



**O.P. JINDAL GLOBAL**  
INSTITUTION OF EMINENCE DEEMED TO BE  
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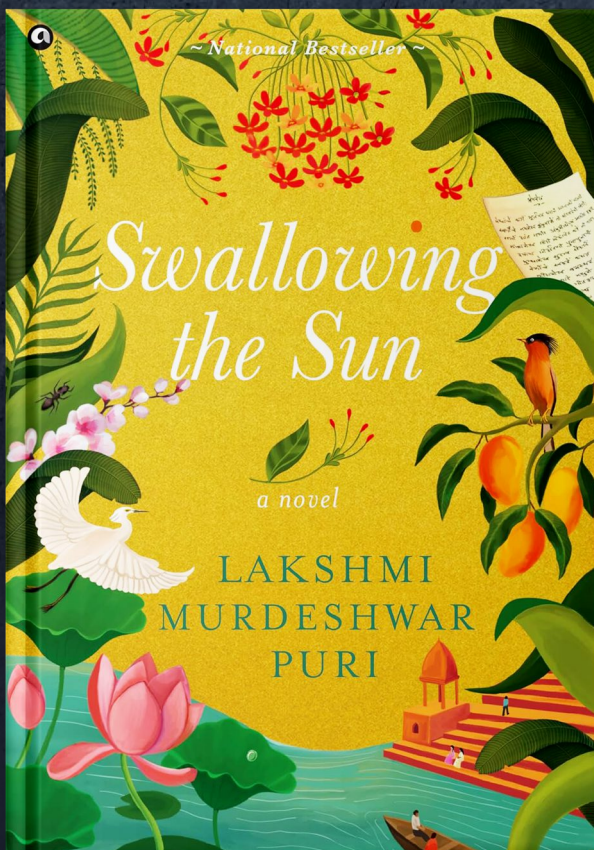
**Jindal School of International Affairs**  
*India's First Global Policy School*

You are cordially invited to participate in the

## **DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC LECTURE**

*on the theme:*

# “Swallowing the Sun: An Ode to the Power of Youth & Women towards a New India”



### **MS. LAKSHMI PURI**

Former Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations and  
Deputy Executive Director, UN Women;  
Former Ambassador of India

**MONDAY, 28 APRIL 2025 | 4:30 PM**

**PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY**

1ST FLOOR, T1, PRITHVIRAJ JINDAL ACADEMIC BLOCK, O.P. JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

RSVP: [vcoffice@jgu.edu.in](mailto:vcoffice@jgu.edu.in)

# PROGRAMME

4:30 PM - 4:35 PM

## Welcome Address

**PROFESSOR (DR.) C. RAJ KUMAR**

Vice Chancellor

O.P. Jindal Global University

4:35 PM - 4:40 PM

## Introductory Remarks

**PROFESSOR (DR.) SREERAM CHAULIA**

Dean, Jindal School of International Affairs

O.P. Jindal Global University

4:40 PM - 5:20 PM

## Distinguished Public Lecture

**MS. LAKSHMI PURI**

Former Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations and

Deputy Executive Director, UN Women;

Former Ambassador of India

5:20 PM - 5:25 PM

## Remarks

**PROFESSOR AMBREEN KHAN**

Adjunct Professor of Practice

O.P. Jindal Global University

5:25 PM - 5:45 PM

## Q&A

5:45 PM - 6:00 PM

## Meet & Greet

## Presenter

**PROFESSOR (DR.) SRIPARNA PATHAK**

Professor

Jindal School of International Affairs

## Ms. Lakshmi Puri

Lakshmi Puri is a former Assistant Secretary-General at the United Nations and the former Deputy Executive Director of UN Women. She was Director of the flagship International Trade division and Acting Deputy Secretary General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. She also led the preparations for the Fourth Least Developed Countries Conference as Director at OHRLLS. Prior to her 15 year stint at the United Nations, she served as an Indian diplomat for 28 years, and was India's Ambassador to Hungary and accredited to Bosnia and Herzegovina. She is a Distinguished Fellow of Indian Association of International Studies (IAIS). Ms. Puri has multifaceted experience in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, negotiations of international agreements and norm setting. She has been active in public advocacy spanning, key areas of sustainable development including poverty eradication, food security and agriculture, water, energy, urban development, education, trade in goods, services, and commodities investment and intellectual property rights regimes, migration and refugees, climate change and humanitarian action. She has contributed to publications and think tanks in these areas and to opinion editorials. Throughout her career, she has interacted with global leaders, decision-makers and opinion influencers at the highest levels. She has developed transformative partnerships with governments, civil society, academia, youth, the private sector, and the media.

Ms. Puri joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1974 as the youngest officer at the time, having secured All India Rank 2 in the UPSC examination. She went on to serve in Japan, Sri Lanka, Switzerland (Geneva), and as Ambassador to Hungary with concurrent accreditation to Bosnia and Herzegovina. At headquarters in Delhi, she served as Under Secretary (Pakistan) during 1978-81 – a crucial period in India-Pakistan relations. She also served as Under Secretary on the Japan and Korea desk.

Ms. Puri has been involved in peace and security policy as well as peace making and peace building efforts at different levels - national, regional and international. Apart from the experience as US (PAK), MEA, she was closely involved in the evolution and implementation of the Indo Srilanka Peace Agreement, the IPKF operations and peace building as part of Indian High Commission's focal team in Colombo during the critical period 1984-1988. She also dealt with India's contribution to international peacekeeping as Ambassador of India concurrently accredited to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1999-2002 where India had the largest contingent in the International Police Task Force there which won laurels. At the United Nations she worked extensively on peace and security issues including disarmament, preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism including in the context of the United Nations Security Council.

She was Joint Secretary Economic Division and Multilateral Economic Relations (ED&MER), and served in this capacity for 6 years (1993 – 1999). She spearheaded India's economic diplomacy and gave it a renewed impetus. The successful articulation of India's economic engagement with the world involved close consultation and partnership with the Indian private sector and their bodies including the CII, FICCI and their foreign counterparts.

She oversaw the policy making and implementation of India's South-South economic cooperation program - ITEC and Government of India's lines of credit to African and other developing countries also in partnership with the private sector.

She was active in conceptualising and negotiating India's many bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral economic diplomacy initiatives such as the Look East Policy, Indo ASEAN Dialogue Partnership and BIMSTECH, the G15, Indian Ocean Rim Association, India-Brazil South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA), and EU - India Strategic partnership and outreach to groupings like ASEM, APEC and OECD.

She worked closely with the Ministry of commerce on trade promotion and India Brand Equity related initiatives and represented the MEA on the Board of the EXIM Bank and public sector undertakings such as WAPCOS, IRCON and trade bodies such as OCCI. She was associated with Government of India policies on both inward and outward foreign direct investment and related multilateral rule making being attempted in the OECD and WTO.

As JS(ED&MER) she also contributed to policy making relating to India's engagement in GATT and the birth of the World Trade Organization.

She continued with her trade and economic policy work when she joined the United Nations in 2002 as the Director of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) flagship Division on Trade in goods, services and commodities. In this capacity, she led the work of the organization in making trade work for development in all its dimensions and, in particular, for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. She became Acting Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD (2007 to 2009) and steered two important UNCTAD Conferences: UNCTAD XI in São Paulo and UNCTAD XII in Accra.

From 2009 to 2011, she was Director of the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in New York. In this capacity, she steered the preparations for the 4th World Conference on LDCs in Istanbul and the adoption of the ambitious Istanbul Program of Action for the LDCs in 2011. She also contributed to the 5-year Review of the Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action in 2010 and to the Samoa Pathway engendering in 2014.

Ms. Puri was appointed Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of the pioneering global entity for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women - UNWOMEN in 2011. Joining the leadership team at its inception, she contributed strategically and vitally in building UNWOMEN into a dynamic entity, a powerful advocate, knowledge and partnership hub, norm setter and program driver for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Under her leadership major international agreements like the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and Financing For Development and human rights and humanitarian accords incorporated gender equality related goals and targets.

Ms. Puri was instrumental in convening by UNWOMEN of the first ever Global Summit on gender equality in 2015 with 70 key heads of state and government attending and making commitments. Private Sector and civil society summits were also convened to broaden the engagement and promote an all of economy and all of society approach.

Imaginative Movement building campaigns such as He For She and Planet 50/50 were also led by her with global impact. She actively supported the 2020 Women on Boards and other campaigns for representation of women in corporate management in the USA and around the world. An innovative campaign involving stock exchanges "Ringing the Bell for Gender Equality" around the world including New York and Mumbai were also launched successfully under her leadership.

Ms. Puri has received international awards and accolades for her work and contribution to international development, human rights, humanitarian, peace and security policy making and norm setting. These include the prestigious Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award, Novus Award for Championing the Sustainable Development Goals, the Millennium Campus Award 2015 and Global Generation Award as Inspiration for Youth.

Ms. Puri completed her graduate and postgraduate studies in History from Delhi University and from Punjab University, respectively. She is fluent in English, Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi and has working knowledge of French and Japanese. She has worked in and travelled to over 70 countries in all continents and has a cross cultural sensibility while being rooted in her Indian cultural heritage.

Ms. Puri is the author of a novel "Swallowing the Sun" which has won universal critical acclaim and become a National Bestseller in record time.

Ms. Puri has several publications and Op-eds to her credit.