

Press Release

Dated: April 22, 2020

Indian Muslims for Progress and Reforms

Prominent Muslims form National Think Tank

Over 200 prominent Muslims of India have come together to create a national think tank and an apex coordination body to put forward the voice of progressive and modern Muslims and to collectively express their constructive views to the media and the nation. Indian Muslims for Progress and Reforms (IMPAR) will work with the intellectual and thought leaders of all communities and represent voices of educated and modern Muslims of the country in the public domain. It will also strive to promote the cosmopolitan, pluralistic, and secular fabric of India by culturally engaging with all communities and media. We hope that our sustained efforts at the grassroots level will bring about a constructive change for the community and the nation.

Former Dy. Chairman, Rajya Sabha – Mr. K Rahman Khan; former CEC – Dr. SY Quraishi; former Ministers – Mr. Tariq Anwar and Sh. Roshan Baig; ; Chairman of India Islamic Cultural Center – Siraj Qureshi, Brig. Syed Ahmed Ali; former Spl. Police Commissioner – Mr. AA Khan; ex. ADG, CRPF Mr. Aftab Khan, former bureaucrats – Dr. Anis Ansari, Mr. MH Khan, and Mr. Salauddin Ahmed; educationists – Mr. PA Inamdar and Mr. SW Akhtar; media persons – Mr. Saeed Naqvi, Mr. QW Naqvi, Mr. Qamar Agha, Mr. Shahid Siddiqui; authors – Ms. Seema Mustafa, Ms. Saba Naqvi, and Ms. Sheeba Aslam; business luminaries – Mr. Saeed Shervani and Mr. Juneid Yousuf; corporate leaders – Mr Siraj Chaudhry and Mr. Riaz Naqvi; thought leaders – Dr. Zafar Mahmood, Dr. Abu Saleh Sharief, and MM Ansari; film world – Mr. Hasan Kamaal, Mr. Aijaj Khan, and Ms. Atika Farooqui; legal luminaries – Mr. Feroz Ghazi, Mr. M Tahir, and Mr. Mehmood Mehdi; and social work – Ms. Amina Shervani, Mr. Arshad Siddiqui, and Mr. Pasha Patel are among the prominent names.

The Muslim community in India has been at the center of negative news. Due to poor education and limited exposure, a section of the community is unable to respond effectively to new situations and challenges. IMPAR plans to chalk out strategies to connect the community to modern education and shared cultural values to contribute to nation-building efforts.

Muslims constitute a large segment of Indians who continue to suffer due to the lack of proper education and ability to access social and economic opportunities. Lack of basic education, social vulnerability, poor economic orientation, and, importantly, certain policy decisions from time to time have in totality contributed to keeping progress distant from the community. We realize that any positive change in the condition of the community is possible only by initiating internal reforms, inculcating scientific and rational thinking and doing community service and creating a favorable social and political environment on the one hand, and enabling access to educational and economic opportunities on the other hand.

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In recent days, it has been observed that the media engagement with the Muslim community has been poor and represented by self-styled clergy or ill informed persons, engaging irrationally in discussions and presenting imbalanced views. As a result, the community's voice and concerns have not been presented or articulated, and a wrong narrative and negative perception built over a period of time. IMPAR would like to share its panel of eminent persons to help the media to have more informed discussions.

In the current circumstances of a countrywide lockdown, our immediate goal is to mobilize the community to assist health administration, law enforcement, and other agencies in the fight against this pandemic. IMPAR, through its various Working Groups and important members, is coordinating with various community NGOs, institutions, and individuals to help stranded people with food and other necessities and also liberally donate funds as and where required.

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 needed to be created by the community. The situation of Muslims and their more constructive engagement can be promoted by creating a national forum and through the process of engagement and community reforms, and by adopting shared values and national ethos and effective policy advocacy and media engagement.

About IMPAR: Indian Muslims for Progress and Reforms

Promoted by 200 plus most prominent Muslims from different walks of life, IMPAR looks forward to your active cooperation and support in making a meaningful difference to the community's engagement with the society and the nation. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Let's be the change that we wish to see in the world." The Forum comprises the eminent persons from politics, bureaucracy, corporate, business, academia, science, economy, journalism, policy-making, art and culture, and philanthropy.

Main Objective

To act as a think tank, research and advocacy center and national-level communication, coordination, and dialogue body on social and political issues, policies, and perceptions pertaining to Indian Muslims and to creating better understanding and opinions among the people and communities by meaningfully engaging with key stakeholders, such as Government, media, other think tanks, and social, cultural, religious 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.

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Objectives

- Conducting research and collecting data on Muslims' social, economic, and educational status and trends in light of various Government decisions and social, economic, and policy developments, including participation in flagship programs and presenting 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 an indirect impact on the well-being of the community, including its security, image, and opportunities; and prepare responses to be taken up with the media, social and political spectrum, and the Government.
- Dialogue with Ministries and State Governments, media, political parties, and social and intellectual groups for sensitization and creation of a better understanding on issues concerning Muslims. Building a database of Muslim professionals in media, law, health, education, business, politics, legislatures, etc.
- Organize consultation meetings, seminars, and discussions and dialogues with various bodies, think tanks, development organizations and media houses, and social and political leaderships to sensitize them and create understanding on issues pertaining to the community.
- Educating youth and inculcating among them rational and scientific thinking, broad social and national ethos and shared values, and greater respect for laws and institutions and promoting social work and community service culture in the community and understanding of the real essence of Islam, and not the demonstration of Islam.

We have set out to correct several long-standing problems. If we change nothing, nothing will change. The road ahead looks long and tedious. Hence, we seek the help and cooperation of all the people of our country in this endeavor.

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