



National Essay Writing Competition

on

INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE LAW

by The Centre for Advanced Study in International
Humanitarian Law (CASH), RGNUL



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RICARDO PARRA

*Artwork: Travesía de la esperanza by Ricardo Parra (UNHCR Refugiarte)
The hope of searching for a new, safe and prosperous future.*

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

The Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law (RGNUL), Punjab was established by the State Legislature of Punjab by passing the Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab Act, 2006 (Punjab Act No. 12 of 2006). The Act incorporated a law university of national stature in Punjab, thereby fulfilling the need for a Centre of Excellence in legal education in the modern era of globalisation and liberalisation. The University acquired the approval of the Bar Council of India (BCI) in July 2006.

In May 2015, the University became the first and only NLU to get accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) with an 'A' grade. In 2018, RGNUL was amongst the four NLUs to have been granted autonomous status by the University Grants Commission. The University has been ranked among the top 10 law schools in India under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), by the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. The University is currently emphasizing on research, training, and consultancy in various of contemporary legal interests and envisages to be a research-intensive university in times to come.

ABOUT THE CENTRE

The Centre for Advanced Studies in International Humanitarian Law (CASH) is one of the flagship centres of Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab. The Centre aims to further its objective of bridging the gap between the theory and practice of humanitarian law. It is established to facilitate research and discourse in the various facets of international humanitarian law by analysing current policy approaches in tackling contemporary global issues. It further streamlines the process of learning through academic courses, programs, and publications.

The Centre follows a multi-disciplinary approach to identifying problems in international humanitarian law and endeavours to engage in dialogue to facilitate change. Therefore, it helps ensure that future leaders and policy-makers understand the practical relevance of the subject of IHL and have a thorough knowledge of its basic principles and frameworks.

ABOUT THE COMPETITION

This competition invites critical and forward-looking engagement with the evolving field of International Refugee Law. Titled '**Homes without Maps: The Journey of Refugee Law through time**', rooted in a discipline shaped as much by global politics and social realities as by legal doctrine, refugee law continues to transform under the pressures of conflict, climate change, and shifting notions of state responsibility. Participants are encouraged to interrogate this dynamic landscapes, its ambitions, its structural biases, and its persistent gaps. From early anglocentric narratives to contemporary Global South critiques, including B.S. Chimni's seminal insights on containment and power asymmetries, the field demands renewed scholarly attention. The competition aims to foster nuanced, original work that situates refugee law within its broader socio-political context, challenges traditional assumptions, and contributes meaningfully to the discourse surrounding protection, displacement, and international justice.

It aims to provide a platform for law students to engage with the evolving field of International Refugee Law critically, strengthening their understanding of the legal, political, and institutional frameworks that shape global responses to displacement. It encourages sharp analytical thinking, empirical exploration, and interdisciplinary perspectives, inviting participants to question structural biases, examine contemporary challenges, and contribute fresh insights toward a more just and effective refugee protection regime.

THEME

International Refugee Law stands as a vital shield for individuals forced to flee persecution, conflict, and rapidly evolving global crises. Built on principles of protection and state responsibility, it seeks to ensure safety, dignity, and rights for those displaced across borders. Yet this framework faces persistent challenges, from politicised asylum processes and uneven state compliance to the widening protection gaps created by climate change and shifting geopolitical priorities. As patterns of displacement grow more complex, the field confronts new legal and ethical questions, opening the door for bold scholarship and fresh analytical approaches.

Illustrative Sub-Themes:

- Climate Refugees
- The problem of Non-recognition and Statelessness
- The determination of refugee status
- Refugee-responsibility-sharing
- Global North v. Global South: Dynamics, Approach and Impact
- Gendering refugees
- War refugees
- Refugee rights and the extent of the principle of non-refoulment

Please note that the above themes are merely illustrative and authors are welcome to go beyond in their exploration and research of the subject

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- The essays shall be between 3,000-4,000 words. Longer pieces may be accepted at the discretion of the editors.
- The main body of the essay must be in Times New Roman, font size 12 with line spacing set at 1.5.
- The footnotes must be in Times New Roman, font size 10 with line spacing set at 1.
- All footnotes must follow the Oxford University Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA) (4th ed.).

ELIGIBILITY DETAILS

- The competition is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students of law. Co-authorship is permitted for up to two authors. Research Scholars are also invited to submit.
- All essays shall be checked for plagiarism and must have a similarity rate of no more than 10%.
- The use of AI for the creation of whole or any part of the content submitted is prohibited.

DEADLINE, PAYMENT AND REGISTRATION FEES

- All essays must be submitted along with registration fees paid by the deadline i.e. **5 January 2026**.
- The registration fee for individual authors, as well as for co-authors collectively, is **Rs 400 (exclusive of GST)**.

[Submission Link](#)

[Payment Link](#)

PARTICIPATION

Those participants fulfilling the eligibility requirements and style guidelines will be awarded a certificate of participation.

Selected essays will be published in an ISBN-serialised book by the Centre for Advanced Study in International Humanitarian Law, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab.

CASH PRIZE

The top three selected essays shall be awarded cash prizes in the following composition:

First Prize	Rs. 7,000/-
Second Prize	Rs. 5,000/-
Third Prize	Rs. 3,000/-

CONTACT US

Queries on the Competition, including thematic and submission related questions, should be directed to il@rgnul.ac.in

Patron-in-Chief

Prof. (Dr.) Jai Shankar Singh
Vice-Chancellor, RGNUL

Patron

Dr. Ivneet Walia
Registrar (Officiating), RGNUL

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