

Press Release Report

Criminal Law Conclave on “An Assessment of the New Criminal Law Regime” Organised by the Centre for Advanced Studies in Criminal Law (CASCL), Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab

13th September 2025 | Online Mode

The Centre for Advanced Studies in Criminal Law (CASCL), Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law (RGNUL), Punjab, successfully organised the ***Criminal Law Conclave on “An Assessment of the New Criminal Law Regime”*** on **13th September 2025**. The event was conducted in an online mode and witnessed an engaging discussion on the new Criminal laws, which have recently completed one year of their commencement. The students of RGNUL interacted with the esteemed resource persons who presented their views on the new reforms, namely, **Prof. (Dr.) Shruti Bedi**, Professor & Director of University Institute of Legal Studies (UILS) at Panjab University, **Prof. (Dr.) Jyoti Dogra**, Professor of Law, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, **Dr. Neeraj Tiwari**, Associate Professor at National Law University Delhi, **Ms. Nayanika** and **Mr. Siddharth** from the India Justice Report, and **Mr. Naveed** from the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy. The Hon’ble Vice Chancellor of RGNUL, **Prof. (Dr.) Jai S. Singh**, Registrar of RGNUL, **Dr. Ivneet Kaur Walia**, Dean of Academics of RGNUL, **Prof. (Dr.) Naresh Vats**, and Dean of Research of RGNUL, **Prof. (Dr.) Kamaljit Kaur** had attended and shared their insights in this Conclave.

The Conclave was conceptualised with the aim of assessing the three newly enacted criminal law statutes—Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023 (BSA). By bringing together eminent scholars, practitioners, and experts, the Conclave aimed to assess the new laws through the lenses of constitutionalism, jurisprudence, infrastructure, and policy, thereby making a meaningful contribution to the national dialogue on their scope and impact. Through this, CASCL reaffirmed its commitment to advancing rigorous scholarship in the field of criminal law.

The programme commenced at 10:00 AM with a warm *Welcome Address and Introduction of the Conclave* delivered by **Prof. (Dr.) Sharanjit**, the **Organizing Secretary** of the conclave who introduced the eminent resource persons to the participants and set the context for the deliberations that highlight the significance of this academic initiative. This was followed by an address by the **Prof. (Dr.) Jai S. Singh**, who reflected upon the transformative moment the criminal justice system finds itself in and emphasised the role of academia in shaping constructive engagement with these laws. The Hon’ble Vice Chancellor focused on the responsibility of universities in shaping dialogue and stated that law schools must serve as think tanks for academic discourse. **Prof. (Dr.) Naresh Vats** addressed the participants by highlighting the educational imperatives of assessing the new criminal laws to prepare future generations of lawyers and scholars.

Prof. (Dr.) Shruti Bedi, spoke on “*Decolonising Criminal Law? Continuity, Change and Constitutionalism*”. Prof. Bedi’s address examined whether the new legal regime truly breaks away from colonial legacies or perpetuates them under a constitutional framework. Her address laid the intellectual foundation for subsequent discussions.

Subsequently, **Prof. (Dr.) Jyoti Dogra**, delivered her insights on “*Leveraging scientific advancements for ‘Nagrik Suraksha’: Anokhi Lal in perspective*”, focusing on how scientific innovations may aid in advancing citizens’ security. Prof. Dogra’s address focused on the role of science and technology in enhancing citizen security, particularly examining how forensic and technological tools may contribute to the effective implementation of justice.

The session was further enriched by **Dr. Neeraj Tiwari**, who presented on “*Tech Integration under New Criminal Laws: Initiatives and Way Forward*”. Prof. Tiwari’s address elaborated upon the government’s initiatives in incorporating digital processes, the challenges of cyber adaptation, and the scope of efficiency gains through modernisation of procedures under the BNSS by the integration of technology in criminal law processes.

Thereafter, the deliberations continued with a joint address by **Ms. Nayanika and Mr. Siddharth** on “*Infrastructural Bottlenecks Emerging with the Implementation of the New Criminal Laws*”. They shed light on institutional and infrastructural challenges hindering effective execution. They highlighted systemic challenges such as inadequate institutional capacity, a shortage of trained personnel, and infrastructural gaps, which may hinder the smooth enforcement of the new statutes.

Following this, **Mr. Naveed** spoke on “*Enduring Colonial Legacy in the New Criminal Laws*”, assessing whether the reforms represent continuity rather than a genuine rupture from the colonial frameworks.

The Conclave concluded with an *Address and Vote of Thanks* by **Dr. Ivneet Kaur Walia**, who expressed gratitude to all speakers, participants, and organising team while reiterating the significance of academic dialogue in navigating the evolving legal landscape. Program coordinators Dr. Gurneet Singh, Dr. Basant Singh, and Mr. Anubhav Kumar also shared their insights. The Criminal Law Conclave thus served as a significant platform for nuanced engagement with the recently enacted criminal law regime. Through diverse perspectives, ranging from constitutionalism and technology to infrastructure and judicial interpretation, the event underscored CASCL’s commitment to promoting rigorous academic scholarship and fostering informed legal discourse.