

Press Release

**Department of Social Work, JMI organizes University Exposure Visit for Adolescent Girls from Low Income Neighbourhoods**

New Delhi, 26 June 2025

The Department of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia in collaboration with the Office of the Dean Students' Welfare, Jamia Millia Islamia organized a university exposure visit of 20 adolescent girls from low income neighborhoods in association with Ankur-Society for Alternatives in Education, on June 24, 2025.

The adolescent girls currently residing in Khichripur, Sunder Nagri and Jaffrabad were between the age of 15 to 19 years and had an educational level ranging from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> standard. The girls who have been part of Ankur's youth collective were looking forward to exploring future educational opportunities and gaining exposure to the university campus. The day long exposure had been very meticulously planned in the backdrop of the proposed objectives and the participant expectations to provide an exposure the academic opportunities and the supportive facilities.

The day began in the seminar room of the Department of Social Work, JMI where the participants were warmly welcomed by Dr. Risha Baruah, followed by their brief introduction. The participants talked about their present educational pursuits, their aspirations and their expectations from the exposure visit. Thereafter, Prof. Neelam Sukhramani, Head, Department of Social Work, shared with the participants the history of Jamia Millia Islamia emphasizing the ideas and values that led to the emergence of the historical university and continue to be a cornerstone of its functioning. A short film about the university was also shown emphasizing the expansion of Jamia Millia Islamia from small tents to a university that ranks among the top in the country. Courses being offered in the university and specifically in the Department of Social Work including the eligibility criteria, admission process and the curricular components were shared with the participants. After the much inspiring sharing, the Director of Ankur- Society for Alternatives in Education, Ms. Sharmila Bhagat addressed the audience reiterating the background to the exposure visit that is rooted in the organizational belief of empowerment through education. She talked about the initiatives being taken by Ankur in low income neighbourhoods or what they also refer to as communities where people in the informal sector of the economy reside. Thereafter, five students who are currently pursuing BA Hons in Social Work and Masters in Social Work shared their journey before joining the programme and through the course of the programme. They talked about the transformation that they have experienced by being a part of the course. The students, some of whom came from very humble backgrounds talked about their trials and tribulations and the ways in which they had tried to overcome the same. The participants felt connected with the shared experiences.

This was followed by the youth group gaining exposure to various centres within the University that was coordinated seamlessly by the Office of the Dean, Students' Welfare – Centre for Innovation And Entrepreneurship, Premchand Archives & Literary Centre, The Central Library, Computer Laboratory, AJK Mass Communication Research Centre and the Sports Complex of the University. The youth group was highly motivated in spirits throughout

the exposure drive and communicated that the experience had been highly reinvigorating and thought provoking. A few statements from the participants are reflections of the meaning that the exposure visit held for them, “Yahan to aake rahungi”, “Padh bhi nahin paayi to kam se kam dekh liya”, “Kaash ye programme do din ka hota”. The participants were completely awestruck by the university. They took detailed notes at each place reflecting their desire to maximise this opportunity.

The painstaking efforts of Dr. Risha Baruah and Mr. Asrarul Haque Jeelani in setting the background of the programme, coordinating with all concerned and ensuring that the participants had a comfortable experience had clearly paid out. The team of the Office of the Dean Students' Welfare led by Prof. Neelofar Afzal had mobilized all the possible opportunities of learning for the young participants. Mr. Maqsd Aalam, Section Officer, Office of the Dean Students' Welfare coordinated with the various offices of Jamia Millia Islamia to provide a wholesome experience to the participants, for whom coming to the university was nothing short of a dream.

Battling social and economic adversities and yet having reached this far, the exposure had opened up vistas of future opportunities for the young girls. The day ended with a big cheer for the university and a strong desire to not be pulled back by circumstances.

Prof. Saima Saeed  
Chief Public Relations Officer























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