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Book Release: Author Mujtaba Syed calls for Democratic response to the Challenges faced by the Muslim Community

📅 August 13, 2025 👤 The India Observer

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By Humaira Jawed, Copy Edited By Adam Rizvi, The India Observer, TIO: Kolkata: Eminent author Dr. Syed Ali Mujtaba calls for a democratic response to the challenges faced by the Indian Muslims. He was speaking at his latest book release event on August 08, 2025 at ICCR Library, Kolkata. His book is titled "Indian Muslims' Tryst with Democracy: Challenges and Opportunities."

The author suggested that the future generation of Muslims can thrive with dignity in India only by adopting a four-pronged strategy.



First, understand their strength and weaknesses in the game of numbers in an electoral democracy. Then form a winning combination to outflank their opponents through numerical arithmetic or game of numbers.

Second is to gain political empowerment by increasing their numbers in the national Parliament, the state legislatures and the Panchayats and municipal wards. Third, build meritocracy in education and qualify the competitive exams and get into government jobs thus integrate into the administrative structure of India.

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Fourth, Muslims should recalibrate its strategies through capacity building at the grassroots forming self-help groups, micro financing and community networking to achieve their broader goal of community advancement in the Indian social structure.

The event commenced with a formal opening ceremony, featuring Jawhar Sircar (IAS) and public intellectual, Saira Shah Halim, the dynamic social activist of Kolkata, Professor Maidul Islam, an erudite intellectual of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata and Dr. Abdul Matin of Department of International Relation Jadavpur University. Philanthropist Dr. Fuad Halim and prominent social leader Imran Zaki were other figures at the event.

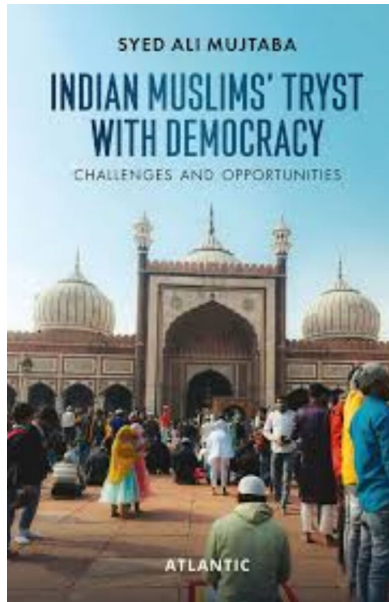
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Jawhar Sircar (IAS) in his keynote address gave some insights on the challenges faced by the Muslim community. He highlighted the pitiable state of Muslims across India, attributing their stagnation primarily to a lack of education, absence of effective community leadership as a critical factor hindering their progress.

"Muslims must not allow to be used as Vote Banks and must boldly join the democratic, secular forces fighting to restore the plural character of India, Sircar said.

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The prominent public intellectual of the country praised the book saying, “The book attempts to revisit the issues confronting Indian Muslims and suggests a roadmap on how Muslims should navigate the path of democracy in contemporary India.”



Prof. Maidul Islam of CSDS noted that Muslims are democratically conscious due to their vulnerability, yet face significant barriers, particularly the lack of progressive leadership as a root cause of their issues.

Prof. Abdul Matin of Jadavpur University stressed the need to strengthen the public education system, noting a change in the nature and quality of education as a pressing concern of the community.

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Social worker Saira Shah Halim delivered an enriching speech, providing deep insights into the topic, captivating the audience with her perspective.

Imran Zaki and Manzar Jameel also contributed valuable points during the book discussion.

The panelist during the book discussion resounded that in independent India, Muslims' tryst with democracy continues and they struggle to cope with the democratic challenges and have to prepare a democratic response within the constitutional framework of India.

The panelists agree that the book meticulously details the Muslims' issues in its entire vicissitude. It delves into the evolving dynamics of Muslim identity in the context of their slipping political power and roadmap democratic response to the democratic system of governance in India.

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The author provides a comprehensive examination of the challenges faced by Muslims and provides strategies to tackle them within the democratic framework of India, summed the panelists about the book.

The book discussion fostered a meaningful dialogue on the socio-political challenges faced by Indian Muslims and the opportunities for advancement.

Overall it was a thought-provoking session which left lot of food for the thought. The event underscored the importance of education, leadership, and fair political representation in addressing these issues.

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This book is a significant contribution to understanding the complex socio-political landscape of Indian Muslims. It is a must-buy for all those who want to know the problems faced by the Muslim community and what could be their plausible solutions.

Curated by Humra Kidwai

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