

Office of the Chief Public Relations Officer
Jamia Millia Islamia

Press Release

JMI Celebrates 80th Independence Day with Patriotic Fervour; Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi Graces the Occasion as Chief Guest

New Delhi, August 15, 2026

New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) marked the 80th Independence Day today with deep patriotic zeal and celebratory grandeur, with Honourable Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi, gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest in the presence of JMI Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mazhar Asif and Registrar JMI, Prof. Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, at the main function held at the Dr M.A. Ansari Auditorium.

The programme commenced with the Quarter Guard presented by NCC Cadets to the Chief Guest, followed by the hoisting of the National Flag and the singing of the National Anthem, which filled the atmosphere with solemnity, pride and patriotic spirit.

The formal proceedings continued with the recitation of Holy verses followed by the Jamia Tarana, reflecting the university's rich traditions and its ethos of unity in diversity. The Vice Chancellor and Registrar, JMI along with Dean of Students' Welfare, Prof. Neelofer Afzal, honoured Shri Manjhi with a shawl, a commemorative memento and sapling. A portrait of the Union Minister was also presented as a mark of respect and gratitude.

Welcoming the distinguished guests and the gathering, Prof. Neelofer Afzal, Dean Students' Welfare, JMI, in her address reminded the audience that the history of Jamia is closely tied to the history of India herself and hoisting of our beloved Tiranga is not just watched but felt at Jamia.

The Hon'ble Union Minister was accompanied by his team including Mr. Danish Rizwan and Mr. Surendra Prasad Pant. The programme was hosted under the aegis of the Office of the Dean Students' Welfare, JMI.

Addressing the gathering, Union Minister Shri Jitan Ram Manjhi reflected on his extraordinary life journey from growing up in abject poverty in a labourer's family to serving as Chief Minister and now as a Union Minister in the Government of India. He shared his own personal struggles which he thought mirrored the life-challenges of a large number of fellow Indians. He specifically brought up the issue of poverty alleviation and lauded the efforts of his Ministry in this direction. Emphasising the pivotal role of youth in nation-building, Shri Manjhi remarked, "Technology can open doors of opportunity, but it alone cannot ensure success. True success is born out of relentless hard work, commitment, and tenacity." He encouraged students not merely to

seek employment but to cultivate an entrepreneurial mind-set and become job creators who can empower others.

Referring to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of making India the world's leading economic powerhouse by the centenary of its Independence in 2047, Shri Manjhi highlighted the MSME sector as the backbone of this vision. He noted that the sector contributes approximately 30.1 per cent to India's GDP and plays a crucial role in driving inclusive economic growth.

Urging the youth to "make social media your strength, not your weakness", the Union Minister encouraged students to acquire skills, develop innovative ideas, embrace entrepreneurship and work towards taking local products and ideas to global markets. He also called upon them to equip themselves with emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and digital marketing to enhance their opportunities and make a mark in the global economy.

Shri Manjhi highlighted various MSME schemes aimed at supporting crores of households, with particular emphasis on women, as well as programmes benefiting Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other marginalised sections of society.

In his address, JMI Vice Chancellor Prof. Mazhar Asif extended warm greetings on the historic occasion of the 80th Independence Day. He shared his reflections on the significance of Independence Day and the responsibilities of the university community towards the nation. His spontaneous articulation in regional dialect endeared him instantly to the audience. Quoting legendary poets such as Amir Khusrau and Allama Iqbal, Prof. Asif spoke about the uniqueness and distinctiveness of India's civilisational heritage. He said, "India has, since time immemorial, been a centre of learning and has been celebrated by poets and scholars as a land of extraordinary beauty and knowledge". He also stated that the true meaning of independence is to collectively work towards raising the quality of life of all citizens.

Registrar JMI, Prof. Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi revisited the history of India's freedom struggle, highlighting the resilience and sacrifices of the freedom fighters against the oppressive colonial rule. He underscored the divisive impact of the British policy of "divide and rule," which sought to fragment Indian society along lines of caste, religion, region, and identity, ultimately leading to the tragedy of Partition. Recalling the contributions of Mahatma Gandhi and Hakim Ajmal Khan, one of the founding figures of Jamia Millia Islamia, Prof. Rizvi emphasised that true independence goes beyond political sovereignty and economic freedom. He said it must be rooted in justice, equality, social harmony, and collective welfare for all sections of society.

The formal programme was followed by a cultural programme presented by the schools of Jamia. The programme featured a rich blend of cultural and artistic presentations by all schools of Jamia. Mushir Fatima Nursery School presented an engaging action song, showcasing the enthusiasm and innocence of the young participants. This was followed by a vibrant musical programme, adding to the festive spirit of the occasion. A special

performance by the children with special needs of the Child Guidance Centre, Dr. Zakir Hussain Memorial Welfare Society highlighted their extraordinary talent, confidence and spirit of participation. The Middle School presented a meaningful performance based on women freedom fighters, remembering the courage and contribution of women who played an important role in India's freedom struggle. The Jamia Girls' Senior Secondary School presented "Swarnim Bharat – Kal Aaj Kal", a Nritya-Natak depicting India's journey through different eras and reflecting the country's rich heritage and changing times. The Syed Abid Hussain Senior Secondary School presented a soulful Qawwali, adding a traditional and spiritual dimension to the celebrations. The programme concluded with a special biographical drama by Jamia Senior Secondary School (JSSS) on Brigadier Mohammad Usman, highlighting his exceptional courage, patriotism and devotion to the nation. The celebrations reflected Jamia's commitment to nurturing patriotism, unity, courage and social responsibility among its students, while providing them with a platform to express their creativity and talent. The programme concluded with the National Anthem, bringing the celebrations to a dignified close and reaffirming the shared values of freedom, unity, peace and national service.

The 80th Independence Day celebrations at Jamia Millia Islamia continued into the evening with "Jashn-e-Azadi", an evening of soulful music and celebration organised at the Dr. M. A. Ansari Auditorium at 7:00 PM on August 15, 2026.

The special evening programme was held in the distinguished presence of Prof. Mazhar Asif, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, JMI; Prof. Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, Esteemed Registrar, JMI; and Prof. Neelofer Afzal, Dean Students' Welfare, JMI.

The highlight of the evening was a soulful musical performance by the Niazi Nizami Brothers, bringing together music and celebration in the spirit of Independence Day. The programme provided members of the Jamia fraternity and guests an opportunity to celebrate the nation's freedom through music and cultural expression.

The day's celebrations thus brought together the solemnity of the national flag ceremony, reflections on the values and responsibilities associated with freedom, the creative talents of Jamia's students, and an evening of soulful music, reflecting the university's rich cultural ethos and spirit of unity in diversity.

The 80th Independence Day celebration at Jamia Millia Islamia reaffirmed the university's commitment to the values of freedom, unity, diversity, education, social responsibility and nation-building.

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