

Department of Sociology, JMI, holds the 5th Bikram Nanda Memorial Lecture

New Delhi, February 6, 2026

The Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), successfully organised the 5th Bikram Nanda Memorial Lecture on 4 February 2026 at 11:00 a.m. at the FTK-CIT Auditorium, Jamia Millia Islamia. The memorial lecture was held in remembrance of the late Professor Bikram Nanda, an eminent academician, inspiring teacher, and a deeply respected member of the Jamia community, whose intellectual legacy continues to guide students and scholars alike.

The programme was organised under the patronage of Prof. Mazhar Asif, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia (Chief Patron), Prof. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, Registrar, JMI (Patron), and Prof. Zubair Meenai, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from faculty members, research scholars, and students from Jamia Millia Islamia as well as scholars and participants from outside the University.

The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Dhananjay Singh, Member Secretary, Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and former Chairperson, Centre for English Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, on the theme "Sustainable Research for Sustainable Development." In his address, Prof. Singh offered a comprehensive and critical perspective on contemporary environmental concerns and underscored the centrality of social science research in addressing ecological crises. He highlighted the importance of strengthening connectivity with rural and marginalised communities, integrating indigenous knowledge systems, and ensuring that sustainability debates remain grounded in questions of social justice and gender equity in India. He also elaborated on various ICSSR initiatives, particularly encouraging students and young researchers to apply for short-term research projects, thereby fostering a robust research culture that is socially relevant, inclusive, and policy-oriented. Prof. Singh further emphasised the need for interdisciplinary approaches, ethical research practices, and academic engagement with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Indian context.

The programme began with a welcome address and introduction by Prof. Azra Abidi, Head, Department of Sociology, who formally welcomed the dignitaries and participants. Prof. Abidi reflected on the academic legacy of late Prof. Bikram Nanda, remembering him as a committed teacher, an intellectually generous scholar, and a mentor who believed deeply in student-led academic initiatives. She highlighted that the Bikram Nanda Memorial Lecture Series stands as a tribute to his vision of critical inquiry, interdisciplinarity, and the nurturing of young scholars.

In his presidential address, Prof. Mazhar Asif, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, JMI, spoke about India's rich civilisational traditions and cultural practices that emphasise

harmony with nature and environmental stewardship. He contextualised these traditions within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, underlining their contemporary relevance and significance for Indian society. Prof. Asif stressed the role of universities in fostering environmentally conscious citizens and advancing sustainable and socially responsible knowledge systems.

The Guest of Honour, Prof. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, Registrar, JMI, highlighted the urgent need to promote SDGs through innovative academic initiatives, research, and policy interventions. He emphasised that institutions of higher learning must play a proactive role in shaping future directions for sustainable development and informed policymaking.

Prof. Zubair Meenai, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, delivered the concluding remarks, wherein he fondly remembered late Prof. Bikram Nanda as his teacher and acknowledged his unwavering dedication to teaching and research. Prof. Meenai also outlined possible ways forward for the Department and the University in contributing towards sustainable development and the creation of an environmentally responsible society.

A significant highlight of the programme was the release of a monograph by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, based on the 4th Bikram Nanda Memorial Lecture delivered by Prof. Ira Bhaskar (former Professor, JNU) on the theme "Popular Culture and Indian Bollywood Cinema." The monograph represents an important academic contribution and reflects the continuity and scholarly depth of the memorial lecture series.

The memorial lecture was followed by a one-day Student Seminar, organised as part of the Department's annual academic festival Karvān-e-Fikr 2026, on the theme "Anthropology and the Anthropocene." Students and research scholars from Jamia Millia Islamia, Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Delhi, University of Calcutta, and Ambedkar University Delhi presented research papers, making the seminar a vibrant platform for interdisciplinary academic exchange.

The programme concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony for the paper presenters, conducted by the Head of the Department of Sociology, JMI. The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Martin Kamodang, Faculty and Students' Advisor, Department of Sociology, who expressed gratitude to the dignitaries, speakers, participants, and organising team for making the event a success.

The 5th Bikram Nanda Memorial Lecture reaffirmed the Department of Sociology's commitment to critical scholarship, sustainability, and student-centric academic engagement, in the true spirit of Prof. Bikram Nanda's enduring legacy.

Prof. Saima Saeed
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