



SNU
SISTER NIVEDITA
UNIVERSITY



Amplifying Marginalized Voices

IV NATIONAL
CONCLAVE

September 18-20, 2025

introduction

- **Theme:**

**Representing the
Unseen:**

India at the margins
and Media.



The representation of marginalized communities in Indian media has been a subject of both progress and criticism. While genuine efforts have been made to showcase diverse voices and narratives, stereotyping, underrepresentation, and misrepresentation persist. While the central government is taking big bold steps to bring the voices from the farthest corners of the country with programmes like *Maan Ki Baat*, efforts are needed from the media in general to make a bigger impact.

Some of the major challenges faced are that of stereotyping them in a simplistic and often in negative light; the problem of invisibility where they are left unseen and unheard and hence they don't matter; underrepresentation in the mainstream media making their problems, their problems and lack of leadership and icons through marginalized characters in mainstream media.

This is a part of India we know exists, but we refuse to accept, see, acknowledge, and elevate. A major issue is tokenism, where marginalized characters are included to fulfill diversity quotas without meaningful exploration of their identities. Stories focus on their oppression rather than celebrating their resilience and culture.

Mainstream media often focuses on urban elites and fails to reflect the issues faced by the rural poor or those in informal sectors. This gap results in a lack of voices from the marginalized sectors. The intersectionality of caste, class, and gender is not often addressed, and marginalized women's voices, particularly those from lower castes, indigenous communities, or sexual minorities, are underrepresented.





While mainstream media often perpetuates stereotypes, alternative media platforms (such as community radio, online platforms, independent documentaries, and films) have been instrumental in highlighting the voices of marginalized groups. These platforms tend to offer more nuanced portrayals, focusing on the resilience and agency of marginalized communities. Activist groups also use media to challenge mainstream narratives, although their reach can often be limited.

With time there have been some changes in Indian media that have now become more open and accepting of the marginalized in their multi-formation be it marginal natives, LGBTQ+ individuals, women, and religious minorities. In recent years, there have been attempts to improve the representation of marginalized groups through films like Article 15, Masaan, and Jai Bhim which have highlighted caste discrimination, though some have faced criticism for using upper-caste saviours. Although this trend is still relatively small in comparison to mainstream Bollywood, it signals a shift in how marginalized groups are represented.

Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube provide a space for marginalized communities to share their stories, which sometimes get picked up by mainstream outlets like grassroots movements like #MeToo

This conference aims to seek, find and explore the plight of the marginalized in India and seek avenues through which they can be better represented as can be done through bringing diverse voices in opinion-making roles like PR and Advertising, Films and Storytelling, collaboration with individuals from marginalized communities to craft authentic narratives through specialized media channels like independent and regional papers and online platforms, ham radio, documentaries and CSR projects, a shift away from stereotypes and towards multidimensional characters through movies both regional and national and challenging biases among audiences through social, literary, native, folk and cultural movements.



As highlighted, marginalized communities in India face significant hurdles in media representation:

- **Stereotyping:** Often depicted in simplistic and negative ways, lacking depth and individuality.
- **Invisibility:** Frequently left unseen and unheard, leading to a sense of insignificance and exclusion.
- **Under-representation:** Their presence and issues are minimal in mainstream media, hindering their access to platforms and leadership visibility.
- **Tokenism:** Inclusion primarily to meet diversity quotas, without genuine exploration of their identities or experiences.
- **Focus on Oppression:** Narratives often center on their struggles, overshadowing their resilience, culture, and achievements.
- **Urban-Centric Bias:** Mainstream media frequently prioritizes urban narratives, neglecting the realities of the rural poor and those in informal sectors.
- **Intersectionality Neglect:** The complex interplay of caste, class, gender, and other social identities is often overlooked, particularly impacting marginalized women from lower castes, indigenous communities, and sexual minorities.

THE OPPORTUNITY:

While mainstream media grapples with these challenges, alternative platforms and evolving trends offer a glimmer of hope:

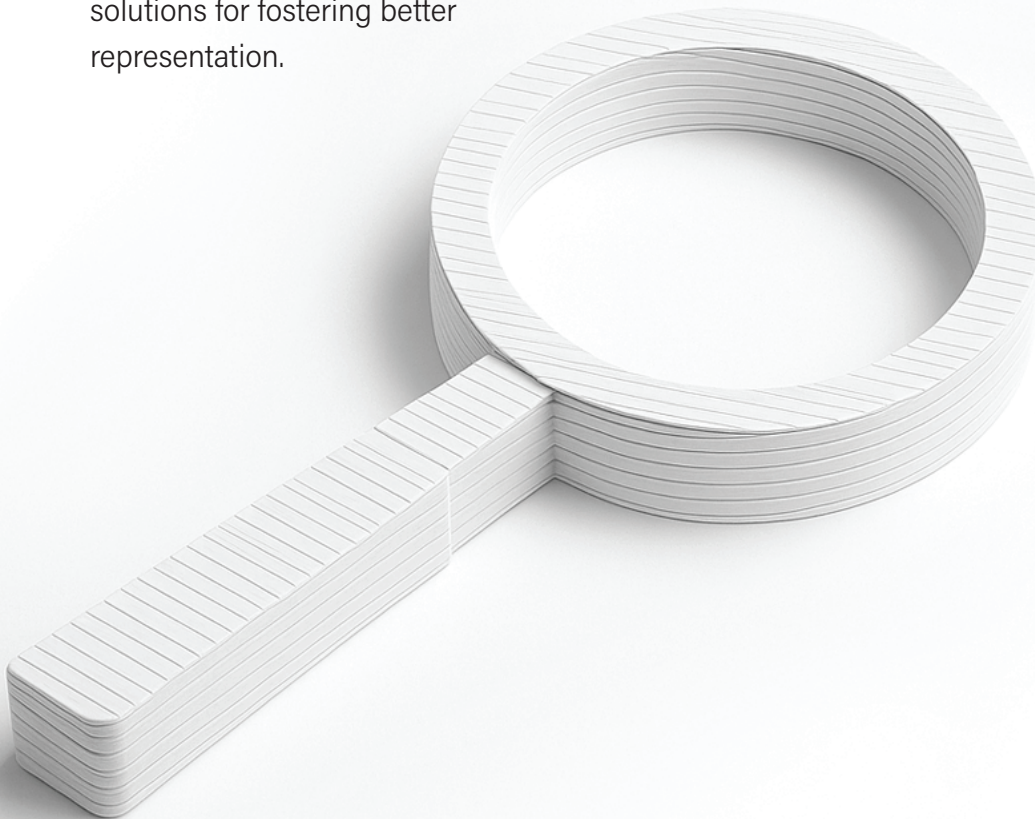
- **Alternative Media Impact:** Community radio, online platforms, independent documentaries, and films are actively providing space for marginalized voices and nuanced portrayals.
- **Activist Engagement:** Activist groups are leveraging media to challenge dominant narratives, albeit with potential reach limitations.
- **Emerging Mainstream Shifts:** Recent years have witnessed a growing openness within Indian media towards diverse identities, including marginal natives, LGBTQ+ individuals, women, and religious minorities.
- **Critical Acclaim for Nuanced Portrayals:** Films like Article 15, Masaan, and Jai Bhim, despite some criticism, signal a potential shift towards addressing issues like caste discrimination.

- **Digital Empowerment:** Platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube are enabling marginalized communities to share their stories directly, sometimes gaining traction in mainstream outlets (e.g., #MeToo movement).



**This conference will serve
as a crucial forum to:**

- **Seek and Find:** Deeply understand the lived realities and challenges faced by marginalized communities in their interaction with media.
- **Explore Avenues:** Identify concrete strategies and solutions for fostering better representation.



path forward



Key areas of focus will include:

- **Bringing Diverse Voices into Opinion-Making Roles:** Encouraging the inclusion of individuals from marginalized communities in PR, Advertising, Films, and Storytelling.
- **Authentic Narrative Crafting:** Facilitating collaborations between media professionals and individuals from marginalized communities.
- **Leveraging Specialized Media Channels:** Exploring the potential of independent and regional papers, online platforms, ham radio, documentaries, and CSR projects.
- **Shifting Away from Stereotypes:** Promoting the creation of multidimensional characters in both regional and national cinema.
- **Challenging Audience Biases:** Utilizing social, literary, native, folk, and cultural movements to foster greater understanding and empathy.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Sister Nivedita University's Journalism and Mass Communication Department has put up this inter-disciplinary theme to invite research papers/articles from faculties, researchers, professionals, technocrats, and industry experts from the fields of Mass Communication, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, English and Cultural Studies to discuss the role of media in representing the marginal voice in the contemporary society, its changing narratives and its effects on human lives.

General outlines have been given above, with papers invited on topics and realms on the broader understanding of the theme and beyond the mentioned topics.



call for papers

TRACKS:

- ◆ Media, the State, and Marginalisation
- ◆ Representation of minority communities in news media
- ◆ Social Media and marginalized voices
- ◆ Journalists and media professionals' outlook while representing the marginalized
- ◆ Stereotyping of the marginalized in media
- ◆ Ecocriticism and Media
- ◆ Public Relations and communication advocacy for marginalized
- ◆ Marketing and Advertising mainstreaming moving away from marginal voices
- ◆ Media of Estrangement of the Human from Nature
- ◆ Maturing of cinema and documentary making it more inclusive
- ◆ Media of Alienation and Individuality
- ◆ Folk, cultural, and regional storytelling through new avenues of radio and podcasting

tracks

- ◆ Caste Politics and Media
- ◆ Portrayals of marginalized, disability, subaltern, and affected in Literature
- ◆ Role of Popular Media and Culture in perception creation in gender dynamics
- ◆ Media literacy and misrepresentation
- ◆ Queer subtext in popular media
- ◆ Financial censorship on media
- ◆ India of media and justice
- ◆ Argumentative narratives in mainstream media
- ◆ Media as a tool for resistance
- ◆ The idea of medium as the message
- ◆ Media, PR, and Ads confined to elitism and exclusivity
- ◆ Marginality and Social Media in the 21st Century
- ◆ Media and oppositional communication challenging norms



IMPORTANT DATES

Conclave Dates: **18th - 20th Sep. 2025**
Abstract Submission Date: **16th Aug. 2025**
Final Paper Submission: **30th Aug. 2025**
Acceptance of Paper: **5th Sep. 2025**

REGISTRATION FEES*

Students: ₹ 750
Research Scholars: ₹ 1200
**Academicians/ Professors/ Professionals/
Independent Researchers: ₹ 2000**
(*To be paid only on acceptance of paper.)

BANK DETAILS

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Guidelines:

- Abstract should be given in no more than **300 words** with five keywords
- Full paper should have the following format:
Name; Designation; University/College/Organisation; Introduction
Scope/Literature Review; Research Methodology/Subject Analysis
Discussion/ Conclusion; Reference Bibliography (Optional)
- The paper/article should be in APA format, Times New Roman,
12 points, with proper in-text citation



Abstracts to be submitted at
<https://forms.gle/ijYXw5aXuYNfLFW68>

CALL FOR QUERIES

Mr. Saikat Majumdar: 98309 07753;
Mr. Arindam Basu: 98303 88835; **Mr. Souvik
Sur:** 79801 65889; **Roopsa Ganguly:** 62918
60437; **Manish Paul:** 62893 03672

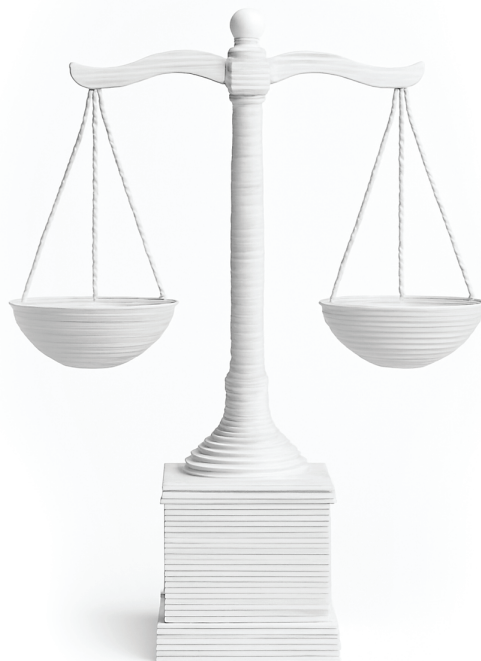
Selected Conclave's papers will be published in a peer-reviewed journal with an ISSN number.

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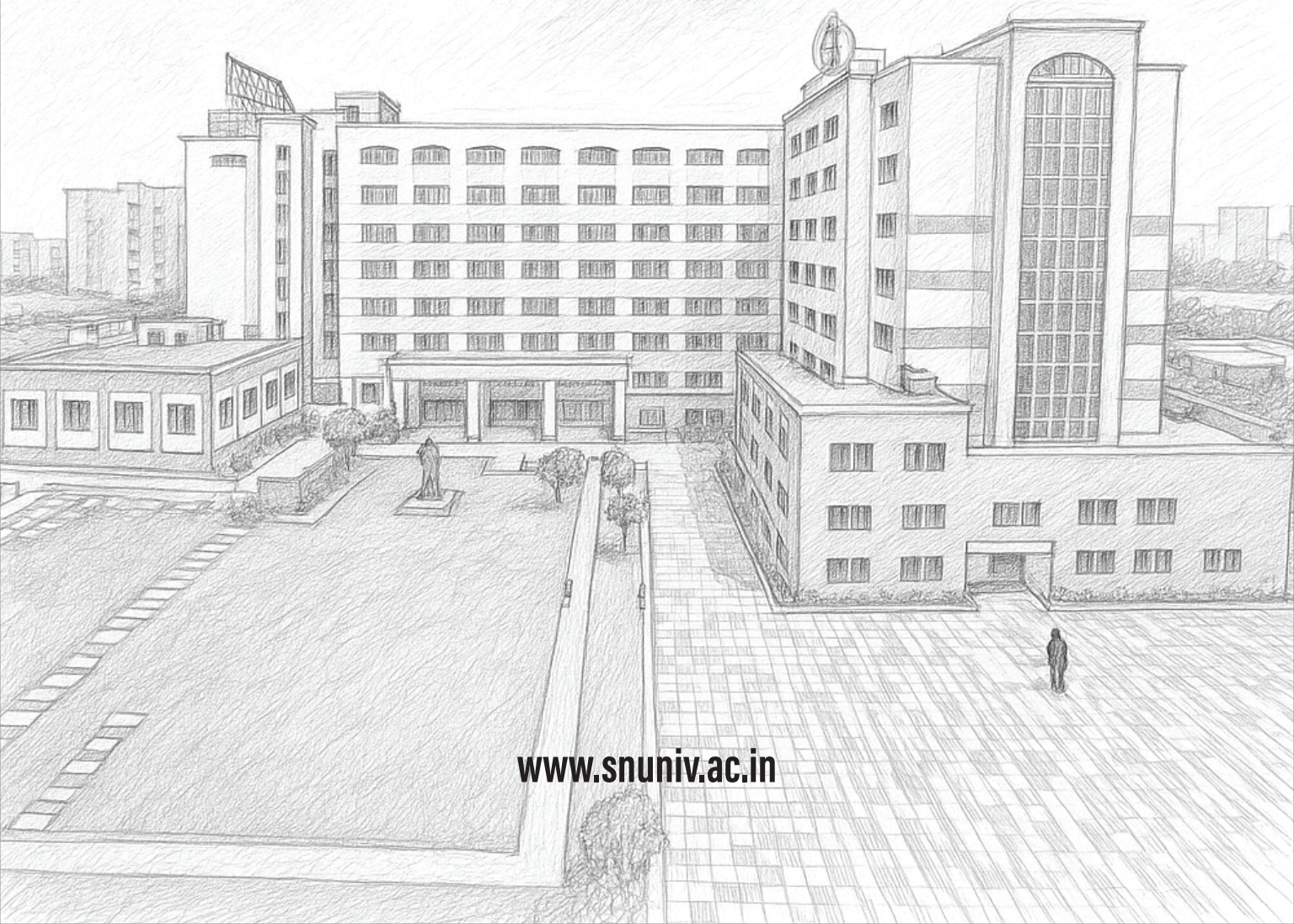
We believe that your partnership, whether through financial contribution or valuable in-kind support, will not only provide significant visibility for your organization but also demonstrate your commitment to fostering a more inclusive and representative media landscape in India.

This will add to your CSR quotient.

**Join us in amplifying the voices that often go unheard
and contribute to a more equitable future.**



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