

THE ORF- HINDU POLICY CONCLAVE 2019

March 6-7, 2019 | Hindu College Auditorium, New Delhi

AGENDA

Day 1 – March 6, 2019

10:30-10:45

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Chandrachur Singh, Department of Political Science, Hindu College,
University of Delhi
Prof. Harsh V. Pant, Director, Studies & Head Strategic Studies Programme,
Observer Research Foundation

10:45-11:45

Inaugural Address: To be confirmed

11:45-13:15

We, the People of India: Elections in a pluralist democracy

As the 2019 general elections come close, the plural identity of India will undergo a tough trial. Key questions warranting attention include those of caste, religion, ethnicity and language. In the tenure of the ruling government, events including the formulation of the Triple Talaq ordinance, the Citizenship Amendment Bill, the grant of ten percent reservation to economically weaker sections and the revival of the Ayodhya dispute, have invited mixed reactions from the polity. This panel will examine the role of the government in preserving the unity and diversity of India, and the capacity of the opposition to question them and hold them accountable, where required. As we discuss the forces that strengthen and stultify our journey as the largest democracy, this panel will deliberate upon the outcome of the upcoming elections.

Panelists: Prof. Madhu Purnima Kishwar, ICSSR, Maulana Azad
National Professor, Founder Manushi

Mr. Roshan Kishore, Data and Political Economy Editor,
Hindustan Times

Moderator: Mr. Kanchan Gupta, Distinguished Fellow, Observer
Research Foundation

13:15-14:15

Lunch

14:15-15:45

“Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas”: On the promise of inclusive development

Inclusive development consists of ensuring that all marginalized and excluded groups are stakeholders in development processes. Out of the several issues forming the narrative, the following have gained prominence in recent years: Has the JAM trinity helped in including those who have been excluded? Has the government done enough to alleviate farmer distress? Have high growth figures translated into improved standards of living for

our populace? Has enough been done to grant quality education and reliable healthcare to the masses? Has the environmental aspect informed our worldview on progress?

As we debate our development journey, this panel will examine the government's flagship policy initiatives and consider whether the promise of inclusivity has been fulfilled or not.

Panelists: Prof. Jayati Ghosh, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Mr. Abhinav Prakash, Assistant Professor, Sri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University

Moderator: Ms. Aparna Roy, Associate Fellow, Observer Research Foundation

15:45-16:15

Tea/Coffee

Day 2 – March 7, 2019

10:30-12:00

Engaging the World: Has India made its mark?

With more than ninety international trips covering six continents, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has elevated India's engagement with the world to a different level. As the panel deliberates on the direction of our foreign policy, it will be interesting to draw our focus on crucial issues like the development of the QUAD, the Indian entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the initiation of the 2+2 dialogue, the Sino-Indian relations post Wuhan, the dynamic neighborhood politics and the coming to terms with protectionist global tendencies. The panel will deliberate upon whether India has finally come into its own, and emerged as a leading power on the world stage.

Panelists: Shri Shakti Sinha, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum Library

Ms. Indrani Bagchi, Senior Diplomatic Editor, Times of India

Moderator: Mr. Kabir Taneja, Associate Fellow, Observer Research Foundation

12:00-12:15

Tea/Coffee Break

12:15-13:45

Schisms and Strifes: Fault lines between institutions, regulatory authorities and the government

Affixing accountability and implementing proper checks and balances is a pre-requisite for any constitutional democracy. For governance to be fair, equitable and transparent, the independent working of institutions like the

media, the Election Commission of India, the Central Bureau of Investigation, and the Reserve Bank of India, among others, is significant. Furthermore, in light of recent events, the constitutional mandate to separate the judiciary from the executive needs to be given greater thrust. Hence, the debate which draws our attention oscillates between autonomous functioning, on one side, and the government's scrutiny and control, on the other.

Panelists: Mr. M.K. Venu, Founding Editor, The Wire

Mr. Gautam Chikermane, Vice President, Observer
Research Foundation

Moderator: Ms. Aarshi Tirkey, Research Assistant, Observer Research
Foundation

13:45-14:45

Lunch

14:45-16:15

Does fortune favour the bold? Throwback to India's recent economic reforms

The last five years witnessed the introduction of "bold" – if not controversial – economic reforms. While the government stands convinced that demonetisation was a game-changer, the opposition has voiced its criticism by declaring it as a failed policy. The implementation of the GST, while still battling teething troubles and settling into the larger fold, continues to pose hurdles due to its complex, multi-layered structure. Other policy measures like Make in India, Start up India and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code will assume critical significance in this debate. This panel will contribute to the existing discourse on these reforms, and evaluate its impact on the Indian economy.

Panelists: Mr. Dhiraj Nayyar, Chief Economist, Vedanta

Mr. Ashok K. Bhattacharya, Editorial Director, Business
Standard

Moderator: Mr. Aparajit Pandey, Programme Director, Observer
Research Foundation

16:15-16:30

Closing Remarks & Vote of Thanks

16:30-17:00

Tea/Coffee