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Wednesday, 17 August 2016, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
T1, Conference Room, 1st Floor
O.P. Jindal Global University
Sonipat Narela Road, Sonipat- 131001, Haryana

Jindal School of Government
and Public Policy
India's First Public Policy School

“Do Criminally Accused Politicians Affect Economic Outcomes in India?”



SPEAKER

Professor Nishith Prakash, PhD
Assistant Professor of Economics
Department of Economics and Human Rights Institute
University of Connecticut, Storrs

Nishith Prakash is an assistant professor of economics on a joint position with the Department of Economics and the Human Rights Institute at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. He joined University of Connecticut after completing his doctorate at the University of Houston, Texas and working as a post-doctoral research associate at Cornell University from July 2010 till December 2011. He previously held visiting Assistant Professor Positions at Ohio University and Dartmouth College and Visiting Scholar at Columbia University and Yale University. He is also a Research Fellow at the Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration (CRAM) based at University College London, The Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) in Bonn, HiCN Households in Conflict Network, and Member of Insights on Immigration and Development (INSIDE-SPAIN).

Professor Prakash's primary research interests include development, labor, and public policy and economics of education. One line of his work focuses on understanding the effects of affirmative action policies in India on labor market outcomes, child labor and poverty. His other work has examined topics such as the returns to English-language skills, effects of crime on economic growth, effect of politician quality on economic outcomes in India, and evaluation of welfare and behavioral impacts of Index Based Livestock Insurance (IBLI) in Kenya. Through his academic pursuit, he has focused on the relationship between government policies and economic development and harnessed rigorous empirical evidence to study the impact of policies and institutions in enabling inclusive growth. He has experience in conducting surveys in developing countries and working with large-scale observational and administrative data sets. His teaching interest includes Development Economics, Applied Econometrics and Economics of Gender and Inequality. Professor Prakash's research has been covered in The Economist, World Bank Development Impact Blog, World Economic Forum, The Atlantic, The Hindu, The Times of India, The Financial Time, The Statesman, The Economic Times and other national and international newspaper.

Abstract: *Indian data on the criminal background of candidates running for state assembly elections and a constituency-level measure of economic activity, proxied by intensity of night-time lights, reveal 22-percentage point lower economic activity arising from the election of a criminally accused politician. These effects appear to be concentrated in the less developed and more corrupt Indian states. Similar findings emerge for the provision of public goods using data on India's major rural roads construction programme.*

RSVP: Ms. Mani Mala, Assistant Manager, JSGP, mmala@jgu.edu.in,+91-8396907364



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