



# INDIAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Dear Colleague:

As this year ends and another year begins, I write to you convey my best wishes for the coming year and to introduce the new team of the ISS.

The Election Officer has declared the names of the elected candidates on the website and I congratulate them and wish them the best.

The Indian Sociological Society has taken great strides in the last two years. During these two years, the ISS MC initiated new activities and enhanced the professional qualities of the existing activities.

As you know, the ISS publishes three journals and a newsletter. The first is *Sociological Bulletin* which started in 1952 and is one of the oldest English language professional social science journals in India. It started as a biannual publication and since 2004 it has become tri-annual. In mid-2016, the Society signed a contract with Sage Publishers to publish *Sociological Bulletin* from 2017 onward. Since then *Sociological Bulletin* has become a global journal having footsteps across the world. All LMs numbering 4450 (as of 9th November 2017) have access to the *Bulletin* as a soft copy.

In January 2014, the Society started its second journal, *Bhartiya Samajshastra Sameeksha*. This international journal in Hindi publishes two issues every year. Sage Publications will start publishing this journal in 2018 and *Sameeksha* will be Sage's first Hindi language journal. Both these initiatives will help the Society save publication costs and thus help to divert existing resources to new activities.

In 2017 the Society revived the ISS E-journal which is now retitled *Explorations*. Two issues have been released and both are now available on the website. In addition, the Society started a newsletter first in print and later as an e-newsletter. It now publishes the E newsletter thrice yearly. The three above mentioned journals are all peer reviewed and together with the E-newsletter, are governed through a common set of Editorial Guidelines which are available on the ISS website.

The second major activity of the Society is to conduct the All India Sociological Congresses (AISC). The present ISS MC rationalised the rules of the conduct of the conferences through a new set of guidelines (uploaded on the website). The theme of the last two conferences (2016 and 2017) were: *Rethinking Sociological Traditions in India and Neoliberalism, Consumption and Culture*. The papers of the plenary sessions of these two conferences are going to be published by Orient Blackswan.

Third, about 17 years ago the Society decided to involve its Life Members in research through the creation of Research Committees (RC). In addition to the publications, the Society's major academic work is being conducted through these RCs which encourage its members to participate in intellectual dialogues and exchange of views. In the last 17 years the number of RCs have increased and as a consequence in June 2016, the ISS MC revised the rules governing the RCs. Additionally due to a request from the RC conveners the MC also instituted a rationalisation committee to reorganise RCs and their themes of research. This committee split, merged and re-titled the RCs in terms of new areas being developed in India and globally and simultaneously re-organised its governance structures. The names of the new RCs are now uploaded on the website. The new governance rules proposed by the rationalisation committee (available on the website) are still being discussed with the conveners and will be finalised in the next meeting of the RC conveners. Today these 27 RCs together with 1 Ad Hoc Group encourage young and old members to present their papers in these Committees at the AISC. To help students write professionally accepted papers, the Society has uploaded on its website PPTs on academic protocols and has initiated a programme of academic writing workshops.

In addition to the above mentioned activities, the Society has two endowments in the memory of M. N. Srinivas and R. K. Mukerjee. The ISS MC designed guidelines for accepting and governing old and new endowments. The M.N.Srinivas and R.K. Mukerjee lectures of 2017 have been published the *Sociological Bulletin*. In addition the Society presents Lifetime Achievement Award and these guidelines have now been redesigned and uploaded on the website. In 2017, the Society honoured Patricia Uberoi and Yogesh Atal and in 2018 it honoured Ratna Naidu and Nandu Ram with Lifetime Achievement Awards.

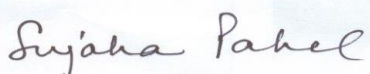
The ISS MC also instituted a committee of past-Presidents to make constitutional changes such as introducing online voting and avoiding conflict of interest and ensure that one person holds only one post. These changes were passed at Tezpur GBM on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2016. The new constitution is uploaded on the website. Additionally in sync with all other professional associations, the Society also has designed an Ethics Code for itself. These guidelines passed at the Lucknow GBM on 11th November 2017 and uploaded on the website are presented as aspirational goals intended to orient sociologists in India to principles and standards regarding their professional responsibilities as teachers, researchers, and practitioners and reflect on their behaviour towards groups and individuals with whom they study, work, and knowledge about whom, they wish to protect.

The two most important decisions taken by this MC related firstly, to the change of the office from the Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi where the Society was housed for 28 years to its own flat at Vasant Kunj, New Delhi in April 2017. This flat has been repaired and renovated. It houses the office of the ISS and is converted to a guest house of three bedrooms meant exclusively for the use of the Life Members of the Society. The second important change was to have an upgraded interactive website for the Society's LMs. This website has all of the Society's information and an archive of past print and e-newsletters. The website facilitates subscription to LM and RC memberships, allows all current LMs to create their own profile page and through this page obtain access to the Bulletin (from Volume 1 onward), E journal and E newsletter, to register for AISC and upload their abstracts and to vote online.

As noted above the present MC streamlined rules and regulations regarding the Society's existing activities, proposed new activities and reorganised its finances. This was done through a consultative process involving all ISS MC Members and the decisions of the MC were unanimous. These decisions and the resultant administrative and governance changes were communicated to Life Members through the nine letters (including this one) written to all of you. These changes were also reported at the two GBMs. You will note that these changes has introduced transparency and democratic decision making.

I wish you and the next ISS MC the best for the coming years and hope that together you take the Society to new heights of professional successes.

With best wishes and kind regards,



Sujata Patel