LIST OF SPECIAL LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE CENTRE FOR MULTILEVEL FEDERALISM
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (2010-15)

The Special Lecture Series (SLS) was launched in November 2010 by Professor Baldev Raj Nayar and is the flagship programme of the Centre. It brings together faculty members, researchers and scholars in an informal Tuesday Talks setting. Invited scholars initiate a discussion in seminar mode on a wide range of topics. Listed below are the talks that were held till September 2015, along with brief Abstracts wherever provided.

1. Baldev Raj Nayar, Professor Emeritus, McGill University, Montreal (11 Nov 2010)

“The Paradox of Globalization and India’s Halting March to a Common Market: The Political Economy of Tax Reform under Federalism”

Prof. Nayar discussed the paradox of India’s shift to globalization and the subsequent policy adjustment that together seem to have favoured the fostering of a common market, even as it took account of the difficulties that are involved in working within a framework of federalism and a partisan multiparty system.

The paradox arises from the juxtaposition of the critique directed against globalization and the actual political process on the ground. The critics of globalization have posited market segmentation, even economic and national disintegration, as one of the preeminent consequences of globalization and the associated phenomenon of economic liberalization. But, contrary to the prognostications of the critics, it seems to Nayar that globalization has, paradoxically, been instrumental in engendering a process of transforming India’s existing highly segmented economy into a genuine common market, though the last mile in the journey toward such a market has yet to be traversed.

In short, he argued that globalization and common market are integrally joined together, with globalization compelling India, as it were, to endeavour to foster a common market. There seems to be a certain inexorable logic that leads globalization to make for the paradoxical result of developing a domestic common market, rather than tending toward market
segmentation as the critics believe. The connecting link between globalization and common market is the quest for economic efficiency. Of course, needless to add, the state as an institutional variable that sits astride as a gatekeeper between globalization and common market has had a critical role in the final outcome.

In analyzing the paradox of globalization and moving forward to a national common market, Nayar focused on one of the crucial elements in promoting a common market - the establishing of an appropriate system of indirect taxation that fosters, rather than hinders, the free flow of goods and services in the domestic market. In exploring this theme, he looked at (1) the relationship between globalization and tax reform; (2) the evolution of tax reform after economic liberalization, including the role of the state in that evolution; and (3) the motivations in tax reform.

2. Dr. Rupak Chattopadhyay, Vice-President, Forum of Federations, Ottawa (6 Dec 2010)

“Financing and Governance of Capital Cities in Federal Systems”

Dr. Chattopadhyay argues that Capital cities, like other cities, are places where people live and work, use local services, and engage in political activity. Yet capital cities are different than other cities. Not only do they host the national government and principal national institutions, they also play a unique cultural and symbolic role in the country. The national capital role and the local role sometimes come in conflict with each other. This conflict can be exacerbated in federal countries where, if the capital is treated like any other city, it would normally fall under the jurisdiction of a state or province and leave a limited role for the federal government. Capital cities in federal countries also differ from capital cities in unitary countries because federal countries are more diverse and this means that federal capitals have the added responsibility of reflecting this diversity while at the same time being as neutral as possible with respect to individual states or provinces. Even within federal countries, there are significant differences among capital cities in terms of governing structures, roles and responsibilities, resources, and the treatment of capital cities by the federal government. He presented findings on the governance of capital cities and draws on their earlier work comparing eleven federal capitals.

3. Prof. Jan Wouters, Jean Monnet Chair Ad Personam EU and Global Governance, Professor of International Law and International Organizations and Director of the Leuven
Centre for Global Governance Studies, Institute for International Law at the University of Leuven (12 Jan 2011)

“Current State and Outlook for Federalism in Belgium and the European Union”

Belgium, at the heart of the European Union, is a country whose federal system displays a number of unique features that go some length in the direction of confederalism. Interestingly, Belgium’s federalism has shown a “centrifugal” tendency over the past four decades, coinciding with another “federal” process affecting the same people and territory, namely, the European integration process. Over the past six decades, the European Community, succeeded in 2009 by the European Union, has seen a remarkable transfer of important powers from Member States to the European level. The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1 December 2009, constitutes the newest phase in this “centripetal” process of an “ever closer union”. In his lecture, Professor Wouters contrasted both evolutions and sketched the outlook for federalism in Europe and Belgium.

4. Dr. Louise Tillin, Lecturer at the India Institute at King’s College, London (25 Jan 2011)

“Remapping India: What can we learn from the creation of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand?”

India is one of the most populous and diverse countries in the world, yet its people are divided into the fewest subunits of any federal system. Her paper addressed the dynamics of post-linguistic reorganisation, focusing in particular on the reasons for the creation of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand, all formed in the year 2000 from the large, predominantly Hindi-speaking states of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. It will set out a framework drawn from historical institutionalism to explain border change in India’s federal system, and an argument for state creation in 2000 that focuses on dynamics at three levels of the federal system - the sub-state, state, and national levels. She goes on to ask to what extent ongoing debates about the possible future reorganisation of borders in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra or Uttar Pradesh, for example, bear similarities with the political process that lay behind the last episode of state creation in 2000.

5. Prof. Christophe Jaffrelot, former Director of the Centre for International Studies and Research, Sciences-Po, Paris and a Member of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) France. (5 Feb 2011)
“Minorities in Urban Areas: Case Study of Bhopal and Ahmadabad”

Using the contours of Geography, Prof. Jaffrelot made an attempt to understand the configuration of the two cities. Ahmedabad has never been a Muslim city. It presents a case of communal tensions in 1969 Hindu workers clashed with Muslim workers; in 1985 caste and communal conflicts; in 1992 Ramjanmabhoomi movement; and in 2002 state-sponsored pogrom to cleanse the Rashtra.

There are Muslim groups like Boras Memons, yet business hardly goes beyond local issues. Juhapura, called as “mini Pakistan”, presents the case of locality of ghettosisation and marginalisation of Muslims. It is a deprived locality which moves by self help group education. Safety and security are the two issues concerning the ghetto. From old city to the industrialised belt to Juhapura, ghettoisation has paradoxical effects in this city.

Bhopal presents a different pattern, where instead of marginalisation at the end of city, the Muslims are marginalised at the centre. The walled city is on the bank of the lake. The percentage of Muslim population has increased with the time. Abolition of jagirdari system lead to palaces being converted into hotels. “Emotional” politics leads to local political elites driven and chosen from community sentiments. Irrespective of vote bank politics, new buildings have come up. Muslims have withdrawn from the walled city.

The ray of hope in the two scenarios lies in the development of the middle class, and informal movements towards integration.

6. Prof. Sumanasiri Liyanage, Department of Economics, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (28 Feb 2011)


The armed conflict in Sri Lanka finally came to an end on May 18, 2009 as the security forces of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) had succeeded in defeating comprehensively the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The way in which the armed conflict between the GoSL and LTTE came to an end on May 18, 2009 was substantially different from that of February 22, 2002. In the latter case, it came to an end through the signing of a ceasefire agreement (CFA) by two contending parties facilitated by the Royal Norwegian Government. Even prior to the CFA of 2002, the armed conflict ended on many occasions as an outcome of
written or unwritten agreement between the two contenders of the armed conflict. However, all these agreements failed to produce perpetual or long-lasting peace for multiple reasons and the failures had eventually led to more atrocious resumption of armed confrontation between twocontending parties.

7. Dr. Wilfried Swenden, University of Edinburgh, UK. (14 Nov 2011)

“Is the United Kingdom Federal: Devolution and Plurinationalism in Comparative Perspective”

In May 2011, Scottish citizens elected their fourth Scottish Parliament since devolution transferred legislative and executive powers to Scotland. Scottish autonomy is part of a wider devolution process, in which powers were devolved from the UK Parliament to the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish assemblies. In strictly constitutional terms, the UK remains a unitary state due to the retention of parliamentary sovereignty vested in the UK parliament. Yet, in practice, devolution has introduced federal features in the functioning of UK democracy. For instance, the restoration of the Scottish Parliament (it ceased to operate with the Act of Union in 1707) followed upon a successful referendum to that effect in 1997. The UK Parliament has respected the verdict of the Scottish voter and it does not alter the powers of the Scottish Parliament without the latter’s explicit consent. However, in the May 2011 elections, the Scottish voters elected a majority SNP (Scottish National Party) into power which plans to organize a referendum on ‘Scottish independence’ in the Autumn of 2014.

In my talk, I highlighted the characteristics and rationale of UK devolution, by placing it against a broader comparative background. I first situated UK devolution against the background of the changing nature of the post-war state in Europe, and the wider processes of European integration and economic liberalization. I argued that the extension of self-rule to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland built upon a long tradition of recognizing the UK state as plurinational which predated self-rule in 1999. Before devolution, the UK government recognized Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish distinctiveness by organizing territorial field administrations in education in health and education, with a view to implement UK policy in the devolved territories in a regionally distinctive way.

However, the replacement of this ‘territorial implementation’ and ‘central representation’ by ‘full scale legislative autonomy’ for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland may have come at a cost. Scottish, Welsh or Northern Ireland’s influence at the centre has reduced, in particular because the UK government provides limited representation for the devolved territories, and because the party in national government (the Conservatives and Liberals) are not strongly
represented among the Scottish voters (in UK and Scottish elections). This limited representation has eroded Scottish (and to a lesser extent Welsh or Northern Irish) loyalties to remaining a part of the UK. From a comparative perspective, UK devolution provides an interesting test case for how plurinational diversity can be accommodated when it only arises within territorially defined but in popular terms rather small sections of the country. One could make the case that it may be more meaningful to compare the UK with a ‘federacy’. At the same time, has the design of UK devolution and the political dynamics it has unleashed put the UK on a slippery slope towards territorial disintegration? Although a majority of Scottish citizens favour remaining part of the UK, they also propagate deeper autonomy, especially in fiscal matters. In turn, the recurrent demands of Scotland generate an awakening of English identity, a sense among the English that Scotland is being treated favourably, especially in welfare. The regional branches of Scottish polity-wide parties (Labour, Conservatives and Liberals) seek to find a delicate balance between moderating these Scottish specific and UK wide interests, but as I argued they too now all advocate more Scottish self-rule. As such the trajectory of UK devolution can be of relevance for other plurinational states or federations, including India.

8. Dr Asha Sarangi, Associate Professor at the Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (30Aug 2011)

"Language, Territory and State: The Architecture of Indian Federalism"

India is a linguistically and culturally diverse country. This social and cultural diversity has found expression in the state discourses, practices, plans and policies at various levels. The question that still needs to be asked is whether the state rationale of organizing and institutionalizing linguistic-cultural diversity in India has resulted in greater democratization and political participation of the people or it has managed diversity to achieve certain political objectives and goals. Keeping the logic and reasons of states reorganization process in various phases after independence, Dr Asha Sarangi, argued that the question of representation, recognition and redistribution of rights, identities and resources needs to be linked up with long drawn complex exercise of state formation in India. She drew attention to the vast and somewhat unmanageable linguistic diversity, and how it has been integrated into the state rationalization project of remapping and redrawing the linguistic-cultural boundaries of the country since the early 1950s onwards. She also described at length the reasons behind the demands for newer and smaller states in contemporary India, and how
these demands focus not so much on linguistic-cultural criteria of geo-linguistic homogeneity and compactness but more on factors such as economic growth and redistribution of state resources, withdrawal of the welfare state, increasing disparities within the states, rise of identity politics and access of sub-state actors to the global market etc. Finally, she also situated the process of reorganization within Indian federalism along with various constitutional and extra-constitutional provisions provided to show the multi-level federalism working in India along with a strong centre bias and forms of asymmetrical federal forms of governance in the country. The lecture broadly focused on showing an interface and an intimate relationship between language, territory and the state as three most important categories of state formation in independent India.


The unity of the Common Market during the Cold War was founded on ideological values, economic principles and the project to reconcile its components, particularly France and Germany. European countries under communist regimes were considered enemies. The question of cultural unity was not really thematized. It was not until 1990 and the enlargement on a continental scale that issues of European identity and unity became crucial. For the moment 27 states are members of the E.U. which recognizes 23 official (national) languages even though English is used as “lingua franca”.

The European Union is neither a federation nor a confederation but an “ever closer” association of nation-states. The nation-state is a political and cultural model of community which has been built and developed since the 18° century onwards. It has deeply shaped the political map of modern Europe. The first attempts to imagine the widened Union tried to transpose the principles used to define the European nation-states (cultural unity of the population, alleged continuity of the nation through the ages, intimate relationship to a given territory) onto a supranational scale. In the 1990’s, programs were launched in order to define the supposed components of European unity: common European history, European literature, European heroes, European “places of memory” etc. The search for unity rapidly highlighted the diversity created during the national era. Therefore, the second step in the
search for the definition of Europe, from the year 2000 onwards, stressed diversity as a genuine and positive way to create identity. On May 4th 2000 the expression “Unity in Diversity” was adopted as the motto of the European Union. Although the Treaty of Lisbon does not include references to the symbols of the EU (flag, anthem, motto), this formula remains at the core of the current cultural policies of the European Union.

Since 2000, the European Union has been financing programs dedicated to the setting up of cultural networks. These programs must be supported by associative structures and be co-financed by local or national authorities. It started with the Culture 2000 program (2002-2006). The Program “Culture 2007-2013 stresses on diversity and interculturality as a means to enhance integration. The “European capitals of Culture” program, launched in 1985, meets with a growing success. Every year, two European cities (generally not national capitals) are named European cultural capital for a year. The European puzzle of national units is thus not abolished but the project is to overcome it through time-limited and transnational celebrations of its components.

2008 was designated “European Year of Intercultural Dialogue” It draw the attention of people in Europe to the importance of dialogue within diversity and between diverse cultures. All of these programs aims to “bring people from different European countries into contact with each other’s culture and promote mutual understanding and to foster a feeling of European citizenship.”

Regarding culture, moral values, lifestyle and consumption, EU citizens are in fact much more similar today than they were in the past. But such similarities are not sufficient to build a strong feeling of belonging and to foster active citizenship. Recent surveys show that national feelings of belonging overcome European feelings of belonging. There is no European public space, no European transnational newspaper or TV Channel., no European transnational political field. Political careers take place in national frames, not in the European one. The recent elections in European nation-states indicate that a significant proportion of E.U citizens do not rely on supranational structures to guarantee their rights and social status. Nationalist movements, generally anti-E.U and hostile to immigrants, are gaining force in many countries. Moreover the definition of the E.U. now seems to be determined more by “credit rating agencies” than by citizens. A (con)federal evolution of the E.U. seems now necessary in order to face the challenges of the globalization and of the debt crisis.
Though for past two decades, the context of conflict has taken a separatist route and the major political slogan that has been raised in Kashmir is ‘Azadi’, it may be interesting to explore if ‘Federal solutions’ can be of some relevance to Kashmir. It may be important to note that though the separatists distinguish their politics from that of ‘Autonomists’ like the mainstream leaders belonging to the National Conference, yet they do refer to the loss of Autonomy of the state as one of the examples of ‘betrayal’ by the Indian state vis-à-vis its promises on Kashmir. In Kashmir, the discourse on Autonomy and Azadi are intrinsically linked and despite the distinctions maintained by the protagonists on both the side, there are common points as well. Of late, the separatists have been using the discourse of ‘Self Rule’ which is quite akin to the concept of Autonomy.

The pertinent issue that needs to be highlighted in this context is that the kind of dichotomous relationship that exists today between ‘Indian Nationalism’ and ‘Kashmiri nationalism’ was not so in the late 1940s. There was more or less, a harmonious construction between the two nationalisms and Article 370 served as a bridge between the two. It was only in the post-1953 period with the gradual erosion of Article 370 that Kashmiri nationalism sought to assert itself in opposition to Indian nationalism. Till 1953 the model of Asymmetrical Federalism was quite successful in ‘integrating’ Kashmir within the Indian union. The impact of autonomy that the state government enjoyed was actually felt by people when the state was able to go ahead with very radical land reforms and change the lot of people overnight. The logic of maintaining the legal, constitutional and political autonomy of the state as well as the ‘negotiability’ and the consent of the state actors that defined the model of centre-state relations till 1953 was lost once Sheikh Abdullah was arrested.

Can the model of Asymmetrical Federalism be revived as a formula of conflict resolution at this point of time? Though the National Conference has sought to offer restoration ‘Pristine’ model of Autonomy of the pre-1953 period as an alternative to the slogan of Azadi, yet it may be important to ask as to how relevant is this model in the context of separatist discourse on the one hand and the changing context of Centre-state relations on the other. Besides the practical issues of turning the clock back, there may be other related issues. Instead of a
historical reversal, it may therefore be important to emphasise on the logic of Asymmetrical Federalism and to restore as sense of negotiability to the political actors in Kashmir so that they can rethink the Centre-state relations in the present context. The present context provides opportunities of new kinds. For instance, there is the notion of cross-Loc linkages and the idea not only of reorganising the Centre-state relations on both the sides of divided Kashmir but also of building a kind of loose confederal kind of relation between both the sides.

There are lot of issues which need to be debated in the context of revival of the model of Asymmetrical federalism which include the internal devolution of power - the regional and sub-regional autonomy; the democratisation of internal political structures; the issue of jurisdiction of Autonomous national political institutions vis-à-vis the Autonomy of the state; the Panchayati Raj institutions etc.

11. Prof. Ramaswamy R. Iyer, Former Secretary, Water Resources, Government of India, is Honorary Research Professor at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi. (4 Oct 2011)

“Inter-State River Water Disputes: Beyond Riparianism and Federalism”

The existing mechanism for the adjudication of inter-State river water disputes can be made to work better through a few more amendments to the ISWD Act, a change of style on the part of the tribunals, and a change in their composition. Institutionalised efforts also need to be made to bring about an agreed settlement of differences before they become serious disputes, and if a serious dispute does arise, to resolve it before recourse to adjudication becomes unavoidable. The competitive, unsustainable demand for water (‘greed’ in the Gandhian sense) that has led to inter-State conflicts over river waters also creates other kinds of water-related conflicts. It is necessary to transcend the riparian/federalist perspectives and the perspective of rights. We must think in terms of our responsibility or dharma in relation to other humans sharing the resource with us, including those in our State or other States, our country or other countries, our generation or future generations; other species or forms of life; rivers, lakes, aquifers, forests, nature in general, Planet Earth itself.

12. Dr. Ajay K. Mehra, Director, Centre for Public Affairs, New Delhi (11 Oct 2011)

“Salwa Judum, Public Security and Federalism: Reflections on a Complex Conundrum”
The Supreme Court judgment on Salwa Judum has raised a number of questions regarding public security in its federal context. The SC was not impressed by the arguments used by the Chhattisgarh government and the Union government that it was a people's movement. It questioned the logic of ill-trained, ill-paid local youth being armed as Special Police Officers, thereby militarizing the society. Post-judgment the Chhattisgarh government and others moved with rare alacrity to amend the law to circumvent the SC judgment, leaving unanswered many questions on public security in multilevel federalism. Similar questions were raised on the federal dimensions of public security in terrorist violence following the Mumbai and Delhi blasts. The report of the Punchhi Commission Task Force on Criminal Justice significantly interrogates the public security architecture holistically.

13. Dr. Stephanie Tawa Lama-Rewal, Research Fellow in Political Science at the Centre for the Study of India and South Asia (CEIAS) at the CNRS-EHESS, Paris. She is also Honorary Fellow at the Centre for Multilevel Federalism (CMF). (25 Oct 2011)
“A Genealogy of the Bhagidari Scheme in Delhi: Participation and Neo-Populism”
The Bhagidari scheme, defining itself as “a partnership between citizens and government”, represents in several respects an innovation in the history of participation in India. This urban participatory device, meant for the middle classes, was launched in 2000 by the Chief Minister Sheila Dixit to link residents and the administration in order to develop participation beyond elections and to improve the quality of urban services. The scheme is now eleven years old. Looking back at its origins allows us to distinguish the reasons explaining its relative success, but also to understand the limits of this device in terms of deepening urban democracy.

14. Dr. Ingrid Therwath, Head, International Relations, Centre de Sciences Humaines, New Delhi. (22 Nov 2011)
“Long-Distance Regionalism and the Struggle for Telangana”
Long-distance nationalism has become somewhat of a catch-phrase. The expression is often used and the phenomenon it describes is well-known. However, its mechanisms have hardly been studied. Worse, long-distance regionalism, which does not necessarily oppose the State or aim at its dissolution, has remained largely ignored despite its insights into expatriate political mobilisation and on State-diaspora relationships. This study explores, through the pro-Telangana movement, the relationship of long-distance regionalists with the state and
country of their origin. It aims at understanding the conditions and the driving forces of their mobilization. Drawing from rational choice and mobilization theories, but bearing in mind the politics of emotion which are also at play, this presentation will examine the social, historical and cultural context that has cradled and helped develop the diaspora’s discourse and mobilisation as well as the motivations of the different actors. In doing so, it seeks to throw new light on the complex relationship between the home country, the home region and international migrants.

15. Shri. Amitabha Pande, IAS Retd and former Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs at the Inter State Council. (29 Nov 2011)

“Kashmir and the Promise of Federalism”
Kashmir today offers what could be the greatest opportunity for lasting peace in the sub-continent. It also has the potential to take a leadership role in radically redesigning the architecture of democratic federalism in South Asia and serving as a model for decentralized governance based on the principles of subsidiarity. Yet, more likely than not, the national and security mindset which dominates policy thinking will once again convert this opportunity into a threat and reinforce those traditions of political conservatism and pusillanimity that have repeatedly thwarted any attempts at revitalising the peace process.

16. Dr. Rahul Mukherji, Associate Professor, South Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore. (7 Dec 2011)

“Ideas, Interests and the Tipping Point: Understanding Economic Change in Federal India” This paper makes the case for a historical path of economic change for India. Comparative political economy and economic history have either stressed the power of ideas or the importance of politics. This paper integrates the two and argues the case for a path where ideas and interests are equally important for understanding economic change in India. Moreover, it proposes a tipping point model of economic change that takes history seriously.

17. Prof. Stefan Hammer, Professor of Public Law and Legal Philosophy at the University of Vienna. (13 Dec 2011)

“Federalism and Fundamental Rights”
It is instructive to compare examples of gradual unitarization of fundamental rights guarantees in selected federative systems such as the US, Switzerland, and the European
‗constitutional compound‘ (taken as a federative arrangement consisting of the EU, the European Convention on Human Rights, and the national constitutions). Insofar as these unitarization processes are not explicitly expressed in democratic decisions but have been driven by the judiciary, they were nevertheless made dependent on at least indirect evidence of democratic consensus on common human rights standards among the entities of the respective federative systems. Thus, the emergence of unitary human rights standards in federal systems is not a simple manifestation of the universality of human rights as reflected in the legal reasoning of judges, but presupposes some sort of an evolving social contract among the citizens of the different federated entities. Where such democratic consensus on essential human rights standards turn out to be fragile, this may pose a challenge to the cohesion of the respective federative systems as a body politic.

18. Prof. James Manor, School of Advanced Study, University of London. He has previously taught at Yale, Harvard, and Leicester Universities; at IDS Sussex; and at ISEC, Bangalore. (17 Jan 2012)

“Indian Incongruities: Centralisation of Power and Decentralisation of Resources”
This talk will focus on the implications of two recent trends which sit incongruously alongside one another. The first is the tendency towards highly centralised, one-person rule in many (though not all) Indian states. The second is the transfer of immense funds to gram panchayats under the MGNREGA -- which represents the most massive injection of funds into a system of democratic decentralisation in world history.

19. Prof. Odette Louiset, Professor in the Department of Geography, University of Rouen, France. (14 Feb 2012)

“The Cultural Geography of Capitals in Federal India: Case study of Hyderabad, Situating Chandigarh and Bangalore”
What is the exact status of cities? Are they masterpieces of territories or places in the broadest scale, that is to say, the world? To answer such a question, the debate about area/network is not enough. This question refers actually to another question: what is a city? This question is a way to understand both the universality of cities - the city as a concept- and the diversity of cities - multiple patterns- in space and time. This question of concept and pattern leads to other ways of considering the city: city in local spatiality, city in cultural frame. But this way is also risky and we must avoid as well European ethnocentrism and
cultural essentialism. As a state capital or a global city, Hyderabad offers a useful case to examine this question of the ‘nature of the city’. This approach also provides a passage to considering other state capitals such as Chandigarh and Bangalore.

20. Dr. Mira Kamdar, Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute in New York and a member of the editorial board of World Policy Journal. (21 Feb 2012)

“India’s Federalism: A Help or a Hindrance to Sustainable Development?”

India is attempting to pursue a classic development agenda in a deepening global context of resource scarcity, economic crisis and climate change impact and in a domestic context of a widening wealth gap and persistent poverty and environmental degradation. How do the multiple levers and stakeholders at the local, state and national levels of India’s federalism help or hinder a sustainable trajectory for India’s development?

21. Professor Imtiaz Ahmad, Political Sociologist, formerly at the Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. (10 April 2012)

“Multiculturalism and Federalism”

The relationship between multiculturalism and federalism is conceptually close as well as problematic in many ways. This talk will seek to unravel the complexities of the linkages between these two concepts.

22. Dr. Sandeep Shastri, Pro Vice Chancellor of Jain University at Bengaluru and the Director of its Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CERSSE). (17 April 2012)

“South Sudan: Democracy, Federalism and Nation Building”

Ever since the people of Southern Sudan voted overwhelmingly (January 2011) for the creation of a new nation, the dialogue on the democratic framework for this country that gained formal independence in July 2011, has seen a clear focus on federalism as a tool of conflict management and managing diversity. The interim Constitution that was adopted on the eve of independence, has many distinct federal features which clearly indicate that the constitution framers in South Sudan took cognizance of developments in new democracies that adopted the federal framework. The focus in South Sudan is clearly to craft a federal
democratic arrangement that specifically addresses the unique challenges that this new nation faces.

23. Professor Navnita Chadha Behera, Professor Department of Political Science, University of Delhi. (21 August 2012)

“From a Policy ‘Lag’ to a ‘Lack’ of Policy”

The Government of India’s decision to release the Interlocutors Report without making any commitment to accept its recommendations has cast a further shadow on its chequered record. This has also driven home the importance of symbolism and processes involved in any such initiative relating to Kashmir as indeed the substantive nature of its recommendations along with the possible outcomes. How does the Interlocutors’ Report fare on these three parameters? The talk will discuss the findings of the Interlocutors report against the background of similar initiatives by both the central and state governments in the past two decades and, dwell on the central government’s Kashmir policy that has remained struck in a groove of policy ‘lag’ to a ‘lack’ of policy.

24. Dr. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, Independent Journalist and Educator. (4 Sept2012)

“Future of Federal Coalitions in India”

Pranab Mukherjee would become the thirteenth President of India in July 2012 was never in doubt. However, the way in which traditional political rivals found themselves on the same side of the fence and once-faithful allies and coalition partners broke ranks, throws up new pointers to the fluid future state of the country’s polity. Clearly, partners and supporters of India’s two largest political parties, the Indian National Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party, prefer to keep their options open in the run-up to the next general elections scheduled for April-May 2014 but which could take place earlier.

25. Dr. E. Sridharan, Academic Director of the University of Pennsylvania Institute for the Advanced Study of India (UPIASI). (20 Nov 2012)

“Coalition Politics in India in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective”
This paper attempts to explain the apparently exceptional pattern of coalition politics in India compared to expectations from theory and from international patterns - the prevalence of minority governments and among them, minority coalitions, among non-single party majority governments, and the predominance of very large coalitions of 6-12 parties - in the light of the specificities of India’s political institutions. It shows that there are two general and three India-specific circumstances that favour such a pattern and that most of these circumstances have been present at government formation in India since 1989, particularly since 1996.

26. Professor Gurpreet Mahajan, Professor, Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University. (18 Dec 2012)

“Cultural Diversity and Federalism”

In recent times, the idea of multi-nation federalism has gained greater acceptance in western democracies. This is not however the case in South and Southeast Asia. Why is this so? Why has the west come to accept federal or quasi-federal arrangements as a viable mode of dealing with claims of cultural difference and minority nationalism? Within Asia, India stands out as an exception in this regard. Just why is the case? Why has India been more willing to accommodate cultural diversities through a federal framework? Is federalism a desirable framework for accommodating minorities and their cultural difference? Are there other options that might be explored? What may we learn from the Indian experience? These are some of the questions that this presentation will try to explore in an effort to understand both the possibilities thrown up by the federal framework as well as the challenges that confront us when differences are accommodated through this framework.

27. Dr. Indira Rajaraman, former RBI Chair Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, Delhi, and Member, 13th Finance Commission (22 Jan 2013)

“Economic Reform in a Multilevel Federal Setting”

In a multilevel federal setting, liberalisation by national government can fail to reform if:

- Subnational governments fail to implement supplementary liberalization
- There continue to remain perverse incentives at subnational levels
- National liberalisation carries negative consequences at subnational levels
The talk examined the 1991 reform package against this framework, and the subsequent correctives introduced in the years since then. It went on to examine the reforms embedded in the recommendations of the Thirteenth Finance Commission, and conclude with the current reform initiatives starting in September 2012.

28. Dr. Eric Leclerc, Associate Professor (HDR) in geography at the University of Rouen and a member of the Interdisciplinary Research Team on Cultural Areas. (12 Feb 2013)

“Tracing Multiple Identities : The Indian Diaspora in Cyberspace”

As part of the e-atlas diaspora, my research is a first quantitative exploration of the presence of the Indian diaspora in cyberspace. The problematic is organized around three axes: first a definition of the Indian diaspora itself, as expressed on the Web and not by the Indian government; secondly a geolocation of the Indian diaspora in cyberspace compared with its spatial distribution; thirdly a temporal approach to identify events that encourages its appearance in the global cyberspace. From the analysis of the corpus gathered (1089 sites), it is clear that a variety of identity claims are expressed on the Web. The structure of the Indian diaspora in cyberspace highlights subnational groups, which qualitative analyses have already identified, but unrelated to the websites of the Indian government. Other emerging identities, religious, professional and especially a supra-national South Asian identity also can be identified. The second finding is the discrepancy between global distribution of the diaspora and its expression on the web, where the United States then dominates and the Gulf States are absent. Beyond an explanation of the uneven access to ICTs, or by the digital divide, inequalities in cyberspace must identify the mediators of that presence. In the U.S., all the components of the Indian diaspora do not have the same visibility whereas access to ICT is similar. The third axis is still under construction, since processing temporal information is very difficult on the Web, the variability of cyberspace enter in conflict with longitudinal studies.


“Pakistan: Federalism and the Challenge of Governance”
Behind the national unity supposed to be established on encompassing Islam, the challenge of governance in Pakistan is the result of three sets of problems: the rise of violent extremism; the tensions between the key players—the Executive, the Judiciary and the Army—and the diversity of regional identities, often under-evaluated by analysts. In fact, one may wonder if the risky regional strategic paradigm defined by the Army is not partly resulting from a lack of balance of the federal polity. While the secession of Bangladesh marked the nadir of federalism in Pakistan, the federal issue—economic parameters included—remains today a matter of debate, as testify identity movements in Sind and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, separatists in Balotchistan, protesters in Gilgit Baltistan, and the proponents of the subdivision of Punjab.

30. Dr Kalowatie Deonandan, Associate Professor of Political Studies at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. (19 March 2013)

“The Governance of Natural Resource Extraction and Multilevel Federalism: Implications for Resource Communities in Canada”

The 21st century has witnessed a dramatic increase in the development of natural resources in several countries around the world. In many areas, however, this boom has triggered mass social mobilization and resistance from local populations on whose territories the resources are located. While resource development advocates laud the industry for the benefits it brings in terms of economic growth, employment and prosperity, detractors counter that it is a threat to democracy, human rights and the economic well being of host communities. Focusing on Canada, a global leader in nation in natural resource development, this presentation explores whether the nation’s multilevel federalism structure, with its shared governance between the federal and provincial governments over resources, makes for more effective public policy in this sphere, particularly with respect to the local populations.

31. Dr Satyajit Singh, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi. (2 April 2013)

“Unfolding the Political in Decentralisation: Village Forest Councils in Uttarakhand”
Unlike the economic literature on decentralisation that is dominated by normative and prescriptive arguments on how a shift towards decentralisation should take place, this paper makes a case for re-centering of the political in the decentralisation literature. This study of decentralisation does not prescribe decentralisation rules, but weighs the different social, economic and ecological outcomes under varied local conditions. It takes note of the diversity of local institutions and politics in the interpretation of formal rules, power relations, legal rights, moral claims, social custom, and the establishment of informal institutional arrangements. It questions the typologies of neat property regimes that are broadly categorised as - open-access, state, private and common property - and points out that ownership does not necessarily refer to control and use of resources. The paper highlights the heterogeneity of property regimes under which the village communities manage the forests, and points out that apart from formal institutions, specific state-society relations determine the entitlements of the villagers.

32. Prof. Zoya Hasan, Professor of Political Science at the Jawaharlal Nehru University and Member, National Commission for Minorities in India. (16 April 2013)

“The National Commission for Minorities: Mandate and Limitations”

After coming to power in May 2004, the United Progressive Alliance launched a new policy discourse on minorities. In March 2005, the Sachar Committee was set up to analyze the conditions of Muslims and to identify areas of intervention by the government to improve their socio-economic and educational conditions. Its report highlighted the deep development deficit and deprivation of the Muslim communities. The government responded by starting a number of specific proposals and schemes for the welfare of minorities and established new institutions to implement it. The Ministry of Minority Affairs created in 2006 was to be the nodal ministry to monitor implementation of these programmes. All these initiatives were taken in addition to the National Commission of Minorities which came into existence in 1992 to monitor the working of constitutional safeguards provided for minorities in the constitution and in laws enacted by parliament and state legislatures. This paper examines key issues relating to the mandate and functioning of NCM in the context of the new policy environment for minority development. The NCM’s experience shows that the enhanced awareness both for the problems of the minorities and efforts to address them has not strengthened or improved its functioning. This is not because of the limitations of its mandate or policies but rather the
institutional bias, lack of political will and democratic mobilization of minorities limit the functioning of institutions designated for their development.

33. Prof. Neera Chandhoke, Former Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi, and Director of the Developing Countries Research Centre, University of Delhi. (23 April 2013)


Secession is a problematic concept and it is not easy to deal with the right to one’s own state. When is secession justified, and even if it is justified should we defend it. The issue becomes infinitely more complicated when it comes to contested secessions in formal democracies such as India, and in plural societies such as the one found in the state of Jammu and Kashmir in India. The paradox of the case that constitutes the empirical referral of this work, the state of Jammu and Kashmir is as follows: whereas the people of J and K have been subjected to institutionalised injustice by the Government of India, at the same time it cannot be said that the Indian state is undemocratic and by this virtue illegitimate. Neither can we deny that a range of moral considerations inhibit an outright grant of the right of secession. How do we then deal with the demand for secession in one part of the state of J and K, notably the Kashmir Valley? The argument developed in this essay holds that if the existing state shows intent to reverse historical injustices, compensate victims of injustice, and institutionalise justice, it is far better that groups give up secessionist demands and opt for living in plural society, rather than in a society that is relatively more homogenous.

One of the central objectives of democratic states is to promote self determination through the establishment of apposite institutions. The establishment of such institutions is politically significant because they carry, at least, three benefits (a) they realise the core moral rights that are the due of each person, (b) these institutions help deflect secessionist demands, and (c) these institutions help to resolve conflicts between rights. In sum, secessionist demands compel us to respond in politically innovative ways on how the faults and the flaws of a formally democratic, but an imperfectly just order can be addressed and negotiated. In other words if secession is a response to certain conditions that prevail in a given state, the challenge is to neutralise these conditions. In the final instance the vital issue is not only the sanctity of territorial borders. The issue is whether these borders contain a political
community that is organised on principles of democracy and justice. The right of secession has to be taken seriously both by its practitioners and its defenders, and justified rigorously.

34. Prof. Rekha Chowdhary, Professor of Political Science, Former Head of the Department of Political Science, University of Jammu and ICSSR National Fellow. (13 Aug 2013)

“Peace Building in Kashmir Today: Problems and Issues”

The crux of the current challenge to peace-building in Kashmir is the stalled peace process and the issues emanating from this development in the post-militancy situation of Kashmir. This talk will explore the issues related to peace building at three levels: the external (India-Pakistan) level, the internal (Delhi-Kashmir) level and the intra-state level. Focusing on the developments of the post-2007 period, it will highlight the changing political responses of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, specifically those of the Kashmiris.

35. Dr V. N. Alok, Associate Professor of Public Finance and Coordinator, Centre for Urban Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration. (3 Sept 2013)

“Panchayats in India: Comparing Devolution across States”

Panchayat, institution of rural local self-government, forms the last tier of multi order federalism in India. Panchayat derives its power from the sub national government, i.e. the state government which has the responsibility to nurture and develop these local institutions. In this process, the Union Government offers the needed support and handhold the states to fulfil their mandated provisions. This is discernible from the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1993 embedded in the Constitution as Part IX. The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj created in 2004, has the mandate to oversee the fulfilment of provisions in Part IX and article 243 ZD (related to district planning committee) of the Constitution. The Ministry had introduced a scheme to a) motivate states to empower the panchayats, b) motivate panchayats to put in place accountability framework making their functioning transparent and efficient. Incentive funds under this scheme are given to the states in accordance with ranking in the Devolution Index.

The index is constructed by assessing the enabling environment that states have created for panchayats to function as institution of self-government. The index incorporates pillars of
devolution, i.e. functions, finances and functionaries, besides observing the setting up of constitutionally provided institutions and their functioning. The study also constructs sub-indices on framework, functions, finances, functionaries, capacity buildings and accountability in addition to the composite devolution index. For the purpose, a unique data set is constructed for all states and union territories by obtaining data from state governments. These are validated through surveys in panchayats.

36. Dr. Aaron Schneider, Leo Block Chair of International Studies at the University of Denver. (10 Sept 2013)

“Class Alliances and Political Institutions in India and Brazil”

The Brazilian state collects 36% of GDP in tax, providing revenues for a generous social safety net and major developmentalist investments. India collects closer to 16% of GDP, barely enough to sustain the state. Yet, while the two countries differ in their tax capacity, they display similar characteristics of highly regressive revenues and numerous distortions and inefficiencies. Rich people pay less of their income in tax than poor people, and competition across and between federal levels of government presents taxpayers with different bases and rates depending on where they transact. What can explain stubborn inequality and inefficiency in the two countries at the same time as they vary in capacity? The current project argues that fiscal systems reflect underlying trajectories of change in social structures and political institutions. Brazil evidences a cross-class alliance of middle class and popular sectors built through struggle and institutionalized in the party system and public policies, but locked into legislative and federal institutions that protect the interests of political and economic elites. In India, legislative practices and federal institutions also create inequalities and inefficiencies, and there is no cross-class alliance to support state capacity.

37. Dr. Ashok Acharya, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and Fellow and Joint Director of the Developing Countries Research Centre, University of Delhi. (17 Sept 2013)

“Accommodating Diversity: Groups in India’s Constitution”

An account of what justice requires by way of suitable accommodations toward disadvantaged groups cannot be adequate without a fuller understanding of how questions surrounding difference are addressed by the founders of a nation. In this paper, I make a two-dimensional
inquiry that includes both historical and normative explorations to the accommodation of group interests in India. The historical review spanning the colonial and the constitution-making periods helps inform us how questions of citizenship and diversity were negotiated and resolved within the constitutional framework. The normative inquiry juxtaposes the post-Independence constitutional model to contemporary discussions of liberal multiculturalism. With regard to the first dimension, the analysis of the colonial period explicates how representation along group lines was created and the manner in which the process of colonial identification of groups and their differences became salient for later constitutional deliberations particularly in the post-Independence period. The process of the deliberations was affected by a series of bargaining and negotiations and the final outcome made a distinction between representation and multicultural entitlements. Exhorting a quasi-liberal spirit, equal treatment in the postcolonial constitution required that dissimilar forms of difference be differently treated.

The paper argues that though India’s constitution exhibits many features of contemporary multiculturalism, aspects of this were an outcome of the second-best model preferred to the Constituent Assembly leaving a few unresolved areas that define the contemporary politics of difference and disadvantage.

38. Prof Carlo Carboni, Professor of Economic Sociology at Università Politecnica delle Marche (UPM), Economics “Giorgio Fuà”, in Ancona (Italy). (24 Sept 2013)

“Italian Elites, Ruling Classes and EU Multilevel Governance”

The talk takes into account not only the Italian economic and political decline but also the democratic malaise which affects multilevel of European Union governance. Obviously, this democratic malaise is connected to the reciprocal mistrust that exists between European citizenry on one side and Brussels ‘Eurobureaucracy’ plus intergovernmental elites on the other. To begin with, we analyse the economic, professional, political and mediatized Italian elites with some comparisons to other elites of large European countries such as Germany, France, Spain and United Kingdom. Italian and Spanish elites are of “one gender” only (male) while Italian and German elites are “gerontocratic” but entrepreneurial leadership stands out among them. The British elites are probably the last European elites with a significant impact on our globalized era, but they are also the least involved in the federal European Union. Great Germany is now the leading European country and one could talk in terms of German
Europe rather than European Germany. The EU needs unified elites that exemplify merit, decision making capability and that have a vision of the future.

39. Prof. Rajeev Bhargava, Director, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. (15 Oct 2013)

“Should Indian Federalism be called Multinational?”

The presentation is divided into three sections. In the first section, I briefly outline four different conceptions of nation states prevalent in India since the late nineteenth century. In the second section, I provide a brief history of how institutional arrangements in India came to embody one of these four conceptions, what I call coalescent nationalism that helped establish India into a linguistically federal nation state. In the third section, I argue that neither this conception of nation state nor the linguistically federal state that flows from it satisfactorily captures or fits the ever-deepening multi-layered diversity of India. So, this move from the second to the third conception of nation states does not take India far enough. Since the governing elites of India were not willing to take this important further step, they contributed to the crisis of Indian federalism and nationalism. I demonstrate this by taking the example of how the Indian state dealt with the aspirations of the Nagas. My general proposal is that Indian federalism should not be called multinational but it should allow some of its segments to be and call India multinational.

40. Prof. Partha S. Ghosh, Senior Fellow at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, and Editor of India Quarterly. (22 Oct 2013)

“Cross-Border Migrations, Foreign Policy and Federalism: The South Asian Experience”

The interface of the three elements mentioned in the title of the talk is intricate. There is a close link between cross-border migrations and foreign policy on the one hand while there is a similar links between the foreign policy process and the federal structure of the state. At yet another level there is a close connection between federalism and migrations. Based on this conceptual outline efforts would be made to see how this framework helps us understand the South Asian situation. To do so, first there would be a stocktaking of the South Asian scene through four migratory patterns, namely, Partition-related, nation-building related, ethnicity-related and foreign-intervention related. To make the story more empirical it would seen
how has federalism, on the one hand, impacted foreign policies in the South Asian federal states, while, on the other, how have the non-federal states fared.

41. Prof. Jagpal Singh, Professor of Political Science, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi. (29 Oct 2013)

“Communal Violence in the Federal System: The Case of Muzaffarnagar”
This talk seeks to situate the Muzaffarnagar riots in the context of the dynamics of federalism in India. It has three parts. Part I provides a narrative of the riot. Part II attempts to explain the stances of the central and state governments regarding the riot and their respective roles and responsibilities. Part III is about the implications of the riot on the politics of Harit Pradesh. The argument also is divided into three sections. First, the riot in Muzaffarnagar is a culmination of social, economic and political processes which can be traced to the mid-1980s. To use P.R. Brass’s concept, Muzaffarnagar is an example of an “Institutionalized Riot System”. Second, as each of the main parties in (western) UP is identified with a specific caste or caste groups or communities, the attitudes of the state and central government are informed by these considerations. The constitutional responsibility of these governments seems to get subordinated to political expediency. This poses a serious challenge to the federal system in India. Third, the nature of politics for Harit Pradesh will depend on how the differences of caste, community and region (district wise, and rural/urban), are shaped in the present context. Besides, there is a possibility that the demand for a separate bench of the Allahabad High Court in western UP could become a rallying point for all castes and communities. This illustrates the complex interlinkages between caste/community and regional identities.

42. Prof. Sonja Walti, Department of Public Administration and Policy, American University, Washington. (12 Nov 2013)

“Conceptualizing the Impact of Federalism and Multilevel Governance on Policy Performance”
Comparative federalism, which has traditionally focused on understanding and comparing how various multi-tiered contexts operate, has seen an increasing interest in questions of policy performance. How well do federal, decentralized, and regionalized political systems do in
solving policy problems? Are they more or less apt at governing the environment, economic development, or fiscal matters? In answering such questions we have struggled with the lack of a predictive “federal theory” to help generate hypotheses about the policy performance of various multi-tiered arrangements, and even more so with the difficulty to include other than federal systems into such comparisons. Actor-centered approaches, such as multilevel governance, have helped to overcome some of these struggles by offering a generic lens on federal, decentralized, and regionalized polities, and by drawing our attention to governmental and non-governmental actors within the framework of formal and informal multi-level institutions. Drawing on various policy examples, this talk will outline and conceptualize ways in which federalism and multi-level governance may affect policy performance.

43. Farida Ayari, Eminent Senior Journalist, formerly with Radio France Internationale in the Middle-East and South Africa. Former consultant for the UN Staff College and FAO in Italy and UNESCO in Tunisia. (19 Nov 2013)

“The Tunisian Transition and the Ennahdha Movement in Power: A missed opportunity for democracy?”

The Tunisian uprising, named Thawrat Al Karama (the Revolution of Dignity), started on 18 December 2010 in Sidi Bouzid. 28 days later, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was ousted from power. He escaped to Saudi Arabia with his family, bringing an end to a regime that lasted 23 years. This sudden collapse took by surprise all political parties including Ennahdha Movement. Ahead of the Constituent Assembly election on 23 October 2011, the party conducted a costly electoral campaign. In the election for the Constituent Assembly, the Ennahdha Movement won 89 of the 217 seats with 37% of the votes making it by far the strongest party in the legislature. Although described as socially centrist with strong support for economic liberalism, the party wishes to revise the strong secular, Arab nationalist and socialist principles that are dominant in the other parties, and instead allow Islam into public life. Since 25 July 2012 Tunisia has plunged into a deep political crisis, with the gunning down of a second opposition figure, Mohammed Brahmi. Earlier, Chokri Belaid had been assassinated earlier in a similar fashion. The birthplace of the Arab Spring is now struggling to defend its nascent democracy against political polarization and mass protests. The Tunisian army - unlike its Egyptian counterpart - is too weak and has no experience of political
intervention. Clearly, the Ennahda Movement has missed the opportunity to implement a transition towards democracy and to reconcile Islam and modern values. Tunisia is at the crossroads, facing an uncertain future.

44. Prof. Niraja Gopal Jayal, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University. (26 Nov 2013)

“The Rival Representational Claims of Parliament And Civil Society”

Across the world, movements seeking to deepen democracy have sought to realize their goals by mobilizing popular participation and demanding accountability at the local and sub-national levels. A consideration of the recent phenomenon of confrontation between the Indian Parliament and civil society, in the context of the Lokpal Bill, suggests that claims to representative legitimacy and demands for accountability may be less acceptable at the national level. The rival representational claims of Parliament and civil society in India generated a conflict about which is more authentically representative of the people and why. Tracing the evolution of the debate about the locus of popular sovereignty from the Constituent Assembly onwards, the paper shows that the constitutional ambivalence on the locus of popular sovereignty lies at the heart of this conundrum. Is it accidental then that the champions of civil society have attempted to re-site sovereignty in the local?

45. Dr. Polly Datta, Guest Lecturer in Economics at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar and Institute of Engineering and Technology, Ropar Punjab. (3 Dec 2013)

“Disbursing Resources to the States in India (1990-2012): The Raghuram Rajan Formula in Perspective”

Formulaic transfers disbursed through Finance Commission and Planning Commission from the Centre to the States has lost its pre-eminence while non-formulaic transfers have been gaining importance over the last few decades leading not only to discretionary influences in federal fiscal transfers and political partisanship but also failure to achieve one of the desired objectives - reducing regional disparities. From time to time different set of criteria with varying weightages attached to each criterion were introduced with a view to incorporating varying aspirations and needs of different States at different stages of development. Recently, the Raghuram Rajan Report took a step forward in trying to draw a balance between “needs” and “performance” while introducing a Multi-Dimensional Index in
distributing resources among the States. The extent to which the Index is different from that of its predecessors and has the potential to achieve the desired goal remains to be seen.

46. Prof. Prakash C. Sarangi, Professor of Political Science at the University of Hyderabad. (10 Dec 2013)

“Economic Reform and Bargaining Federalism in India”

Economic reforms and subsequent politics have generated a model of bargaining federalism in India, thus replacing the earlier interpretations of a centralized federalism or a cooperative federalism. Since the 1990s politics seems to imitate the logic of a market. Each State is guided by its own perceived interests. Centre is just another player in this political market, not a big brother guiding and protecting the States. Whether a State’s voice will be heard or ignored depends on her bargaining power based on physical resources and negotiating skills. Competition among States has created a new politics of hierarchy, with their spheres of influence spilling beyond the country’s borders. The political implications of India’s bargaining federalism need careful analysis and scrutiny.

47. Dr. Scott Moore, Giorgio Ruffolo Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at Harvard University. (17 Dec 2013)

“Federalism and Water Resource Management in India: A Comparative Perspective”

Inter-state water resource disputes are an issue of growing political and economic importance in India. Yet their existence and persistence is something of a puzzle; India’s constitutional architects anticipated such disputes and established specific mechanisms to prevent them. Moreover, a number of legislative instruments to manage inter-state water resources, such as the River Board Acts, have remained unused, and disputes are instead referred to the judiciary. Drawing on comparative research into inter-jurisdictional river basin disputes in the United States and China as well as in India, it is argued that India’s electoral system provides insufficient incentives to encourage national political leaders to broker solutions to inter-state water resource disputes. Nonetheless, a sustained central role is necessary to prevent the kinds of interminable judicial disputes that currently characterize water resource management in India.

48. Aditi Malik, PhD Candidate (ABD) in Political Science at Northwestern University, USA. (14 Jan 2014)

“Political Coalitions and Communal Conflict: Explaining Electoral Violence in Kenya and India”
This talk explores and attempts to explain temporal variations in electoral violence in Kenya and India. Specifically and through sub-national comparisons in the two countries, it poses the question: why have elections produced local-level violence—in the form of ethnic clashes in Kenya and Hindu-Muslim riots in India—at some times but not at others? Moreover, given comparable histories of electoral violence, why do some places achieve a decline in such conflict over time while others see it persist or even escalate? Although the existing literature on this subject has offered a number of explanations—including the role of institutionalized systems of riot production (Brass 1997 and 2003), civil society associations (Varshney 2002), and electoral incentives (Wilkinson 2004)—to account for spatial variations during periods of electoral violence, we know surprisingly little about the temporal aspects of such conflict.

Based on field research and 160 elite interviews conducted in both countries, this research finds that in “patronage democracies” (Chandra 2004) such as Kenya and India, violence during any given election is a function of party politics and more specifically a function of how political coalitions coalesce or divide communities at the local level. I argue that when electoral alliances have united historically antagonistic ethnic and/or religious communities—such as Kikuyus and Kalenjins in Kenya and Hindus and Muslims in India—elections have been peaceful. Contrariwise, when these groups have been voting in different electoral camps, elections have been accompanied by violence. In both countries, I also find that peaceful elections have not been a product of leaders’ commitment to peace per se but have occurred when unique domestic and international circumstances drove politicians to unite rival ethnic groups in coalitions of convenience.

49. Prof. Carlos M Herrera teaches Comparative Constitutional Law and Philosophy of Law at the Université de Cergy-Pontoise, France. (21 Jan 2014)

“Social Counter-Powers in Western Constitutional Law”

In this talk, Professor Herrera explains the idea of “social” counter-powers in constitutional law, particularly in the light of social protest movements that have become widespread in the past two years in several countries, under the name of “indignados” (outraged). The notion of social counter-powers appears as a specific and distinct one, principally from other like-minded notions such as the “right to resistance” or “civil disobedience”, but also of from the traditional “checks and balances” concept. Above all, this notion of social counter-powers opens new perspectives for building a new constitutional law.
“Political Competition in the Heartland: Emerging Patterns in Uttar Pradesh”

Uttar Pradesh (UP) provides a useful site to examine the pattern of political competition in the forthcoming national elections 2014. It has always mirrored major transformative developments in the country: shift in the party system, rise of the Hindutva ideology, movements such as Mandal or the Dalit upsurge. Moreover, with regional and state parties becoming partners in national coalitions, the importance of key states such as UP has increased. Upto the 1980s UP was an excellent example of single party dominance and stability. In the 1990s it reflected the de-stabilizing changes experienced due to the collapse of the Nehruvian consensus on secularism and socialism leading to fragmented multi-partyism, hung assemblies, short-lived coalitions and poor governance. With the relative weakening of identity politics by the early 2000s it was widely believed that political stability with bi-polar competition between the SP and BSP on a development-oriented agenda, had returned to UP and on the national scene.

UP is once again set to become the battle ground for intense political competition to capture power at the centre between the two major national parties, the BJP and the Congress, together with strong challenges from the SP and BSP. The selection of Narendra Modi to lead the BJP’s election campaign puts him in direct competition with Rahul Gandhi. Three issues which seemed to be settled will once again play a determining role. Hindutva and communal mobilization visible in low intensity disturbances since the SP assumed power in 2012 leading to the Muzzafarnagar riots, and attempts by the BJP to revive its Hindutva agenda with the support of the Sangh Parivar. Contestation for the support of the Muslim community, which was entering a post-Babri Masjid phase, but now seems to be moving away from the SP and is angry with the Congress for failing to fulfil promises. Caste remains a determining factor and Dalit votes will play a crucial role as the Congress hopes to obtain some support and might try to align with the BSP to meet the challenge of the BJP. In sum, UP seems to represent an unchanging India where older patterns are rearing their heads once again despite emergence of civil society movements against clean politics and better governance. This paper will examine these seminal issues that will play a role in the Lok Sabha election due in 2014 and their impact on Indian democracy.
“Analysing Assembly Elections 2013: Beyond Numbers”

From a cursory glance at the results of the 2013 assembly elections in four states (excluding Mizoram) one gets the impression that there was a complete rout for the Congress in these elections. From the point of view of number of seats won by different parties one may not be incorrect in having this kind of an impression, as Congress managed to win a total of 126 assembly seats (of the total 590 assembly seats in the four states of Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh) a loss of 122 assembly seats, compared to the assembly elections held five years back in 2008. On the other hand, the BJP won 408 assembly seats, a gain of 114 assembly seats compared to previous assembly elections. The BSP won only 8 assembly seats, a loss of 9 seats compared to 2008. There is a big gap between the number of seats won by the two national parties, the BJP and Congress. There is also a big gap between the vote share of two national parties, the BJP polled 43.3 percent votes while Congress polled 34.7 percent votes, almost nine percent less compared to the BJP. The BSP also lost 3.6 percent votes compared to previous assembly elections. The other smaller parties and independents suffered both in terms of seats and votes compared to the 2008 assembly elections, except for in Delhi where Aam Adami Party registered impressive victory winning 28 seats, with 29.5 percent votes.

But is it correct to say that this election resulted in a rout for the Congress? Going by the vote polled by the Congress in these elections and its comparison with its share in 2008, it may not be correct to say that Congress was routed in these elections. The Congress polled 34.7 percent votes (average vote share in all the four states) in 2013, which was only 1.1 percent less than its vote share in 2008. In spite of such dissatisfaction of the voters, the Congress managed to hold on the kind of electoral support which the party received in assembly elections held five years back.

The BJP did increase its vote share, but the gains for the BJP came largely at the cost of other smaller parties and BSP which got wiped out in these elections. The BJP’s vote share increased by nearly 8 percent in dalit reserved constituencies, while both Congress and BSP lost sizeable number of votes in these constituencies. Survey data also indicate that the BJP’s popularity increased amongst the dalits in all the three states except in Chhattisgarh. The Congress also suffered a loss amongst other sections of society. The only voters which
remained loyal to the Congress were the Muslims, who voted for the Congress in sizable number in all states. In Rajasthan, MP or Chhattisgarh they may have for Congress due to absence of an alternative, but the Muslims voted for the Congress in Delhi even when they has an alternative in the form of Aam Aadmi Party. These elections also witnessed some decisive vote amongst the young voters for AAP in Delhi and for BJP in other states. It is important to mention that these young voters had remained divided between various parties in previous elections like their counterpart, voters of other age group.

But the Congress suffered badly in terms of seats, due to their poor vote seat conversion ratio compared to BJP or AAP in Delhi. Comparative analysis of results also indicate, the loss for the Congress in largely concentrated in the urban localities but still managed to perform reasonably well in rural and semi urban constituencies. Compared to the last assembly elections (2008), in urban constituencies, the Congress suffered a loss of 8.7 percent votes, in semi urban constituencies, the Congress increased its vote share by 2.4 percent and in rural constituencies its vote share marginally increased by about 1 percent.

It is the urban voters who are extremely unhappy with the Congress, not so much the rural voters. The huge dissatisfaction of the urban voters from the Congress is mainly due to the issue of price rise and corruption for which they blame the Congress led UPA government. These twin issues also became the biggest issue of election in these elections in all the states. Large number of people admitted voting on either the issue of corruption or price rise.

The success of the BJP was more due to an attraction of the voters towards the party rather than merely being fed up with the Congress, such a feeling is only amongst the urban voters not amongst the rural voters. Vote share estimate clearly indicate hardly lost votes amongst rural voters. The positive vote for the BJP was due to good work done by Shivraj Singh Chauhan in M.P and Raman Singh in Chhattisgarh and looking forward to BJP as an alternative to the Congress in Rajasthan and Delhi, though BJP fell short of majority in Delhi. The local factors, mainly the good work of state governments in MP and Chhattisgarh contributed more for the good performance of the BJP rather than the Modi magic as is normally talked about. No doubt Narendra Modi is the most popular choice amongst the people as the next Prime Minister of India, but his ability to pull votes for his party (BJP) due to his personal appeal remains limited. Had Modi been a great vote puller for his party, the party may not performed much better in Chhattisgarh and could have got a majority in Delhi. Modi remained
popular in M.P and Rajasthan, but the impressive victory of BJP in those two states largely due to the factors.

These results do not merely indicate an anger of the people against the Congress which BJP has been successfully tapped but also a positive vote for the BJP. One cannot deny that these results indicate, the BJP gaining momentum or gaining popularity amongst voters in these state which would help the BJP during 2014 Lok Sabha elections. But one must remember that Lok Sabha elections would be held not merely in these four states. There are still many challenges for the BJP, it needs to perform well in states of Bihar, UP and Orissa and make inroads in some other states like West Bengal or in AP, but the questions is, can BJP do that in remaining four-five months before the next Lok Sabha elections?

52. Dr. Ajay K. Mehra, Director, Centre for Public Affairs and teaches at Shaheed Bhagat Singh (Evening) College, University of Delhi. (11 Feb 2014)

“Smaller Parties and Federal Coalitions”

With the general election 2014 less than three months away, speculations have begun on the possible political landscape by early May. The Legislative Assembly elections in Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Rajasthan threw up a few clues to the emerging scenario as well as some candid questions. The decline of the Congress (a win of only 126 Assembly seats out of 590) that experienced an upswing in the fifteenth general election 2009 and stabilisation of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the states it has been ruling (viz, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh) and its rise in Rajasthan and Delhi at the cost of the Congress (a win of 408 seats) are clear trends that may follow three months hence. Though with 34.7 per cent votes the Congress may be far behind the BJP’s 43.3 per cent votes, but it still has substantive political presence across the country. Similarly, the smaller parties not being able to make much dent in the states they do not have a strong presence is also a visible trend. However, the most telling statement of these elections was the rise of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which emerging out of the anti-corruption and Jan Lokpal Movements of 2011-12 decided to test the political waters by contesting the Delhi polls and make a political statement against the response of all the parties on its assertion of an ombudsman law proposed by them. The AAP’s 28 out of 70 seats in Delhi Assembly at the cost of the Congress (down from 43 to 8) and the BJP (improved from 23 to 32, yet short of absolute majority by four seats), in their first outing underlined the popular feelings against the established and
ongoing political order and the desire to experiment with new formations. Thus within a year of its formation the AAP formed the government in Delhi, albeit with Congress support and granted the status of a state party by the Election Commission of India.

That the Congress is experiencing the strongest anti-incumbency wave across the country since 1977 and for the first time could dip to a two digit tally in the Lok Sabha is too obvious to be stated. However, despite a stable hold over power in Chhatisgarh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh and the latest upswing in Delhi and Rajasthan that is being backed up by the projection of Narendra Modi as a strong leader and a good administrator, the projection for the BJP does not yet support their 272-plus campaign for the 2014 Lok Sabha. Obviously, the best scenario for the party would be a coalition government of the NDA formation, sixth consecutive coalition government since 1996 and a fourth one after three full-term coalition governments since 1999 in New Delhi.

However, the interesting trend between 1999 and 2009 general elections is the plateauing of the state parties to a one-third level, excluding smaller parties such as the BSP and NCP, which are technically national parties and account for 30-plus seats. A strong performance by the BJP in the coming general election despite a poor showing by the Congress would mean that the two together would account for 300 plus seats, as it is in the fifteenth Lok Sabha. The smaller parties would then either get restricted to the same level, or lose further in case of a stronger showing by the BJP/NDA, or if the Congress manages to do better than projected.

A panoramic look at the emerging politics indicates a contest between the two national parties and smaller parties in close to 300 seats. In about 250 seats the small parties would give a tough competition or be dominant. The political challenge thrown up by the AAP phenomenon would be an untested additional factor in May 2014 and an unexpected 30 to 40 seats to the party could upset all calculations and political options. The CSDS-CNN-IBN Election Tracker study indicates that the BJP is on the upswing and the NDA could win between 200 to 220 seats and the Congress-led UPA could win 100 to 120 seats. Thus the two major alliances led by the two national parties could win close to 320 seats, leaving 200 to 220 seats for smaller parties, some of which could be part of the two alliances. In 2004 the state parties got 174 seats and in 2009 159 seats in the Lok Sabha; adding the tally of two smaller parties in the list of national parties BSP and NCP, smaller parties had 202 and 189 seats respectively in the two elections. In case they cross 200, a 10 to 15 per cent increase in
their strength would add new bargains in coalition politics. The space for the smaller parties could also be determined by the way the AAP redefines the ensuing electoral politics.

Federal coalition under the circumstances could be stable, but the smaller parties could have critical space to dictate policy choices on the issues of their regional constituencies, as witnessed in recent years.

53. Prof. Dipankar Gupta, Former Professor, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and earlier Professor in the Department of Sociology, University of Delhi (1993-95). Distinguished Professor, Shiv Nadar University and Director of its Centre for Public Affairs and Critical Theory. (18 Feb 2014)

“India Waiting: The Citizen Elite and the Call of Democracy”

This talk would emphasise that democracy, as we now know it, did not emerge fully formed from the start, but developed over time, more often than not, because leaders intervened and not so much the masses. Democracy does not grow naturally because its basic tenet, fraternity, is a cultivated disposition that does not flourish spontaneously. This central fact is essential for understanding the possibilities and limits of democratic reform movements.

54. Dr. Manisha Priyam, an academic researcher who works on issues of development and politics. She has a doctorate from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), in International Development. (4 March 2014)

“Bottom up Perspectives to Indian National Elections”

For many reasons, the national elections 2014 have evoked keen enthusiasm and intense passion amongst those who engage in high-level analysis of political outcomes and electoral decision-making, as also for citizens who engage with this extraordinary political moment of engagement with the sovereign they create and anoint. From the pedestals of structured analytical, to the everyday ordinary, a large number of questions are seemingly posed anew to the processes of Indian democracy. Are these going to be a ‘national election’ with pan-Indian issues driving an agenda driven political choice? Or, is the idea of India likely to emerge from a conglomerate of state level decisions? And how much does the local or small matter in the making of the large-scale idea of the nation? Are constituency level dynamics going to play a role? Is the changing nature of the electorate with a large population of the young likely to make a difference? In the face of the decline of the Congress, what type of
choice are the minorities going to exercise? And is there a shift in the vote block mindset among the socially disadvantaged caste categories? Unravelling the answers to each poses unique challenges to those are analytically engaged with the national elections, as well as those for whom it is time to make a choice and undertake a single rational action that can be aggregated alongside million others.

This presentation is an attempt to understand the 2014 electoral moment from an analytical perspective, beginning form the base where the ordinary voter is, and immersed around her everyday life. Contrary to large n-studies that present a flat picture, my work unravels the variety of ways in which the idea of India is created in electoral moments. Its empirical work is drawn from two within constituency case comparisons from recent Assembly elections in Gujarat and Delhi. It is an attempt to understand why people vote the way they do—a comprehensive examination of the legislative act by the citizen. From the empirics of case comparisons, it takes an inductive loop to put forward a hypothesis the issues that will be significant on the ground as this round of the electoral battle is fought, as also the strategies and mechanisms that will be put forward by political parties in response. The author suggests that 2014, and hereafter, will be a battle of the federation of Indian states to create the idea of India.

55. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, Senior Journalist at Lok Sabha Television and independent columnist (11 March 2014)

“Can Narendra Modi build a federal coalition?”

In the coalition era of politics, it has become essential for leaders to develop the ability to form coalitions if they wish to influence either in governance or Opposition politics. In the context of Narendra Modi, this issue has come into sharp focus because of the perception that he has a very singular and autocratic style of functioning. Modi has been known to function autocratically in matter governance in Gujarat, within his own political party he has been greatly unable to work as a team and within the larger political fraternity of the Sangh Parivar he had problems in working within the existing hierarchies. The problem that Modi faces despite being a front runner for the 2014 election with a distinct chance of becoming prime minister is his ability to draw allies and coalition partners. This predicament will be accentuated because a large number of allies are run on equally autocratic lines with little democratic structure and practise by leaders who are political strong satraps. In such a
situation, what can be the possible moves or adjustments to his working style that Modi will have to affect to be able to build a coalition? The presentation will analyse the background and issues that have surfaced so far in the election campaign.

56. Professor Philip Oldenburg, Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University. (1 April 2014)

“Narendra Modi as Prime Ministerial Candidate: Implications for Election Analysis”

Does the emergence of Narendra Modi as an explicit PM candidate mean that we must modify the perspective which says that “national” elections are really “state by state” elections? This is the basic question which this presentation seeks to answer.

The contextual backdrop is succinctly articulated by Louise Tillin as follows: “Since 1989, no single national party has won a majority in the Lok Sabha elections. As a result the last twenty five years have ushered in an era of experiments with different patterns of increasingly stable coalition government in New Delhi bringing together national and regional parties. This is a period in which political and economic decentralisation have been mutually supporting. Economic liberalisation has given the states a greater stake in competing to attract investment. Politically, power has also flowed down to the state level, where a substantial number of regional parties have been formed along the lines of language, region, caste, religion – and more recently, anti-corruption. Some regional parties have flourished and taken power at the state level; others have fared less well and disbanded, merged or dwindled. But taken together, these regional political actors have made the landscape of electoral politics extremely varied across India.

57. Prof. L.N. Sharma, former professor of Political Science, Patna University. (7 April 2014)

“Candidates and Campaigns: Lok Sabha Elections in Bihar”

More than issues and agendas, personalities dominate the upcoming sixteenth Lok Sabha elections. The talk of policies and reforms and even of good governance and model code of conduct evaporate once the electoral process starts, In Bihar we find that the BJP made an alliance with Lok Jan Shakti Party (LJSP) led by Ramvilas Paswan and allotted it seven seats on the calculation that the Dalits may cast 37.5% votes to the BJP-led
National Democratic Alliance (NDA), if the 2009 election is taken as a benchmark. Of the seven seats allotted to LJSP, it granted three seats to members of the Paswan family. The NDA agreed to allot three seats to its new ally, the RLSP of Upendra Kushwaha, because the Kushawahas constitute 11% of the population. BJP has granted half of the thirty seats allotted to it to the upper caste because it is pitted against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar of the Janata Dal (United) (JD-U), who has so far been making an alliance of Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs), and the Pasmanda Muslims. Narendra Modi has allotted a ticket to the Dalit leader Udit Raj of U. P. The Aurangabad seat in Bihar has always been represented by a Rajput ever since the provisional Parliament of 1950, earning the epithet of ‘Chittorgarh’. Kishanganj has always been represented by Muslims including outsiders like M. J. Akbar and Syed Shahabuddin. Thus caste and religion play a predominant role in garnering votes.

The other strategy of the BJP was that it took no time in granting ticket to Ramkripal Yadav who had held the post of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) general secretary for decades. This followed on the heels of RJD Chief Laloo Prasad allotting the Pataliputra seat that Ramkripal represented in the previous Lok Sabha to his (Laloo Prasad’s) daughter, Misa Bharti. All the parties freely welcomed defectors to their folds. About a dozen (to be exact, thirteen) turncoats were granted tickets by the JD (U). Ten of the thirty seats in BJP’s list went to defectors from other parties. Decisions made by JD (U) Chief Minister created resentment among senior party leaders and workers, who expressed resentment to the party’s national chief Sharad Yadav and wanted that the party should have a Parliamentary Board to decide the names of candidates. They resented the fact that defectors had been instantly rewarded leaving old and seasoned workers of the party sulking.

Liquor barons, builders, musclemen, crorepati, businessmen, and the corrupt in large numbers have been granted tickets by all the parties excluding the left. Granting of tickets to A. Raja, Yeddyurappa, Rama Singh, Mukhtar Ansari, Atik Ahmad, Pawan Kumar Bansal, are the cases in point. Comparatively speaking, candidates selected by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) are better but some of them do not have real contact with the people of the constituency they have been allotted tickets for. The death of inner party democracy in the selection of candidates bode ill for the Congress party. The introduction of 'primaries' for only 15 Lok Sabha seats out of 545 at the instance of the INC vice-president Rahul Gandhi is a mere tokenism. The supremos of regional parties in
allotment of party tickets to their candidates are also autocratic. Similarly, if Laloo Prasad can grant two tickets; Ramvilas Paswan three, and AIDMK three to members of their families, how can they accuse the Congress party of dynastic rule?

58. Adnan Farooqui, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. (22 April 2014)

“Renomination of Candidates: Internal Procedures of Indian Parties”

This presentation analyses a critical aspect of the internal functioning of five major Indian political parties, namely the nomination of candidates for parliamentary elections, focusing on the pattern of re-nomination of former candidates and incumbents. The data are analysed against the literature on the structure and functioning of Indian parties, and interview material on the process of nomination in the 2009 and 2004 elections. From the perspective of a six-fold typology of centralisation of nomination processes drawn from the comparative literature, it is found that all the parties analysed are in either the second-most centralised, or even most centralised categories, and that for the three major national parties, Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party and Communist Party of India (Marxist), past performance plays a role in nominations, the majority of incumbents being re-nominated in the post-1989 period.

59. Dr. Saroj Giri, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi, Delhi. (29 April 2014)

“Good Governance: Post-ideology in Indian Politics Today”

What explains the ubiquitous acceptability of good governance in Indian politics today? When did the self-righteous upper middle class character of the anti-corruption movement turn around into the aam aadmi mobilisation of the lower classes, particularly the urban poor? This presentation traces this process, particularly with reference to the rise of the AAP. It will be seen that since elections are a modality of power in India, the poor become important even for upper middle class movements vying for power. This mobilisation of the poor converges with claims of good governance, positing transparency, efficiency and growth. Here economic liberalisation seems to fit in with ‘giving voice’ to the lower classes, even as big capital rules the roost. The post-ideological claims of good governance, transparency and development agenda must be unpacked to lay bare the so-called authoritarian turn in Indian politics today.
60. E. Sridharan, Academic Director of the University of Pennsylvania Institute for the Advanced Study of India (UPIASI), in New Delhi. (6 May 2014)

“Pre-electoral Coalitions and Post-election Possibilities”
This presentation discussed the pre-electoral coalitions struck so far in the 2014 election and how they look in the light of the past elections as well as through the lens of coalition theory. It also examines the implications they might have for post-election coalitions.

61. Navin B. Chawla, former Chief Election Commissioner of India. (12 May 2014)

“GE 2014: Elections and Democracy”
The political discourse during the present election campaign for GE 2014 has become very personalised, often vitiated and occasionally even vitriolic. Judging also from the large amount of cash, liquor and freebies seized in states such as Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and elsewhere, election rules are being broken with impurity while elections are becoming very expensive as well. The Election Commission is doing its best to level the playing field by the judicious use of the powers at its disposal. Are these powers enough? What systemic changes need to be brought in to better ensure that the election debate is fought on issues that are not divisive or abusive? What long term reforms are needed to make Parliament more representative of people’s aspirations?

62. Sandeep Shastri, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Jain University at Bengaluru and the Director of its Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CERSSE). (13 May 2014)

“What Really Mattered to Voters in the Lok Sabha Polls”
What explains the ubiquitous acceptability of good governance in Indian politics today? When did the self-righteous upper middle class character of the anti-corruption movement turn around into the aam aadmi mobilisation of the lower classes, particularly the urban poor? This presentation traces this process, particularly with reference to the rise of the AAP. It will be seen that since elections are a modality of power in India, the poor become important even for upper middle class movements vying for power. This mobilisation of the poor converges with claims of good governance, positing transparency, efficiency and growth. Here economic liberalisation seems to fit in with ‘giving voice’ to the lower classes, even as big capital rules the roost. The post-ideological claims of good governance, transparency and development agenda must be unpacked to lay bare the so-called authoritarian turn in Indian politics today.
The origin and history of Article 370 is related to the covering letter addressed by Maharaja Hari Singh forwarding the Instrument of Accession. The Constitution provided for this Article as a temporary measure but efforts are being made to make it permanent and more. For the sake of votes Article 370 is sought to be made a communal issue affecting Muslims all over the country. Narendra Modi during his 2014 election campaign urged a public debate on retention of Article 370. The Kashmir imbroglio has defied solution. It has been seen as a Kashmir Valley centric issue. This ignores the fact that the Valley is only 10 per cent of the vast land space of the State and Kashmiri speaking Muslims are a minority in the State. A solution of this intractable international problem has so far not been found.

H K Dua, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha and former Editor, Hindustan Times, Editor-in-Chief of the Indian Express, Editorial Advisor of The Times of India, Editor-in-Chief of The Tribune. (21 Oct 2014)

There is a clear demarcation between the various State institutions - namely, Parliament, the Judiciary and the Executive. Whenever any organ of the State, any one of these three, exceeds its limits, the people sense danger. In the 1970s, there was a talk of committed judiciary. And later on, there was the supersession of judges. The Executive, at that time, was clearly crossing the limits prescribed for it.

In the 1993 Judgement, the judiciary crossed its limits. Brother Judges went on to appoint Brother Judges and when Brother Judges appoint other Brother Judges, nepotism creeps in, favouritism comes in. In a Collegium, there can be instances of bargaining taking place
between one Judge and another, with a Chief Justice taking a better share. Nowhere in the world do judges appoint themselves. Always, it is an Executive decision but there are checks on the misuse of executive power.

There has been considerable lobbying with the Collegium members by judges from the State High Courts. The kind of culture which prevails in the judiciary leads to malpractices, and should be corrected. The quality of justice has declined in the country in the process. This is because the right kind of people are not being appointed to the highest rungs of the judiciary. The Collegium has never laid down the criteria for appointment of judges, as to what kind of judges you need in High Courts or in the Supreme Court. Thus, it is important that there is a Constitution Amendment Bill to set up a National Judicial Appointments Commission.

66. E. Sridharan, Academic Director of the University of Pennsylvania Institute for the Advanced Study of India (UPIASI). (28 Oct 2014)

“Is the Era of Coalitions Over?”

Is the era of coalition politics due to seven consecutive elections, 1989-2009, in which no single party got a majority now coming to an end, especially in the light of the Maharashtra and Haryana assembly elections following the BJP’s majority on its own in the 2014 Lok Sabha election? I will argue that it is premature to conclude the coalition politics is coming to an end and base myself on three arguments - about the BJP’s majority in 2014, about legislative compulsions and the composition of the Rajya Sabha during its term, and its future expansion needs.

67. Subrata K. Mitra, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Heidelberg University, and a Visiting Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. (25 Nov 2014)

“Innovating multi-level governance: the Indian state and the challenge of optimal public service delivery in the era of globalization”

Thanks to the global flow of culture, capital, information and power, the delivery of public services - in communication, basic needs, finance, health, security and the environment, to name just a few - has emerged as a major theoretical and empirical challenge to students of governance. The conventional canon according to which the nation state - as regulator, rule-
maker, watchman and provider of last resort - held a monopoly in public service delivery, stands challenged by new international norms. These ideas such as basic human rights, and the ‘obligation to protect’ make it possible for the global civil society to skip over the nation state and reach out directly to the vulnerable sections of society, refugees on the march, and in some cases, the victims of state violence. But, international norms do not have international organisations to back them up, and in practice, have to seek the assistance of the state for their implementation. Under the impact of these multiple pressures, the nation state itself has moved from its Westphalian avatar - the omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent actor, disposing of the monopoly of legitimate violence - to a partner of civil society in order to get better ‘value for money’ from the efforts that go into public service delivery. ‘Innovating multi-level governance’ responds to this general challenge and analyses the structural problems that it entails it in the Indian context. The talk will be based on an analytical model of innovating multi-level governance, and some case studies from India (social forestry, micro credit, e-governance and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Act). The paper concludes with some general lessons of the Indian case, particularly (but not exclusively) relevant for South Asian and transitional societies.

68. Prof. Anupama Roy, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi. (9 Dec 2014)

“Blood and Belonging: Overseas Citizenship of India and the Deception of De-territoriality”

The paper pegs itself onto the amendment in the Citizenship Act of India in 2003, which put in place the ‘Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)’ as a separate category of Indian citizens. The Citizenship Amendment Act of 2003 constitutes a point of coalescence of the diverse and dissonant strands in the practice of citizenship in India. In order to understand these dissonances and the contested meanings associated with citizenship, this paper, shall examine the category of the OCI as a peculiar product of globality. While imbued with the promise of transnationality and freedom from spatial constraints that the global condition claims to have brought in, it also reflects the tensions that the resultant ‘duality’ of citizenship brings in its wake. In this context the paper will examine the manner in which dual and transnational citizenship generate anxieties around a ‘crisis in citizenship’, which is expressed differently in specific national locations with corresponding notions of resolution of crisis. In the Indian context the category of the OCI and the changes, which have been made
through later amendments, draw attention to the manner in which citizenship continues to be haunted by ties of belonging, which are determined by blood and descent. The changes in the citizenship law in India captures the ferment in citizenship, which has become more accentuated in recent years, deepening the fault-lines in the debates on the core features of citizenship.

69. Prof. Ajay Darshan Behera, Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia University. (20 Jan 2015)

“Insurgencies in the Northeast: From Conflict to Cooption”

For almost seven decades since independence, India has been grappling with the challenge of insurgency in the northeast. The challenge has been countered for an extended period of time through strategies of mixed response to armed insurgencies and attempts to accommodate their moderate elements, but separatist tendencies in the region have remained persistent, creating sustained socio-political tensions and instability. However, India’s experiences of dealing with the violent insurgencies in the northeast by both force and negotiations have paid some moderate dividends. Its efforts at co-opting more and more insurgent groups have been fairly slow. But the Indian State’s resilience and the strategy of keeping its doors open for negotiations has induced some of the major insurgent groups to explore the option of negotiating their demands. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the northeast, tensions will continue in the region accompanied by low-level violence. And as long as violence continues in the northeast, there will be a need for serious introspection about some of the root causes like migration, land alienation, lack of development, etc. Some of these may be difficult issues, but unless they are addressed and some outcomes visible, low-levels of insurgent violence will continue in the region.

70. Prof. Lawrence Saez, Department of Politics at the School of Oriental and Asian Studies (SOAS), University of London. (3 Feb 2015)

“The political budget cycle and subnational expenditures in federations: Panel data evidence from India”

What political variables explain variations in subnational fiscal expenditures on interest payments on the debt? Professor Saez argues that the political budget cycle and centre-right political party ideology -rather than the effective number of parries, alternation of power, ideological proximity between the central government and constituent units, or most forms of political party ideology- can help explain the level of expenditures on interest payment of subnational debt in India. The core
empirical finding is that significant increases in expenditures on the debt occur the year in which a state assembly election is held in India.

71. Lion Koenig, Adjunct Faculty at the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University, as well as at the Centre for Culture, Media and Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. (10 Feb 2015)

“Citizenship and Nation-building in India: Past Achievements and Future Challenges”

The Indian case opens up the analytical space for the comparative and general dimensions of the problem of nation-building and the creation of resilient and functioning institutions. One learns from the Indian case that with regard to citizen-making in a post-colonial context, the constitution and law matter, but politics matters too, and most of all, path dependency matters enormously. India’s relative success at turning subjects into citizens, more successfully at least than neighbouring Pakistan or Sri Lanka, is a function of India’s political structure, process and memory, woven together in an institutional arrangement that draws its inspiration both from the modern state and the traditional society.

The complex process of acculturation, through which the imported becomes indigenized and hybridized, involves agency and strategy, innovatively producing an asymmetry that reflects the uneven nature of such conceptual flows, the cultural context and balance of power. In India, the structure of institutions that were intended to give concrete shape to the idealistic goals of the Republic, enshrined in the preamble, adopted methodological individualism as the cutting edge of social change. However, such principles as individual rights, representation based not on group identities, but on individual interests and structured along the lines of political majorities, seen in the context of a society based on hierarchy and tightly-knit social groups, could only lead to conflicts grounded in values and interests of everyday politics.

In discussing past policies the paper also points towards topical challenges and investigates into recent conceptual developments like ‘cultural citizenship’, which as a hybrid, normative concept emphasizes the significance of cultural participation and representation of different groups in the various media discourses that, in sum, constitute the national narrative, and following from that, the cultural collective memory. In addition to the afore-mentioned constitutional arrangements, cultural- and media representation is seen as the precondition for the inclusivity, and hence the stability and resilience of state and society and will form one of the central challenges in the near future.
72. Dr. Rakhee Bhattacharya, Associate Director and fellow at Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, New Delhi. (24 Feb 2015)

“Northeast India and its Neighbours: Issues of Security and Development”

India’s Northeast has for long been fraught with security threats, economic underdevelopment, political volatility and social unrest. Much of its contemporary turmoil has its roots in the colonial period when borders were restructured. Such restructuring of political boundary has made Northeast a borderland with almost 4000 km long borders being shared with China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan. The region’s geographical location henceforth became strategically important while constructing power relation with these neighbours in the subcontinent. These neighbouring nations have been either economically underdeveloped, or politically volatile or socially unrest; and therefore have perpetually remained potential sources to destabilize region’s economy, security and polity. Northeast region thus was territorialized as an isolated and landlocked area bordered by many such countries as a sources of constant irritation. It disrupted natural, historical, ethnic, cultural, and economic relations across the borders by setting a new power relation based on security concerns. The paper therefore attempts to enter into a new debate of inter-linking security and development issues of Northeast India by critiquing States’ top-down decisions and policies and by locating peoples’ voices of the region. In this context, the paper also brings out the importance of understanding each of these neighbours separately and its impacts on both security and development in India’s borderland of Northeast. But in recent times with the blowing wind of change in some of its critical neighbours towards political democracy, it bestows hope to Northeast India. The region can now think of changing its stationary security concerns by relocating its position with an achievable border management policy and pro-active political-economic policy with the neighbouring nations. The region at this point needs to experiment at sub-national levels of exchanges between states, cities, villages of Northeast India and the neighbouring nations to strengthen the local capacities and relations. This to a large extent may provide stability to this borderland of India.

73. Dr. Kamal Nayan Choubey, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, Dayal Singh College, Delhi University. (10 March 2015)
“Forest Rights and Decentralization: PESA, FRA and the Third Tier of India’s Federal Structure”

Since the colonial era there has been a tendency of centralized control of forest resources. The Colonial State used these resources to serve its imperial interests and legislations like Indian Forest Act of 1927 were designed for this purpose. In post-colonial India, initially ‘Forests’ were part of the State list, but the Central Government ensured its dominance in matters related to forest areas on the basis of the Forest Act of 1927. The centralization of power increased in 1970s through many mechanisms i.e. enactment of Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, shifting ‘Forests’ from State List to Concurrent List (1976), and the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. In the post-liberalization era the role of private corporate capital has been immeasurably increased in the extraction of forest resources for ‘development’, which has further dispossessed the tribal population in these areas. Since 1970s, however, there has been a parallel process of tribal resistance to the centralized development model imposed. As a result of this pressure, two laws have been enacted for forest areas. One is the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996 (PESA) and the other is the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights Act) 2006 (hereafter Forest Rights Act or FRA). PESA extends 73rd Constitutional amendment to the Schedule V areas and makes important provisions for autonomous Gram Sabhas in these areas. FRA, on the other hand, is related to forest areas of the whole country and gives individual property rights over ‘encroached’ forest land and community property rights over forest land and its resources. It also makes important provisions for the conservation of wildlife. These laws are commonly termed ‘progressive’ laws because tribal groups waged a long struggle for these laws and apparently got some crucial rights over the affairs of their villages (particularly in PESA) along with forest land and its resources (in both PESA and FRA). In this sense both these laws impact the third tier of the federal structure. Since these areas are rich in natural resources, the Central Government also has crucial powers to intervene in matters related to the extraction of natural resources, management of forests and conservation of wildlife. This paper attempts to study Government’s policies to hand over natural resources of forests to corporate capital, as also to evaluate and comprehend the experiences of both PESA and FRA. Would it be correct to claim that they have created an autonomous space for the third tier of the federal structure, notably in tribal areas? The arguments are presented at three levels: first we introduce these laws and analyze experiences; second, we underline through some case studies how local communities are using these laws to resist state imposed
development and also trying to create an autonomous space for themselves. Third, we propose the idea of ‘Marginal Society’ to describe the experiences of both these laws. Though the implementation of both these laws has been dismal, they have created an awareness among tribal population in these areas, which could be a strong base for an autonomous space as a third tier of the Indian federal structure in forest and Schedule Five areas.

74. Dr Nidhi Srivastava, Fellow at The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi. (17 March 2015)

“Environment and Resource Federalism in India: Trends and Issues”

‘Environment’ was not a priority for the government either before or at the time of independence. Therefore, it does not feature in the Indian Constitution as a separate entry under the schedule demarcating legislative powers. However, environment protection is clearly provided for in the Indian Constitution as a directive principle of state policy and judicial interpretation over the years has further strengthened this mandate. Some of the more important domains of environment, such as water, waste, forests etc. are assigned to either the Centre or to the State or both (concurrent). The distribution of subjects has not been static and has changed from time to time to reflect the understanding, aspirations and needs. The degree to which any level of government has utilised the available space has not been uniform. It has evolved with the challenges and other dynamics, such as politics, capacity and resources. In India, especially on matters of environment, there has been a tendency to move towards centralisation, either through legislation or executive orders.

The Judiciary in India has been one of the prime drivers behind the mainstreaming of environmental considerations into governance. By extending its involvement in, for example, forest issues, the Supreme Court has increased the country’s dependence on the Supreme Court for natural resource management. This phenomenon has had an impact on the relations between Centre and State with respect to environment and natural resources. This paper traces the evolution of legislation and policy on environment and natural resources in India through the lens of federalism. It further studies the different drivers and determinants in the realm of environmental and resource federalism. Federalism is a dynamic concept and, therefore, the real issue is whether the concept has kept pace with the emerging environmental issues. In this context, the paper discusses some of the challenges and opportunities that the current dynamics of federalism present for an improved governance of environment and natural resources.
Dr Wilfried Swenden, Senior Lecturer of Politics, University of Edinburgh and Dr Rekha Saxena, Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi. (31 March 2015)

“From ‘Central Planning’ to ‘Team-building’? State Grievances and the Demise of the Planning Commission”

The Indian economy has gone through profound changes in the last few decades, not in the least as a result of its gradual opening up to the dual forces of liberalization and globalization. These changes put the role of the Planning Commission under pressure. Initially designed to provide a planned approach to the social and economic development of the Indian economy after independence, the Planning Commission developed into an extra-constitutional authority with considerable oversight in the coordination of intergovernmental finance and public sector investment. Our paper looks at the role which the Planning Commission has played in centre-state relations throughout time and critically analyzes the extent to which state grievances have contributed to undermine its future. We argue that the Planning Commission challenged the territorial self-rule position of the states without offering effective compensatory shared rule mechanisms. In the second half of the paper we reflect on the extent to which the NITI Aayog may redress this imbalance and relate its position to other instruments of intergovernmental coordination, in particular the almost defunct Inter-State Council. Is the NITI Aayog simply a ‘rebranding’ of the Planning Commission or might it constitute a substantive change in centre-state interactions in matters of territorial finance and public policy. Our research is based on field research in Delhi during February-March 2015 in the context of a Leverhulme Network project on Indian federalism, coordinated by the University of Edinburgh and involving three Indian and three UK based universities.

Govind Bhattacharjee, Director at the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India, New Delhi. (7 April 2015)

“The Special Category States of India”

Eleven of the twenty eight states of India comprise what is collectively called the “Special Category States”; it comprises the eight north-eastern states plus Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttarakhand. They represent the asymmetrical elements in our federal
structure. Resources that can be harnessed for development are scarce within their territories; history and geography seem to have conspired together to keep them economically backward and politically prone to instability. Geographical isolation from the mainland has contributed to their sense of alienation from the mainstream India, while remoteness and difficulties of terrain have put insurmountable difficulties in creating viable physical and social infrastructure within their territories. Politics of partition had also played its part, effectively severing their economic links with the neighbours. Sharing international borders, they are affected by the geopolitics of the region, and political turmoil in neighbouring countries have often spilled across their boundaries, creating conditions of instability in many of these states. Most of them have also suffered from protracted and violent insurgency movements that prevented their economic development for decades and the developmental schemes of government from being implemented, increasing the misery of their people.

The Indian federation tried to address their asymmetry by providing some constitutional safeguards in the form of Article 370 and 371 and Schedules V and VI of the Constitution. These safeguards were inadequate and were not backed by appropriate institutional mechanisms and hence did not work optimally. The problems of economic backwardness were sought, rather unimaginatively, to be addressed by giving them access to plan grants on liberal terms - that's what had made these group of states ‘special’ as compared to the other states of the federation. Some additional benefits in the form of tax relief were provided to private investor as incentives for setting up industries which too proved inconsequential in the absence of infrastructure and power. It was wrongly perceived that only an uninterrupted flow of money could address their problems that basically arose from lack of capacity and appropriate institutions. The flow of funds was scale neutral as far as backwardness was concerned, lacked accountability arrangements and was without any performance expectation. It was simply meant to be a dole in perpetuity that could not augment their economic or fiscal capacity. Without enabling environment and institutions, the scheme degenerated into creating an overwhelming dependency syndrome, besides fuelling endemic corruption, wastes and leakages. To the already existing nexus of politicians, bureaucrats and contractors was added another element- the insurgents, each claiming their share in the pie of central funds, directly or indirectly, often in collusion with each other.

Even the economic assistance that was originally envisaged for them in the form of liberal plan grants got much diluted over time due to the intrusion of Centrally Sponsored
Schemes that took away a large part of the total plan assistance; besides, most of these funds, being transferred directly to the implementing agencies in the states, further vitiated and distorted the original arrangements beyond recognition. The required capacities and institutions remained elusive and the states continued to depend overwhelmingly on central funds, which even now constitute very large proportions of their total gross domestic products. Most of the states are also heavily indebted and without central funds would not be able to survive as viable states. But still they have made remarkable progress in socio-economic terms and quite a few of them have attained levels of development comparable to the national average and even better. This would not have been possible without their special category status. However, time has come to review the entire arrangement, redefine the expectations behind such arrangement and substitute it with a more effective mechanism by addressing the shortcomings noticed.

77. Prof. Om Prakash Mathur, Senior Fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi. Formerly Distinguished Professor of Urban Economics, National Institute of Urban Affairs (14 April 2015)

“Local Governments and the Finance Commissions”
The key questions that will be addressed are: have the local governments benefitted from the dispensation of the successive Finance Commissions? Has the experiment of amending Article 280 with the insertion of (3) (bb) and (3) (c) been a worthwhile exercise? The presentation will begin with a brief reference to the initial purpose underlying Article 280 (3) (bb) on Panchayats and (3) (c) on Municipalities and then discuss the approaches employed by the successive Finance Commissions in addressing their mandates. The presentation will especially discuss the approaches of the 13th and 14th Finance Commissions. The presentation will argue that the approaches of the Finance Commissions have lacked consistency and much of the expected gains from this experiment have been lost in the process.


“Political Parties in India: Current State and Agenda for Reform”
The political scenario in India has been undergoing palpable change over the last few years. Results of the last few elections are proof, if needed, of the flux in that Indian polity. The
last Lok Sabha election was obviously significant, resulting in a change in the party in power after ten years. So were the next four state assembly elections which were followed by the almost totally unanticipated result of the election for the Delhi State Assembly. A new political party, which came into being in November 2012 and had made its electoral debut in the 2013 Delhi elections, returned with a stunning victory. No other political parties or formations has been unaffected by these two major developments. At the same time, there have been triggers from the judiciary, the Election Commission, the Law Commission, the Central Information Commission, and civil society for changes in the way politics is done in the country.

79. Rakesh Ranjan, Adviser in NITI Aayog, Government of India, currently heading its Divisions of Plan Coordination and Management and Housing and Urban Affairs. He is part of the team that finalized the 12th five year Plan. (5 May 2015)

“NITI Aayog: A case of Schumpeterian Creative Destruction”

On Jan 1, 2015, NITI Aayog replaced the erstwhile Planning Commission. The pertinent questions are: In what ways, is NITI Aayog different from the Planning Commission? Secondly, whether it is a good development? And thirdly, when a major criticism of Planning Commission in many quarters was that it was a non-constitutional body as it was set up through a Resolution of Government of India, what could be the rationale of adopting the same route for setting up NITI Aayog? This talk is intended to stimulate discussion and does not necessarily represent the views of the Government.

The erstwhile Planning Commission finalised blue prints for economic development through five year plans and allocation of plan resources in accordance with such plans. It was an important inter-governmental body which had interface with Central Ministries on one hand and with the State Governments on the other. For about 65 years, it played this important role though many would argue that it needed better alignment with the changing needs of economy in a largely open economy format with a pronounced global integration. The talk would take the position that while Planning Commission did its bit, the institutional structure of NITI Aayog and its positioning by its chairman, the Prime Minister of India, as one of the prime organisations, entrusted with fostering the spirit of cooperative federalism, is definitely an improvement. However, much would depend on how the processes for interaction with State Governments are designed. The paper also takes the position that
demand for a constitutional basis for erstwhile Planning Commission itself lacked the requisite merit, largely due to non-appreciation of distinct role to be played by the Finance Commission and the Planning Commission in the overall scheme of federal financial arrangements.

80. Rana Banerji, IAS Retd, Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat (18 Aug 2015)

“Internal Security in the Indian Federation”

As India strives to emerge as a strong regional power it faces formidable security challenges, the most formidable of which stems from terrorism, in both its external and internal dimensions - the trans-national and home-grown, against which India has long waged a relentless fight. Apart from terror groups like Lashkar e Taiba, Hizbul Mujahideen and Jaish-e-Mohammed, India faced a threat from home-grown outfits like Indian Mujahideen. India’s approach to counter these threats includes a two-pronged approach - a counter terror approach based on effective policing and a more inclusive way to tackle socio-political causes behind such violence. As Law & Order is a State subject under the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution, political leadership in States are extremely sensitive about any undue Central supervision or interference over their own jurisdictional domain over the Police. It was in this context that the concept of National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) as an apex body, a single and effective point of control for all counter terrorism measures, faced much criticism from Chief Ministers of various states (including from PM Narendra Modi, then CM, Gujarat). They saw this step as a means of weakening India’s federalism. In particular, there were apprehensions about its unilateral powers to conduct operations. It was argued, with some justification, that such sweeping powers vested in a Central agency would violate the autonomy of state governments. An effort would be made to present India’s internal security threats and ways to meet the challenges in the context of a democratic State functioning in a federal backdrop, though having strong unitary characteristics.