

IMPAR
Indian Muslims for Progress and Reforms

THREE MONTHS INCREDIBLE JOURNEY OF IMPAR

10 April 2020 - 10 July 2020



BACKGROUND



IMPAR was formed on April 10, 2020 by consulting about 100 concerned eminent persons of the community, who felt the need for collective actions to address the grave situation that was emerging especially by hate speeches and motivated media overdrive. In a very short time, IMPAR has worked overtime in an emergency mode to perform from police interventions to emergency helps to media outreach, fake news busting to releasing Jamaatis, filing FIRs to legal notices and more. Promoted by 500 plus Muslims from different walks of life such as politics, bureaucracy, education, business, science, media, law, art, etc., IMPAR is now joined by 2000 plus prominent Muslims from across the country.

Indian Muslims are at the cross roads, facing a plethora of challenges from low share in education, jobs and businesses to increasing social, political and economic marginalisation to the issues of image and perceptions to cultural identity and physical safety and security, and access to basic amenities and social welfare programs. Widening the educational and economic opportunities in a cost-effective manner for its citizens is a national priority for India in the new millennium. Any positive change in the condition of the community is possible only by initiating internal reforms, adopting modern outlook, and doing community service on the one hand and building favorable social and political environment, and enabling access to educational and economic opportunities on the other hand. The barriers to access and equity faced by Muslims require a better understanding by the Government, media, thought leaders, and political class for which a research, monitoring, dialogue, and policy advocacy forum was needed to be created by the community. IMPAR is the result of this over-riding concern felt for a long time.

VISION

IMPAR focuses on improving image and perceptions about Muslims in India and promoting better understanding among the communities by proactive policy and media engagements, initiating positive social actions and community reforms, cultivating youth and women leaderships and facilitating access to modern education, business and economic opportunities by promoting positive thinking, and unleashing the potential of the community. We at IMPAR also stress on maximising social and economic opportunities and accessing the same.

OBJECTIVES

- To act as a think tank, watchdog, research and data centre, advocacy and communication group, national-level coordination, and dialogue body on social and economic issues, policies and perception management about Indian Muslims and to creating better understanding and opinions among the people and communities by meaningfully engaging with key stakeholders – Government, media, other think tanks, and social, business and political organizations. And also, to work on promoting education and awareness, national ethos and shared culture, rational thinking and scientific temperament, reforms, and positivity in the community toward maximizing social and economic access and opportunities.
- Conducting research and collecting data on Muslim's social, economic, and educational statuses and trends in light of various Government decisions and social, economic, and policy developments, including participation in flagship programs, and present the same to the Government, various groups, and the media. Analyzing social, political, economic, and policy environment and media coverage, which have a direct and indirect impact on the well-being of the community, including its security, image and perceptions, and long term implications; and preparing responses to be taken up with the media, social, and political spectrum and the Government.
- Putting before the political parties the concerns of the community, and social, economic and development agenda; seeking their support and commitments; and accordingly, monitoring whether the same has been included in the manifestoes and subsequently implemented.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

IMPAR has a panel of experts- the Steering Committee with 32 members who hail from esteemed backgrounds. IMPAR has an Executive Committee with 20 members, National Council with 250 members and 12 Working Groups with 1400 members. IMPAR has other bodies as well such as Expert Groups, Task Forces, Program Committees, State Chapters and District Action Groups.

IMPAR looks forward to making a meaningful difference to the community's engagement with the society and the nation.

GUIDELINES ISSUED

IMPAR issued several sets of guidelines as per SOP on preventive measures to contain the spread of COVID 19 at religious places/places of worship.

Guidelines on how people should observe Ramzan amidst the pandemic were issued. From offering taraweeh at home to avoiding iftar gatherings, the guidelines encompassed major areas of concern around the social life of Muslim community in Ramzan.

In the wake of the COVID 19 threat, IMPAR also issued a set of guidelines for Eid 2020. The 11 points guidelines sought to ensure that social distancing and austerity measures were followed. In addition, IMPAR also urged people to offer Eid prayers at home, to avoid shopping for Eid, avoiding extravagant meals and instead encouraged to donate money to the needy, irrespective of caste and creed. IMPAR also coordinated with the Imams of various masjids across the country on giving directions about how to perform Eid namaz at home.

LEGAL ADVOCACY

IMPAR filed an RTI on the number of total deaths in the recent riots of North-East Delhi; FIRs for the missing people; total number of injured; list of houses and shops that were looted with list and names of affected families; list of burnt houses and shops and names of affected families; list of the arrested people by names and the charges framed against each arrested person by name of police station or other concerned teams; list about the compensation that was paid for deaths, injured, burnt /damaged houses, properties etc.

IMPAR has also submitted a complaint with the National Human Rights Commission over the hunger death of a Tablighi in hospital in Delhi. The complaint has been picked up by NHRC and it has sought response from concerned authorities failing which legal proceedings would be initiated against them.

IMPAR initiated a powerful campaign against Dr Aarti Lalchandani who had indulged in a hate rant against the Tablighis. In this regard, IMPAR wrote to Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harshvardhan and Medical Council of India asking for immediate action against the above-mentioned doctor. In addition to this, powerful media/social media campaign was launched by IMPAR against the purported hate speech by Dr. Aarti Lalchandani. Subsequently, IMPAR filed a Public Interest Litigation against her in the Allahabad High Court.



IMPAR filed a Legal Notice against the News Anchor Amish Devgan for making highly offensive, derogatory, and defamatory remarks against revered Sufi Saint Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.

IMPAR also filed a complaint with Delhi Commission for Women against Payal Rohatgi for her abusive tweets against Indian Muslim women. IMPAR served legal notice to news anchor Shweta Singh and Aaj Tak for insulting and questioning the courage of Indian Army. The notice has been sent by Diwan Associates.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE CONCERNED AUTHORITIES

In its endeavor to establish channels of communication and engage with the administration and political leadership of the country, IMPAR wrote various letters of concern. To mention few instances of establishing communication, IMPAR wrote letters of concern to Union Minister Dr Harshvardhan, MCI demanding action against the doctor who allegedly claimed that Tablighi Jamaatis were terrorists. Letters were also sent to Secretary, Family Health and Welfare concerning the disturbing trend of Muslims facing discrimination in hospitals. IMPAR has sent a letter of concern to Delhi Commissioner of Police with regard to suo moto action against the channels which aired the doctored audio regarding Maulana Saad.

IMPAR also sent letters to the HM to take action against the hate messages targeting the Muslim community and how during the pandemic the students were arrested on false charges of inciting riots.

IMPAR sent letters to Prime Minister on several instances congratulating the Prime Minister for his statement that the virus has no religion. IMPAR also wrote to Shri Mohan Bhagwat welcoming his statement that Muslims are an integral part of Indian society, and the whole community cannot be targeted for mistakes of few.

Other than this IMPAR also wrote letters of appreciation to various organizations and individuals like Poorvanchal Dastak, Go News, Mufti Rizwan Qasmi for serving the nation in the best possible way. IMPAR also wrote for intervention to Mr. Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi Commission of Police against the cases of economic boycott that Muslim traders/vendors are undergoing. Letters of concern were written to Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Dr Harshvardhan and Medical Council of India about how at certain places private hospitals denied treatment to Muslims patients. It was requested that stern measures should be put in place to check this practice. Communications were also sent to CMs congratulating them for commendable action and, at the same time pointing out lapses, if any. Appreciation letter was sent to Mr Sonu Sood for his remarkable contribution to the nation in the time of crisis.

Letters of concern were written to Delhi Waqf Board and Shri Manish Sisodia for immediate release of salaries of Imams and Muezzins in New Delhi. Shri Manish Sisodia promised to look into the matter and directed the Delhi Waqf Board for immediate release of salaries.

IMPAR also wrote to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and ICMR for cancellation of licenses of laboratories which are involved in erroneous Covid 19testing.



INTERVENTION IN THE TABLIGHI ISSUE

IMPAR managed to get the Tablighis released who were languishing in various quarantine centers across the country since many weeks. The COVID 19 protocols require 14 days of quarantine but unfortunately, most of the Tablighis had spent more than a month in quarantine. The irony was that people were quarantined for so many days, even though none of them were found Corona positive cases. With the collective effort of few individuals such as Jb. MH Khan, IAS, ex-Secretary, GOI, Mr. HK Paliwal, ex-Secretary to CM, Gen. Zameer Uddin Shah, and Mr MJ Khan, about 250 Tablighi members were released who were lodged in Baraut for last 50 days. 55 Tablighis locked in quarantine at a school in Gonda for 40 days were also released. Dr. Nitin Bansal, DM, helped in the completion of all formalities and ensured that Tablighis reached their home before Eid.

IMPAR wrote to Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Home Secretary Government of India, Shri Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor Government of India, Thiru K Palaniswami Honorable Chief Minister Government of Tamil Nadu Chennai, Mr K Shanmugan Chief Secretary Government of Tamil Nadu, H.E Banwari Lal Purohit Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu for the release of overseas Tablighi Jamaatis languishing across various jails in Tamil Nadu. Though having completed the necessary quarantine and ordered for release by the Hon'ble High Court of Chennai, the release has been deferred by one or the other reason. In this regard, press release was also released and carried by several English, Urdu and Hindi newspapers.



COMMUNITY WORK

IMPAR has prepared a booklet of charity work done by Muslims, individually and at community level during the COVID 19 crisis. IMPAR also initiated zakat related work for facilitating zakat collection for institutions which have not been able to go out and collect zakat this year. A list of Madrasas from across the country was prepared. The list is uploaded on the IMPAR website.

Specific help was provided to more than 25 stranded Muslims during the lockdown by using assistance and network of the members. IMPAR also urged the government to issue guidelines to FCI for opening its godowns for NGOs for direct lifting of stocks. Food/ration deliveries were managed in multiple cases by members plus Nafed supplies were arranged to one Muslim NGO in Mumbai.

A campaign was launched on Blood Donors Day. As it is impossible to have a blood donation camp in the current situation, IMPAR generated a web link where the donors could register themselves so that they could be contacted easily at the time of emergency.

IMPAR came up with a booklet named Walking Together with COVID where the community work done by Muslims individually and by the community throughout the pandemic was highlighted. Another initiative taken by IMPAR was to collaborate with NGOs for admitting COVID19 patients in hospitals, quarantine centers and to provide help to the distressed families in performing their last rites.

Sanitization and COVID 19 awareness drives were held in North-west Delhi by IMPAR volunteers.



As part of the RRF, IMPAR plans to felicitate individuals and organisations who have done exemplary work during COVID19 Crisis (HelpingHands). Information about the program was disseminated and entries are being sought.

IMPAR initiated the knowledge series where it would be collecting thesis, books, documents, judicial reports about Muslim community in India.

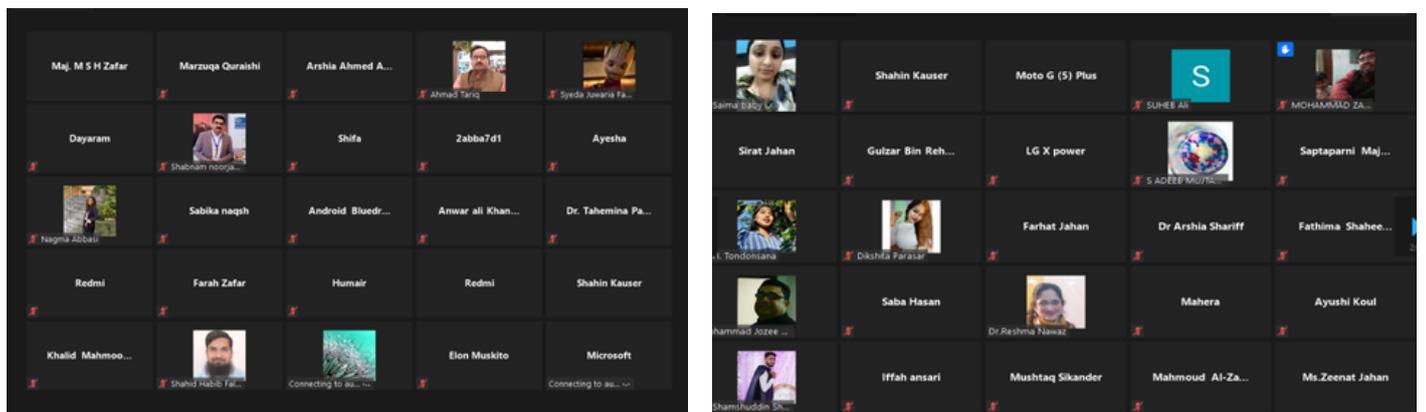
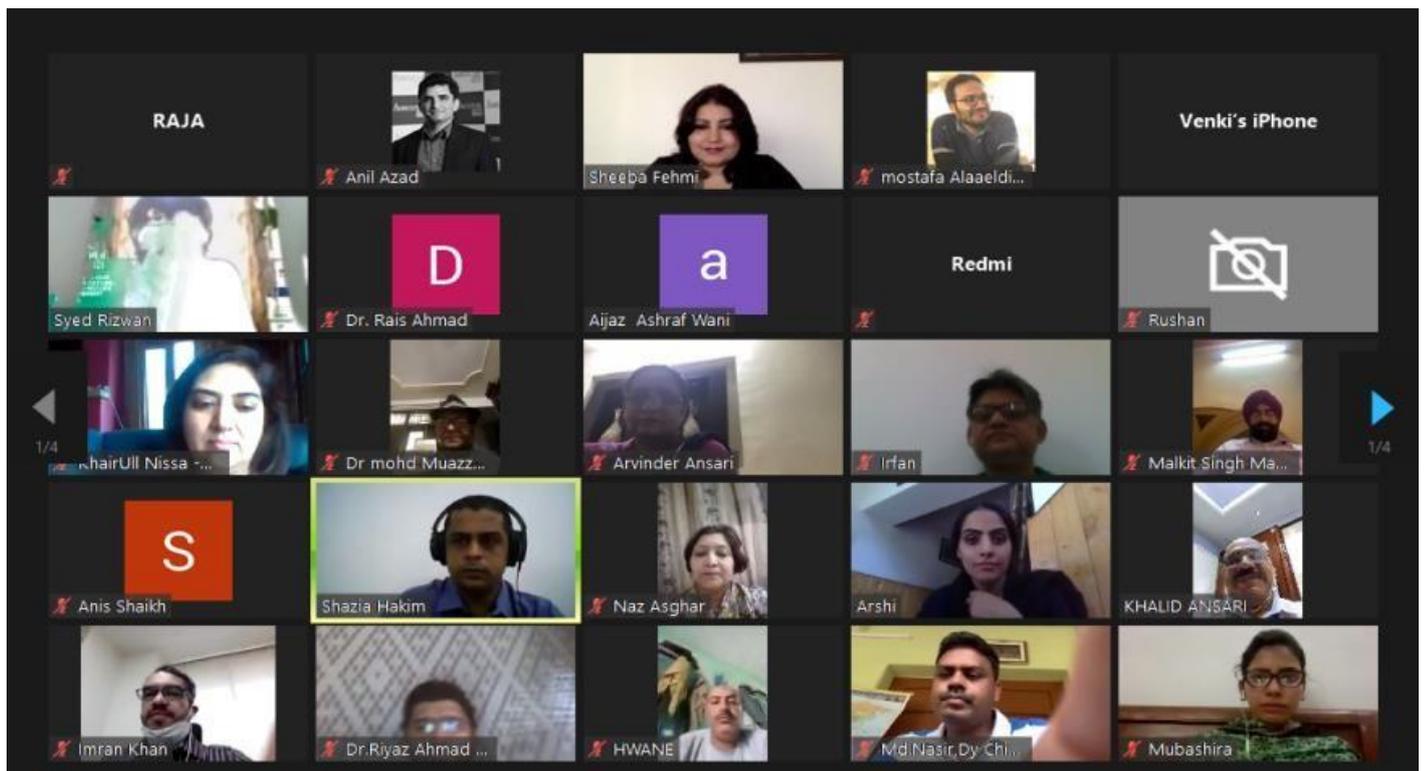
WEBINARS CONDUCTED

IMPAR initiated a webinar series wherein the first webinar on Opportunity Start-ups post COVID 19 was conducted, Mr Siraj Chaudhry, Mr MQ Sayed, Mr Imteyaz Siddiqui, Dr Zubair, Mr Ather Zia, Mr John Rizvi, Mr MJ Khan were the eminent speakers on the occasion. A webinar (2nd in series) on Fake News and Hate Speech: Consequences and Recourse to Legal Remedies was conducted on 17 May 2020. Five speakers, namely, Adv. Nasir Aziz, Adv. Firoze Ghazi, Adv. Ishtiaq Ali, Dr. Farukh Khan, and Adv. Tahir participated, and Sheeba Aslam Fahmi delivered the closing remark. Third webinar on How Muslims view the Changing Political Scenario was conducted on 21 May 2020. In the webinar key speakers were Mr. K. Rahman Khan, veteran politician of Indian National Congress, former Union Minister of Minority Affairs and Ex-Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha and Mr. S M Shervani, Managing Director, Shervani group.

Webinar was held on 10th June for the release of IMPAR website, launch of leadership development program, launch of IMPAR work plan, release of booklet on community work done during Covid19 and for sharing the progress report of the two-month journey of IMPAR.

IMPAR Political Group passed a resolution on political empowerment of the marginalized communities in a webinar. The webinar was convened by Mr Anis Ansari (retired IAS officer). On July 10th, the series of webinar- Jobs Readiness Program was commenced.

IMPAR organised a webinar on Muslim Women in Higher education on 4 July 2020. Prof Arvinder Ansari, Head of Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia, Ms Khair un Nissa Shah, Vice President World Trade Centre, Dr Amina Mirza, Assistant Professor, Delhi University, Ms Sheeba Aslam Fehmi, journalist and India head at Indiatime.live, Dr Venkatesh Sundaram, Economist at World Bank, Dr Arshia Sharif, Professor and Pharma Consultant were the speakers for the event. More than 200 participants attended the webinar.



IMPAR organised an interaction with Shri Suresh Prabhu, Member of Parliament and India's Sherpa to G7 and G20 countries. On behalf of IMPAR, Mr K Rahman Khan-former Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha, Mr H R Khan-former Deputy Governor RBI, Mumbai, Mr Yunus Javed-India Representative Saudi CISP and Aramco, Mr Saaed Shervani-M D Shervani Group of Hotels, Ms Sheeba Aslam Fehmi-journalist and India head at Indiatimes.live and Mr M J Khan-President IMPAR raised pertinent issues that affect the Muslim community in India. The program was conducted by Mr Khalid Ansari, Executive Director IMPAR and vote of thanks was delivered by Col Saleem Durrani. The news about the interaction was widely covered by national and regional media.



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SOCIAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES

IMPAR conducted twitter activities notably a population ursting myth campaign, a twitter storm on Eid at home. Social Media and Mainstream Media structure was formulated. All IMPAR social media handles were operationalised on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube etc. Videos were generated about important issues and social media team was created. Further negotiations with media agencies are underway. Several TV programs were organized with panelists from IMPAR appearing for giving a progressive Muslim perspective. Other than this, campaigns were launched and widely circulated and appreciated by the general public.

In a way, IMPAR was vigorously covered by national and regional media. Articles about IMPAR were shared widely on social media handles and amongst the groups. The articles focused on the image and perceptions management of Muslims in India, organizing community reforms and positive social actions, creating channels of help for access to social and economic opportunities.



PRESS RELEASES ISSUED

Various press releases were issued about the work IMPAR has been doing. Press release and reports about the webinar were released. IMPAR released a press release demanding an impartial, unbiased, enquiry on the violation of Epidemic Act 1897 and lockdown guidelines. Other press releases were also issued by IMPAR on Amish Devgan's and Dr Lalchandani's case, release of foreign TJ members on humanitarian grounds and the members were released thereafter.

Press releases were issued on specific subjects of concerns. IMPAR came out with a press release condemning the Chinese incursions in Ladakh and offered condolence to the families of 20 soldiers who lost their lives.

IMPAR worked strenuously to get a formal advisory of the government to media houses issued against hate speeches and fake news. This advisory was issued to states and regional channels. Change in media discourse is visible.

ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES

IMPAR has managed to create a space for best minds of the Muslim community together. A working team has been put in place-organizational structure laid with Steering Committee and working groups for more effective functioning. IMPAR brochure was prepared and IMPAR website was made functional. More than 30 Zoom meetings were held with various groups and Steering Committee. Almost 5000 people joined through WhatsApp groups. Twitter and Facebook handles have become more efficient with addition of members. IMPAR working agenda for next 12 months was released. The agenda touches issues of monitoring of media contents and constructive engagement, analyzing the social, political and economic challenges by internal working groups, constituting expert groups to leverage government programs and schemes, engaging with central and state governments and all the key institutions, reaching out to top 1000 corporates for CSR, jobs and skill support, organizing meetings, expert lectures and roundtables with thought leaders of various subjects, holding

dialogue with leadership of all political parties, media and corporate houses, creating NGO's and start ups and adopting the same number in existing districts, creating monitoring centre, emergency response team (ERT) with legal support system, organizing RRF (reward, recognition function) for outstanding community work, organizing social actions like cleanliness drive, feeding the poor, community service and leadership development of women and youth.

IMPAR is working towards the formation of District Action Groups (DAGs) across the districts in the country. Work is being carried out on laying the structure and other necessary logistical arrangements.

IMPAR has also laid down its agenda for the next 12 months.

JOB CREATION

IMPAR launched the Jobs Readiness Program geared to train job-seekers. Eight sessions were delivered by experts so far. Additionally tie ups have done reached out with Sudexo and Kaamhai.com



Working Groups



Legal Support Group



Women Empowerment Group



Research Group



Media Outreach Group



Overseas Group



Youth Empowerment Group



Social Action Group



Food and Agro Group



Masjid and Madrassa Group



Education and Jobs Group



Policy Advocacy Group



Skills and Enterprise Group

Various Programs Initiated by IMPAR



Contact Us:

Indian Muslims for Progress and Reforms

Mr Khalid Ansari, Executive Director
306, Rohit House, Tolstoy Road, New Delhi - 1100011
Mob.: +91-97118 98605, +91-97118 98405 | Tel.: 011-23731129, 011-23731130
Email: info@impar.in, india.impar@gmail.com
www.impar.in

