

# DR K.R. NARAYANAN CENTRE FOR DALIT AND MINORITIES STUDIES

B.R. AMBEDKAR MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES

## **Representing “Backwardness” and the Question of Muslim Identity**

by

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- Venue                      Reading Room, Dr K.R. Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minorities Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
- Time & Date            2.30 PM, Thursday, 24 April 2014
- The Topic                The lecture traces the genealogy of the term ‘backward’ in relation to the process of identity construction among the Muslim community. During the colonial rule the term ‘backward’ was also used to identify and isolate those sections of the population who were a constant threat to the British rule. For instance, in the colonial records in Malabar the Muslims were mostly represented as illiterate, fanatic and virile. The colonial administration declared that the only solution to this ‘Muslim problem’ lay in the spread of modern education. Therefore, the colonial discourses on Muslim backwardness, modern education and Muslim reaction has to be read against this backdrop. The plasticity of these discourses is such that they still hold sway over Muslim identity.
- The Speaker            Shareena Banu teaches in the Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. She focuses on the theme of education and the Muslim community in Kerala as part of her primary research interest. Her published papers include, ‘Colonial education and Muslim leadership’, ‘Gulf migration and identity assertion pattern: Denominational contestations and emergence of public sphere among the Muslims of Kerala’, etc.