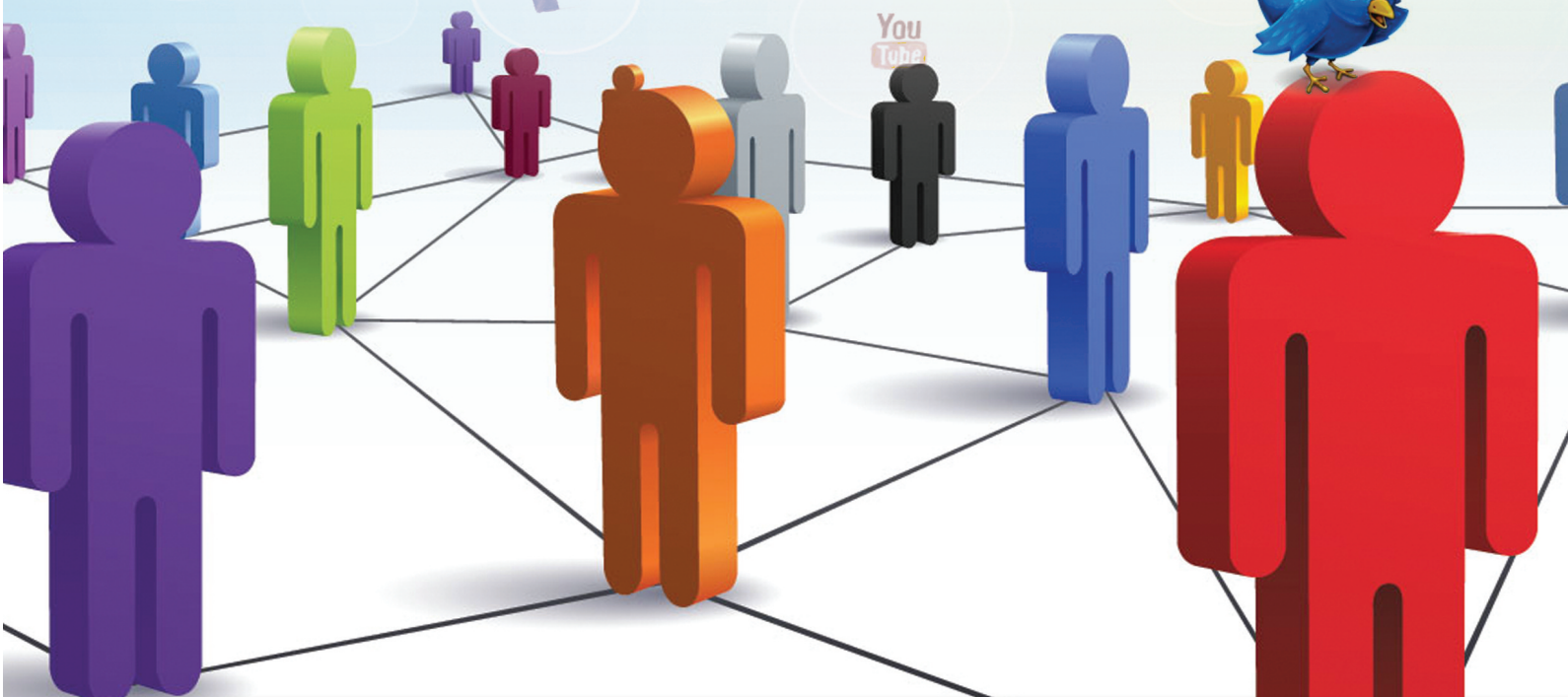


# JAUHAR

Volume 01 | Issue 03 | March-May 2011

## VIRTUAL CONNECTION

Jamia students use IT to the hilt; devise innovative ways to disseminate information



### INSIDE

On campus: Ideas on Pakistan; engineering displays, Islamic finance... **P 7**

Course of action: West Asian Studies **P 12**

Student corner: Experiences of foreign students **P 14**





# Contents



## IN FOCUS

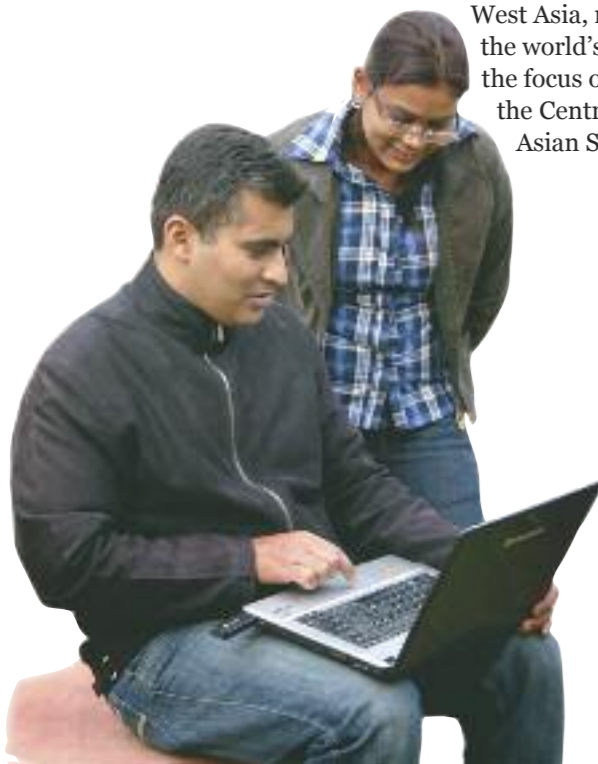
### Virtual connection

Jamia students use technology to stay connected, promoting a vibrant social media culture .....4

## COURSE OF ACTION

### West Asian focus

West Asia, now gripping the world's attention, is the focus of research at the Centre for West Asian Studies.....12



## STUDENT ZONE

### Glimpses of India

Indian education and cultural mores, as viewed by Jamia's foreign students .....14

### Twin trajectories

Shooting medals for Amandeep and Sarpreet; Bioinformatics prize for Poonam Singh.....17

## PAGE OUT OF THE PAST

### Silver lining

Jamia's silver jubilee function in 1946, when Dr Husain reprimanded political stalwarts ....20

### The journey from Jamia

SY Siddiqui of Maruti Udyog Ltd remembers his days at the Department of Social Work .....22

## Also

### ON CAMPUS

Happenings in Jamia .....7

## PAPERS & PRESENTATIONS

Faculty publications.....23



Maulana Mohamed Ali 'Jauhar'  
Founder, Jamia Millia Islamia

# From the Vice-Chancellor

As *Jauhar* goes into its third edition, I reflect on the fulfilling and exciting three months that have gone by. First, the National Commission for Minorities Educational Institutions has declared the University as a 'Minority' Institution. The judgement has generated considerable discussion and debate, bringing out the pros and the cons of the declaration. In view of all the discussion, it is necessary for me to put things in perspective. For one, since it was founded over 90 years ago, Jamia has dedicated itself to the cause of providing sophisticated, modern and secular education to students of all castes and creed irrespective of religion. Notwithstanding the fact that the founding fathers of the University were largely Muslims with considerable concern for Muslim education, the student population has always been a mix of all communities, with Muslim student's percentage hovering a little over 50 percent. Therefore, by declaring the University as a Minority Institution, the Commission has translated the *de jure* to *de facto*. Within the campus, things go on as they always did. Nonetheless, the judgement has put an extra onus on the administration and the teachers of the University to ensure that we retain the nationalistic and secular values that have been the bedrock and the basis on which this great

institution was founded. I believe the University remains committed to this. As a first step towards ensuring that the benefits of the new status reach the underprivileged among the Muslim community, the Academic Council and the Executive Council have already resolved that from the 50 percent seats reserved for Muslims, 10 percent each will be reserved for Muslim women and the backward classes.

As we step into the new Academic session, a number of new courses/systems are being put in place to meet new challenges. Sport has gained a distinctive edge and there is much greater sporting activity all around. Fine Arts, plays, and musical concerts have kept us enthralled. There have been days when all of the large numbers of conference halls in the campus were used for conferences, seminars and discussions. And now as the students write their examinations I wish them all the very best. I empathise with students who have been unable to take the examinations owing to the shortage in their attendance. The experience hopefully shall make them wiser that University education is a combination of work and play, but the essence lies in imbibing classroom education and knowledge and not simply 'passing' examinations.

We now wait to welcome the new students into this large family and look forward to a fruitful year ahead.

Najeeb Jung  
Vice-Chancellor

*Jauhar* is published by The Registrar,  
Jamia Millia Islamia, Maulana Mohamed  
Ali Jauhar Marg, New Delhi 110025

Chief Patron: **Najeeb Jung**,  
Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia

Editorial Board:  
**Simi Malhotra**, Media Coordinator  
**Zahid H Khan, Abdul Bismillah,**  
**S Ghazanfar H Zaidi,**  
**Mukul Kesavan, Dakshita Singh**

Ph: +91-11-26981717,  
EPABX: 1050/1051; +91-11-26980090  
Fax: +91-11-26980090;  
E-mail: mediajmi\_outreach@yahoo.com

*Jauhar* is Printed by Enthuse-Answers  
Communications Pvt. Ltd.  
Z-35, IInd Floor, Okhla Industrial Area  
Phase-II, New Delhi-110020

Photos:  
**Amlan Paliwal**

Design and Production:  
**IANS Publishing**  
www.ianspublishing.com





# Virtual connection

Jamia's student community is using social networking technology and platforms to share information about campus events

**M**ohd Absarul Hasan, an English news editor with All India Radio, had to be admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, when his platelet count fell drastically in the wake of a dengue attack in September 2010. Hasan needed blood urgently. What came to his aid was a 140-character sms flashed to the student community of Jamia, calling for urgent blood donation. The sms service, called 'Jamia Info', is being run by a group of students from the University, including the patient's brother Ehteshamul Hasan, an MA final student of Islamic studies, who is also a reporter with *Rashtriya Sahara*.

On another occasion, Jamia Info came to the aid of Naseem, an economically deprived student, who was suffering from throat cancer. An appeal for funds led to a collection of over ₹60,000. Naseem, a student of Urdu, is now convalescing.

Technology has had a visible impact on students' lives in Jamia. It is helping them to stay connected with peers across departments and has enabled them to participate in University life more vigorously. Today, it is mobilising them to contribute meaningfully to community and society, as the examples above prove. Welcome to the world of the facebook, mobile, web, and blogging communities of Jamia.

Each of these is an individual initiative, with or without the support of the University administration or faculty members. Jamia Info was, for example, started by Hafiz Shakiluz Zaman, who did his Master's in Education in 2010, and is now preparing for a PhD. How did it all begin? Hafiz felt that students like him didn't quite know what was happening on the campus. He made use of Google's SMS Channel and "launched" the sms service as a one-man show in September 2009, convincing nearly 25 students to

"subscribe" to the service. Today, it has 3,800 subscribers. The earliest users, including Ehteshamul Hasan, became members of Hafiz's team. And the beauty of it all? The service runs free of advertisements!

Like Hafiz, Khalid Jaleel, an MA previous year student of Political Science, felt the need to know

things like, 'Who said what at which seminar'. Khalid says, "There's Radio Jamia, but no newspaper. And I was in a position to fulfil that need, because I am interested in journalism, I have a news sense, and I can manage a website fairly well. So I bought a domain name www.jamiajournal.com and space on the internet, and put a notice saying I was looking for writers." Soon, he had a committed band of writers, from as diverse academic backgrounds as Engineering and English.

Syed Aaqib Mujtaba, a IInd year BCom student, Aisha Md Shamsuddin, a IIIrd year English Hons student, Aaqib Raza Khan, Zenia Khurshid and Sabina Yeasmin, all Ist Year English students, Mohd Aarif Khan, a IInd year BTech student, and Abhiram Awasthi, a Ist year BBS student, joined the bandwagon, inspired by the media 'bug', despite the exams then being round the corner. On this neat-looking site, the diversity of backgrounds is also reflected in the nature and variety of the features — from views on the minority status of Jamia and a critical appraisal of the VC's rendition of Akbar's role, to

seminar reportage, and opinion polls (again, at the time of filing the story, an opinion poll on the minority status of Jamia was posted).

If it's tech talk, can facebook be far behind? Asad Zaidi has been instrumental in setting up the facebook community 'Jamialive', which is "liked" by over 990 persons. Asad did his BTech from Jamia in Electronics and Communication in 2004 and followed it up with an MBA in Finance and Marketing from the Centre for Management Studies, JMI, in 2009. "I was always involved in one thing or the other and had a network across departments. But I felt that students in JMI did not have a pan-Jamia feeling. The idea behind Jamialive was to provide a social media platform for students, alumni and faculty to interact with each other, where people could share constructive ideas and where alumni could help the current students with job openings and mentor them," he says.

Besides Jamialive, Zaidi and his friends own the Jamia Millia Islamia Alumni page (1,468 fans) JETS: Jamia Engineering and Technology Students (577 fans), and a few other JMI centric facebook pages.

Equally active on the social network is Shahid Siddiqui, a PhD student at the KR Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minorities Studies. Currently working with Network 18, Shahid is carrying out research on 'Media and Marginalisation'. A film-making enthusiast, he fulfilled his family wish first, completing a degree in dentistry from Manipal, before venturing into ad films in 2002. Working on products like Lakme, Asian Paints, and TVS Victor Bikes, he did his PG in Public Administration from Jamia, before going to Bangalore for specialisation in film-making.

With a view to creating awareness among citizens using new media, he started the Association for Community Research and Action, and posts his articles on its website www.acralive.org. For the causes he espouses, he has also involved research scholars and students from Jamia, Delhi University, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Hamdard. Among his readers are not only Jamia students, but also a few members of the faculty. Dividing time between his doctoral work, writing, and work on his channel is no mean task, but he straddles the three worlds with considerable ease and resolve.

Other social network communities too juggle with the two fronts well. Khalid ensures that his editorial team does not miss out on the academic front in the



**Signalling new times: Hafiz Shakiluz Zaman (right) and Ehteshamul Hasan (second from right) with other members of the Jamia Info team**



**A web of student life: Members of jamiajournal.com**

process of attending seminars. For Hafiz, who culls information from a variety of sources, such as banners, the Jamia website, the media coordinator, departments, and students themselves, the challenge, however, lies in managing information. Jamia Info can send out only three smses a day, and, therefore, it often becomes challenging to prioritise and choose from among events to be broadcast. There's also the small but significant matter of time — messages can be sent out only between 9.00 am and 8.00 pm. The challenge, therefore, is to pack as much information as possible in those 140 characters.

So, how does a social network office feel like and how does it work? Jamia Info's mobile service is operated out of mobile handsets. Each member's handset is his work station. Hafiz takes care of technology, while Ehteshamul Hasan and MPhil Urdu student Naushad Manzar help in popularising the service. Hafiz, an Arabic graduate and a BEd and MEd, is adept at technology, having done a diploma in computer applications. He created a website for the Department of Arabic and has also populated the Jamia Wikipedia page. In fact, for his PG dissertation, he worked on the use of Web 2.0 technologies and how education could make use of ICT. "Students and teachers don't use social networking effectively for education. They only use it for forging friendships. If it can be used for academic and administrative purposes, it would benefit more people," he says.

The Jamia Journal operates from individual laptops and PCs. Khalid says, "As we are not an official newspaper, we do not have a workplace in Jamia." They don't even hold editorial meetings regularly and briefs are sent out online to the members. Editorial discretion lies with Khalid, though there's enough flexibility for outsiders to contribute. There's also a student photographer, Abhiram Awasthi, a 1st year student of BBS, ably capturing the moods and moments of the campus. Inadequate technology support, admits Khalid, has prevented the team from providing Urdu and Hindi services for Jamia Journal.

Limitations notwithstanding, the student fraternity of Jamia has lapped up these social network platforms readily.

The appeal of Jamia Info's smses, despite its simultaneous facebook and twitter presence, lies in the fact that one can access information anytime, anywhere. You don't have to go to your laptop if you're unable to recall the venue and you have an event to attend in 10 minutes! The information is there on your handset.

Aashish Birgi, a 1st year BBS student and a user of Jamia Info and Jamia Journal, says, "The sms service is very handy. Although there are banners announcing main events on the campus, at times we miss out on the smaller events. Sometimes, students in one corner of the University might miss out a banner in another. The sms service acts as a one-stop reminder." What fascinates Birgi about Jamia Journal is that the website acts as a platform for students to express their views and acts as a discussion forum.

As of now, these platforms are not in competition. There's enough exchange of ideas and information, and the core team members of one platform are also on the friends' or followers' list of the other. But Zaidi is keen that all of them join hands because, "We are essentially doing the same thing."

Where does this leave the print medium? Isolated attempts are being made to reach out to students through the grand old medium, but the costs are a tad forbidding. Syed Ali Akhtar, a student of MCRC, brings out *Jamia Jagaran* on the occasion of Foundation Day, once a year! The cost of printing needs to be subsidised by advertisements from well-wishers. However, it's passion which keeps the endeavour going.

Whatever be the medium chosen by these interfaces, the urge to stay connected meaningfully is the driving force. Technology is merely an 'infobahn', facilitating this connectedness on the campus. ♦

## Thoughts on the Subcontinent

Intellectuals from India and across the border reflect on the current turmoil in the region and suggest solutions

"It is natural, perhaps, for Indians injured and angered by Pak-sponsored violence to wish murderous attacks in Pakistan on Pakistani targets. This wish has been granted. Yet it is not clear that the rise in extremist militancy in Pakistan has helped India, except perhaps by reminding the Pakistani people that violent extremism is South Asia's common danger and foe."

This was Prof Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, and Research Professor at the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA, delivering the Saifuddin Kitchlew Memorial Lecture on the theme 'Enhancing Security: Lessons of History and Geography'. The talk was on strategy, but he talked about reaching out — to Pakistan and to Afghanistan.

Prof Gandhi agreed that in Pakistan, the State and civil society were two different entities and that both gave out conflicting signals. However, he assured the gathering that the majority of Pakistanis wanted peace, adding it was in India's interest to reach out to Pakistan's civil society. Reminded about the support for the killer of Salman Taseer from sections of civil society, he emphasised that just because the majority had been silenced by the guns, it did not mean that they supported violence.

About Afghanistan, he said it would be foolish on India's part to wish away the "geographical contiguity" of Pakistan and Afghanistan and their "religious compatibility". Similarly, it would be foolish on Pakistan's part to wish away the friendship between India and Afghanistan, especially when one of the friends was a growing economic power. Prof Gandhi, however, cautioned both India and Pakistan against fighting their wars in Afghanistan. "If history says anything about Afghanistan, it is that, that country is best left alone. Whenever they have tried to press or induce the Afghans to move in a certain direction against their will, they have all failed — the Iranians, the Mughals, the British, the Russians, and the Pakistanis," he reasoned.

On another occasion, scholars from Pakistan, and of Pakistani origin, discussed the malaise of Pakistan in the context of what its original ideologues and

**Prof Rajmohan Gandhi speaking about India, Pakistan and Afghanistan**

founding fathers had wanted it to be. The event was International Seminar on 'The State of Pakistan', organised by the Academy of Third World Studies.

Farzana Sheikh, author of *Making Sense of Pakistan*, said that the ambiguity that the father of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, exercised with regard to the role of Islam in the running of the State, was largely to blame for the current problems. "The uncertain imagining... has eroded the foundations of a stable society, blighted governance and led to a poorly developed sense of the self."

In his presentation, Istiaq Ahmed, Professor Emeritus, Stockholm University, discussed nine positions on the concept of the State. In discussing the march of the military and the retreat of democracy, he dwelt on key personalities and their contributions to the "idea of Pakistan". In his view, Zia-ul-Haq must take much of the blame, for it was





Scholars from Pakistan in a discussion on "The State of Pakistan"

during his time that the State became "an embodiment of punishment", the blasphemy laws were enforced, and the compassion of Islam was eroded.

Ayesha Siddiq, a defence analyst, in her paper 'Pakistan — A State in the Making', chose to strike a different note. Shunning pessimism, she argued that there was nothing wrong with Pakistan and that Pakistan had, in fact, never abandoned its original path. In her view, the army had "captured the imagination" of the whole nation, including civil society and the liberal intellectuals, despite its links with, and dependence on militants. It had forged connections with countries across the world, she said. Siddiq described the current spate of violence as "an aberration", an attempt at weeding out those not in line with the "grand national strategy".

Both Indian and Pakistani scholars felt that since the 1971 war, Pakistan had made all efforts to shrug off its South Asian cultural legacy and had increasingly looked westward, towards embracing

an Arab legacy. In light of this, Iftikar Malik from the School of Humanities and Cultural Industries, Bath Spa University, UK, expressed hope that Pakistani civil society, through its involvement in the liberal arts of music, cinema and other creative expressions, would "bring back Pakistan into South Asia".

Another event was a symposium on 'The Way Forward in Jammu and Kashmir', again hosted by the Academy of Third World Studies. The event witnessed a debate on whether the J&K problem was a political issue or a governance issue. Reminding the gathering about what Jawaharlal Nehru had observed in 1952 with regard to J&K — that "the decision will be made in the hearts and minds of the men and women of Kashmir" — Home Secretary GK Pillai said people had not really reached out to Kashmiris. He said a positive beginning had been made by withdrawing 2,000 troops recently. The Government was also in talks with corporate India to provide jobs to Kashmiri youth.

In his observations, Prem Shankar Jha said that if Kashmir was to be "brought back", someone would have to be held responsible. Shujaat Bukhari of *The Hindu* said all such measures were secondary, because the Kashmiri problem was political. "You never owned Kashmiris, always looked at it through the prism of security and strategy."

Chief Interlocutor Dilip Padgaonkar talked about the discussions his team had had with different groups in Kashmir, their chief grievances, and the road ahead, including the release of stone-pelters and creation of job opportunities. He, however, warned, "There's no magic wand or formula. Unless people see change on the ground, interlocution will be in jeopardy." ♦

## Peace on the Border...

Jamia's cyclists take the message of 'aman' to Wagah

A group of 19 students and seven members of the Jamia family took part in the Aman Caravan Rally in February end. The starting point of the rally was the Swarn Jayanti Gate on Wagah Border. Sanjiv Bhanot, DIG Amritsar Border Range, flagged off the rally after the Beating the Retreat Ceremony on February 28, 2011.

Before the rally began, the students paid obeisance at the Golden Temple and Jalianwala Bagh, Amritsar. At Wagah, the students witnessed the impressive Beat-

ing the Retreat Ceremony and interacted with personnel from the Border Security Force at the venue.

The rally traversed about 550 km on the Grand Trunk Road, through Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Sirhind, Karnal, Panipat, Rai and other towns, before reaching Delhi on March 8. On their way the students stopped at various roadside *dhabas* and market places to interact with local residents on the idea of peace and universal brotherhood. ♦

# Techies' day out

The lawns of the Faculty of Engineering reverberated with life at Encomium Fest

It was that time of the year when the Engineering students of Jamia got a chance to showcase their classroom learning before a larger audience. The young engineers-to-be displayed their technical prowess to the fullest in a number of technical competitions during the three-day Encomium Fest in January. The robotics display, at an event titled *Encephalia*, was a big hit with the spectators. Participating teams created a robot from scratch, one that responded to a series of commands and traversed a track laid on the lawn.

The other technical events were *Rationale* — a session featuring technical papers; *Enmetier* — a business plan competition; *GreenTech Innovation* — a session for competitive presentations on sustainable development, using green technology; and *Avanzare* — an on-the-spot programming competition.

Lending an atmosphere of festivity to the event were cultural and sporting events of all kinds. The front lawns came to life with *Nukkad Naatak* competition among Delhi's colleges, while a football match was played out elsewhere under the title *Futsal*. Treasure hunters were trying to decipher clues in the *Treasure Hunt*, while elsewhere others were debating or listening to arguments and counters on the theme of mercy killing in *Encopinion* — the debating competition. However, what brought students together to a rocking finale was *The Sixth String*, a gala music concert on the closing night.

Earlier, the Faculty celebrated its silver jubilee in end December, 2010, with a global meet titled Jamia Engineering Alumni Association Conclave — 2010.



Robots on the prowl: Engineering students demonstrating their ingenuity

The theme of the event was Youth Entrepreneurship. Alumni from across the world, as well as present students, identified and examined issues impeding young entrepreneurs around the world. The event included panel discussions and quizzes, as well as fun-filled programmes, such as karaoke. ♦

## The principle of weight

Professor of Physics wins power-lifting competition

Dr AK Hafiz, an Assistant Professor at the Department of Physics, not only understands the principle of weights, he has mastered weights too. He has won the Eastern India Powerlifting Championship, held in Kumartuli, Kolkata recently.

Dr Hafiz not only bagged the Gold Medal in the 100 kg category but was also the top lifter of the tournament, with a combined lift of 705 kg. His win has been instrumental in helping the West Bengal Team win the Team Championship. ♦







# Islamic finance

The Department of Commerce & Business Studies hosts a conference on Islamic finance

The last couple of years have brought to light the shortcomings of Western banking models, prompting many to ask whether other approaches to finance can offer the world any lessons in managing risk and, above all, improving the integrity of the world's financial markets. One big attraction is the resilience Shariah-compliant instruments displayed during the recent global financial crisis in maintaining their integrity when some of their Western equivalents crumbled. Islamic finance has attracted the attention of global banks and governments across the world as a model worthy of studying and emulating.

It was thus that the subject association of the Department of Commerce & Business Studies organised a one-day national conference on the topic Islamic Finance: Prospects & Challenges on March 8, 2011.

Dr MY Khan, former Economic Adviser, Secu-

rities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI), gave an overview of the Indian financial system and discussed the hurdles in the present regulatory system that had discouraged Islamic banking and finance in India.

Among the presentations were: 'Shariah-Compliant Portfolio Management' by Dr Shariq Nisar, Director, TASIS; 'Employment Opportunities in Islamic Finance' delivered by Arti, Representative of Chartered Institute of Management Accountant (CIMA); and 'The Concept of Islamic Structured Products, Funds & Investments' by RK Gupta, MD, Taurus Mutual Fund.

Ali Shervani, Director, Miftah Advisory Pvt. Ltd., talked about current challenges and possible solutions for Islamic finance operations in India. In her presentation, Anjani Sinha showcased the opportunities in the commodities market for Shariah-compliant investment products. ♦

# The winning tackle

Jamia wins the North Zone Inter-University Hockey (Men's) Tournament



Jamia's Hockey team emerged victors in the North Zone Inter-University (Men's) Tournament in early January to a rousing ovation at the sports grounds of the Faculty of Education of Jamia.

This year, Jamia Millia Islamia had organised the event from December 28, 2010 to January 4, 2011. Twenty-seven Universities from the Northern Zone participated in the Tournament.

The Universities were divided into four pools, viz., A, B, C & D. A total of 29 matches were played. Out of these, 23 were played at the knock-out stage and 6 played at the league level.

In the last league match played on January 4, the home team beat Panjab University, Chandigarh, with a solitary field goal scored by Devi Prasan.

In the other match played between Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, and Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, both team levelled off at 3-3.

The final positions are:

- Jamia Millia Islamia: First
- Kurukshetra University: Second
- Gurunanak Dev University: Third
- Punjab University, Chandigarh: Fourth

# The world's a stage...

Jamia presents a palette of art, culture and the performing arts

Vice-Chancellor Najeeb Jung donned a new mantle on February 27, when he played the role of Akbar in the Indian People's Theatre Association's (IPTA) production *Anarkali-Akbar-Salim*, written by Imtiaz Ali Taj and directed by Aziz Quraishi.



He had taken to the stage after a gap of 40 years. Jung was active in theatre in school at St Columba's and later in college as part of the Shakespeare Society of St Stephen's. The play was staged to a full house at Ansari Auditorium. A screen was installed outside the auditorium for those who couldn't get inside the auditorium. High on Jung's priority list now is building up a theatre culture in Jamia. "I am keen to have an Urdu drama society. I also want a music school in the University," he says.

for those who couldn't get inside the auditorium. High on Jung's priority list now is building up a theatre culture in Jamia. "I am keen to have an Urdu drama society. I also want a music school in the University," he says.

The students of the Department of Art History and Art Appreciation at Jamia Millia Islamia curated a show titled 'Transformation' at the MF Husain Art Gallery, Jamia Millia Islamia, in February end.



The show was part of a students' project for the paper 'History of Curatorial Practices'. It was inaugurated by Shobha Broota. Students used various media in visual arts, such as painting, sculpture, photography, and installations, in a wide variety of forms to give shape to the theme.

The show was part of a students' project for the paper 'History of Curatorial Practices'. It was inaugurated by Shobha Broota. Students used various media in visual arts, such as painting, sculpture, photography, and installations, in a wide variety of forms to give shape to the theme.

Ustad Zila Khan's Sufiana Kalam in early February was a talking point on the campus. A Sufi singer, Ustad Zila Khan renders both classical and semi-classical musical forms and embraces the traditions of the Imdadkhani Gharana. Daughter of Ustad Vilayat Khan, she is the first woman of the gharana to have learnt and given a performance. She renders a vast range of musical forms, such as qaul, qalbana, gul and others.



On the occasion of Faiz Ahmad Faiz's Birth Centenary, acclaimed *dastangos* Mahmood Farooqui (right) and Danish Hussain (left) mesmerised Jamia students with a *dastangoi*. Students and teachers alike were spellbound as Farooqui and Hussain wove a narrative around the Urdu poet's life, drawing on his writings and poems, throwing in a generous mix of humour. The event was organised by the Outreach Programme, in collaboration with Jamia Discussion Forum.



On the occasion of Faiz Ahmad Faiz's Birth Centenary, acclaimed *dastangos* Mahmood Farooqui (right) and Danish Hussain (left) mesmerised Jamia students with a *dastangoi*. Students and teachers alike were spellbound as Farooqui and Hussain wove a narrative around the Urdu poet's life, drawing on his writings and poems, throwing in a generous mix of humour. The event was organised by the Outreach Programme, in collaboration with Jamia Discussion Forum.





# West Asian focus

The Centre for West Asian Studies is carrying out pioneering research on the region's dynamics

Recent events in West Asia have caught the world by surprise. In fact, most countries are today waiting and watching to reformulate their policies vis-à-vis this oil-rich, yet volatile region. Think tanks too are grappling with new realities of the region. Under the circumstances, dedicated academic centres are better placed to analyse the dramatic changes. The Centre for West Asian Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia, started in 2005, is one such centre, focused on research work on West Asia, in all its dimensions.

Inaugurated in 2005 by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, the Centre began work from a single room in Jamia School. It shifted to its present building, adjacent to the Centre for Third World Studies, in 2009. Its first breakthrough was a national conference it held in 2006 on 'West Asia and the Region: Defining India's Role', and a subsequent publication of a book on the seminar theme, under the same title. The Centre offers MPhil and PhD programmes.

The Centre has developed an interesting MPhil programme on the following:

- Religion and Society in West Asia
- Political and Social Thought in the Arab World
- Modern History of West Asia
- Film and Popular Culture in West Asia
- Survey of Arab Israeli Conflict
- Social Demography, Migration and Development in the Gulf
- US and the Gulf Region
- Modern Business and Finance in the Gulf
- Contemporary Literature in the Arab World

At the PhD level, research scholars have taken up such themes as 'Energy Security and West Asia', 'Islam and Discourse on Democracy in West Asia' and 'New Media Technology in the Arab World and its Impact on Society'. Manzar Jahan took up a PhD



in human rights because, as he says, "While West Asia is volatile, no one speaks about human rights violations in the region." TK Jabir is doing his doctoral on 'Civil Society Movement and Democratisation in Egypt: An Analysis of Role of Muslim Brotherhood' – themes that have acquired immediate relevance and salience.

The programmes have been thoughtfully developed by a faculty with a sound background in research. Thus, Acting Director Javed Ahmad Khan has a PhD in Economics (West Asia) from Aligarh Muslim University and specialises in Islamic Finance. Prof Anwar Alam has received Indian Council of Social Science Doctoral Fellowship and the United States International Visitor Programme Scholarship. Sujata Ashwarya Cheema, a PhD from JNU, specialises in Arab-Israel conflict. She's also a Visiting Professor at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and has been a post-doctoral research fellow in Paris. Others on the faculty rolls are Rafiullah Azmi, specialising in Gulf Security, Involvement of External Powers, and History of Gulf and Indo-Gulf Relations; Shahid Jamal Ansari, specialising in Arab Political Thought; and Hemayun Akhtar Nazmi, with interest in Religion, Culture and Society.

**Courses:** MPhil, PhD

**Eligibility:** For MPhil: Master's degree in any discipline with 55 per cent marks

**Number of seats:** 15 seats in MPhil

**Fee:** ₹4,370 (subject to change)

The student body is diverse, with representation from Kerala, North-East and Kashmir, among other states. It's also reflected in the academic backgrounds of students. Saima Shahid, who is an MA in English from AMU, joined the course because, "Literature is so vast, one can relate it to any field." Yogesh Kumar has an MA in Public Administration from Jamia. Fouzia Jan from J&K did an MBA in Finance from Bangalore University, and is now carrying out research on Islamic Finance.

The Centre runs a lecture series to which international experts are invited. To keep students buzzing with ideas, the Centre often holds essay-writing and quiz competitions. However, what students look forward to the most is the Friday discussion, when they brainstorm issues of contemporary relevance. In discussions at the Centre these days, there's a sense of jubilation. As Mohd Musharraf, an MPhil student says, "The uprising is a good sign. The countries will open up and people will be free to visit those places. As things stand now, we have to rely on secondary sources." ♦

## Helping hand

Free coaching for deprived students

The Centre for Coaching and Career Planning runs free coaching programmes for aspirants belonging to SC, ST, OBC, and Minority communities who wish to prepare and compete for a variety of jobs, both academic and administrative, as also to pursue studies in areas of their choice. The funding for the Centre is provided by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

The Centre draws on a qualified teaching pool to help coach the students who are selected for the coaching on the basis of an entrance test. Classroom teaching is supplemented and strengthened by periodic tests and evaluation.

The Centre's library has a collection of relevant material on a variety of subjects, which is replenished regularly to help students have access to current and relevant material.

The UGC has sanctioned an amount of ₹15 crore for the establishment of a Residential Coaching Academy for the Minorities, SCs, STs and Women in September 2010. Jamia Millia Islamia has identified land and RITES has already been assigned the job of constructing the building at Jasola.

To begin with, the Centre launched a coaching programme in October 2010 for those taking the Civil Services and SSC examinations.

The Centre has successfully arranged some of the top professionals of the country to coach students in General Studies, CSAT, and optional subjects, such as History, Geography, Political Science, Sociology, Public Administration, Urdu, Arabic and Persian. This year, five students trained by the Centre qualified for the IAS personality test.

Two students have passed the preliminary rounds in the Rajasthan PCS and two in the J&K PCS tests. Four students have cleared their NET-UGC, 15 have gained admissions to different engineering colleges, and 20 others to Bed and ETE programmes.



# Glimpses of India

The 'Indian experience', as seen from the perspective of foreign students studying in Jamia...

- Walaa Khashlan Yesser chose to travel to India for further studies after graduation because of the turmoil in her home country, Iraq. Today, she's is at home in Jamia. Her three-year-old daughter blissfully plays around as Walaa joins us in a discussion on a February afternoon. This MCA student can't help noticing the green contrast that the Jamia campus, and Delhi, in general, provide. "I have seen the contrasts. But my daughter was born here and she has only seen this greenery. I often bring her to the campus to let her play."
- Shir Mohammad from Afghanistan, pursuing an MA in Islamic Studies, is a senior government official, and has served the Karzai Government in different capacities. He graduated from Islamic University, Saudi Arabia, but, as he says, "I felt the need to do a master's from a university where English would also be used. I had been to Jamia once before and knew its rules, and therefore chose to join it." Mohammad would like to do his PhD too, before resuming work back home.

Adding to the diversity of Jamia is a substantial foreign student presence, lending to the campus its own dynamics. It cuts a wide swathe from Nigeria to Indonesia, with students from Afghanistan constituting the majority. Attracting these foreign students are courses as diverse as Management and Engineering on one hand, to English and Islamic Studies on the other. Though, of course, there's more demand for professional courses, says Dr Ameena Kazi Ansari, Foreign Students Adviser, and an Associate Professor of English.

The University on its own doesn't offer any scholarship to foreign students. It's either the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), that offers the scholarship, or respective governments

who sponsor their students. Thus Sri Utami Budi from Indonesia is pursuing Master's in English on an ICCR scholarship. She took a written test even as a TOEFL score came in handy for the admission. Similarly, Raed Kassab from Palestine came to know about the existence of the ICCR scholarships through a newspaper in his country. "When I saw the advertisement I hadn't even thought of coming to India. You know the situation in my country. We all look westward, of going to Europe. But my father encouraged me to apply. The whole process of admission took nine months. It was my ministry which conducted the required tests and interviews." Kassab is now a IIIrd Year BArch student.

The nine-month-long admission process that Kassab refers to, can today extend even further, in the wake of the increasing security concerns. Often, it has meant an aspirant losing out a year. In the case of M Reza ZH Karfar from Iran, the delay, in fact, proved to be a blessing. He had originally got admission in Chhattisgarh University, but as he had missed out on the session beginning, he had to apply the following year again. However, by then he had learnt about the reputation of the Faculty of Architecture in Jamia and chose to apply here instead. The delay in admission had happened despite the fact that Karfar had earlier done his class XII at the Iranian School, Pune, and had besides attended an English language course at the University of Pune. As to why he chose to come to India for his school-leaving examination, he has a philosophical answer, "Most things in life happen suddenly."

## A new chapter

In Utami's case, the sudden changes in the ways of teaching-learning have come as a big challenge. Adjusting to the difference is the most difficult aspect of foreign education, she says, adding, "Back in In-



A new learning: Shir Mohammad from Afghanistan (left); Abbas from Iraq (centre) and Walaa Khashlan Yesser from Iraq (right)

onesia, education was more student-centred. We used to make a lot of presentations. Here, it's in the nature of lectures, though, of course, the teachers are all very knowledgeable. And they are approachable too. We can go to them anytime in case of any difficulty." Utami is also surprised at the reading expected out of students: "You have to read 10 books for one novel."

Like Utami, Mohammad from Afghanistan pays tribute to the knowledge and expertise of the faculty. "They think big and are very open. If teachers think small, it's not good for a stream like Humanities," says Mohammad.

The other difficulty that foreign students often face is adjusting to English. Loui H Abbas, another MCA student from Iraq, says, "It was very difficult in the first semester. The accent is different. I completely relied on books in the initial months. But now I am comfortable."

Kassab from Palestine has now near-mastery over "Hinglish". With his penchant for humour, he describes an incident in the early days, when a fellow student got into a conversation with him. "When the student repeated her question to me twice or thrice and I still didn't understand, I requested her, 'please speak in English'. And to my astonishment she replied she was speaking in English."

Despite language barriers, the foreign students gel well with Indians students, to the extent that most of Karfar's facebook friends are now Indians.

Shir Mohammad, a married man with six children, finds that "age is no bar" in forging friendships with students much younger, and often invites them home. Similarly, he has been invited to a number of social occasions like weddings and birthdays, thanks to friends. While the foreign students unanimously find their Indian peers "helpful", Utami says, "Indian students are very serious. I am surprised the library never has enough room. And every time I meet them I find the group discussing studies. Back in Indonesia we never did that."

## Lessons outside class

An important issue is that of accommodation. While not every foreign student can get accommodation on campus, some opt for rented accommodation in the vicinity, for reasons of privacy and comfort (see box). Karfar has his own reasons for choosing to stay on his own: "I love to hear kids playing, and the *sabzi-walas* (vegetable vendors) calling out. It assures me that life is going on."

Life goes on even after college hours. The foreign students know how to enjoy life to the fullest and have been quick learners in observing and absorbing Indian culture. Adding to their lexicon now are movies like *Dabangg* and numbers like *Sheila*, but they obviously take it all in with suspended disbelief. "I realise that I can never fight 10 villains at a time," says Kassab. Karfar loves Qawwalis and visits Nizamuddin (where the Dar-





## 'Same strictness in admission'

Dr Ameena Kazi Ansari, Foreign Students' Adviser, on foreign students' experiences

### What are the criteria for admission for foreign students, both for scholarships and self-financed students?

To begin with, Jamia does not offer any scholarship. It's either the Government of India, which gives a scholarship through ICCR, or respective governments, which finance a candidate's study. In all cases, we ensure that the candidate meets the academic standards that we expect out of any student. He/she has to meet the eligibility requirement. While there is no English language test, we assume that the candidate would know that while Urdu is given priority, knowledge of English is also crucial. We do provide them the option of special English language classes.



### What are the major adjustment issues?

Most of the students come from countries, which are developing. Therefore, economically, there is not much variation in terms of students' economic backgrounds. An important issue is accommoda-

tion and stay. They like to guard their privacy. In the hostel, you have to follow certain norms. And a foreign student would like his own hours of coming and going. It's also due to food preferences. In rented accommodation there's freedom to cook, and you can go for things like a refrigerator. Finding accommodation is not difficult. They usually find one with the help of their senior compatriots.

### You are also a faculty in the Department of English. What has been your experience with them? And what are their career goals?

Academically speaking, they are just as competitive. They would like to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by this experience, and then branch out into the civil services of their respective countries or take up teaching at college level. Some would like to pursue further research, while others are already working and have come to India to enhance their career prospects. ♦

gah of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia is located) for extended Qawwali sessions.

To Kassab, the most endearing aspect of Indian life is its cultural rootedness. "I attended a wedding and was surprised to see the traditional costumes and rituals. I saw so many colours, especially red. In our part of the world, our traditional dress has been replaced by the Western white."

Of course, there were cultural shocks in the beginning. Karfar shares his experience: "On my first day in India, I saw an auto-wallah offering Namaaz in his auto, and I wondered, where have I landed!" For Karfar's Nigerian classmate Mohammad Nasir Hamid, the adjustment has just begun, with his parents moving back to Nigeria. Used to living with his parents, he has shifted to hostel recently and is yet to develop a taste for Indian food.

### Future course

Interestingly, once educated here, many foreign stu-

dents want to stay back. Abbas and Shir Mohammad would like to come back for their PhDs, while Utami and Walaa would go back and teach. Dr Ansari says that a majority of students who come to India wish to either join the government in their home countries, or join the university system, or are working and have come to India for career improvement.

Keeping track of what each foreign alumnus is doing is difficult. However, the Ministry of External Affairs has pushed for a database of foreign students, and EdCIL is working towards developing one. Dr Ansari is hopeful that this will give a fillip to alumni networking too, and will enable them to stay connected.

But whether he stays in touch or not, Kassab will always be thankful to India for making him a multi-dimensional person. "India is a very good place to start. It makes a successful person out of you. It teaches you to take care of many things at a time. After having stayed in India, you can survive anywhere." ♦

## Shooting stars

With their sights set firmly on the cross-hairs, Amandeep and Sarpreet Singh emerge winners in the Inter-University Tournament

They took up shooting in the same school, Summerfield, joined the same course — BBS — in Jamia Millia Islamia, and have shared aspirations. Amandeep and Sarpreet Singh, both 1st year students, are together bringing laurels to the University. In the recently-concluded Inter-University Tournament, Sarpreet won the gold medal and Amandeep the bronze.

Sarpreet took to the sport in class VIII. "Every young kid wants a gun in his hand and wants to fire," says Sarpreet. Amandeep joined later, in class XI. It's an expensive sport, both admit. While Amandeep is supported by his mother in the pursuit of his dreams, Sarpreet was selected for a Sports Authority of India Scheme, which entitles him to a stipend of Rs 600 per month, besides a shooting facility and a coach. Among their accomplishments are a gold and a silver in team events at the National-level School Shooting Championships.

Admission to Jamia has, however, meant a tough juggling act — between academics and shooting practice — due to strict attendance rules. For shooting practice, the two travel to a facility in Faridabad and



Sarpreet (left) and Amandeep (right) with their medals

the expenses are reimbursed by the University. Both men would love to pursue a career in shooting. "I owe a lot to this sport. It will be incorrect on my part to give it up," Sarpreet says. And even with examinations round the corner, he tells us he would begin practice for the next tournament shortly. ♦

## A high jump

Talha Khan's admirable feat at the IIT athletics meet gives this Jeddah boy a superb launch pad

Talha Khan grew up in Saudi Arabia, but his parents, both of Indian origin, sent their son to Jamia for his college education. At the International Indian School, Jeddah, where he studied, a healthy sporting culture and sound training infrastructure helped nurture Talha's passion for high jump. The strapping boy was fascinated by the grace of the game — particularly the curving of the body over the bar. Now a BTech IInd Year student of Electronic Engineering, he recently won a silver medal at an athletic meet at IIT Delhi. While Talha wants to pursue a formal career, he is clear about the role sport plays in his life. "The world requires versatile personalities. I don't want to be a person who achieves 10 on 10 in academics but is dumb in every other sphere. I see myself as a social person," says Talha. Even as he works on his muscles, Talha is training his mind for an MTech from the IIT. ♦







# Microscopic work gets noticed

Painstaking research by a PhD scholar rewarded at an international conference at AIIMS

PhD scholar Poonam Singh at the Department of Bio-Sciences was awarded the AR Gopala Ayengar Best Poster Award at the 7th International Conference of Asian Biophysics Association (ABA & IBS-2011) in early February. Poonam's poster, titled 'Serine Protease Inhibitors: Targeting Surface Cavities for Hindering Polymerisation in Serpins' was named the best out of about 250 entries, including those from Australia, China, Taiwan, England, France, Germany, and the US. Poonam's doctoral work is part of the scientific community's endeavour to identify disease-causing strains in humans. Her work is 'dry', as she works on the computer on data, while her peer works in the lab. Her project, therefore, falls in the domain of Bioinformatics. Poonam graduated from Acharya Narendra Dev College, DU, and secured a BEd from Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut, and an MSc from Jamia.

It was during her MSc



dissertation that she got interested in Bioinformatics, an interdisciplinary subject, straddling the worlds of Life Sciences, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and of course, Computers. After her PhD, she would like to pursue a career in drug development.

Adding versatility to this scholar's persona are some of her other accomplishments. Poonam has played volleyball and cricket in school and college and was adjudged 'woman of the match' in an inter-university match during her BEd days. She paints and draws, and is now happy adding colour to charts and presentations, hangs around with fellow scholars over tea, and thrives on thrillers and comedies, preferably of Amitabh Bachchan's. ♦

# Student scholars

Financial assistance to candidates starting from class VIII to degree/diploma programmes

Twenty-five students of Jamia Millia Islamia and its schools have won a scholarship from Youth Empowerment Services (YES), a Delhi-based development programme of the New Millennium Foundation. These students will get a scholarship of Rs 1,500-1,000 per month, besides enrolment in the YES Achiever's Programme for a year.

The selection for the academic year 2011 was made

after a detailed evaluation and interviews on the basis of merit and need. Preference was given to toppers, students belonging to minority communities and families with low income, students pursuing professional courses, sportspersons (those who have played at the state level), and girl candidates, among others. The average percentage secured by the selected candidates in their last examination is 81.86 percent.

# Powers of persuasion

Members of the Debating and Quizzing Society get the best team prize in a debate at AMU

Members of the Debating and Quizzing Society won the overall best team prize at the recently held Sir Syed Memorial Debate Competition in Aligarh Muslim University in early March.

The topic of the debate was 'Politics of identity has outlived its utility'. Thirty teams participated in the event. The Jamia team participated in the competition in all the categories — English, Hindi and Urdu and won the second prize in the Urdu section. The participants were:

- English: Sharabh Srivastava, BA LLB Vth Semester; EJSS Kathyayani, BA LLB Vth Semester
- Hindi: Jainendra Kumar, BA Mass Media IInd year; Armaan Ansari, MA Hindi
- Urdu: Mehmood Asim, BA Arabic, IInd year; Md Ishtiyaque,

BA Political Science, IInd year.

Kushagra Nigam, Praveen Pandey, Sumbhul Fatima and Hameedur Rehman also took part in the competition. ♦



Members of the Debating and Quizzing Society with their trophies

# A serious take on cinema

Prof Shohini Ghosh, a filmmaker, academician and author, has written a book titled *Fire: A Queer Classic*

Prof. Shohini Ghosh holds the Sajjad Zaheer Chair Professorship at the AJK Mass Communication Research Centre (MCRC). As MCRC was a collaboration between Jamia Millia and York University of Toronto, her batch was taught by a team led by the well-known documentary filmmaker of Canada, James Beveridge.

After finishing a second Master's in Communication from Cornell University, USA, Ghosh returned to MCRC to teach Video & TV Production in 1990. Before leaving for the US, Shohini had worked at MCRC as a producer of educational programmes for the UGC's country-wide classroom which used to be, at the time, an excellent training ground for fresh graduates. She made 12 films in 12 months which included a documentary on music composer Anil Biswas and a long



interview with science-fiction writer Arthur C Clarke by Professor Yashpal. However, Shohini realised she did not want to make a living out of films but work on that one film she thought would be special.

In 2003 she made *Tales of the Night Fairies*, a documentary about the sex workers' movement for rights in Kolkata which won the Best Film Award at the Jeevika Festival in 2003 and has since travelled extensively to festivals across the world.

Ghosh's new book *Fire: A Queer Classic* was released in Toronto in December 2010. The book is a discussion of Deepa Mehta's film and the debate that surrounded its release in India.

Currently, Ghosh is pursuing a PhD in Film Studies from the School of Social Sciences in Jawaharlal Nehru University and is also editing an anthology of essays on the documentary practices in India. ♦

FACULTY PROFILE



# Silver lining

A rare occasion when stalwarts from the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League listened in silence to a public reprimand by Dr Zakir Husain

Jamia's silver jubilee was celebrated in November 1946, the dark days preceding the partition of India. A series of unfortunate events had signalled that partition was a certainty. After the World War, the new British Prime Minister, Clement Atlee, had ordered elections in India. Congress leaders, who had been in prison during the war period, had lost ground and the Muslim League, which had used the period to make rapid political advances, won all the 30 Muslim seats in the Central Assembly, and 427 out of 507 Muslim seats in the provincial legislature.

It was a confident Muslim League which entered talks when the Cabinet Mission arrived in India to decide her destiny, including settling the Muslim League's demand for a separate nation. Months of protracted negotiations yielded no result. Soon, Jinnah announced 'Direct Action Day' to press for the demand for Pakistan, which led to widespread arson, killings, and rape across the length and breadth of the country. A constitutionalist who had never considered violating the law as a political option, had, with his call to his followers to take the law into their own hands, set in motion gruesome bloodshed.

It was in this vitiated atmosphere that the silver jubilee celebration happened. Vice-Chancellor Dr Zakir Husain, not a political figure but a widely respected educationist, decided to use the occasion to bring the leadership of both the Congress and the Muslim League at one place.

What gave him the hope that the Muslim League leaders would agree to come, when there was little meeting ground left between the two political streams, is uncertain. What is certain is that he didn't know what Jinnah thought of him.

During the Shimla Conference and Cabinet Mission meetings, Jinnah had adopted a stubborn approach that just as the Muslim League represented only the Muslims, the Congress represented only the Hindus, and should, therefore, send only a Hindu representative. The Congress had objected, saying it was the prerogative of the Congress to decide who should represent it. It suggested Maulana Azad's



**Mohammad Ali Jinnah (right) with Liaqat Ali Khan and other members of the Muslim League at the function**

name, but Jinnah refused to acknowledge his presence. The Congress then thought of Zakir Husain's name. When Lord Wavell mentioned his name to Jinnah, the latter dismissed him as "Quisling. Utterly and entirely unacceptable." This fact first came out in 1973, four years after Husain's death, when the Wavell diaries were published. In 1946, oblivious of Jinnah's view about him, Husain went ahead with his plan to invite the Muslim League leaders. Rajmohan Gandhi, in his book *Understanding the Muslim Mind*, wonders, "Had Zakir Husain known what we know, his activities... might have been different."

M Mujeeb, Husain's friend and later a long-serving Vice-chancellor of Jamia, describes in his book *Dr Zakir Husain: A Biography*, how Dr Husain set about convincing the League leaders to join the celebration: "The way he went about it was a masterpiece of planning. The Jamia Millia first set up an educational exhibition, one round of which... would convince anyone that there was constructive thought and sound practical sense underlying its work... There was no hurry, no salesmanship. Time was allowed for celebrities to mention the exhibition in private conversation." Mujeeb says further that once word had spread, he arranged for a meeting

## THE EVENT MAN >

- Begum Qudasia Zaidi arranged two generator sets for supplying electricity and pumping out water from a well, dug specifically for the occasion.
- One Abdullah Atawale was given the charge of the kitchen, but he failed to deliver. Finally, it was left to a teacher to supervise the cooking!

with Jinnah to invite him. Jinnah refused outright, saying he was opposed to everything that the Congress supported, and Jamia did enjoy the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi. However, a few days later, Jinnah's sister Fatimah Jinnah came to see the exhibition, and Mujeeb says, "She must have given a very good report, for some days later Jinnah sent word that he would attend the jubilee function."

The new campus of Jamia struggled with water and electricity supply in those years, and it required top logistical expertise to make arrangements for 2,000 guests for four days, including bed and board.

Students and teachers themselves dug pits to lay a pipeline for water supply. Foodgrain and other food items, which were again scarce, were also procured with difficulty. The nawab of Rampur lent a huge tent, titled *Dal Badal*, besides other smaller tents. While Begum Qudasia Zaidi, wife of the future

Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, Col BH Zaidi, looked after all the arrangements, Dr Husain personally supervised the preparations, including the sitting arrangements for the dignitaries.

Thus, seated on that rare occasion under the canopy were political stalwarts Jawaharlal Nehru, C Rajagopalachari, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Maulana Azad and Liaqat Ali Khan, listening to Vice-chancellor Dr Zakir Husain, as he delivered, what Mujeeb describes as the "most eloquent and moving speech of his life". We produce here an excerpt:

"You are all stars of the political firmament; there is love and respect for you not only in thousands but in millions of heart. I wish to take advantage of your presence here to convey to you with the deepest sorrow the sentiments of those engaged in educational work. The fire of mutual hatred which is ablaze in this country makes our work of laying out and tending gardens appear as sheer madness... How can we provide adornment for the moral nature of man when the level of conduct is lower than that of beasts? How shall we save culture when barbarianism holds sway everywhere, how shall we train man for its service? How shall we safeguard human values in a world of wild beasts? These words might seem harsh to you, but the harshest words would be too mild to describe the conditions that prevail around us. We are obliged by the demands of our own vocation to cultivate reverence for children; how shall I tell you of the anguish we suffer when we hear that in this upsurge of bestiality even innocent children are not spared?..."

For God's sake, put your heads together and extinguish this fire! This is not the time to investigate and determine who lighted this fire, how it was lighted. The fire is blazing; it has to be put out. It is not a question of survival of this nation or that nation. It is a question of choosing between civilised human life and savagery of wild beasts. For God's sake, do not allow the very foundation of civilised life in this country to be destroyed as they are being destroyed now."

While they were all ears, perhaps it was too late in the day to roll back the hatred they had let loose.

## References:

- Dr Zakir Husain: A Biography* by M Mujeeb  
*Understanding the Muslim Mind*  
 by Rajmohan Gandhi  
*Partners in Freedom: Jamia Millia Islamia*  
 by Mushirul Hasan and Rakhshanda Jalil





# '77 in 1977'

SY Siddiqui, a topper in social work, remembers the faculty and infrastructure in his alma mater

**S**Y Siddiqui joined the Department of Social Work, Jamia, in 1974, because he felt the then craze for medicine and the civil services was not to his liking. His brother HY Siddiqui (now retired) was teaching in the Department then, and from what the brother described, the younger Siddiqui surmised that social work suited his aptitude better. "Also, unlike a plain degree, it was a semi-professional course, and it could be topped by a further qualification afterwards."

Siddiqui thought of trying out the course for a week and shortly thereafter arrived from Kanpur. However, not only did he decide to stay on, he also went on to top the batch in 1977, and followed it up with a gold medal in his Master's in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations in 1979. He proudly recalls, "I remember that the previous toppers used to score around 60 percent. I scored 77 percent."

That dream performance, feels Siddiqui, was largely due to the faculty, who, he feels, were "Outstanding teachers, very closely in sync with the needs of the students... Their commitment was extremely high and capability, top of the class." He says, "In terms of infrastructure, only a few blocks existed then. We had our classes in *dampooos*. But in terms of environment, it was everything.

In fact, because I was the topper, people expected me to join the University of Delhi for my Master's because of its reputation. But more than that, I valued the people, personalised attention, and the initiatives taken by students in Jamia."

Siddiqui too was involved in many initiatives. Among them was promoting cricket on campus.

He remembers that the current Sports Director Nur Mohammad, only a few batches senior, did the crucial groundwork in improving Jamia's sporting infrastructure.

Community work was another area he was involved in. When a flood struck Delhi in 1977, the Department did phenomenal work in the area around Jamia, including Batla House. He says, "Working in the community was a new learning. We realised that life is not ideal."

Siddiqui's was the second postgraduate PMIR batch, and he says, "It did very well in placements." In fact, Siddiqui himself was given a job offer by Atul Das Industries, Faridabad, where he had interned. The proprietors wanted him to join once the internship would get over. But immediately afterwards, Escorts made him an offer. "They wanted me to join immediately. And while I felt awkward, Atul Das showed magnanimity in letting me go

because Escorts was a big name."

A journey that started in the *dampooos* of Jamia now sees Siddiqui as Managing Executive Officer, Administration, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. ♦



## Bio honour

A Govt of India award for Biosciences faculty member

**D**r Nikhat Manzoor, a faculty member at the Department of Biosciences, Jamia Millia Islamia, is the recipient of the prestigious Boyscast Fellowship, awarded by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

Dr Manzoor has expertise in Biochemistry and Biophysics and worked with Dr Brian C Monk and Prof Richard Cannon on the mode of action of a peptide-based inhibitor that targets the plasma membrane proton pump in fungal pathogens. The research involved Biophysical, Molec-

ular Genetic, Proteomic, and Biochemical studies designed to establish how the inhibitor interacts with its target.

The research will facilitate the development of novel antifungals that will help prevent diseases, such as oral and disseminated candidiasis, including diseases caused by organisms resistant to existing antifungals. The research was partially supported by the New Zealand Dental Research Foundation.

Meanwhile, Prof Arif Ali of the Department of Bio-Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences, has been nominated to the 'Pioneers in Genomics Education' Class of 2010 by the Genomic Pioneers Gateway for outstanding contributions to the field of Genomics Education.

Genomic Pioneers Gateway is a leadership forum and a platform for ideation, comprising companies, industry and research centres for giving direction to the field of genomics. It is sponsored and promoted by Gene Logic and Ocimum Biosolutions, a leading global genomics company. ♦



Dr Nikhat Manzoor

## Young Scientists' Award

**D**r Mohammad Irfan Qureshi, Assistant Professor at the Department of Biotechnology, won the First Prize in the Young Scientists' Award Category at the 3rd International Conference on Parthenium-2010, held from December 8-10, 2010.

The Conference was organised by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi, and the Entomological Society of India at IARI and was supported by the Indian

Council for Agricultural Research, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and the Department of Biotechnology, among others.

Dr Qureshi presented a paper on 'Introducing Weedomics: Understanding the Tolerance Mechanism of Weeds', an entirely new concept in the field of plant molecular biology. Dr Qureshi's session was chaired by Prof Baruch Rubini, President of the International Weed Science Society. ♦

## SOCIOLOGY

Books and papers by the

**Dr Ravi Kumar, Assistant Professor**

**Books**  
*The Heart of the Matter – Development, Identity and Violence: Reconfiguring the Debate* [ed], Aakar Books, New Delhi

*Ghetto and Within: Class, Identity, State and Political Mobilisation*, Aakar Books, New Delhi, 2010

**Paper**  
'Education and the Politics of Capital: Perspective and Agenda for Resistance against Neoliberalism', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 38, Nos. 9-12, September-December 2010

**Dr Manisha Tripathy Pandey, Associate Professor**

**Book**  
*Globalisation and the Indian Urban Middle Class: The Emerging Trend*, Uppal Publishers, New Delhi, 2010

**Paper**  
'Ventilating Predicament of Development: New Economic Enclaves and Structural Violence in India' in *The Heart of the Matter: Development, Identity and Violence: Reconfiguring the Debate*, Ravi Kumar [ed] Aakar Books, New Delhi, 2010.

## MANAGEMENT

Dr PK Gupta, Associate Professor, Centre for Management Studies, presented a paper titled 'An Econometric Estimation of the Bank-side Determinants of Problem Loans in Indian Private Sector Banks' organised by Management Application and Research Center, Yeditepe University, Istanbul. Dr Kavita Chauhan, Reader, presented a paper, 'Issues of Governance and Corruption' at a conference in the Department of Economics, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak.

# Faculty of Education



Nestling in the back lanes of Jamia Millia Islamia, this building of the Faculty of Education was among the earliest set of buildings to come up when the Jamia campus shifted from Karol Bagh to its present location in 1935. Like the other original buildings of the campus, this too was designed by German architect Karl Heinz. It evoked both admiration and surprise for its design elements. The influence is distinctly European, as the central dome suggests. There's a clear departure from the pointed arches of the Mughal-era buildings.

Announcing the purpose of the building is a sculpture, representing an open book.



**Jamia Millia Islamia**

Maulana Mohamed Ali Jauhar Marg, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi - 110025

EPABX: +91(11)26981717, 26988044, 26984075, 26985176

Website: [www.jmi.ac.in](http://www.jmi.ac.in)