

Press Release

Supreme Court Judge, Hon'ble Justice N. Kotiswar Singh inaugurates the 1st Jamia Millia Islamia National Mediation Competition 2026

New Delhi, February 14, 2026

Marking a significant step towards strengthening the culture of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and collaborative justice in India, Hon'ble Justice Shri N. Kotiswar Singh, Judge, Supreme Court of India, inaugurated the 1st Jamia Millia Islamia National Mediation Competition, 2026, on February 12, 2026. The three-day program organized by the Faculty of Law, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), which concludes today, is the first of its kind event on alternative dispute resolution and has witnessed enthusiastic participation from 24 selected law schools & institutes of national repute, besides being graced by eminent dignitaries from the judiciary, academia, and the legal profession.

Prof. Mazhar Asif, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia; Prof. Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, Registrar, JMI; Dr. Vikas Singh, Senior Advocate and President, Supreme Court Bar Association; Prof. (Dr.) V. K. Ahuja, Director, Indian Law Institute; Ms. Iram Majid, Central Government Standing Counsel at the Delhi High Court, Executive Director of APCAM, and Director of IIAM; and Prof. Mohammad Asad Malik, Faculty of Law and Chief Proctor, JMI, graced the inaugural session, which began with the recitation of verses from the Holy Book followed by the rendition of the *Jamia Tarana*, reflecting the rich cultural and institutional ethos of the University.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Guest on the occasion, Hon'ble Justice Shri N. Kotiswar Singh, highlighted the urgent need for mediation in light of the enormous pendency of cases in Indian courts. *Referring to data from the National Judicial Data Grid, he observed that with over 4.8 crore pending cases and limited judicial strength, mediation emerges as a practical and necessary solution.* Drawing examples from religious scriptures and everyday family life, Justice Singh emphasized that dispute resolution through dialogue is deeply ingrained in Indian society. He appreciated the Faculty of Law, JMI, for conducting this national level competition on this very important, vibrant, and potential area of alternative dispute settlement mechanism and encouraged students to cultivate the qualities of compassion, neutrality, and confidence essential for effective mediation.

In his address, Prof. Mazhar Asif, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, JMI, encouraged students to approach mediation with humility, empathy, and integrity. He remarked that every

meaningful endeavor must be guided by compassion and understanding, virtues essential to the practice of mediation.

Prof. Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, Registrar of JMI, connected mediation with the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and the philosophy of peace and conflict resolution. Emphasizing that the true function of a lawyer is to unite parties rather than merely focus on winning cases, he advocated for voluntary dispute resolution mechanisms inspired by India's Panchayati Raj system.

Dr. Vikas Singh stressed that justice for all can be meaningfully realized through mediation, describing it as an extension of India's cultural and ethical traditions rooted in fairness and collegiality. He urged students to adopt mediation not only as a professional skill but also as a lifelong approach to resolving conflicts.

Prof. V. K. Ahuja traced the historical and philosophical foundations of mediation in ancient Indian texts, including references from the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Manusmriti*. Through illustrative anecdotes, he highlighted how conciliation has long been recognized as a preferred method of dispute resolution, predating the adversarial system introduced during the colonial era.

In her address, Ms. Iram Majid emphasized that mediation is not merely an alternative to litigation but a collaborative process rooted in dialogue and understanding. She encouraged participants to view the competition as an opportunity for growth, learning, and networking.

Prof. (Dr.) Ghulam Yazdani, Chairman, Dean, Faculty of Law, in his welcome address, highlighted that mediation is not merely an academic exercise but a philosophy of justice deeply embedded in India's cultural and civilizational traditions. Referring to the concepts of *Sulah* and reconciliation, he stressed the importance of compassion, cooperation, and healing within the justice delivery system. He noted that in an era marked by prolonged litigation and mounting pendency, mediation offers a humane and effective path forward for the amicable settlement of disputes.

The dignitaries were felicitated with shawls, saplings, and mementos as tokens of respect and gratitude. The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Alisha Khatun, faculty convenor of the function.

The three-day competitions, which commenced following the inaugural session, have been witnessing teams engaging in simulated mediation sessions designed to test their negotiation, analytical, and problem-solving skills.

The 1st Jamia National Mediation Competition stands as a testament to the Faculty of Law's commitment to promoting ADR as an integral component of legal education. By

blending tradition with contemporary legal practice, Jamia Millia Islamia continues to nurture socially responsible legal professionals dedicated to advancing access to justice and fostering a culture of dialogue and reconciliation.

Prof Saima Saeed
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