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Jindal School of Government and Public Policy (JSGP)

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OPEN LECTURE

on

Saving the Nation: Government Advertisements in Aaj Kal and the Post-Independence Indian Citizen, 1950–1962

SPEAKER

DR. ANAB NAIYER
Postdoctoral Fellow
Ashoka University, Sonipat



ABSTRACT:

For her postdoctoral research, Dr. Naiyer investigates the intersections of Urdu print culture, citizenship, and everyday reading practices in postcolonial North India (1950s–70s). She examines how commercial Urdu digests and state-led literacy initiatives and print ephemera together shaped ethical, gendered, and civic imaginaries of readership and citizenship.

For this presentation, she studies a selection of government advertisements for National Savings Schemes published in Aaj Kal, a prominent Urdu-language magazine published by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in the 1950s which was a foundational decade of the Indian republic and its early Five Year Plans. Drawing on archival holdings of the magazine from this period, the paper reads these advertisements not merely as financial promotions but as a rich site of ideological production, through which the postcolonial Indian state articulated its vision of nationhood, development, and civic belonging to a vernacular readership.

SPEAKER'S BIO:

Dr. Anab Naiyer is a Postdoctoral Fellow at Ashoka University specializing in South Asian print cultures, with a particular focus on Urdu digests and vernacular literary production in modern North India. She has also worked on syncretic folk devotional practices at Salar Masud Ghazi's shrine in eastern Uttar Pradesh. She has been a Nehru Fulbright fellow and has published on topics such as health, community, contestation, and solidarity within Urdu print culture.

WEDNESDAY, 01 APRIL 2026 | 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM
ENIGMA, THIRD FLOOR, PRITHVIRAJ JINDAL ACADEMIC BLOCK (T1)
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