

IRC CLUB REPORT 2020-21

The International Relations Club is a club that believes in critiquing, analysing, and understanding current affairs across the globe. On campus we help create spaces for relevant discussions on international social, political, and economic issues, bringing in scholars, practitioners, and activists to encourage student involvement in IR. Through this we focus on fostering a well-rounded understanding of global issues and an attuned sense of political consciousness, all while making news more accessible and interactive. The club, thus, encourages discussion, disagreement, and debate over topics of international intrigue, promoting an atmosphere of learning through diplomacy.

The club has also, over the years, published its flagship feature - a yearly newsletter titled *Akhbaar* - highlighting important moments in politics, public policy, world economics, and pop culture. In 2020 we have adapted the concept of *Akhbaar* to social media, posting a bi-weekly news update titled *Mid-Day Akhbaar*, along with a number of weekly social media campaigns.

Our theme for the year 2020-21 was **#FactOverFiction**, focusing on combating misinformation and fake news with well-researched political arguments, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While IRC held multiple events over the course of the year, a few, in particular, stand out.

One among those was IRC's first event '*That's On Period(t) - An event on Period Poverty*'; a panel discussion on Period Poverty, covering Indian and international perspectives with a special focus on the issue amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

The panel featured speakers from Mumbai, New Delhi, Cleveland, and Toronto.

Another occurrence of importance was IRC's recurring event series titled '*विवाद: 100% Unadulterated Discourse*' which focused on encouraging debate and discussion amongst students on topics of economic, social, and political relevance. Throughout the course of the year the IRC team brought in a number of guest moderators to overlook a *विवाद* on the topics of *Protectionism & Welfare*, *The State of Indian News Media*, and *The Indian Farm Acts of 2020*.

IRC also held numerous seminars and panel discussions this year, albeit virtually via Zoom. Some of the highlights were the seminars on the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, also titled '*The Trans Act Takeback*', and the seminar on '*The Impact of the Partition of 1947 on South Asian Relations*'. The former featured trans rights lawyer, Adv. Ankan Biswas; social activist, Rachana Mudraboyina; and, HUMSAFAR Trust Advocacy Officer and Recruiter Coordinator, Anjali Siroya. The latter featured esteemed professors from Jawaharlal Nehru University and Wilson College.

This year was also quite a fruitful year in terms of club collaborations. In the month of November, IRC collaborated with six Sophia College clubs. Five of these collaborations were made under the umbrella event of '*The Art of Political Expression*,' which aimed at highlighting the intersection between art and

politics. The IRC team collaborated with the English Literary Society, Art & Design Club, World Music & Dance Club, Sophia College English Dramatics Association, and Photography Society, to create content for social media based on each of their niche interests.

The final collaboration was with the Sophia Queer Collective, a branch of the Students' Social Reforms Initiative, on '*The Trans Act Takeback*'.

Due to the pandemic, a lot of IRC's poster work was translated into Instagram infographics. The IRC team worked very hard over the course of the academic terms, posting content under the following five categories:

- **General Editorial** - News Reports/Current Affairs/Feature Articles which adopt a strictly neutral tone; reflective of IRC.
- **#TheBreakdown** - A recurrent campaign focusing on political events that have arisen in modern times in a detailed manner without resorting to oversimplification or overlooking important facts. This campaign acquaints people details and serves as an incentive to research these issues on their own.
- **#InTheFrame** - A campaign discussing and recommending movies with plots centered around consequential events, set in time periods of significant political events or that are "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant"
- **#HistoryRevisited** - A recurrent campaign breaking down historical events which also may have modern-day implications in a detailed manner by highlighting perspectives of all possible stakeholders.
- **#ForTheCulture** - A campaign highlighting pop culture references which may or may not have any political background.

By the end of the year, the club had an established social media presence, making news and information easily accessible to their followers.

Throughout the course of this year, the International Relations Club crossed heights it had never before reached. The lack of geographic limitations brought in international panelists and speakers from across India, setting a new quality standard with regard to discussion and experience. All in all, this has been one successful year for the club. And from here on out, we hope that it will only get better.