses its gratitude to everyone who put in efforts to see to it that the Association's work went on smoothly. Here's also hoping that the new Association takes on from where we stopped and contributes in better ways.



Azeemah Saleem
Final Semester, M.A.
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