

National Seminar on
Making Democratic Governance Work:
Reinventing Public Service Delivery Systems in India
5th & 6th November, 2013

Organized by
The Department of Political Science
Jamia Millia Islamia
New Delhi-110025

Concept Note

The proposed National Seminar in the department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia would focus on how democratic governance works and the need to reinvent public service delivery systems in India. Political Science has focused largely on democratic institutions in recent years but far less on the understanding of basic state capacity, the absence of which often undermines democracy. Do democratic governance systems comparatively work better to ensure improved public delivery systems in the long run? Do public powers in democracies necessarily match human welfare and better public outcomes? These are serious questions that ought to be debated in the public domain. Democracy and good governance are separate and distinct phenomena, but worldwide empirical evidence has proved that regimes reflecting both dimensions are necessary to achieve many aspects of human security. Is democratic governance good for economic prosperity translated into concrete citizen entitlements?

Within the international community, democracy and governance are widely advocated as intrinsically desirable and important goals. The challenge for democracies is therefore not simply to strengthen downward electoral accountability so that vote seeking politicians have an incentive to pay attention to citizen needs. It is equally important to endow the public governance systems with the capacity, technical skills and resources so that elected leaders can deliver things that most citizens want: food and nutrition, education, basic healthcare and sustainable livelihoods. Recognizing the need for both democracy and development, the challenge of developing societies like India is to make democratic governance work in terms of good public delivery systems which truly impact on the lives of citizens.

Development in today's age includes both economic growth and human development. Globally we are the second fastest growing economy yet our ranking in human development is 119 (UNDP Human Development Report 2010). This is an obvious mismatch. It is the experience of developed countries today that higher growth (we have averaged above 7% growth rate in the last decade) is an essential pre-condition to better equity. With such growth rates in the last decade, for the first time in India's political history public

power and resources can match public outcomes in terms of better and reformed public service delivery systems.

Democracy eventually gives everyone a promise and a hope to be included in citizen entitlements. Part IV of the Indian Constitution constitutes the core of the promise of socio economic justice to be progressively realized through enhanced state capacity. Our proposed seminar on **“Making democratic governance work: Reinventing Public Service Delivery Systems in India”** will focus on good governance practices in India in the post globalized era (1990’s and beyond) in different sectors (infrastructure, education, health, urban civic services etc.) initiated by either the Centre or different states which have reformed or reinvented public service delivery systems with visible and measurable impacts on lives of citizens.

Call for Papers

The Seminar will invite scholars, development practitioners, NGO’s and administrators to document cases of public service delivery reform across a range of sectors in different states of India. The criteria used to choose papers for presentation will be three fold. First, they must represent some form of institutional innovation or reform in diverse sectors of service delivery. Second, the cases must indicate empirical evidence of positive citizen impacts certified by rated domestic or external agencies. Finally the selected case studies should be examples of stable initiatives that have been in existence for at least five years.

By presenting these best practices across a range of sectors we hope to understand delivery systems in a broad diversity of services and the challenges in these sectors. This will shed light on the post globalized reform processes in India, their outcomes and the underlying explanatory factors especially to focus on two objectives: (a) understanding of the key causal factors and constraints involved in the reform process of public service delivery in India (b) attempt to build theoretical constructs through a study of common patterns of practice in public service delivery systems in India.

Specific Themes

The conference shall deliberate on the following themes:

- Theme I:** Administrative reforms and political leadership : Building political support for programme delivery.
- Theme II:** Infrastructure reform in key sectors: Case Studies from Indian states
- Theme III:** Public sector enterprises : Fostering competition and service autonomy.
- Theme IV:** Restructuring service delivery in social sector: Reforms in educational access and quality.
- Theme V:** Improving health outcomes through access & equity: Best practices
- Theme VI:** Improving urban civic services: Strengthening accountability mechanisms
- Theme VII:** Simplifying process delivery through e-governance: Spreading networks
- Theme VIII:** Good governance and effective public service delivery: Proposals for civil service reform

Organizing Committee

- Patron** : ICSSR and Jamia Millia Islamia
- Chairman** : Prof. Badrul Alam, Head, Department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia
- Organizing Secretary** : Prof. Furqan Ahmad, Department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia
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Prof. Furqan Ahmad, Department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia
Prof. R.K. Barik, Indian Institute of Public Administration
Prof. Amita Singh, Centre for Law & Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Seminar Logistics

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Guidelines for Paper Presentation

Papers with a serious engagement on the above themes are invited from academics, research scholars, activists and practitioners of public administration. The abstracts of the papers. (not more than 500 words) should clearly reveal new concepts and in sights and reach the conference organizers by e-mail at jamiapublicadmnconference2013@gmail.com latest by 5th July, 2013. All the authors of abstracts should give brief C.V. and mail id. Only the authors of selected abstracts would be called for the presentation of their papers in the conference. The conference will solicit both theoretical and empirical research papers associated with conference themes. Authors of selected abstracts are advised to submit their papers electronically (MS Word).

Important Dates

Submission of abstracts :	5th July, 2013
Acceptance of abstracts :	15 th July, 2013
Submission of full papers :	15 th September, 2013
Announcement of the final seminar programme :	5 th October, 2013

Selected papers presented at the conference will be published in an edited book in 2014.

Financial Support

Participants are expected to bear travel cost. The organizers will bear expenses of local hospitality. In select cases partial/full grants maybe extended to paper presenters only depending on the availability of funds.