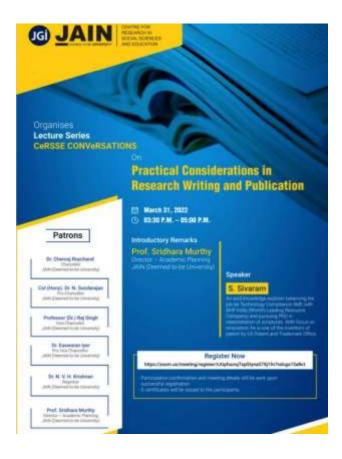
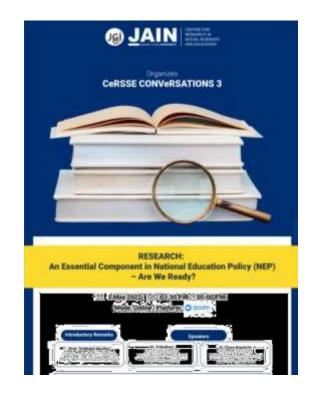
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CeRSSE CONVeRSATIONS -

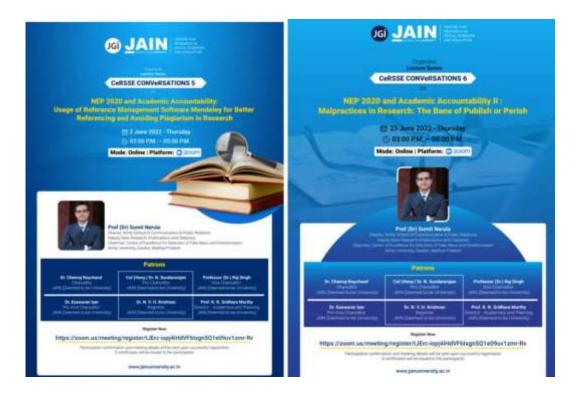
Lecture Series Organised by the Centre











Event Report

CeRSSE CONVeRSATIONS 2

As the world has again unleashed the demon of war, unfolding at the heart of Europe, the Russia-Ukraine War 2022 became a part of *CeRSSE CONVeRSATIONS*- a bi-monthly lecture series encapsulating research as well as the contemporary issues of concern. On 21 April 2022, the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE), JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), brought to its academic audience a panel discussion titled *Politics and the Humanitarian Dilemma: Russia-Ukraine War 2022*. Speaking of the war, Russia, clearly played the role of an aggressor violating Ukrainian sovereignty. While war always brings with it destruction, this war involves global interests and complex scenarios- ranging from its economic and geo-strategic implications to the humanitarian ones.

To address these challenges emanating from the war scenario- an array of scholars discussed the issue from an international studies perspective. While the soaring oil prices are touching our daily lives, thousands of Ukrainian refugees are fleeing their country- knocking on the doors of others. On a whole, the discussion encompassed several facets in it- institutional, humanitarian, economic and political.

The panel was chaired by Dr. Archna Negi, Associate Professor, at the Centre for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament (CIPOD), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Dr.

Negi, a specialist in international laws and organisations, not only weaved the discussion together but also threw light upon the role of the United Nations mechanism within the ambit of a world crisis. Dr. Vivek Mishra, a Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi and Visiting Faculty at Symbiosis School of International Studies and Rashtriya Raksha University, Gandhinagar, analysed the role of the United States primarily in dealing with the crisis. Alongside, he also reflected upon the role India and China play in their diplomatic capacities visà-vis the USA regarding the Ukrainian crisis. Dr. Nanda Kishor M S, an Associate Professor at the Department of Politics and International Studies, Pondicherry University, discussed the war scenario from a rather theoretical perspective with two theoretical focal points-realism and liberalism. He reflected upon the inadequacies of liberal world order in contemporary international politics and brought in the realist perspective to explain the ongoing crisis. Dr. Karamala Areesh Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, St. Joseph's College, Bengaluru, focused specifically on the facet of energy security reflecting upon the complex geopolitical dynamics of the war.

Ukraine is raging the newsrooms across the world incessantly and perhaps, rightfully so. But at the same time, this world remains oblivious to many other such crises. The question is- is it simply the war that matters to the world? Or is it the question of who wages it against whom, curving the geopolitics of the day? On this note, the panellists also viewed the global crisis from a racial perspective and critiqued the inefficiency of the international legal mechanisms as a preventive tool. Overall, beyond the academic deliberations and engaging discourses, war hardly has a triumphant side and thus, the discussion was put to an end with the hope of relative peace and security worldwide.

Electoral Reforms in Indian Democracy- Vestiges of Past, Volatility Now, & Vision Ahead

Inaugural Panel Discussion on Tackling Electoral Challenges- Contemporary Debates and Regional Perspective.



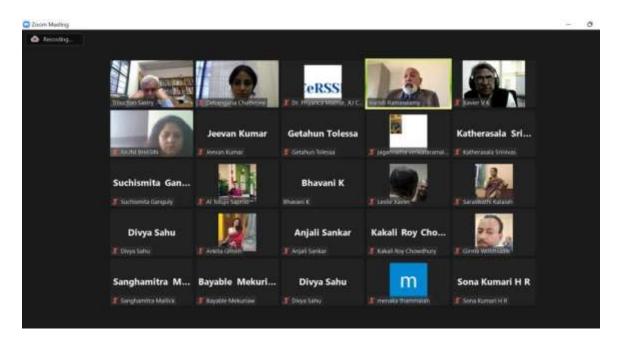
The Representation of the People Act (RPA) of 1951 undoubtedly provides a constitutional roadmap for conducting elections to the Centre and State Legislatures. Though the act has been amended over the years to reflect upon the changing needs, it seeks further room for healthy engagements with the stakeholders. In 2019, debates on electoral reforms at the Parliament touched

upon contentious issues such as the appointment processes of Election Commissioners; political funding; Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs); the proposition for conducting multi-level simultaneous elections; the role of social media; and the usage of data targeting the

swing voters. To this may be added more electoral concerns of contemporary times-organisational weakness of political parties generating the routine cases of political defections, perpetuating political violence, and caste, gender, and communal dynamics shaping political practices.

Echoing the ethos of upholding a vigorously functioning democracy, in January 2022, Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri, the honourable Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, spoke at length at a press conference on the pressing need for electoral reforms in the country. He envisioned establishing a healthy democratic space for discussion on this matter seeking insights from the stakeholders and engagement with the students. And to this end of spreading greater electoral awareness, educational institutions may be the vanguard because they engage with young minds.

We, at JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), would like to ensure that these young minds are nurtured in a well-informed manner. After all, at an interface of elections and democracy lies people and their interests. How much of the contemporary electoral mechanism and practices are true to its democratic spirit - remains at the heart of the question. Therefore, in the series of events on electoral reforms, titled as- *Electoral Reforms in Indian Democracy- Vestiges of Past, Volatility Now, and Vision Ahead,* through the course of its various sessions, we would be addressing the Constitutional facet of India's Electoral Reforms, its debates, the current challenges, the issue of gender parity in the Electoral Process, and its regional reflections upon the state of Karnataka. The proposed variety of events includes online lectures and panel discussions along with topical Presentations and debate competitions among the students.



Prof. Harish Ramaswamy and Prof. Trolochan Sastry during the Zoom meeting on 27 May

To this end, the first event under the series was held on 27 May between 3.30 pm and 5 pm under the theme titled- *Tackling Electoral Challenges- Contemporary Debates and Regional Perspective.* The event was chaired by Prof. Jeevan Kumar, a superannuated Professor of Bangalore University, and an Hon. Professor, at Panchayati Raj University, in Gadag, Karnataka. The panellists were Prof. Trilochan Sastry who is a Professor at IIM Bangalore and the chairman of the Association for Democratic Reforms and a frontline advocate of the Right to Information campaign, and Prof. Harish Ramaswamy, currently serving as the Vice-Chancellor, Raichur University, Karnataka with over two decades of experience in teaching and research in the Postgraduate Department of Political Science both, at the University of Mysore, Mysore and at Karnataka University, Dharwad, Karnataka, India. Through the course of the session, while Prof. Sastry's pragmatic cynicism emphasised people's democratic participation, Prof. Ramaswamy deliberated upon the theme through the lens of the conceptual framework by highlighting the fallouts of reforms in the country's current democratic set-up. On a whole, the discussion paved the way for future deliberations on the matter from a much more nuanced perspective.