

MY RESPONSE TO KOONAL DUGGAL'S POST IN ROUND TABLE INDIA

Since I have received enquiries about Koonal Duggal's write-up in Round Table India, I am pasting below my two posts in Round Table India today.

Cultural Studies Workshop 2016 is scheduled to begin from 12 March. As early as 27 January 2016, I had sent a note to all participants, clarifying the issue that Koonal Duggal has mentioned in his post. I am pasting my email below. (Incidentally, Kavaita Bhowal is the name of the person who assists with the administrative work of the Workshop.) After this email, I had heard no more complaints from the participants till Koonal's post in your site.

This is the email posted on 27 January, 2016:

Dear Participants

Kavita Bhowal just now forwarded the note she had circulated amongst you all, seeking to know who needs accommodation and who doesn't. It was not meant by any means to make you feel unwanted; rather, we wanted to know your preference. We have received requests from a couple of participants regarding whether they could stay at 'home'. So we wanted to get a clear picture before we book rooms at the hotel.

This is the first time out of 19 such occasions that CSW is being held in Calcutta, and that too not in a campus -- be it a guest house or a hotel or at an institute premises. On all other occasions, we used to insist that scholars must reside in campus during the workshop. But this time it is different. The workshop will be held in the city at Jadunath Bhavan Museum and Resource Centre, which is part of CSSSC. The participants will stay in an adjacent hotel and the some of the faculty in a guest house about half a kilo meter away. (Incidentally, of the 9 external resource persons, only 4 have opted to stay in the guest house. Others will stay with their folks). Since we cannot provide a campus this time where everybody can stay in the same premises and interact even after the workshop is over every evening, we thought there is no point in insisting that everyone should stay in the hotel during the entire term. That is why, we wanted to know your preference. Trust me, there is no more significance attached to this gesture.

We want to make sure that 30% of those participating must be from SC, ST and minority religions. I fully agree that to circulate in tabular form information about participants (that includes caste background) was wrong, it shouldn't have happened. I personally apologize for it. Hope this clears the air.

With warmest wishes,
Manasda

To continue, the reason why we had included SC, ST and minority categories in the tabular form prepared on the details of the participants was to ensure that 30% of our participants this time are from these backgrounds. It was a sheer accident that the file was sent as an attachment. This is not the first time dalits and participants from minority backgrounds are attending the workshop. In its history of 19 years, CSW has now a large contingent of former participants. No one has

ever complained of any segregation. We conduct a detailed feedback every time. Never was anything like this mentioned.

[Manas Ray](#)

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