Resource Persons

Guest of Honour &
Session Chair/ Moderator
Prof. G. Ram Reddy
Academic Dean, Sammakka Sarakka
Central Tribal University (SSCTU),
Mulugu, Telangana

Keynote Speaker
Prof. Sonu Trivedi
Department of Political Science,
Zakir Husain Delhi College,
University of Delhi; Distinguished Fellow,
India Foundation, New Delhi

Special Guest
Dr Samatha Mallempati
Research Fellow, ICWA, New Delhi

Panelist
Dr. Simone Zoya Khan
Assistant Professor,
Department of Political Science,
GITAM, Visakhapatnam

Panelist
Dr. Poornima
Assistant Professor & HoD,
Department of Political Science,
Andhra Loyola College (Autonomous),
Vijayawada

Panelist
Dr. Babjee Pothuraju
HoD, Department of Political Science,
Government College (Autonomous),
Rajahmundry

Valedictory Chief Guest
Dr. B.V. Muralidhar
Senior Professor &
Head, Department of Political Science
and Public Administration,
Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati

Registration link :
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScfRMT9P5ufeGBt0Gfw40xTj2ymlFT999fWwUYR5slHSh4uHQ/viewform?usp=publish-editor

Registration QR Code

WhatsApp link :
https://chat.whatsapp.com/GxhAO8uFhU0CYRyMooOOPn?s=cl&p=i&mlu=4&ilr=4&iam=2

Payment QR Code

Payment Details:
Registration fee includes Conference Kit,
2 Tea-Break coupons and 1 Lunch coupon.
Students & Scholars : Rs. 100

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MARIS STELLA COLLEGE

(AUTONOMOUS) VIJAYAWADA-8, ANDHRA PRADESH
A College with Potential for Excellence
NAAC Accredited & ISO 21001:2018 Certified

Indian Council of World Affairs as an Institution of National Importance

National Level Foreign Policy Awareness Programme on

Strategic Autonomy in a Fractured World: A Student Dialogue on India's Foreign Policy Choices in 2026

Date : 27 November 2026 Time : 9.00 AM to 5.30 PM
Venue : Conference Hall
Maris Stella College (A), Vijayawada, A.P.



Organized by
Department of Political Science & IQAC

Supported by
Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA),
New Delhi, under the ICWA Foreign Policy Awareness Grant

About the College

Maris Stella College, founded on 16 July 1962, is run by the Society of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM), a Catholic religious congregation established by Blessed Mary of the Passion in Ootacamund in 1877. Reflecting its noble vision and mission, the college has consistently upheld exemplary academic standards, offering a holistic education that nurtures intellectual, moral, social and spiritual growth.

Committed to empowering students from marginalized communities, the institution equips young women with the knowledge and confidence needed to navigate an increasingly dynamic and evolving world. Over the decades, tAhe college has achieved significant academic milestones, including the conferment of Autonomy in 2003 and the adoption of the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in 2006. It has been accredited by NAAC in the 4th cycle and is a proud recipient of the Government of India's RUSA 2.0 grant.

About the Department of Political Science

The Department of Political Science at Maris Stella College (Autonomous) is the academic home of the proposed event. Its teaching and research engage with governance, public institutions and international relations, and it is committed to giving students more than classroom exposure to the subject. The Department's ongoing work in international relations and foreign policy is the direct basis of the thematic focus of this programme.

The Department seeks to help undergraduate and postgraduate students move from classroom instruction towards policy debate, diplomatic reasoning and direct interaction with practitioners of international relations. The programme described below is designed in that spirit, and is intended to be principally student-led and student-facing.

About the Programme
Background and Rationale

India's foreign policy is navigating one of its most consequential periods in recent years. The 2025 United States tariff escalation on Indian exports, followed by an interim trade understanding in February 2026 that brought tariffs down substantially, the India–European Union Free Trade Agreement concluded in January 2026, the upcoming Quad summit, and India's 2026 BRICS chairmanship together raise a pressing question: is India's long-standing doctrine of strategic autonomy holding firm, or are new pressures from trade, technology and great-power competition beginning to reshape it?

Students often engage with such developments only through classroom instruction, with limited exposure to policy debate or practitioners. This event offers a structured, experiential introduction to India's current foreign policy choices through expert lectures, a panel discussion and a simulation-style debate in which students argue from the standpoint of different stakeholders. It is consistent with ICWA's mandate of promoting awareness of world affairs among young people.

Objectives

- To introduce students to the concept of strategic autonomy and its testing amid current trade and geopolitical pressures on India.
- To create a structured platform for student engagement with practitioners and scholars of Indian foreign policy.
- To develop skills in policy analysis, public speaking and diplomatic negotiation through a simulation-style debate format.
- To strengthen inter-collegiate academic exchange on international relations among institutions in Andhra Pradesh and other States.
- To build sustained student interest in the study of world affairs, in line with ICWA's institutional mission.

Thematic Focus

The event centres on India's current foreign policy choices — the 2026 US trade understanding, the India–EU FTA, the upcoming Quad summit and India's BRICS chairmanship — and what they mean for the doctrine of strategic autonomy.

Format

- A keynote/guest lecture by a subject expert.
- A panel discussion involving faculty and practitioners.
- A student-led structured debate on a contemporary foreign policy question.
- An essay writing competition for participating students/scholors.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced student understanding of India's current foreign policy choices and the debate over strategic autonomy.
- A trained cohort of students better equipped for MUNs, policy fora and civil services examinations with an international relations component.
- Strengthened institutional linkage between Maris Stella College and ICWA for future collaboration.

National Level Student Competitions with Atractive Prize Money

1. On-the-Spot Essay Writing Competition

Duration: 30 minutes | Word Limit: 500–600 words

Participants will write an essay on one of the following themes:

- India's Strategic Autonomy in 2026: Independent Choice or Strategic Hedging?
- Trade Deals as Foreign Policy: What Do the US Trade Understanding and the India–EU Free Trade Agreement Mean for India's Global Standing?
- India's Global Orientation: Should India Lean Towards the West, the Global South, or Neither?

2. Inter-Collegiate/University Student Debate Topic:
Has India's Pursuit of Strategic Autonomy Been Strengthened or Strained by Its 2026 Trade Deals with the US and the EU?

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Programme Date : 27 November 2026
Last Date for Registration : 20 November 2026
Registration is open to students from participating colleges/universities.