

**DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES, IUST INAUGURATES 2-DAY
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ‘CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSE ON
WOMEN IN ISLAM’**



The department of Islamic studies, Islamic University of Science and Technology inaugurated a Two-Day International conference on 19th and 20th December, 2018 entitled ‘*Contemporary Discourse on Women in Islam*’. Dr. Showkat Hussain Dar initiated the conference and the talked about the background of this conference and its importance in discarding myths about women in both the text and the context within Muslim societies. Head Department of Islamic Studies, Dr. Afroz Ahmad Bisati welcomed the guests and participants and gave a context to need for organizing this conference and the questions revolving around women and Islam. How, from both philosophical-cultural and religious traditions have undermined the place of women in the world. It is Islam, under the normative horizon, emancipated the women and shaped a positive space for socio-economic and intellectual engagement of women in Islamic societies.

The keynote speaker, Prof. Obaidullah Fahad (Head, Department of Islamic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University) deliberated on ‘*Contemporary Thought on Women in Islam*’ and started off with the diverse narratives revolving around women within Muslim as well as non-Muslim societies. How dual-*Jahaliyyah*, both of early Islamic society and the modern world have degraded the status of women and it is only the Prophetic normative framework and its implementation, can the renaissance of women rights is possible. He also talked about the complementarity of genders. Gender roles in Islam are simultaneously coloured by two Qur'anic precepts: (i) spiritual equality between women and men; and (ii) the idea that women are meant to exemplify femininity, and men masculinity.

Prof. Abdul Salam Bhat [Dean School of Humanities and Social Science] offered his worthy remarks and deliberated on the ingrained notion of women rights in Islam and its role in discarding the misinformation and misinterpretation about the place of women in Islam. He equally impressed upon the condition of women in Muslim societies and the debates around women specific issues. He suggested to look for alternate narratives to respond to those issues. Prof. A. M. Shah [Dean Academic Affairs, IUST] equally started off with the wide-gap between the textual approach to the women and the contextualist reality of women in the Muslim world.

The inaugural session concluded with the deliberations from the Vice Chancellor of IUST, Prof. Mushtaq Ahmad Siddiqi. He impressed upon the universal challenges faced by Muslims and humanity across the globe. He focused on the shaping and impressing on the moral framework of Islam and the role of Islam, not only a religion of past but as a religion for future too and its scope to play a substantial role in shaping the discourse of ethico-moral framework vis-à-vis the dignity of women both on social and spiritual level. Dr. Ali Mohd Bhat concluded the inaugural and offered the vote of thanks to academics, researchers and scholars for participating in the event.

The conference stretched on 5 technical sessions and 60 papers were presented on different topics related to the theme of the conference. Some of the papers presented in the conference, like Dr. Safa Altaf paper on ‘*Contemporary Muslim Women Education*’ wherein she focused on rate of illiteracy among women and how the reformist policies about education vis-à-vis women can bring a change in make a substantial shift towards upliftment of women. Dr. Sajad

Ahmad Mir spoke about '*Divorce in Islamic Law*' and the rationale behind the philosophy of divorce, the different jurisprudential approach towards the methodology of divorce and how its efficacy can be increased in the modern times. Miss Aesha Javid talked about '*Critical Appraisal of Feminist Tafsir*' and the methodological errors in the approaches of tafsir writing within progressive Islamic feminists like Liela Bakhtiyar. Dr. Rabia Noor spoke about the 'Reception of Triple-Talaq verdict on Twitter' and how a two-fold response of emancipation and misappropriation of Triple-Talaq verdict was visible and manifest on the twitter. Shaista Rasool presented her paper on '*Contribution of Muslim women in Hadith literature*' in which she discussed the contribution of women companions especially Aisha (ra), Safiya (ra) and other companions who safeguarded and transmitted the hadith literature. Various other themes were discussed in the conference vis-à-vis women which includes contemporary Muslim scholars' contribution, the challenges of feminist discourse, and other contours related to this theme.

The programme concluded with the valedictory session. Head Department of Islamic Studies, Dr. Afroz Ahamd Bisati welcome the guests and participants, and alluded to the importance of this seminar. Professor Abdul Salam Bhat (Dean, School of Social Sciences and Humanities) also spoke about the importance of such theme and the responsibility of Muslims to create a response to the challenges coming from within Islamic tradition and from the outside world. Prof. Hamidullah Marazi (Head, Dept. of Religious Studies, Central University of Kashmir) also spoke about the role of Islam in shaping a coherent, cohesive and systematic sacred-centric approach towards women. He also highlighted to need to critically evaluate the western orientalist and feminist approach towards women. Dr. Riyaz Rufai (Registrar, IUST) applauded the efforts of the department for organizing the conference on such an important theme and offered his assistance for organizing some more conference in the future. The conference was wrapped up with the vote of thanks by Dr. Showkat Hussain Dar, who extended his greetings to all those who participated in the two-day international conference.