



O.P. Jindal Global University
A Private University Promoting Public Service



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

Jindal School of Government and Public Policy

cordially invite you to an

Open Lecture

on

A Beveridge Plan for India? Social Insurance and the Making of the 'Formal Sector'

by



Professor Ravi Ahuja

Professor of Modern Indian History

Centre for Modern Indian Studies, University of Göttingen, Germany

Abstract

The talk explores the global and local contexts of a central piece of labour legislation that was passed in the first year of Indian independence: the Employees' State Insurance Act of 1948. Global trends in social policy had impacted on Indian debates over the appropriateness of a social insurance scheme for workers since the 1920s; the World War had further intensified this debate in many parts of the world; the postwar crisis, the concomitant rise of labour struggles and the emerging economic policy of the postcolonial dispensation then created the conditions for a peculiar form of social insurance available only to a minority of India's workforce, the employees of the so-called 'organized sector'. While thus being firmly located in a global political context, India's employees' insurance should not be understood in terms of a 'diffusion' of Euro-American forms of social regulation. This paper argues instead, that the peculiar form that worker-oriented social policies took in postcolonial India contributed to a hardening of boundaries between what would later be called 'formal' and 'informal' labour and thus to a regime of labour regulation that diverged substantially from those of the North Atlantic region.

Bio of Speaker

Ravi Ahuja heads the research group 'Modern Indian History' at the Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS) of Georg-August-University Göttingen. He has worked on various aspects of India's social history from 18th to 20th century including urban history, the history of infrastructure and the social history of war. His research interests have increasingly moved towards contemporary history. Current research projects examine the social history of South Asian seafarers and the emergence of a labour-centred social policy in mid-twentieth century India. After teaching at the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg and conducting research at the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies in Berlin he was appointed Professor of Modern South Asian History at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London. He joined CeMIS as its founding director in 2009.

Wednesday, 4 April 2018, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

T3, Conference Room, O. P. Jindal Global University

Sonipat Narela Road, Sonipat - 131001, Haryana (NCR of Delhi)

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