

**Department of Political Science,**  
**Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab**

presents

**1<sup>st</sup> RGNUL Young Scholars Conference, 2024**

on

***Emerging Trends in India's Foreign Policy***

**Call for Abstracts**

**ABOUT RGNUL**

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 University of Law of national stature in Punjab, to fulfil the need for a Centre of Excellence in legal education in the modern era of globalization and liberalization. The University acquired approval of the Bar Council of India (BCI) in July 2006. The University also got registered with the University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi under Section 2(f) of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 and has been declared fit to obtain grants from the (UGC) under Section 12-B of the UGC Act, 1956. The University was accredited with 'A' Grade by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in 2015. The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, ranked RGNUL the first amongst the cleanest Higher Educational Institutions, Swachh Campus (2019) in the category of Government Residential Universities.

**ABOUT DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Political Science, emerging as a separate academic discipline in the second half of the 19th century, has become an integral part of the social sciences. The study of political philosophy and statecraft, however, has been prevalent for thousands of years, beginning with the first written records. It is closely related with Law, as important legal concepts and constitutional principles originate in political philosophy. The Department of Political Science is a constituent department of RGNUL playing a crucial role in fostering an understanding of

domestic and international political systems, preparing students for careers in various fields, and contributing to the academic discourse on political issues. At RGNUL, Punjab, Political Science is taught by two faculty members, Ms. Aditi Dubey and Mr. Sourav Kumar. Teaching at RGNUL is carried out with a multidisciplinary approach and this further enables the students of law to understand the interface between Law and Political Science. The Department of Political Science is very active in organising various seminars, conferences and workshops, in collaboration with different centres of the university.

### **ABOUT THE CONFERENCE**

The Department of Political Science at RGNUL, is organising the 1<sup>st</sup> RGNUL Young Scholars Conference (YSC) as an annual flagship event of the Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab. The 1<sup>st</sup> YSC will be held in February 2024 on the theme “Emerging Trends in India’s Foreign Policy” with **focus on two important regions of the world, West Asia and Africa**. It will be a platform for young scholars to deliberate on issues related to India’s foreign policy in the regions. The conference will foster a vibrant intellectual exchange among young scholars delving into the intricate dynamics of West Asia and Africa, promoting a deeper understanding of their shared historical narratives, diverse cultural expressions, and evolving geopolitical landscapes.

West Asia continues to be in a state of flux ever since the discovery of oil in the region and more so after the Arab Spring. Ideology, combined with popular aspirations for liberty, dignity and equality played an important role in the beginning but the absence of viable alternative mechanisms and incapacity of states to manage the resulting disorder have led to further escalation of the conflict. Moreover, the Israel-Palestine conflict has the region divided over means and mechanisms of countering Israeli manoeuvres supported by the West. On the other hand, the African region consists of some of the most underdeveloped countries of the world, with many countries suffering under the counter waves of Authoritarianism and Democracy. The ethnic and tribal dynamics have led to numerous civil wars on the continent, leading to multiple past and ongoing interventions by the United Nations Peace Keeping Force. The entry of the African Union as a member in the G20 reflects the growing importance of the region in world politics.

The importance of West Asia for India is manifold. The biggest plank is energy security, as a substantial portion of India’s oil and gas imports come from the region. The presence of a sizable Indian diaspora in West Asia is another crucial factor, with remittances from this community playing a vital role in India's economy. Strategic partnerships with West Asian

countries enhance India's regional influence and contribute to collaborative efforts in areas such as defence, counterterrorism, and intelligence-sharing. Additionally, West Asia serves as a crucial bridge for India's access to Central Asia and Europe, further underlining the strategic importance of the region in India's geopolitical considerations.

India's growing interest and engagement with Africa is multifaceted, spanning economic, political, strategic, and cultural dimensions. Africa is a resource rich continent, along with an underutilised market of over a billion people. Moreover, African countries are rising players in curating new strategic alliances in security, climate change, multilateral trade issues etc. With the increasing influence of China in the continent, India seeks to position itself as an alternative and valuable partner. India's two millennia long history of engagement with the region, has come to be translated into South-South Cooperation in the present times, hinging on capacity building, healthcare, cultural cooperation, and global governance.

This background mandates the need for an academic discourse on India's Emerging Foreign Policy trends towards the two regions in question, West Asia and Africa.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE**

- The primary objective is to facilitate in-depth scholarly discussions and encourage the exchange of ideas among academics and researchers in a compact round table setting.
- Encourage interdisciplinary perspectives by bringing together scholars from various academic fields, including International Relations, Political Science, Economics, History, Sociology, and Cultural Studies.
- Encourage comparative studies that analyse India's foreign policy in the African and West Asian context compared to other global actors, such as China, the United States, and European nations.
- Explore the academic insights and research findings that have direct policy implications for shaping India's foreign policy towards West Asia and Africa.
- Create a platform for academics to network, form research collaborations, and build lasting academic relationships for future collaborative projects.
- Facilitate opportunities for young researchers to publish conference papers in academic journals or edited volumes, contributing to the scholarly literature on India-West Asia and India-Africa relations.

- Encourage the participation of RGNUL students, providing them with a unique opportunity to engage with cutting-edge research, network with scholars, and develop an understanding of real-world diplomatic challenges.

### **CONFERENCE AGENDA**

The conference shall start with a Keynote Address on the theme “Emerging Trends in India’s Foreign Policy” with a focus on West Asia and Africa, followed by two technical sessions, with two expert Chairs for each. The themes for the technical sessions would be:

1. Challenges and Opportunities for India in West Asia.
2. Challenges and Opportunities for India in Africa.

### **TARGET AUDIENCE**

Students, Research Scholars and Ph.D. Candidates from higher education institutions and research think tanks, pursuing studies in the domains of Political Science, International Relations, International Political Economy, International Law and the like. Applicants must be actively engaged in research on the West Asia or Africa regions.

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

- Last date for Submission of abstracts: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024
- Announcement of shortlisted abstracts: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024
- Last date of Submission of Papers: 10<sup>th</sup> February 2024
- Date of Conference: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (Saturday)**

### **VENUE**

Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab  
(Bhadson-Patiala Road, Sidhuwal, Patiala, Punjab - 147006)

### **SUGGESTIVE THEMES**

#### **1. Historical Narratives**

- Revisiting Historical Narratives: Deconstructing Eurocentric Perspectives and Reasserting Indigenous Voices
- Cultural Heritage and Transnational Connections: Migration and Diaspora Engagement

- Leveraging History: Trade Routes and the Connectivity Programs

## **2. Unstable regimes in West Asia and Africa and India's Approach**

- India's Non-Interference Policy: Navigating the challenges of engagement with unstable regimes while maintaining principled foreign policy
- India's Contributions to Mediating Conflicts and Fostering Post-Conflict Reconstruction
- Oil Politics

## **3. South-South Cooperation at Multilateral Forums**

- Climate Crisis and Sustainable Development
- WTO – TRIPS and Food Security
- G20 and BRICS

## **4. India's Soft Power Approach in the Regions**

- Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power: Investigating the use of Intangible Heritage and the effectiveness of India's Media Outreach, Cultural Events, and Public Diplomacy Initiatives in Shaping Perceptions and Attitudes
- India's Economic Soft Power: Assessing the Impact of India's Economic Engagement, Development Assistance, and Trade Relations on Soft Power Projection
- India's Multipolarity: Exploring India's Soft Power Strategies in the Context of a Shifting Global Order and Emerging Powers

## **5. West Asia and Africa in International Law**

- India's stance on the application and compliance with International Humanitarian Law in armed conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, particularly in context of the Israel-Hamas war.
- Investigating India's manoeuvring in the legal frameworks governing the exploitation and management of natural resources in Africa and the Middle East, including the rights of indigenous communities and environmental protection.
- Exploring the legal and ethical implications of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, cyber warfare, and drones in Africa and the Middle East.

\* The themes are only suggestive and non-exhaustive in nature.

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

**Abstract:** The abstract must range between 300 to 500 words, outlining the methodology and the tentative outcomes of the research. The abstract should be on a topic of contemporary interest in the area of India-West Asia or India-Africa Relations.

**Full Paper:** The word limit for full paper submission is 6000-9000 words. The paper must consist of an Introduction, Research Methodology, Literature Review, Results & Discussion, and Conclusion.

### **Formatting Guidelines:**

- File must be in Microsoft Word editable format.
- The Citation style to be followed is APA 7th edition.
- Font: Times New Roman, Size: 12, Spacing: 1.5, Alignment: Justified
- Title must be size 14 font and bold.
- In-text citations and endnote referencing is to be followed. Footnoting must be avoided to the extent possible.

### **General Guidelines:**

- Abstracts and full papers have to be submitted at [politicalscience@rgnul.ac.in](mailto:politicalscience@rgnul.ac.in).
- Submission must be an original work of the author and empirical studies would be given preference over doctrinal research.
- A maximum of two authors are allowed per paper.
- A brief bio-note (maximum 150 words) should be attached to the abstract, detailing the designation and institutional affiliation of the author(s).
- The abstracts will be double-blind reviewed before acceptance for presentation, subject to submission of full paper in a timely manner.
- The selected papers will be invited for presentation at the conference and will be published in the form of an edited volume after plagiarism check and double-blind peer review.
- A self-declaration must be submitted along with the full paper regarding the originality of the work and that it has not been published/sent for publication anywhere else.

## **REGISTRATION DETAILS**

- **Registration Fee:**
  1. **Students:** Rs. 1,500/-
  2. **Ph.D. Scholars:** Rs. 2,000/-
  3. **Academicians:** Rs. 3,000/-
- Fees for co-authors shall be applicable as per the category.
- An email confirming acceptance of the paper for presentation will be sent through email, containing the payment link and last date for making the payment.
- Food and lodging costs shall be covered through the registration fee.

## **ORGANISING COMMITTEE**

### **Patron**

Prof. (Dr.) Anand Pawar

Registrar & Officiating Vice-Chancellor, RGNUL

### **Faculty Coordinators**

Mr. Sourav Kumar

Ms. Aditi Dubey

Assistant Professor of Political Science

Assistant Professor of Political Science

RGNUL, Punjab

RGNUL, Punjab

### **Student Coordinators**

Pranit Singh (+91 93533 25035)

Divisha Gora (+91 82091 87387)

\* All queries may be directed to the email or the student coordinators.