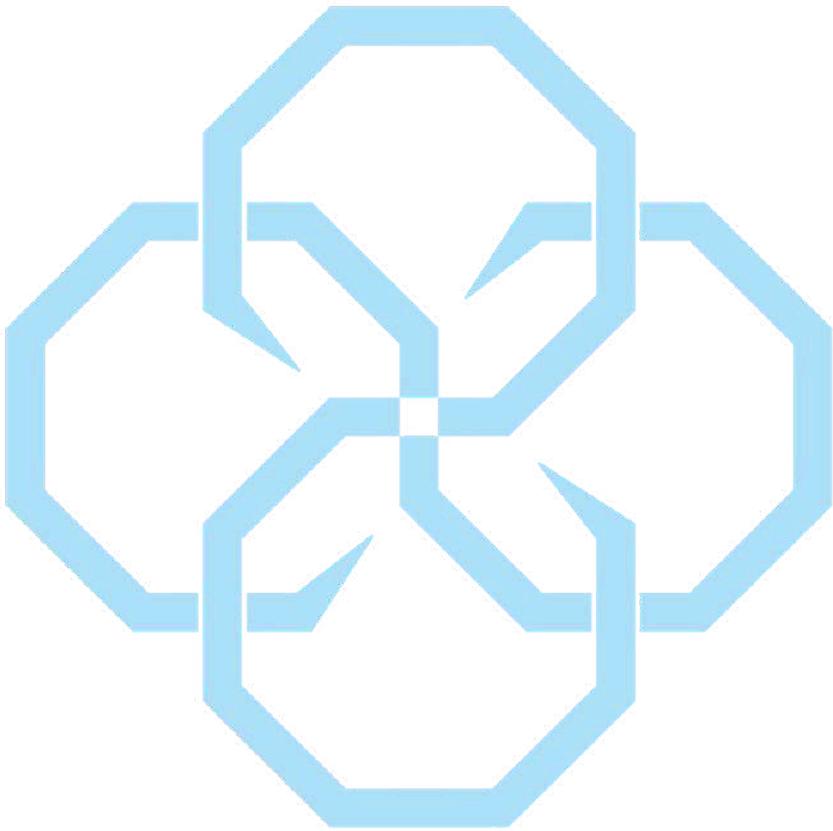


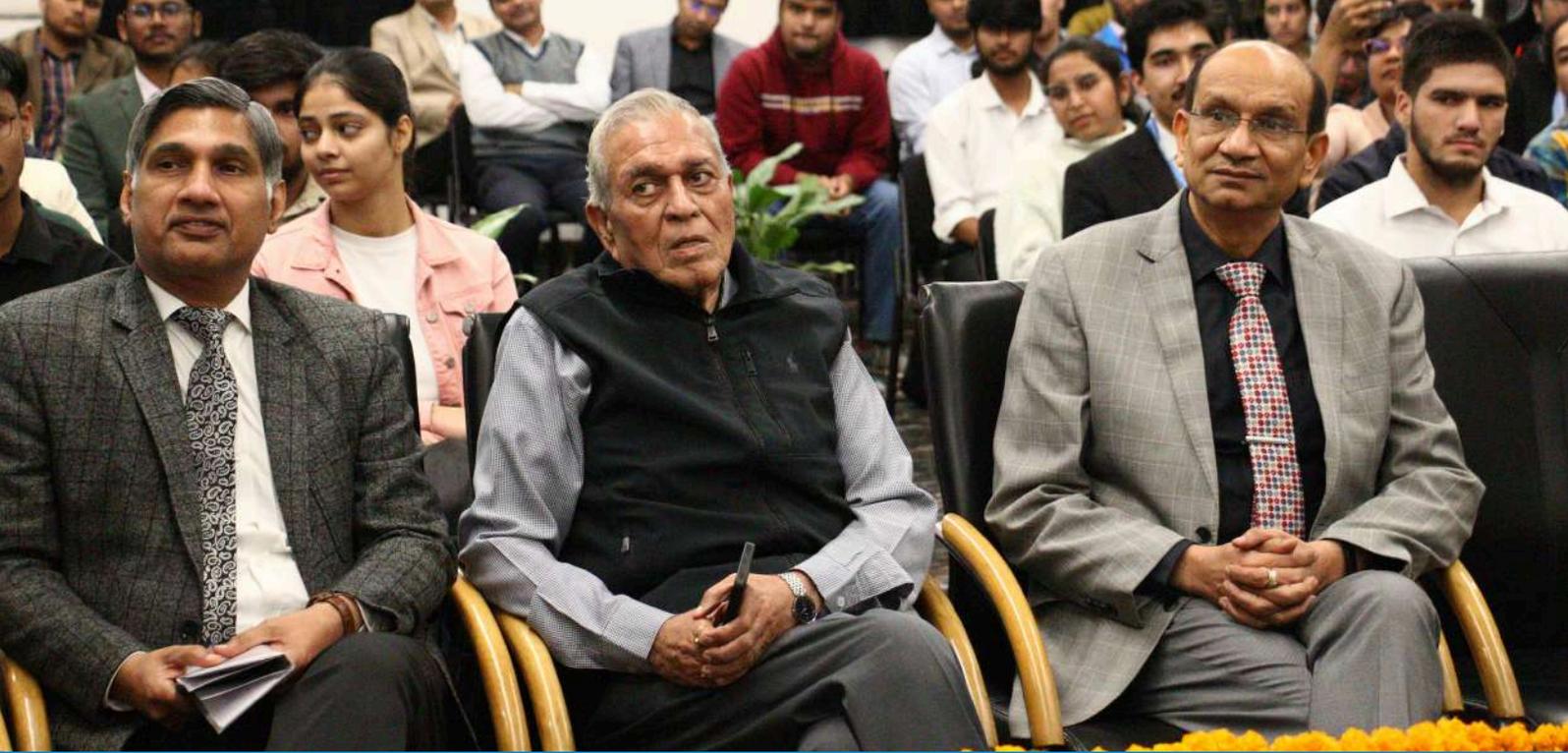


**SAU**  
SOUTH ASIAN  
UNIVERSITY

# SAU CONNECT

Monthly Newsletter  
**February 2026**





## WELCOME TO SAU

South Asian University (SAU) is an international university established by the eight SAARC member nations to foster regional understanding and provide quality higher education. Founded in 2010 and located in Maidan Garhi, South Delhi, SAU offers undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programs in fields Mathematics, Life Sciences & Biotechnology, Economics, Social Sciences, Legal Studies, Management, Asian Studies, Chemical Sciences, Arts and Design, Climate Change, Physical Sciences, Computer Science and Engineering, aiming to equip students as future regional leaders.



## PROF. K. K. AGGARWAL

President

I extend my warm greetings to the students, faculty, and staff of South Asian University. The vibrant academic discussions, research initiatives, and cultural activities across the campus reflect the energy and dedication of our University community.

I am pleased to share that admissions for the upcoming academic session are now open. I warmly invite aspiring students from across South Asia to join this unique regional institution and become part of a diverse academic environment that encourages critical inquiry, collaboration, and innovation.

As we move forward, let us continue to work together with commitment and purpose to strengthen the ideals of scholarship, cooperation, and mutual understanding that guide South Asian University's mission.



# From the Editorial Team

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This month's issue of SAU Connect brings together a vibrant collection of academic, cultural, and institutional milestones that reflect the dynamic life of South Asian University. The University marked **National Science Day 2026** with the two-day International Workshop "**Bridging the Gap Across Sciences,**" which brought together distinguished scholars, researchers, and students from across the world for interdisciplinary dialogue and technical exchange. The **inauguration of Lecture Hall 1** by Hon'ble President Prof. K. K. Aggarwal, in the presence of senior University leadership, further strengthened the academic infrastructure supporting teaching and research at SAU.

The issue also captures the rich cultural life of the campus. Students celebrated the spirit of South Asia through events such as **Falgun Utsav, Pongal,** and the **SAU Food Fest 2026,** where music, traditions, and diverse cuisines created an atmosphere of shared heritage and community bonding. These celebrations reflect the University's unique identity as a regional institution that brings together cultures, languages, and traditions from across South Asia. This edition also highlights notable scholarly contributions from the University community. The issue also features academic profiles and highlights of research contributions that underscore SAU's growing intellectual engagement with global policy debates.

Alongside these developments, the University continues to witness strong participation from students and faculty in **workshops, discussions, and creative initiatives** that enrich campus life. From scientific presentations and technical training sessions to artistic performances and student-led activities, the past month reflects a vibrant culture of learning and collaboration.

As always, SAU Connect aims to document and celebrate the many achievements and initiatives that shape our community. We hope this issue offers readers a meaningful glimpse into the academic pursuits, cultural diversity, and collaborative spirit that define South Asian University, and we invite members of the SAU community to continue sharing their stories and accomplishments in the months ahead.

# Highlight of the month



The **ISA RC-22 Midterm Conference on “Global Flows and Reconfigurations of the Sacred”**, organized by the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences at South Asian University in collaboration with the International Sociological Association – Research Committee on Sociology of Religion (RC-22), brought together leading scholars, researchers, and students from across the world for three days of intensive academic engagement and dialogue. The conference created a vibrant platform to examine how the sacred is being reshaped across societies through global flows, social transformations, and new forms of religious expression.

## ISA RC-22 Midterm Conference

### “Global Flows and Reconfigurations of the Sacred”

Organised by:  
Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences

The second day of the conference featured parallel thematic sessions examining a wide range of themes including religious heritage, sacred spaces, lived experiences of faith, and the emerging post-secular context. Scholars also explored the presence of the sacred in digital landscapes, the tensions between global and local religious expressions, and the challenges involved in rethinking and reconfiguring religious practices.

A key highlight of the day was the keynote lecture by **Prof. Mar Griera, President of ISA RC-22**, titled “Governing, Believing, and Healing Spiritually: Authority and the Body in Contemporary Western Society.” With **Prof. Marian Burchardt** as discussant and **Dr. Sumedha Dutta** as session chair, the lecture examined the institutional dimensions of contemporary spirituality and its connections with care, community, and subjective empowerment. The day concluded with a cultural evening and Presidential Dinner attended by **Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi**, Senior Vice President, South Asian University, where students presented music, dance, and a cultural fashion show reflecting the diversity of South Asia.



The third and final day featured the plenary session titled **“Religion in South Asia,”** with speakers including **Prof. Renuka Singh, Dr. Sudipta Roy, Dr. Santosh Singh, Dr. Dev Nath Pathak, Dr. Chudamani Basnet, Dr. Daksha Sharma, and Dr. Balram Prasad Raut,** moderated by **Dr. Ratan Kumar Roy.** The discussion highlighted themes of religious diversity, authority, conflict, and the evolving forms of religion in the South Asian region.

During the valedictory session, **Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi** encouraged participants to continue the conversations initiated at the conference in their academic work. **Dr. Ravindra Kumar Soni,** Registrar, congratulated the organizers and participants on the successful conduct of the event, while **Prof. Mar Griera** emphasized the importance of critical engagement by social scientists in addressing global challenges. **Prof. Dev Nath Pathak,** Associate Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, reflected on the conference as a space for intellectual exchange and new perspectives. The conference concluded with a vote of thanks by **Dr. Sumedha Dutta,** Conference Convenor.



Following the conference, international delegates participated in a curated visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra, providing an opportunity to engage with the region’s cultural heritage and conclude the event on a memorable note.

# Admissions 2026-27



South Asian University (SAU) announced the commencement of admissions for the **academic session 2026–27** at a well-attended press conference held on 24 February 2026 in New Delhi. The event drew significant media attention, with participation from more than 70 publication houses, underscoring the growing interest in the University's expanding academic portfolio.

The highlight of the event was the address by **Hon'ble President Prof. K.K. Aggarwal**, who reaffirmed SAU's distinctive identity as an international university established by SAARC nations and its commitment to delivering world-class, future-ready education under the vision of "*Knowledge Without Borders*." He emphasized the University's continuous efforts to broaden academic opportunities and equip students with the skills, knowledge, and research capabilities required in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

A key focus of this year's announcement was the launch of several new academic programmes across undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels. **These include BA LL.B. (Hons), BBA LL.B. (Hons), BA (Hons) in Media, Arts and Design, MA in Journalism and Digital Media, MS in Business Analytics, and new PhD programmes in disciplines such as Management, Climate Change, English, and Chemistry.** In addition, the introduction of a **specialization in Quantum Computing within the B.Tech CSE programme** marks a significant step towards advancing cutting-edge technological education.

The University also highlighted recent advancements in infrastructure, research facilities, and interdisciplinary learning, reinforcing its position as a leading institution in the region. Admissions are now open, inviting aspiring students to join a vibrant and globally engaged academic community.

# Women Scholars Advancing Knowledge at SAU

On the occasion of International Women's Day, South Asian University celebrates the remarkable research contributions of its women faculty members.

## Prof. Camena Guneratne

*Advancing Environmental Justice and Human Rights*



**Prof. Camena Guneratne** is an internationally recognised scholar in environmental law, human rights, and gender justice. She holds an **LL.B from the University of Colombo, an LL.M from Harvard Law School, and a PhD from the University of Waikato, New Zealand.** Her work focuses on the intersections of *environment, development, and women's rights*, and she has taught Environmental Law at several universities in Sri Lanka.

Beyond academia, she has actively contributed to policy and civil society, serving on the boards of organisations such as the **Environmental Foundation Ltd., the Centre for Women's Research, and Transparency International Sri Lanka**, and currently a board member of the **Centre for Poverty Analysis.** A **Fulbright Scholar** and **Smuts Visiting Fellow at the University of Cambridge**, her work advances equitable and sustainable legal frameworks.

## Prof. Deepa Sinha

*Pioneering Research in Discrete Mathematics*



**Prof. Deepa Sinha** is a distinguished mathematician whose work has enriched **Discrete Mathematics**, particularly the theory of signed graphs. She earned her **Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics from the University of Delhi** and her **M.Sc. from the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur.** She has earlier served **Delhi College of Engineering, Banasthali University, and Delhi Technological University.**

She has authored **115 research papers** in reputed journals and has supervised **19 Ph.D. scholars.** A **CSIR-NET qualifier** and recipient of the **Junior Research Fellowship from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, MATRICS Project (2019-2022)** from the **Science and Engineering Research Board under the Department of Science and Technology.** She is a fellow of the **India Society of Mathematical Modelling and Computer Simulation (IITK)** and serves on **editorial boards of International Journal.**

## Prof. Kavita Khanna

*Driving Innovation in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning*



**Prof. Kavita Khanna** has over **25 years of experience in teaching, research, and academic leadership in computer science and emerging technologies.** She holds a **PhD from Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi,** and her research focuses on *Artificial Neural Networks, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, and Soft Computing.*

She has authored **over 70 publications** in reputed journals and conference proceedings and has supervised several doctoral and postgraduate research students. Prof. Khanna has also undertaken research and consultancy projects with organisations such as the **Department of Science and Technology, the National Technical Research Organization, and the National Commission for Women.** She has held key academic leadership roles, including **Campus Director at Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University,** contributing to innovation in technology education and research.

## Prof. Kiran Rai

*Strengthening Scholarship in Corporate and Financial Law*



**Prof. Kiran Rai** is a leading scholar in *corporate and financial regulation*. A **University Gold Medallist in both LL.B. and LL.M.**, she serves as Professor of Law at the Faculty of Legal Studies, South Asian University, while on lien from **Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai**.

Her research interests include *Insolvency Law, Sustainability, Competition Law, and Securities Regulation*. She has authored **numerous research papers and five books** and has contributed actively to policy discussions through engagements with institutions such as the **Competition Commission of India** and the **Securities and Exchange Board of India**. Her current research also explores the *intersection of law and emerging technologies*, including collaborative work on the **use of Artificial Intelligence in legal processes**.

## Prof. Nishi Sharma

*Advancing Research in Finance and Management*



**Prof. Nishi Sharma** is a scholar of *finance and management* with over two decades of academic experience. She currently serves as Professor of Finance at the Faculty of Management, South Asian University, and previously taught for seventeen years at **Panjab University's University Institute of Applied Management Sciences**.

Her research contributions include over **45 publications** in reputed journals indexed in Scopus, ABDC, and UGC databases. She has also co-authored a book, co-edited two volumes, and presented numerous papers at national and international conferences. Supported by research funding from **ICSSR** and the **National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation**, she has supervised doctoral scholars and mentored more than ninety master's research projects, contributing to the advancement of research in finance and management education.

## Prof. Ritu Gaur

*Innovating HIV Research and Antiviral Drug Discovery*



**Prof. Ritu Gaur** is a leading scientist whose research focuses on *host-pathogen interactions in HIV and the development of novel antiviral therapies*. She holds a **PhD in Life Sciences from the National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi**.

Her work has significantly advanced understanding of *HIV replication mechanisms and viral-host interactions*. She has contributed to important breakthroughs in identifying and characterising **HIV maturation inhibitors**, including research on the mechanism of action of the first-in-class inhibitor **Bevirimat**. Through collaborations with international research groups and industry partners such as **Pfizer and Hetero Drugs**, her work has produced **high-impact publications and a granted patent for anti-HIV agents**, contributing to global efforts in antiviral drug discovery.

## Prof. Ritu Gupta

*Championing Legal Scholarship and Gender Justice*



**Prof. Ritu Gupta** is a distinguished scholar of *commercial and business law* with extensive experience in **legal education and research**. She currently serves as Professor of Law at the Faculty of Legal Studies, South Asian University, while on lien from **National Law University Delhi**, where she earlier led the **Centre for Business and Financial Laws**.

Her research focuses on *Contract Law, Banking Law, Property Law, Competition Law, and Gender Justice*. She has authored **two widely used books**, including works on *Law of Contract and Sexual Harassment at the Workplace*. Recognised for her contributions to legal scholarship, she has been featured in **BW Legal World's list of "100 Influential Women Driving Change in the Indian Legal Ecosystem."**

# Research and publications

## Scholarly Publication on the Historical Foundations of Humanitarian Law

Dr. Srinivas Burra of the Faculty of Legal Studies published an article titled “The Adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions: A Humanitarian Break and Colonial Continuity” in *Humanitarian Law & Policy*, as part of a joint symposium on the updated Commentary on the Fourth 1949 Geneva Conventions organised in collaboration with EJIL:Talk! and Just Security. The article examines the historical context of the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, highlighting how their humanitarian vision coexisted with continuities of colonial power structures that influenced their formulation and early implementation.

## Research Presentation on Regional Maritime Strategy

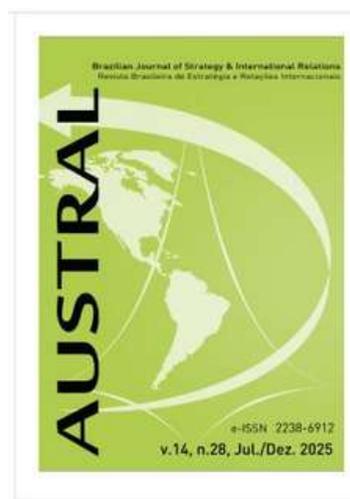
Maiwand Safi, a final-year PhD scholar working under Sanjay Chaturvedi, presented his research paper titled “The Strategic Significance of Afghanistan in India’s MAHASAGAR Mission” at the 16th South Asia Conference organised by the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. The paper argued that maritime relevance today extends beyond geography, highlighting Afghanistan’s role as a strategic bridge between India and Eurasia and its importance for strengthening India’s regional partnerships and strategic outlook. The presentation reflects meaningful scholarly engagement with contemporary geopolitical debates.

## Research Publication in Cancer Biology

Dr. Yuba Raj Pokharel of the Faculty of Life Sciences and Biotechnology, together with PhD scholar Shirani Punniyamoorthy, published a research article titled “N(3)-substituted thiophene-2-carboxaldehyde thiosemicarbazones and their copper(II) complexes: Synthesis, Characterization, in silico study and Anticancer activity” in *Polyhedron*, an Elsevier publication. The study, conducted at the Cancer Biology Laboratory, explores the synthesis and biological potential of novel chemical compounds with promising anticancer activity, contributing to ongoing research in medicinal chemistry and cancer therapeutics.

## Publication on International Relations Theory and Foreign Policy

Dr. Anmol Mukhia of the Faculty of International Studies published an article titled “Can Social Constructivism in IR Shape Foreign Policies? A Case of North Korea–China Relations” in the *AUSTRAL: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations* (Vol. 14, Issue 28), a Scopus-indexed journal. The article examines how social constructivist perspectives in international relations can influence foreign policy behaviour, using the evolving relationship between North Korea and China as a case study.



# Collaborations

## MoU with NASSCOM to Enhance Industry-Oriented Learning



The **Centre for Executive and Technical Programmes (CETP)** at **South Asian University** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **NASSCOM**, marking an important step toward strengthening industry-academia collaboration and enhancing employability-oriented learning opportunities for students. The partnership aims to equip learners with industry-relevant skills across both technical and non-technical domains, enabling them to respond effectively to the rapidly evolving digital economy.

Through this collaboration, students will gain access to **NASSCOM FutureSkills Prime**, a national digital learning platform designed to build competencies in emerging technologies. The initiative will allow students to explore cutting-edge areas of digital innovation, pursue industry-recognized certifications, and engage in collaborative learning experiences aligned with contemporary industry requirements.

By integrating academic learning with professional skill development, the initiative seeks to bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and practical industry expectations. The collaboration reflects South Asian University's continued commitment to preparing students with future-ready capabilities while fostering meaningful engagement between higher education institutions and the technology industry.



# Achievements

## Research Scholar Secures Award in International Poster Competition

**Keshav Kumar**, a PhD research scholar in the Department of International Relations at the Faculty of International Studies, South Asian University, working under the supervision of **Dhananjay Tripathi**, secured second position in a poster presentation competition held during the three-day workshop titled "*Understanding Migration in the EU*" (18–20 February 2026).

The workshop was organised by the **Centre for European Studies**, Jawaharlal Nehru University under the **Jean Monnet Module – Migration in the European Union**, and co-funded by the European Union. His poster, titled "*Selective Migration Policy in the EU: A Political Economy Perspective*," examined the political and economic dimensions shaping migration policies within the European Union. The recognition highlights the quality of research undertaken by SAU scholars and their active engagement with international academic platforms.



## MA Economics Student Qualifies UGC-NET with Outstanding Rank

**Koshika Pandey**, a second-year MA Economics student at the Faculty of Economics, South Asian University, achieved an exceptional result in the **UGC NET examination** by securing a **99.906 percentile** and an approximate **All India Rank of 32**, thereby qualifying for the **Junior Research Fellowship (JRF)**.

Her accomplishment reflects sustained academic dedication, intellectual rigour, and the strong research-oriented environment fostered at the Faculty of Economics. This achievement adds to the growing list of academic successes of the University's students. The University congratulates her on this significant milestone and wishes her continued success in her future academic and professional pursuits.



# New Programme

## Launch of MA Programme in Communication for Sustainable Development

The **Faculty of Social Sciences** at South Asian University has introduced a new **MA Programme in Communication for Sustainable Development (CSD)**, designed to explore the critical role of communication in advancing sustainable societies. This innovative programme examines how strategic communication can contribute to achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, while also analysing the growing influence of emerging technologies in shaping contemporary communication practices.

The curriculum places particular emphasis on the use of digital platforms, data-driven communication, and **Artificial Intelligence-enabled tools** in addressing sustainability challenges. By combining theoretical perspectives with practical approaches, the programme seeks to equip students with the skills required to design and implement effective communication strategies that promote sustainable development across diverse social and policy contexts.

The first cohort of the programme will commence in **Summer 2026**, offering students an opportunity to engage with interdisciplinary perspectives on sustainability, media, and technology. Prospective applicants are encouraged to follow updates and application details through the University's admissions portal.

# Academic Activities

To mark **National Science Day 2026**, South Asian University organised a two-day International Workshop titled “Bridging the Gap Across Sciences,” hosted by the Faculty of Physical Sciences in collaboration with the Faculty of Chemical Sciences and the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies. The inaugural session was opened by Dr. Jyotsna Sharma, Associate Dean (Faculty of Physical Sciences), followed by remarks from **Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi and Prof. Pankaj Jain** on the transformative role of science and education. The workshop was formally inaugurated by **SAU President Prof. K. K. Aggarwal**, who emphasised the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration for future innovation. The day also featured technical lectures, a LaTeX workshop, and student activities celebrating scientific creativity.



**International Workshop on the occasion of National Science Day 2026**



**Global Scientific Dialogue Marks Day Two of Interdisciplinary Workshop**

The day two of the International Workshop “**Bridging the Gap Across Sciences**” at South Asian University focused on advancing global research collaboration and interdisciplinary inquiry. The day began with a virtual keynote by **Hyyong Suk from Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology**, followed by technical sessions featuring oral and poster presentations from scholars across leading institutions worldwide. Discussions covered diverse themes including AI in healthcare, plasma physics, quantum computing, and sustainable energy technologies. Student cultural performances reflecting the spirit of the SAARC region added vibrancy to the programme. The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks by Jyotsna Sharma, celebrating a successful commemoration of National Science Day.

South Asian University hosted an engaging session on **Navigating Academic Publishing** for faculty members and research scholars across disciplines. **Experts from Springer Nature, including Leana Li and Satvinder Kaur**, shared insights on publication processes, proposal development strategies, and emerging challenges in academic publishing in the age of AI. The discussion highlighted best practices for strengthening research visibility and navigating global publishing platforms. The session was **chaired by Dev Nath Pathak and moderated by Ratan Kumar Roy**, providing participants with valuable guidance for advancing their scholarly publishing efforts.



**Session on Academic Publishing with Springer Nature**

As part of the FLSB Expert Series, **Sayanta Bera from Sister Nivedita University** delivered an insightful seminar on plant viral dynamics. His talk explored the **“crop-wild interface,”** explaining how wild plants act as reservoirs for viruses affecting nearby cultivated crops. Highlighting the role of antagonistic pleiotropy in viral evolution, the lecture examined how adaptive trade-offs influence virus-host interactions. Dr. Bera also discussed the broader implications of his research for understanding the **Indian virome landscape and developing climate-resilient agricultural strategies.** The session offered valuable perspectives for researchers working at the intersection of plant science, ecology, and sustainable agriculture.



### Expert Seminar on Plant Viral Dynamics and Sustainable Agriculture



### Guest Lecture on Federated Learning and Secure AI Systems

The **Department of Computer Science and Engineering** at South Asian University hosted a guest lecture by **Yann Busnel from Institut Mines-Télécom, France.** The lecture focused on federated learning and its role in enabling collaborative machine learning with decentralized data while maintaining privacy and security. Prof. Busnel also highlighted challenges related to **network trust, secure communication, and threats in distributed AI environments.** The session generated lively discussion among students and faculty. The event was coordinated by Rajesh Ranjan under the guidance of Pranab Kumar Muhuri, reflecting the University's commitment to advancing research in emerging digital technologies.

South Asian University, in partnership with **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) India,** hosted the Pre-AI Summit Forum on **“The Role of AI for Environmental Resilience.”** The forum served as a precursor to the **AI Impact India Summit 2026** and brought together policymakers, researchers, and industry leaders to discuss how artificial intelligence can help predict environmental risks and support large-scale adaptation strategies. The distinguished panelists included Smt. **Meenakshi Lekhi (Former Minister of State, MEA), Shri Justin Mohan (IFoS), Dr. Parth Sarathi Roy (Former Director, IIRS), Prof. Sumitava Mukherjee (IIT Delhi), Ms. Pooja Munshi (Data and Product Lead, UNEP, Nairobi), Ms. Roli Agarwal (Google), and Mr. Subhash Patil (Partner, PwC).**

Moderated by **Balakrishna Pisupati,** the discussion emphasised AI's potential in strengthening climate resilience and sustainability planning.



### Pre-AI Summit Forum Explores AI for Environmental Resilience

As part of the SAU Thought Café Series, **K. L. Agarwal** delivered a lecture on the **growing relevance of soft power and diaspora diplomacy in shaping global influence**. The talk highlighted how India's cultural outreach, intellectual traditions, and global diaspora networks contribute to strengthening its international standing.

The lecture also examined the strategic role of diaspora communities in fostering economic, cultural, and diplomatic engagement across regions. The session was chaired by **Prof. K. K. Aggarwal, President of South Asian University**, and was attended by faculty members, researchers, and students interested in contemporary foreign policy and global diplomacy.



**SAU Thought Café Lecture on Soft Power and Diaspora Diplomacy**



**Interactive Session on Careers in the Sustainability Sector**

The Interdisciplinary Centre of Excellence on Climate Change, Green Transition and Sustainability at South Asian University, in collaboration with the Centre for Entrepreneurship, Training and Placements, organised an interactive session on **“Opportunities in the Sustainability Sector.”**

The event featured **Ashish Jain, Founder Director of the Indian Pollution Control Association**, who shared insights from over two decades of experience in waste management, environmental technologies, and sustainability initiatives. The session offered students practical perspectives on emerging green careers, circular economy models, and industry expectations, encouraging them to explore meaningful career pathways aligned with environmental sustainability.

South Asian University hosted the fifth lecture under its **Eminent Speakers Series** featuring legal professionals from **Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas and Khaitan & Co.** Speakers **Anandita Kaushik, Sanchit Agarwal, Saumya Rai, and Shubhang Upadhyay** shared valuable insights into the corporate legal sector, career pathways, and the evolving expectations of top law firms.

The interactive discussion enabled students to engage directly with experienced practitioners and gain practical understanding of professional opportunities in corporate law. The event reflected the University's commitment to connecting students with leading professionals and strengthening career readiness.



**Eminent Speakers Series: Insights from Leading Law Firms**

The Faculty of International Studies at South Asian University organised a lecture as part of its Department Seminar Series featuring **Keshab Giri from the University of St Andrews, Scotland**. His talk, titled “**War through an Intersectional Lens**,” explored the multiple dimensions of conflict through the framework of intersectionality, with particular reference to the **Maoist insurgency in Nepal**.

The lecture examined how identity, power, and social structures shape experiences of war and conflict. The session concluded with an engaging discussion in which students and researchers actively participated.



**Lecture on War and Intersectionality in Contemporary Conflict**



**Placement Readiness Training Strengthens Student Employability**

The Centre for Entrepreneurship, Training and Placements at South Asian University, in collaboration with the **Global Talent Tracker Foundation**, organised a week-long Placement Readiness Training Programme under the Barclays CSR initiative. Designed for MBA and BBA students, the programme focused on building employability skills and corporate preparedness through interactive sessions by experienced industry trainers.

Key themes included workplace expectations, professional communication, interview preparation, and career planning. The initiative reflects the University's commitment to bridging the gap between academic learning and industry requirements while equipping students with the skills needed for successful professional careers.

# Cultural Programs

## Falgun Utsav Celebrates the Spirit of Spring at SAU

Students at South Asian University, New Delhi, celebrated Falgun Utsav 1432 with great enthusiasm, welcoming the arrival of spring through music, colours, and cultural expression. Organised by the Bengali student community in collaboration with the University's Cultural Committee, the event brought together students from diverse backgrounds to participate in traditional songs, performances, and festive activities. The celebration reflected the vibrant cultural traditions associated with the spring season and created an atmosphere of joy and community bonding across the campus. Falgun Utsav provided students an opportunity to share regional traditions while strengthening the spirit of inclusivity and cultural exchange at the University.



## Students Celebrate Pongal with Tradition and Festivity

The festival of Pongal was celebrated with great enthusiasm at South Asian University, as students came together to mark the harvest season through traditional customs and cultural activities. The celebration featured colourful decorations, festive food, and performances that highlighted the rich cultural heritage associated with the harvest festival. Students enthusiastically participated in the festivities, creating a lively and welcoming environment across the campus. The event not only celebrated the spirit of gratitude and abundance associated with Pongal but also strengthened bonds among students from different regions, reflecting the multicultural and inclusive ethos of the University community.



## SAU Food Fest Showcases Culinary Diversity of South Asia

South Asian University hosted the South Asian University Food Fest 2026, a vibrant celebration of the region's rich culinary traditions and cultural diversity. The event brought together students representing different South Asian countries who set up food stalls featuring authentic regional cuisines. The festival created a lively atmosphere filled with flavours, aromas, and cultural exchange, allowing participants to experience the diverse gastronomic heritage of the region. Through student-led initiatives and enthusiastic participation, the Food Fest highlighted the spirit of regional cooperation and community engagement that defines the University's multicultural campus environment.



# Presidential Connect



## SAU President Honoured with Excellence in Education Award 2026

The Hon'ble President of South Asian University, Prof. (Dr.) K. K. Aggarwal, was honoured with the **Excellence in Education Award 2026** during the ceremony organised under the **Banaras Literature Festival (Kashi Sahitya Kala Utsav)**. The award recognised his visionary leadership and significant contribution to strengthening academic collaboration and advancing higher education.

The ceremony celebrated distinguished individuals who have made notable contributions to nation-building in the fields of education, literature, art, and culture. Under the leadership of Prof. Aggarwal, the University has actively promoted innovation, interdisciplinary learning, and international academic engagement.

The recognition highlighted his commitment to strengthening educational institutions as centres of knowledge creation and social transformation, reaffirming the importance of values such as knowledge, service, ethics, and leadership in shaping education for sustainable development and societal progress.



## Prof. (Dr.) K. K. Aggarwal Honoured by Summit India and AICTE

The Hon'ble President of South Asian University, Prof. (Dr.) K. K. Aggarwal, was honoured by Summit India in collaboration with the **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** in recognition of his distinguished contributions to higher education and nation building.

The award was presented by **Shri Shyam Jaju, Chairman of Summit India**, in the presence of eminent dignitaries including **Shri Lokpal Singh, Shri Kunwar Vikram Singh, Prof. Mahesh Verma, and Ms. Shilpa Puri**.

The ceremony, held at the SAU campus, celebrated Prof. Aggarwal's visionary leadership and enduring influence in strengthening India's academic ecosystem.

Under his guidance, the University has continued to expand its academic reach and foster regional collaboration, while promoting innovation, research excellence, and institutional development in higher education.



## Honorary Fellowship Conferred on Prof. (Dr.) K. K. Aggarwal

The Hon'ble President of South Asian University, Prof. (Dr.) K. K. Aggarwal, was conferred the **Honorary Fellowship of the Punjab Academy of Sciences during the Punjab Science Congress** held on 7 February 2026 at **GGSDS College, Chandigarh**.

This prestigious honour recognises his remarkable contributions to scientific research, academic leadership, and institutional development. Prof. Aggarwal has consistently **advocated strengthening research ecosystems and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration across universities and scientific communities**.

His leadership has contributed significantly to enhancing the role of higher education institutions in knowledge creation and innovation. The fellowship acknowledges his commitment to promoting scientific inquiry and academic excellence while encouraging collaboration among scholars and institutions.

**SCIENCE TALK**

An interview on  
**"Teacher and parents association for better education: a scientific approach"**  
 Expert  
**Prof. K. K. Aggarwal**  
 President, South Asian University (SAU), New Delhi (an international university established by the member nations of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Founding Vice-Chancellor, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi)

Interviewer: **Shalini Mittal**  
 On 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 6:10 PM

Channel: **इंद्रप्रस्थ, Akashvani Live News 24x7 & 'Akashvani AIR' YouTube**

## Prof. (Dr.) K. K. Aggarwal Highlights Scientific Approach to Education in AIR Interview

In an insightful interview broadcast on **All India Radio**, the Hon'ble President of South Asian University, Prof. (Dr.) K. K. Aggarwal, shared his perspectives on **strengthening education through collaborative and evidence-based approaches**.

Speaking on the theme **"Teacher and Parents Association for Better Education: A Scientific Approach,"** he emphasised the importance of meaningful engagement between teachers and parents in improving learning outcomes and ensuring the holistic development of students.

Prof. Aggarwal highlighted the need to adopt **research-driven educational practices and foster dialogue among stakeholders to enhance the quality of education**. The discussion underscored how partnerships between families, educators, and institutions can create supportive learning environments and contribute to more inclusive and effective educational frameworks.



# Outreach Activities



## Lead Lecture at PTCA International Symposium

Dr. Ananda Mustafiz, Faculty of Life Sciences and Biotechnology, delivered a lead lecture at the 47th Annual Meeting of the Plant Tissue Culture Association (India) Symposium and Industry Conclave, held from 17–20 February 2026 at the Jawaharlal Nehru University Convention Centre, New Delhi. The event, organised by the National Institute of Plant Genome Research in association with the Plant Tissue Culture Association (India), focused on plant tissue culture for biomanufacturing, nutritional security, and climate resilience. Dr. Mustafiz's lecture highlighted emerging research in plant molecular biology and its relevance for sustainable agriculture. Adding to this achievement, her PhD scholar Ms. Arushi Jain presented a poster on her doctoral research, showcasing the innovative scientific work being undertaken at South Asian University and contributing to global dialogue on plant biotechnology.



## SAU Participation in Global Policy and Leadership Conclave

Mr. Shubham Mahajan, Assistant Director at the Centre for Entrepreneurship, Training and Placements, along with students and faculty members, represented South Asian University at a high-level conclave organised by the Chintan Research Foundation at Hyatt Regency, New Delhi. Centred on the theme "Naari Shakti," the conclave brought together diplomats, policy leaders, and changemakers to deliberate on women-led global engagement and leadership. The SAU delegation interacted with several distinguished ambassadors and international representatives, fostering dialogue on academic-diplomatic engagement. Invitations were extended to visiting dignitaries to engage with SAU's international student community. The event also provided opportunities to explore potential CSR collaborations with the Adani Foundation.



## Faculty Representation at the AI Impact Summit 2026

Dr. Ashish Gupta, Senior Associate Professor, Faculty of Management, South Asian University, participated as a Distinguished Speaker at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. In the panel discussion titled "Educating for Viksit Bharat – Why Creativity, Cognition and Culture Matters," he shared insights on the evolving role of education in nurturing creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness in the age of artificial intelligence. The session highlighted how educational institutions can foster innovation-driven learning while preserving cultural and intellectual diversity. Dr. Gupta's participation underscored SAU's engagement with national conversations on technology, policy, and education, and reinforced the University's commitment to contributing to emerging debates on the future of learning in a rapidly transforming technological landscape.



## Expert Address at Indian Handicrafts and Gifts Fair

Dr. Ashish Gupta, Senior Associate Professor, Faculty of Management, was invited as a Distinguished Expert to speak at the 61st Edition of the Indian Handicrafts and Gifts Fair (IHGF) held at India Exposition Mart Limited, Greater Noida. The event was organised by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts under the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Dr. Gupta delivered an expert address on “Market Diversification: Emerging Destinations and Trends Drivers in Indian Handicrafts Products.” His talk explored new global markets, changing consumer preferences, and strategic pathways for expanding India’s handicraft exports. The session highlighted the intersection of traditional craftsmanship and modern market dynamics, while emphasising the importance of innovation and policy support in strengthening India’s handicrafts sector and promoting sustainable livelihoods.



## International Training Programme on Gender Issues in the World of Work

South Asian University hosted participants from eleven countries as part of the International Training Programme on “Gender Issues in the World of Work,” organised by the V. V. Giri National Labour Institute under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. The initiative focused on advancing gender parity, promoting decent work conditions, and strengthening policy frameworks that support inclusive development. During the programme, Prof. Kavita Khanna, Prof. Dhananjay Tripathi, and Dr. Ravindra Kumar Soni, Registrar of South Asian University, delivered lectures and facilitated academic interactions for the visiting participants. The programme provided an important platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange on gender-responsive labour policies.



## Industrial Visit for MBA Students to Yakult Danone India

MBA students from South Asian University visited the Yakult Danone India Pvt. Ltd. manufacturing facility in Sonapat as part of an industrial exposure programme facilitated by the Centre for Entrepreneurship, Training and Placements. The visit provided students with valuable insights into manufacturing systems, quality control procedures, supply chain management, and food safety standards within the fast-moving consumer goods sector. Students observed operational processes and interacted with industry professionals, gaining practical understanding of corporate culture and real-world business practices. Such experiential learning initiatives help bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and industry requirements, enabling students to better understand contemporary management practices and operational challenges in large-scale manufacturing organisations.



## Industrial Exposure for Biotechnology Students

Students of the M.Sc. Biotechnology programme from the Faculty of Life Sciences and Biotechnology visited the Yakult Danone India Pvt. Ltd. facility in Sonipat for an academic exposure to large-scale industrial fermentation processes. The visit enabled students to observe the production of the probiotic beverage Yakult and understand the cultivation of *Lactobacillus casei* strain Shirota in industrial fermenters. They learned about media preparation, microbiological quality control, and fermentation optimisation techniques used in commercial biotechnology production. Students also participated in an interactive session with company representatives, discussing aspects of microbial product development, probiotic science, and industrial biotechnology applications. The visit significantly enhanced students' understanding of real-world biotechnology processes and commercial fermentation technologies.



## SAU Participation in the AI Impact Summit 2026

South Asian University actively participated in the AI Impact Summit 2026, a major forum exploring the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on society. In collaboration with Software Technology Parks of India and the Blockchain for Productivity Forum, SAU organised a session titled "Engineering Digital Trust in the Age of AI: Blockchain as the Backbone of India's Intelligence Infrastructure." Dr. Praveen Mishra, Director ICT, delivered a keynote presentation on "AI in Education Beyond Borders," highlighting how emerging technologies can enhance learning systems and enable global academic collaboration. The session brought together experts from technology, academia, and policy to discuss digital trust frameworks and the integration of AI and blockchain in future technological ecosystems.



## Academic Engagement in Public Discourse on Water and Ecology

Dr. Medha Bisht moderated a thought-provoking session titled "Bin Paani Sab Soon – Streams of Life" at the Amphitheatre of the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The discussion brought together photography, travel writing, storytelling, and cultural narratives to explore the ecological and symbolic significance of water. Drawing inspiration from Rahim's famous doha "Bin Paani Sab Soon," the session reflected on the centrality of water in sustaining life, culture, and ecological balance. Participants discussed how the loss of water resources affects not only environmental systems but also the cultural meanings and social relationships associated with them, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable water stewardship.

# SAU Bookshelf

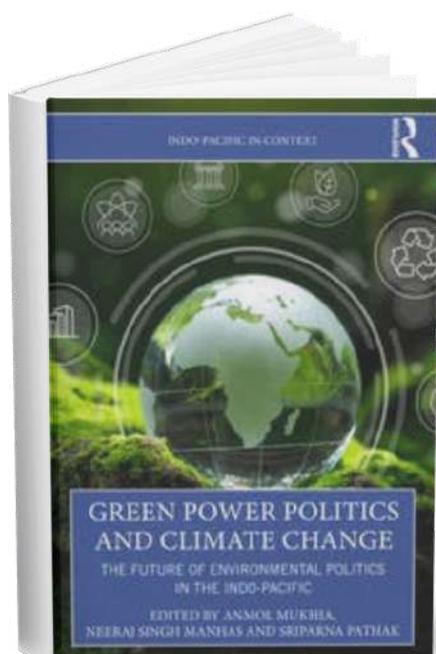
## **Green Power Politics and Climate Change: *The Future of Environmental Politics in the Indo-Pacific (upcoming)***

This month, SAU Connect highlights *Green Power Politics and Climate Change: The Future of Environmental Politics in the Indo-Pacific (upcoming)*, edited by Dr. Anmol Mukhia, Assistant Professor, Faculty of International Studies, South Asian University, along with Neeraj Singh Manhas, and Dr. Sriparna Pathak, which explores the evolving intersection of geopolitics, environmental policy, and climate governance in the Indo-Pacific region.

Dr. Anmol Mukhia is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of International Studies, South Asian University, New Delhi. He holds a PhD in International Relations from Jilin University, China, supported by the Government of India and the Chinese Government Scholarship. He was a postdoctoral fellow at the Higher School of Economics (HSE) University, Moscow.

His research focuses on geopolitics, environmental politics, the Indo-Pacific, and Global South studies. Dr. Mukhia has published widely in leading international journals and has authored and edited several books on climate politics, sustainable energy transitions, and regional cooperation. His academic work contributes significantly to contemporary debates on climate governance and geopolitical transformations.

***Green Power Politics and Climate Change: The Future of Environmental Politics in the Indo-Pacific (upcoming)***, edited by **Dr. Anmol Mukhia**, along with Neeraj Singh Manhas, and Dr. Sriparna Pathak, presents a comprehensive examination of the evolving dynamics of climate politics in the Indo-Pacific region. The volume combines theoretical perspectives on green politics with detailed country-based analyses to explore how states and international institutions are responding to climate change. It traces the development of global environmental governance while examining diverse national approaches, including those of the European Union, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka. A key focus of the book is the growing geopolitical dimension of climate action, particularly the strategic competition between the United States and China as they seek to expand influence in the region through climate cooperation and policy initiatives. Accessible to a broad audience, the book provides valuable insights into the intersection of geopolitics, environmental policy, and sustainability, making it a significant contribution for scholars, policymakers, and readers interested in climate governance in the Indo-Pacific.



Dr. Anmol Mukhia, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of International Studies, South Asian University

# Inauguration of Lecture Hall

Hon'ble President of South Asian University, Prof. Dr. K. K. Aggarwal, inaugurated Lecture Hall 1 in the presence of Vice Presidents Prof. Dr. Sanjay Chaturvedi, Prof. Dr. Pankaj Jain, and Prof. Dr. Pranab K. Muhuri, along with Registrar Dr. Ravindra Kumar Soni, Deans, faculty members, and staff.

Prof. Dr. Aggarwal congratulated all stakeholders and the engineering team for their dedicated efforts in completing the facility. The ceremony concluded with a formal Vote of Thanks delivered by Shri Mohan Prasad Kediya, Superintending Engineer.



# Did you know?

## Spring and Spiritual Traditions Across South Asia

February across South Asia reflects a vibrant mix of seasonal change, cultural celebrations, and spiritual observances. As winter gradually gives way to spring in many parts of the region, communities gather to celebrate language, faith, and tradition. In 2026, the beginning of Ramadan, the holy month of fasting and reflection for Muslims, also falls toward the end of February, adding to the region's rich tapestry of cultural and religious life.



**Afghanistan** – As winter continues, families gather for poetry, storytelling, and music evenings, while many communities prepare for the coming month of **Ramadan**.



**Maldives** – Island communities prepare for the **Ramadan**, with mosques organising prayers and families planning evening iftar gatherings that strengthen social bonds.



**Bangladesh** – People celebrate **Pohela Falgun**, welcoming spring with colourful attire and music, while families also begin preparing for the holy month of **Ramadan**.



**Nepal** – Thousands of devotees gather at the sacred Pashupatinath Temple to celebrate **Maha Shivaratri** with prayers, rituals, and traditional music.



**Bhutan** – Families celebrate **Losar**, the traditional New Year, with prayers, while the nation also observes the birthday celebrations of **King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck**.



**Pakistan** – The spring festival **Basant** is associated with colourful kite flying and cultural festivities, while communities also begin preparing for the holy month of **Ramadan**.



**India** – Devotees observe **Maha Shivaratri** with fasting, temple visits, and night-long prayers dedicated to Lord Shiva, bringing communities together in spiritual reflection.



**Sri Lanka** – The colourful **Navam Perahera** in features traditional dancers, drummers, and decorated elephants, celebrating Buddhist heritage through vibrant processions.

## Do you know what the word 'Spring' is called in the languages of South Asia?

- Afghanistan (Dari): بهار (Bahar), (Pashto): پسرلی (Pasarlai)
- Bangladesh (Bengali): বসন্ত (Boshonto)
- Bhutan (Dzongkha): ཅུའི་ཀཱ། (Chid-ka)
- India (Hindi): बसंत (Basant)
- Maldives (Dhivehi): ވަނަނާ (Vasantha)
- Nepal (Nepali): वसन्त (Basant)
- Pakistan (Urdu): بہار (Bahar)
- Sri Lanka (Sinhala): වසන්ත (Wasanta), (Tamil): வசந்தம் (Vasantham)

# Upcoming Events

March

2

2026

A distinguished lecture by Prof. K. Srinath Reddy, Honorary Distinguished Professor and Goodwill Ambassador (PHFI), Founder President of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), and Former Head of the Department of Cardiology, AIIMS.

March

3

2026

Quantum Technologies Research Dialogue for Collaboration

March

6

2026

BioZest 2026, annual bioscience festival

March

6

2026

7th lecture under the SAU Presidential Distinguished Lecture Series titled 'Climate Terror' in Anthropocene: South Asian Conundrum'.

March

6

2026

Webinar : How to Access e-resources under One Nation One Subscription (ONOS)

March

9-13

2026

Art Camp (Painting Workshop)



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# Print-line

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- **Patron:** Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi, Vice President, Prof. Pankaj Jain, Vice President, Prof. Pranab Muhuri, Vice President
- **Chief Editor:** Dr. Abinash K. Jha
- **Editor:** Pallavi Kaushik
- **Photographs of in-house activities:** Devender
- **Newsletter published by:** Dr Ravindra Soni, Registrar, South Asian University for educational purposes
- **Address:** South Asian University, Rajpur Road, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi - 110068

# SAU Click



## Our Contact

South Asian University, Rajpur Road  
Maidan Garhi, New Delhi 110 068



**Phone :**  
+91 (11) 35656500



**Email :**  
abinashjha@sau.int  
pallavi@sau.int



**Website :**  
sau.int

