

Two- Day International Conference (17th -18th March 2015)

Theme

(Muslims, Democracy and the Media: Challenges and Prospects)

Inaugural Session was held in DDE Auditorium at 10:00 AM -01:00AM. Programme was inaugurated with Lightening of the Lamp. Introduction of the Conference was given by Prof. Ehtesham Ahmad Khan (Dean and Head, MCJ, MANUU) and Welcome Address was given by Prof. Khwaja M. Shahid, Pro Vice-Chancellor, MANUU, Hyderabad. The Key Note Address was delivered by **Mr. Shekar Gupta**, Eminent Journalist, New Delhi. **Mr.N. Ram**, Former Editor-in-Chief, The Hindu, Chennai, was the Chief Guest and **Mr. Rajdeep Sardesai**, **Mr. Andrew McAllister**, **British Deputy High Commissioner, Hyderabad** **Mr Najam Sethi**, **Eminent Journalist, Pakistan**, **Mr. Imtiyaz Alam**, **Eminent Journalist, Pakistan** were the Guest of Honors. The Inaugural Session was presided over by Prof. Mohammad Miyan (Honorable Vice-Chancellor, MANUU, Hyderabad in the august presence of Janab Zafar Sareshwala, Honorable, Chancellor, MANUU, Hyderabad.







Plenary Session-I was held on 17th March in DDE Auditorium at 02:30-04:00PM. The sub theme of the discussion was *'Muslims and International Media'* which was chaired by Mr. Najam Sethi. Others who participated in the discussion were Mr. Satish Jacob, Mr. Vinod Sharma, Mr. Imtiyaz Alam, Mr. Swapandas Gupta, Mr. Jawed Naqvi, Ms. Seema Mustafa, Ms. Mehmal Sarfraz and Ashish Chouhan.



Plenary Session-II was held on 17th March in DDE Auditorium at 04:15-05:45PM. Sub theme of the discussion was *'Muslims, Communalism and Indian Media'* which was chaired by Mr. Kingsuk Nag. Participants who discussed the theme were Mr. Shahid Siddiqui, Mr. Zafar Agha, Mr. Seshadri Chari, Mr. Ved PratapVaidak, Mr. Anjum Rajabali, Mr. Kumar Ketkar, Mr. Ashok Malik and Mr. Hilal Ahmad.



Plenary Session-III was held on 17th March in CPDUMT Auditorium at 2:30-4:00 PM. Sub theme of the discussion was ‘*Urdu and Hindi Media: Working at Cross Purposes?*’ This session was chaired by Mr. Jawed Naqvi. Discussants were Mr. Naseem Arifi, Mr. Abdus Salam Asim, Mr. Aslam Farshori, and Mr. Sanjay Dwivedi.



Plenary Session-IV was held on 18th March in CPDUMT Auditorium at 12:00 PM -1:30 PM. Sub theme of the discussion was ‘*Muslims, Urdu Media and Muslim Politics*’. This session was chaired by Mr. Imtiaz Alam. Discussants were Mr. Zafar Agha, Mr.Aaku Srivastava, Mr.Masoom Muradabadi and Mr. Hisam Siddiqui.



Plenary Session-V was held on 18th March in CPDUMT Auditorium at 10:00 AM -11:30 AM. Sub theme of the discussion was '*Muslims, Secular Democracy and Media*'. This session was chaired by Mr.Ved Pratap Vaidik. Other Discussants were Mr. Najam Sethi, Prof. Shafey Kidwai, Mr. Kumar Ketkar, Mr. Syed Faisal Ali, Mr.Tehseen Munawer.



URDU UNIVERSITY MEDIA CONCLAVE

On the evening of the 17th March 2015, the **Media Conclave** was organized on the theme '*Minorities and the Media – At the Crossroad?*', which was anchored by Mr. **Rajdeep Sardesai** and Mr. **Kamal Khan**, had an electrifying impact on the audience, bringing much enlightenment to all.

In the Media Conclave, renowned journalist and writer Rajdeep Sardesai agreed that a negative stereotype about Muslims persisted in the media. The stereotypes of Muslim people which have prevailed in Media reckon that all Muslims are same with a particular characteristic (turban and beard) and a Muslim can be recognized only by the turban and beard', he said.

Mehmal Sarfraz pointed out that stereotyping was true not just about Indian Muslims but about the whole Muslim community, 'whether it's the Muslim from Burma, Palestine or from any part of the world'.

Speaking about the Pakistani Media **Najam Sethi** said that the Pakistani media had a very negative view about Indian minorities, that they are undermined and downtrodden. That they don't get equal rights and the Hindu civilization is dominating them and that is a totally established wisdom of Pakistani media', he added.

Shahid Siddiqui added that somehow Muslims are themselves responsible for stereotyping as they also had to give up their mental ghetto for themselves. So both the media and the Muslims need to come out of it. 'Secular parties who use secularism were also responsible for it. They play fear psychosis on both sides: minority as well as majority. They created majority fear psychosis in minority and minority fear psychosis in majority and thus create a chaos between minorities and majorities for the sake of voting politics' he said.

Shekhar Gupta, the former editor of the India Express who also participated in the Conclave said that 'the Nehruvian constructs of secularism is unsustainable construct because it is almost irreligious construct. Indian society is very religious society'.

Another renowned journalist **Ashok Mallik** agreed that when it came to TV debates, 'the Muslims are never been asked the same questions as Hindus. We always discussed the Muslim voters within a certain framework because we are comfortable with that'.

Pointing out the need for reforms for the community, **Professor Faizan Mustafa**, the Vice Chancellor of NALSAR University said that 'fatwa which has gained a notorious reputation was only an individual's opinion. It is not religion and people are misinterpreting it' he added.

Kamaal Khan said that Muslims waged fierce struggles for the enactment of the law to annul the supreme court judgment in the Shah Bano case It's was the law board which turns tables over Shah Bano case and compelled the supreme court to change its judgment. In 75 districts of UP Muslims celebrate Ram Leela in one or the other ways, whether by lighting, by making stage, or by performing the role of *Bharata Lakshmana and Shatrughana*.

Vinod Sharma said that the majority needed to introspect also. Nowadays secular parties are also pursuing soft Hindutva. And Muslims may need to make their own parties.

Noted journalist **Swapan Dasgupta** posited out that for stereotype to be successful, 'it has to have an element of truth. You cannot create a stereotype of a person merely referring to a Bollywood film. Surely there will be a germ of truth in it. The point is what stereotypes do is that it exaggerates and it believes that the position is static. Wide spread perceptions often are translated in political terms'.

Former Political Editor of the Asian Age **Seema Mustafa** said Muslim opinion has liberal voices but it was often overshadowed by conservative forces. She said that during the Shah Bano case Muslim people were alienated into two groups. One group supported Shah Bano and the other was opposed. The rational voices which were supporting Shah Bano were suppressed by the conservative Muslims.

Zafar Mahmood said that the media often looks for stereotypes to perpetuate. He said that in 2010 a Muslim youth from Kashmir topped IAS exams but media was not amused and did not report in the way they should. 'If they have done so, students would have been inspired, but on the other hand, suppose if a person in a remote village of UP commits some mistake in its own family which anyone can do anywhere, that time the media will call for debates and thus creates stereotyping' he remarked.

Speaking on discrimination, **N. Ram** pointed out different ways in which discrimination can work. He pointed out that, 'when Sri Lankan refugees migrated to Tamil Nadu, most of them have come by boat without passports, unauthorized, we welcome them and earlier we had Tibetan refugees who crossed the actual control and came, so we don't have any problems with it, but why do we have a peculiar problem when Muslims come across the boundary'.

The conclave reached a heartening conclusion that media, Muslims and the majority community must undertake a thorough self-introspection to remove the dark clouds of misunderstanding between and among communities. And the media must be more sensitive, responsive and responsible. Democratization of the media was urgently required, and the media industry must become inclusive in character. The message of the conclave was well received by all those present as one witnesses them expressing their unconditional approval through the massive clapping.





A cultural programme of *Ghazal and Sufiyana Kalam* was performed by famous artiste **Ms. Smita Bellur** on 17th March 2015 evening.



Valedictory Session was held on 18th March 2015 in CPDUMT Auditorium at 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM. Session was Presided over by Janab Zafar Sareshwala (Honorable Chancellor, MANUU, Hyderabad in the august presence of Prof. Mohammad Miyan, Honorable Vice Chancellor, MANUU, Hyderabad. **Lord Meghnad Desai, Padma Bhushan**, Economist & Statesman, London was the Chief Guest. Prof. Khaja M. Shahid, Pro-Vice Chancellor MANUU, Hyderabad and Prof. Ehtesham Ahmad Khan, Dean, School of MCJ were also present in the valedictory session. Approximately 108 papers were presented in four Parallel Technical Sessions of International Conference.





Head
Department of Mass Communication & Journalism