



**IAWS**  
Indian Association  
for Women's Studies



**BML MUNJAL  
UNIVERSITY™**  
FROM HERE TO THE WORLD

# **IAWS NORTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2026**

# **GENDERED SOCIAL LIVES OF CONSTITUTIONAL PROMISES**



**25-26 MAY, 2026**

**BML MUNJAL UNIVERSITY,  
GURUGRAM, HARYANA**

# About IAWS



# IAWS

Indian Association for Women's Studies

The formation of the Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS) can be traced back to the resurgence of the women's movement in India in the mid-1970s and the publication of Towards Equality Report prepared by the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI), set up by the Government of India prior to the First UN World Conference of Women held in Mexico, in 1975. Gradually, several social scientists and academicians in India associated with the CSWI process chose to develop initiatives in the interdisciplinary field of women's studies. The first National Conference on Women's Studies in 1981 was held at SNDT University, Mumbai. The conference resolved to set up the Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS), which was registered as a membership-based organisation in 1982. SNDT University, Mumbai, and Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS), New Delhi are founding institutions of the IAWS.

The IAWS has emerged as a premier professional association that aims to further women's studies as an interdisciplinary academic field concerned with women, the politics of women's studies and the women's movement, feminism and gender. It undertakes independent and collaborative activities with Universities, Women's Studies Centres and other institutions/ organisations to promote discussion on women in emerging fields, including the fields of citizenship, legal rights and environment. The IAWS is governed by its Constitution. It has built up its own archives. Its activities are coordinated by an Executive Committee, elected every three years by its members. IAWS organises a National Conference every three years alongside regional conferences, regional workshops and other research-based activities.

## About the Conference



The Constitution of India articulates foundational promises of equality, dignity, liberty, and justice. Yet the meaning of these promises is neither fixed nor self-evident. For women and gender-diverse persons, constitutional rights have been experienced less as settled guarantees and more as fragile, uneven, and contested claims shaped by social hierarchies, institutional practices, economic arrangements, and political power.

Women's rights movements and feminist scholarship have long engaged constitutional rights not merely as legal texts, but as social claims forged through struggle. At the same time, there is painful awareness that these rights are mediated by family and community, filtered through welfare systems and administrative procedures. They are also often suspended in the name of order, morality, development, or national interest. From the regulation of sexuality and reproduction to access to work, health, education, and social protection, constitutional justice is frequently realised and denied through everyday encounters with the state and society.

Within this landscape, development policies and governance interventions often deploy the language of empowerment and inclusion, even as they redistribute risk and responsibility onto women and deepen their everyday vulnerabilities. It is important to note that rights are not always abolished, rather they are often narrowed, proceduralised, delayed, or rendered conditional. Gendered subjects encounter constitutional justice through documentation requirements, welfare conditionalities, institutional delays, moral scrutiny, and selective recognition of harm.

Historical and comparative perspectives remind us that the present moment is better understood as an intensification rather than a rupture. Gendered struggles around labour, resources, dignity, citizenship, health, and survival have unfolded across different historical conjunctures, shaped by colonial rule, nationalist projects, developmental state formations, social movements, and global political economies. Feminist scholarship across history and the social sciences has consistently demonstrated that rights are not static entitlements but are repeatedly reworked. Women's claims have repeatedly had to negotiate the public–private divide, familial authority, caste and community norms, and economic dependency. These histories illuminate both the possibilities and the limits of constitutional justice.

In contemporary contexts, these considerations have acquired renewed urgency. Shifts in political economy and governance have significantly altered the conditions under which women negotiate work, care, safety, mobility, and belonging. Processes such as economic restructuring and the retreat of public welfare have interacted with the normalisation of informality and precarity, intensifying existing social inequalities.

New sites of significance have emerged in which constitutional rights have to be grasped, articulated and contested. Digital infrastructures, biometric systems, platform economies, and data-driven governance now mediate access to rights and entitlements. Health, education, labour, and care systems increasingly operate through dispersed administrative and technological regimes, raising fresh questions about accountability, dignity, and justice for women and marginalised genders.

This conference seeks to bring together interdisciplinary feminist engagements with constitutional rights and justice, understood not narrowly as legal doctrine but as lived, institutional, and historical realities. It will examine how constitutional promises are interpreted, translated, undermined, reclaimed, and reimagined in everyday life—and how gender shapes these processes in fundamental ways.

The subthemes on which abstracts were collected:

- Gendered experiences of constitutional equality and discrimination
- Citizenship, belonging, and constitutional inclusion/exclusion
- Family, intimacy, and the constitutional regulation of the personal
- Work, welfare, care, and socio-economic rights
- Violence, security, and constitutional protection
- Health, reproduction, disability, and bodily autonomy
- Development, displacement, and environmental justice
- Administrative practices, welfare delivery, and everyday governance
- Digital technologies, surveillance, and rights-bearing subjects
- Social movements, feminist struggles, and constitutional change
- Intersectional approaches to constitutional justice
- Delays, denials, and temporalities of justice
- Feminist critiques and re-imaginings of constitutional futures

The conference aims to foster interdisciplinary dialogue on gendering constitutional rights and justice. By bringing together diverse feminist perspectives, it seeks to deepen critical understanding of constitutional promises and their social conditions, and to reflect on the possibilities of justice in times of institutional, political, and economic uncertainty.

# Conference Schedule

## DAY 1 : 25 MAY 2026

**8.00 – 9.00 AM Breakfast · E2 Café**

**Registration : 9:30-10:15 AM**  
**Outside Moot Court Hall, 3rd Floor, NB**

**Inaugural Session : 10:30 – 11:30 AM**  
*Venue: Moot Court Hall, 3rd Floor, NB*

**Welcome Address:**

**Pritam Baruah**

Dean, School of Law, BML Munjal University

**Introductory Remarks:**

**Maya John**

General Secretary, IAWS and  
Associate Professor, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi

**Keynote Address:**

**Indira Jaising**

Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India;  
Former Additional Solicitor General of India

**Tea Break : 11:30 – 11:45 AM (Near Moot Court Hall)**

**Opening Plenary 11:45 AM – 1:15 PM**  
*Venue: Moot Court Hall, 3rd Floor, NB*

**Speakers:**

**Nikita Sonavane**

Lawyer, researcher and co-founder of Criminal Justice and  
Police Accountability Project

**Sukanya Shantha**

Journalist, The Wire

**Shahrukh Alam**

Advocate, Supreme Court of India

**Moderator:**

**Shraddha Chaudhary**

Assistant Professor, School of Law, BML Munjal University

**Lunch Break : 1:15 – 2:15 PM, Venue: E2 Cafe**

**Panel 1: Gender, Borders, and Citizenship**  
2:15 – 4:00 PM, Venue: Room 301, 3rd Floor, NB

**Convenors:**

**Rukmini Bhuyan**, University of Delhi  
**Nasreen Chowdhory**, University of Delhi

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Rukmini Bhuyan</b>	Embodied Borders: The Foetal Citizen and the Indian State	University of Delhi
<b>Hitesh Kumar Mandal, Nasreen Chowdhory and Akanksha Kapoor</b>	Gendered Body: State and Citizenship	University of Delhi
<b>Samata Biswas</b>	The Gendered Body as a Border: Production of Embodied Statelessness in India	The Sanskrit College & University, Kolkata
<b>Kshitij Garg</b>	Unwanted and Bordered: Nationalist Symbols and Violent Possessions	University of Delhi
<b>Indira Tayeng</b>	Land, Lineage, and Law: Challenging Gendered Claims of Belonging	University of Delhi
<b>Shamna Thacham Poyil</b>	Counter-Topographies of Belonging: Gendered Statelessness, Digital Identity, and Rohingya Refugee Women in India	University of Delhi

**Tea Break : 4:00-4:15 PM, Near Moot Court Hall**

**Parallel Sessions: 4:15–5:45 PM**

**Panel 2:**

**Citizenship in Practice – Gender, Voice, and Rights**  
Venue: Room 301, 3rd Floor, NB

**Chair: Anupama Roy**

Professor, Centre for Political Studies, JNU

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Pratibha Ahirwar</b>	Gendered Digital Public Sphere and Constitutional Free Speech in India	JNU
<b>Prashant Pippal</b>	Constitutional Promises and Administrative Realities: Transgender Citizenship and Recognition Practices in Delhi	JNU

<b>Sourya Majumder</b>	Social Citizenship and Right-wing Populism: Case Studies of Women's Education and Housing in India	CSLG, JNU
<b>Sakshi Wadhwa</b>	Contestations of Women's Identity as Rights-bearing Citizens: An Examination through Fictional Discourse	JNU
<b>Abdul Mateen</b>	Waiting for Justice: Gendered Temporalities of Undertrial Women in Indian Prisons	ACWS, Aligarh Muslim University

### **Panel 3:**

#### **Logged On, Left Out:**

#### **Gender, Digital Power, and Its Discontents**

Venue: Room 302, 3rd Floor, NB

#### **Chair: Mathew John**

Professor, School of Law, BML Munjal University

<b>Presenter(s)</b>	<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
<b>Lee Tato and Jagadhatri Singh</b>	Choice, Surveillance, and Sexuality: Women's Online Dating Practices as Negotiation in Dating Apps in India	JNU
<b>Habibul Rehman Ansari</b>	Digital Violence Against Women: When the IT Act and Constitution Both Fall Short	Aligarh Muslim University
<b>Suman Sahu</b>	Implementing Digital Governance at the Last Mile: The Unseen Labour of Anganwadi Workers in India	University of Delhi
<b>Garima Chauhan</b>	Producing Unequal Citizens: Private Digital Education and the Gendered Making of Constitutional Subjects	AUD

**Tea Break : 5:45 – 6:15 PM, Near Moot Court Hall**

**Film Screening: 6:15 – 8:15 PM,**

**Venue: Auditorium, Gateway A**

**Film by Prof. Uma Chakravarti  
'Woh Subah Hami Se Aayegi'**

**Discussion: 7:45 – 8:30 PM**

**Moderator: Shadab Bano**

Professor of History, Aligarh Muslim University

**Dinner : 8.30 PM · E2 Cafe**

## DAY 2 : 26 MAY 2026

8:00 – 9:00 AM Breakfast · E2 Café

Parallel Sessions: 9:30 – 11:00 AM

### Panel 4:

#### **Political Cartographies: Representation and Its Discontents**

Venue: Room 301, 3rd Floor, NB

**Chair: Lata Singh**

Professor, Former Faculty, Centre for Women's Studies, JNU

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Afroza Hassan</b>	Representation of Women in the Judiciary of Jammu and Kashmir	University of Kashmir, Srinagar
<b>Neha Waila</b>	The Paradox of Electoral Participation: Mapping Adverse Incorporation and the Making of Gendered Political Subjects in Uttarakhand	IISER Pune
<b>Surbhi Karwa</b>	Beyond Parity and Towards Transformative Political Equality	UNSW Sydney
<b>Shraddha Dubey</b>	The Unfulfilled Promise of Women's Representation — A Study of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act	NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad

### Panel 5:

#### **Between Kinship and Nation: Feminist Futures of Motherhood, Care, and Resistance**

Venue: Room 302, 3rd Floor, NB

**Chair: Surabhi Singh**

Assistant Professor, School of Law, BML Munjal University

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Misria Shaik Ali</b>	'Mothers' Facing Radiation: Resolve and Resistance by Women around India's Nuclear Facilities	Independent
<b>Neha Tiwari</b>	Rethinking Modernity and Empowerment: Assisted Reproductive Technologies and the Reshaping of Power Relations	Gurugram University
<b>Veena Gowda and Arati Ranade</b>	Between the Hearth and the Constitution: Feminist Futures of the PWDVA	Independent
<b>Anamta Hamid</b>	Performing Motherhood Under Surveillance: The Institutional Limits of Maternal Identity in Prison	Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, JNU

Tea Break : 11:00 – 11:30 AM, Near Moot Court Hall

**Parallel Sessions: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

**Panel 6:**

**Intimacy and Autonomy: Negotiating Love, Morality, and Rights**

Venue: Room 301, 3rd Floor, NB

**Chair: Neha Dixit**

Independent Journalist and Writer

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Saumya Maheshwari</b>	Stubbornness as Constitution-Strengthening Disposition amongst Inter-religious Couples in Delhi NCR	Doctoral Researcher, SOAS, University of London
<b>Smriti</b>	Between Refuge and Violence: Safe Houses and the Gendered Mediation of Intimate Citizenship in Haryana	Jawaharlal Nehru University
<b>Damini Rana</b>	From Taboo to Justice: Sex Literacy, Disability, and the Limits of Constitutional Inclusion in India	Ambedkar University Delhi
<b>Akwinder Kaur</b>	Honour, Desire, and the Denial of Justice: Reading Heer as an Archive of Gendered Constitutional Absence	
<b>Arshi Jahan</b>	Radical Love and the Denial of Dignity: Curious Case of the Dhuku Women	Jawaharlal Nehru University

**Panel 7:**

**Labour in the Shadows: Care, Informality, and Precarity**

Venue: Room 302, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, NB

**Chair: Indrani Mazumdar**

Researcher and Former Fellow, CWDS

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Qubra Rather</b>	Women Negotiating Livelihood, Care and Invisibility: Aari Kaarigars and Home-based Labour in Kashmir	University of Kashmir
<b>Zeenat Mahzabin</b>	Women's Work in the Saree Recycling Micro Enterprise: Assessing Socio-Economic Change and Labour Rights under the Code on Social Security Act, 2020	Centre for Women's Studies, Banaras Hindu University
<b>Nayan Kumar Saini</b>	Countering Gender Inequality through Women's Empowerment in Bihar: A Qualitative Study of Self-help Group Women Associated with JEEViKA Program	Centre for Political Studies, JNU
<b>Aswathi N.B.</b>	Domestic Work, Law, and Everyday Labour Relations in Kerala	JNU, New Delhi
<b>Divya Chauhan</b>	Rethinking Care through the Purple Economy	IGNOU

**Lunch Break : 1:00 – 2:00 PM , Venue: E2 Cafe**

**Parallel Sessions: 2:00 – 3:30 PM**

**Panel 8:**

**At the Margins : Gender, Minority Identity, and the Wait for Justice**

Venue: Room 301, 3rd Floor, NB

**Chair: Indu Agnihotri**

Professor, Former Director, CWDS

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Devangana Kalita</b>	Juliana Kangkadi & Laxmi Orang: Adivasi Women in Postcolonial Assam and the Promise of the Constitution	Centre for Women's Studies, JNU
<b>Sharon Singh</b>	The Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958: A Gendered Wait for Justice	NLSIU
<b>Ahyon Ayoub Khan</b>	Embodiment and Visibility: Young Kashmiri Muslim Women Navigating Urban Delhi	University of Kashmir
<b>Indu Kumari</b>	The Kaleidoscopic Routine of Misery: Prison Everydayness and Constitutional Promises in Confinement	JNU

**Panel 9:**

**Education, Policy and Invisible Exclusions**

Venue: Room 302, 3rd Floor, NB

**Chair: Anita Rampal**

Former Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Delhi

Presenter(s)	Paper Title	Affiliation
<b>Deeksha Sharma and Satvinderpal Kaur</b>	Invisible Inequalities: Locating Women in India's Shadow Education Economy	Department of Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh
<b>Shubham Yadav</b>	Women Collectives, Ambedkar and Critical Literacy: Lessons from the Field on '(Re)claiming Citizenship'	JNU
<b>Shivani Choudhary</b>	Trans Student Experiences of Constitutional Equality and Discrimination in Different Universities of Delhi	Dr B R Ambedkar University Delhi
<b>Disha Sharma</b>	The University as a Site of Sexual Citizenship: Queer Politics in Contemporary India	Dr B R Ambedkar University Delhi

**Tea Break : 3:35 – 3:50 PM, Near Moot Court Hall**

## Valedictory Session

3:50 – 5:20 PM | Venue: Moot Court Hall, 3rd Floor, NB

**Pritam Baruah**

Dean, School of Law, BML Munjal University

**Sania Ismailee**

(Assistant Professor, BML Munjal University)

**Ghazala Jamil**

(Assistant Professor, JNU)

**Navsharan Singh**

(Feminist Researcher and Coordinator,  
IAWS Northern Regional Committee )

### Vote of Thanks:

**Shazia Malik**

Assistant Professor, University of Kashmir

**Dinner : 8.30 PM · E2 Cafe**

## **Conference Organisation Committee**

### Northern Regional Committee:

**Maya John,**

**Shadab Bano,**

**Ghazala Jamil,**

**Satvinderpal Kaur,**

**Garima Mishra,**

**Natasha Narwal,**

**Shazia Malik,**

**Tauseef Fatima,**

**Vijaylakshmi Brara, and**

**Navsharan Singh (Co-ordinator)**

### Organising Committee at BML Munjal University:

**Sania Ismailee,**

**Shraddha Chaudhary,**

**Suchismita Chattopadhyay,**

**Arun Sagar,**

**Mathew John, and**

**Pritam Baruah (Co-ordinator)**