



Two-day National Conference on

# "Concept of the Unity of Ummah and Schools of Thought in Islam"

Organized by

**Institute Of Objective Studies, New Delhi**

In collaboration with

**India Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi &**

**Dr. P A Inamdar University, Pune**

February 22-23, 2025

Venue: India Islamic Cultural Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

## Concept Note

Atheism, irreligiosity and immorality are the most intensive nuisance in the modern age. Social media platforms have aggravated this trend and have made it more woeful. Criticisms and arguments have become widespread. Individuals, regardless of their knowledge or understanding, engage in these activities for amusement and self-expression. The excitement and chaos generated by immature minds have polluted the atmosphere and beliefs as well as values have become primary targets. Furthermore, the atmosphere of hatred and animosity between believers of different religions, followers of Islamic sects, and schools of thought, make easy the way of modern-day ignorance and intent atheism, ultimately promoting irreligiosity, immorality, social disorder and anarchism.

### A Broader Perspective

The growing hatred and animosity among the people of different religions in our beloved country and the atmosphere of debates, arguments and hatred between the people of Islam itself not only has negative impacts on social harmony and relations within the community, but it also damages the image of India and Indian Muslims in the world. Today's landscape of sectarianism, marked by political manoeuvrings and the revival of polytheistic traditions under the guise of nationalism, poses a serious threat to our nation's constitution, secular system, democracy, and social fabric. On one hand, there is a race to worship power and wealth while religion and faith are at risk, on the other hand, discord, suspicion, accusations, character assassination, propaganda, rumours, and hateful speeches are widespread. Alarmingly, all of these are being justified through unrestricted use of religious arguments, as if our best capabilities have been directed toward this "noble" task.

Even in these troubled times, our youth are wasting their energy and talent in destructive rather than constructive activities, by engaging themselves at negative debates. Instead of thinking about the welfare of the community, scholars in madrasas and khanqahs are competing to outdo each other, keeping which holds sophistry the public in its grip, with the power of speech and pen focused not on defending the faith, instead they are satisfying their egos and defending personal interests. This is a moment of deep introspection for Muslim

Ummah. It is the responsibility of the elders of the community to refix priorities and guide the new generation to take to the right path before it is too late.

### **Historical Context**

The example of 16th Century India is pertinent. When the nuisance of irreligiosity and immorality intensified, religion was being replaced with a superficial faith, and the king was declared God, prominent scholars and spiritual leaders like Khwaja Muhammad Abdul Baqi Kabuli (Baqi Billah), his successor Sheikh Ahmad Faruqi Sarhindi (Mujaddid Alf-e-Sani), and their contemporaries came forward with courage. First, they set their priorities, devised strategies and finally, they worked in close cooperation and harmony. Conspiracies were hatched to pit Hazrat Mujaddid Sarhindi and Hazrat Muhaddith Dehlavi (RH) against each other, but they failed. The affirmation of prophethood and the greatness of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was the focal point of their struggle by way of dialogue and their strategy involved in engaging with the socially influential people. They countered negative propaganda and false narrative with positive, well-reasoned, timely preaching and straight and simple conversation, exemplified by Sheikh Ahmad Faruqi Sarhindi's 'Maktubat' (letters) and the widespread network of his trained disciples. The network established by our righteous predecessors, in the form of madrasas, khanqahs, and organizations, still exists but is unfortunately gripped by desertedness, stagnant, and internal squabbles.

Thus, there is a need to activate and mobilize them within their areas of influence and guide them to take the right path. The intentions and behaviour of those in power today remain the same, and so does the role of scholars and intellectuals. The Muslim Ummah must face these challenges with the same wisdom and determination as its predecessors did. The outline of the conference on the topic "Concept of the Unity of Ummah and Schools of Thought in Islam" has been crafted with the above-mentioned thoughts in mind. Senior scholars and young people from various fields of Islamic science and philosophy are invited to share their views and engage in dialogue and discussion. We believe that amid this internal strife fuelled by social media, rays of hope will glimmer. May the Almighty Allah guide us and make our efforts successful.

### **Sub-themes of the Conference**

1. The Unity of Ummah and its teachings in the Qur'an and Sunnah.
2. The principles & limitations of agreement and disagreement in Islamic Shariah.
3. The points of consensus and contention among Sunni schools of Fiqh.
4. Differences and agreements between the Asharites, Maturidites, and Hanbalis.
5. Distinctive features and characteristics of various Sufi orders.
6. The role of Sufism & Sufis in preaching of Islam and the nature of Sufi rituals.
7. The concept of apostasy in Islam: forms and rulings.
8. The principles and rules to declare someone a disbeliever, sinful or misguided.
9. How Muslims should interact with Muslims according to Quranic guidelines.
10. Social relationship, rights of neighbours and human rights in Islam.
11. Guidelines to deal with different communities and beliefs in Islam.
12. The current sociopolitical conditions of the country and dealing with issues under Islamic principles.

### **Other Important Sub-themes**

1. The discord and disunity among Ahlus-Sunnah and ways to achieve unity and harmony.

2. The dangers of extremism in attitudes toward differences on minor issues.
3. The reasons for the distance and misunderstandings between madrasas and Sufi scholars.
4. The division of Maulvi and Sufi: Causes, effects, and harms;
5. The distance between the Ulema and Sufis of North and South India: Underlying Factors.
6. Disagreements and Conflicts based on rituals and ceremonies in Sufi Schools.
7. The behaviour of madrasa and khanqah scholars toward the general Muslim population and the Quranic guidelines for this: Deviations and harms.
8. The traditions of one-sided interpretations of Iman, Islam, and Ihsan: harms and consequences.
9. The impact of criticism by scholars of one another's practices.
10. Explanation, interpretation, and specification of Fihi-Ikhtilaf, Mukhtalaf Fihi, and Khilaf-an-li-Fulan in the Dars-e-Nizami books.
11. The causes and consequences of ignorance of Usul and Furu (fundamentals/ non-fundamental) despite formal education.
12. Issues stemming from the conflation of Usul and Furu and the resulting public misunderstandings: Examples and parallels.
13. The dire consequences of neglect of fundamental economic crises due to extreme focus on minor differences.
14. The etiquette of disagreements on Usul and Furu, and ignorance of the requirements of fiqh and the theological differences.
15. 15.Disputes over leadership, succession and the resultant disunity among common Muslims: Consequences and effects.
16. The essence of objections to Sufi traditions and rituals.
17. The trend of turning personal and individual disagreements into sectarian and group conflicts.
18. The crisis of the clear explanation and dissemination of disbelief, hypocrisy, immorality, and polytheism: Causes and consequences.
19. The causes of excessive takfir (declaring disbeliever) & measures to prevent it.
20. The tradition of labelling others as innovators, polytheists, and disrespectful toward the Prophet: Causes, consequences, and remedies.
21. The respect for the Kalima (declaration of faith) and its requirements.

*Note: All the papers presented in the conference will be compiled in a book form and will be published by the Institute of Objective Studies.*

### **Important Dates:**

- Last date of submitting abstracts between 700-1000 words (in in-page/word file and pdf): January 10, 2025
- Information regarding acceptance of the abstract: January 15, 2025
- Last date of submitting full paper (in doc file and pdf) February 10,2025

**Registration is free:** For registration and abstract submission, please click the link below:

<https://forms.gle/aJ1xw7pUuBmme7ts7>

### **About Organisers**

**IOS**-Institute of Objective Studies is a renowned research and advocacy organization established in 1986 in New Delhi. Dedicated to fostering intellectual development and social harmony, the IOS focuses on addressing the challenges faced by the Muslim community in India and beyond. Through

research, publications, conferences, and capacity-building initiatives, the institute aims to enhance the understanding of Islamic perspectives on contemporary issues while promoting dialogue among diverse communities. The IOS plays a pivotal role in fostering unity within the Muslim community by encouraging intra-community dialogue, addressing sectarian divides, and advocating for collective efforts to resolve socio-economic, educational, and political challenges. Furthermore, the IOS actively engages with other communities to promote social justice, and communal harmony, working towards the broader goal of a peaceful and inclusive society.

**IICC-India Islamic Cultural Centre** is a prominent institution located in New Delhi, dedicated to promoting the rich cultural and intellectual heritage of Islam in India. Established on occasion of 14<sup>th</sup> Centenary of Islam, with the vision of fostering harmony and understanding among diverse communities, the IICC serves as a hub for cultural exchange, education, and dialogue. It also provides a platform for addressing contemporary issues faced by the Muslim community and encourages collaboration for socio-economic development. With its commitment to unity, diversity, and progress, the IICC continues to play a vital role in nurturing interfaith understanding and showcasing the vibrant legacy of Indian Islam and Muslims.

**DPAIU-Dr P A Inamdar University**, located in Pune, is a premier educational institution. Established with the vision of providing quality education and fostering academic excellence, the university focuses on nurturing skilled professionals who are equipped to meet the challenges of the modern world. The university is situated within the Azam Campus, a sprawling educational complex that houses several institutions dedicated to different fields of study, provides a vibrant learning environment with state-of-the-art facilities, including modern classrooms, libraries, sports facilities, and hostels. This campus has gained a reputation for its commitment to academic growth, research, and community engagement, making it a hub for students from diverse backgrounds.

**Convenor of the programme**

**Mr. Ahmad Jawed**

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