

Report: Research and FDP Committee's Fourth Discussion Forum

Date: May 22, 2021

Time: 6:00-7:30 pm

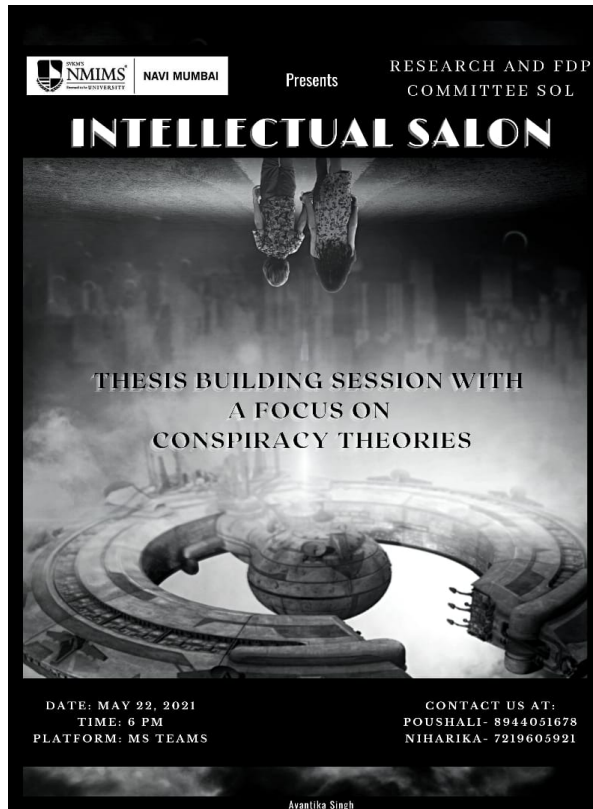
Platform: Microsoft Teams

Topic: Thesis Building with a focus on Conspiracy Theories

Organiser: Research and FDP Committee, SOL

Moderator: Anushka Singh

Time-Keeper: Malvika Pandey



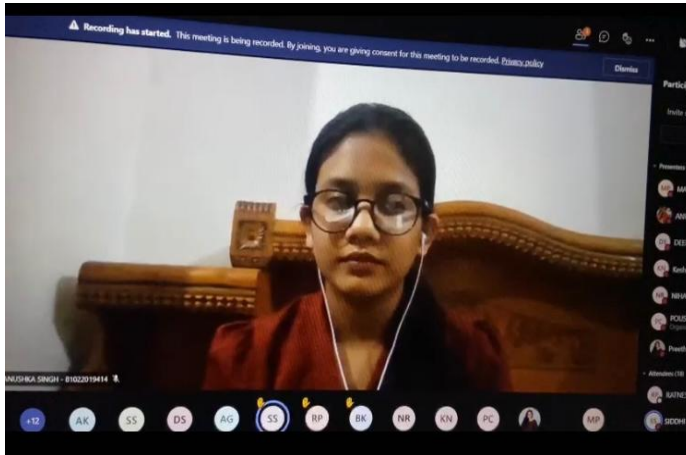
The Research and FDP Committee of School of Law, NMIMS, Navi Mumbai successfully organised its fourth “Intellectual Salon” discussion forum under the aegis of Faculty In-Charge Prof. Preethi Kavilikatta on May 22, 2021. The forum was held on Microsoft Teams in lieu of the pandemic and saw the attendance and participation of students from all three batches at School of Law. The forum saw participation by 27 students approximately and Prof. Nandy who expressed that he was hoping that the session would prove to be resourceful.

An introductory note was delivered by Committee Member Poushali Chakraborty from BBA LLB Year III who provided a brief understanding of what thesis building is all about and then spoke on conspiracies theories. She threw the light upon the Hitler-Hollow Earth theory among others. Thereafter, the

floor was opened for discussion by moderator Anushka Singh and Ratnesh Purohit, from the first year, took the stage to state that a theory is not just a style of thinking, but a way of thinking which can give individuals a sense of control.

Biva Basu Kundu spoke thereafter, illustrating that the subject at hand dealt with an interplay of the subjective as an influencing force and the prudence of individuals, illustrating that conspiracy theories can be harmless but provoking. Siddhi Sahoo and Aryanshu Gautam expressed their views on the psychological and futuristic characteristics of conspiracy theories. Aryanshu elaborated on how conspiracy theories can stem from subjects that are tabooed in society and also inspected how conspiracy theories themselves may be tabooed. Poushali added that conspiracies may be used for political gain to manipulate the people.

Prof. Preethi Kavilikatta further propelled the discussion towards refuting conspiracy theories by perusing the difference between fact and emotion. First year students Ratul and Sifat took the stage thereafter to further illustrate how conspiracy theories may affect the future and how these theories are influenced by personal beliefs and vice-versa respectively. Siddhi Sahoo further inspected an evolutionary perspective to the theme by observing that humans have



evolved to try to make sense of unexplained phenomena, postulating that this might be the essence of conspiracy theories at their core.

The fake Apollo landing theory was discussed by Bhakti Kara in context of financial backing of conspiracies, while Aryanshu took from this to enumerate that scientific explanations may be an effective way of countering the spread of

conspiracy theories, opening a Pandora's box to the question- how does a conspiracy theory spread? Poushali, Prof. Kavilikatta, Nivruthi Pasupunuri, and Niharika Ravi contributed their views to this discussion, laying emphasis on the lack of research on conspiracy theories and focussing on the science of today and the science of tomorrow alike.

Prof. Keshab Nandy was invited to share his views. He laid emphasis on the fact that theory builds a perspective and congratulated the participants on their efforts, after which a summary note and vote of thanks was delivered by Poushali Chakraborty who spoke on multilateral thinking and thanked the participants for their presence.