



**SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)
SYMBIOSIS SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS CONFERENCE

INDIA'S STRATEGIC CULTURE: ADDRESSING GLOBAL & REGIONAL CHALLENGES

25-26 November 2023

Concept Note

This conference seeks to deliberate on the key viewpoints on India's Strategic Thought and its impact on policy responses to global and regional challenges through a non-Western lens. Much of the discussion around India's strategic thought and culture has been influenced by the pioneering effort of the American foreign affairs commentator and former military officer, late George K Tanham's research paper for RAND titled: "Indian Strategic Thought: An Interpretive Essay", based on his interactions with Delhi's security elite. It has continued to shape the debate over whether to agree with or refute Tanham's findings, particularly on the point that there is an "absence of strategic thinking" in India. This was followed with another essay- 'Indian Strategy in Flux' (1996), in the edited book titled Securing India: Strategic Thought and Practice, that collated the thoughts of Indian strategic thinkers from academia. A less discussed, though intriguing work has also been the book by Nirad C. Chaudhuri, 'The Continent of Circe: An Essay on the Peoples of India' (1965) which takes an in-depth look at 'Indian' thought. In the view of Kanti Bajpai, India's strategic culture has long been dominated by the worldview of the country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. But the situation is changing with neo-liberalism and realism now competing with one another. It appears that the three major academic variants of Western international relations, viz., realism, neoliberalism and constructivism – are, but transplants in the academic understanding of the evolution of India's contemporary strategic thought.

Given that strategic culture comprises a country's worldview, understanding of subject-object relations and behaviours based on that country's history and geo-political and geo-economic situation, the time has come to ask how India thought about international relations. Therefore, the conference seeks to explore the evolution of the ideas and concepts behind Indian notions of the State and statecraft and consequent policymaking. The objective is to understand key values, principles, negotiation strategies and lines of the argument advanced by Indian leaders and thinkers since the ancient period, that continue to guide policy making. To this end, the conference will focus on the evolution of ideas of nationhood, the role of ethics in statecraft as well as economic decision making and the nature of power as evinced through diplomacy and warfare. It would then seek to apply the knowledge in enquiring if this can provide a framework to comprehend India's responses to contemporary global & regional challenges.

Thus, the unique angle adopted by this conference lies in its view of strategic culture as an environment and an intervention variable to impact decision makers in their definition of security interests which in turn nudge the strategic alliance and policy choices. We can clearly see that the



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changes in the world order and the immediate challenges India faces to its interests, have moulded the shaping of new diplomatic approaches based on a new strategic culture leaving behind the defensive, passive and reactive tendencies that have characterized Indian strategic culture for several years.

Taking from here, the next and most significant attempt by the school through this conference will be to establish the nature of International Relations (IR) studies in India, with the long-term objective to carve out a place in IR studies globally. With the global shift towards India's growing centrality in international relations, it is the opportune moment to engage in deliberations that would bring about changes in the discourse and narrative on Indian strategic thought in the realm of international relations.

IRC 2023 will address these and related questions over two days, with presentations by eminent practitioners and academics, followed by robust discussions involving peers and students of international studies and other faculties from schools in Pune and other parts of India. The results of these interactions will yield a publication that will showcase new approaches to understanding India's strategic thought as the bedrock of India's foreign policy.

SESSIONS:

- I. Evolution of Indian Strategic Thought: Political and Economic Dimensions
- II. Ethical and Moral Dimensions of Statecraft
- III. Geopolitics and Conflict
- IV. Ideas of Nationhood and Civilizational Imagination
- V. Diplomatic Practices in Foreign Policy: The Indian Way
- VI. Indian School of IR-An Idea Whose Time Has Come?

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AGENDA

DAY I SATURDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2023	
11:00 AM – 11:45 AM	INAUGURAL SESSION Keynote Address: Dr. S. Jaishankar External Affairs Minister, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India
11:45 AM – 13:15 PM	Session I Evolution of Indian Strategic Thought: Political and Economic Dimensions
13:15 PM – 14:30 PM	LUNCH BREAK
14:30 PM – 16:00 PM	Session II Ethical and Moral Dimensions of Statecraft
16:00 PM – 16:30 PM	COFFEE BREAK
16:30 PM – 18:00 PM	Session III Geopolitics and Conflict
DAY II SUNDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2023	
9:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Session IV Ideas of Nationhood and Civilizational Imagination
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	COFFEE BREAK
11:30 AM – 13:00 PM	Session V Diplomatic Practices in Foreign Policy: The Indian Way
13:00 PM – 14:30 PM	LUNCH BREAK
14:30 PM – 16:00 PM	Session VI Indian School of IR-An Idea Whose Time Has Come?
16:00 PM – 16:30 PM	WRAP UP

International Relations Conference-2023-24 at Symbiosis International University

Respect principal sir,

We are students of Department of political science. We attended the inter- national relations Conference 2023-24 at Symbiosis international university.

The chief guest and keynote speaker of that conference was our external affairs minister, government of India Dr. S. Jaishankar.

The conference was held for two days everyday there were three sessions which was lead by Prominent political scientist.

From this Conference we learnt evolution of Indian Strategic Thoughts: Political f Economic dimension, Ethical & Moral dimension of Statecraft, Geopolitics & Conflict, ideas of nationhood & civilizational imagination, diplomatic practices in foreign policy: The Indian way, Indian School of IR: Idea whose time has Come? & so on.

Thank you! to the principle of H.V. Desai collage & department of pol. Science in general and Ms.Bokil Mam in particular

Names of the participated students,

1) Rajkumar Jagdale. SYBA

2) Sakshi Kamble. TYBA

3) Manoj Waghamare. SYBA

4) Anushaka Bayas. TYBA

Rajkumar

Sakshi

Manoj

Anushaka

★ International Relations Conference - 2023-24
at Symbiosis International University ★

Report

We ~~the~~ ^{are} Students of Department of Political Science. We attended the international relations conference 2023-24 at Symbiosis international university. The chief guest and keynote speaker of that conference was our external affairs minister, government of India ~~Dr.~~ Dr. S. Jaishankar. The conference ~~was~~ held for two days. Everyday there were three sessions which was lead by prominent political scientist.

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Thank you! to the principle of H.V. Desai college & department of pol. science in general & Ms. Bokil Mam in particular.

