

CfP: National Seminar on Constituent Assembly Debates – From Deliberations to Destiny: The Constituent Assembly and Beyond (9th Edition) at the Department of Law, University of Kerala [Nov 26 – 28, 2026]: Submit Abstract by 31 Oct 2026

About Department of Law

Established in 1988 with the vision of promoting excellence in legal scholarship, the Department has nurtured generations of students, scholars, and practitioners who have contributed significantly to academia, the judiciary, the bar, and public life. With a strong emphasis on both teaching and research, the Department offers a postgraduate programme in Public Law and Intellectual Property Rights, a Postgraduate Diploma Course in Human Rights Law, Undergraduate minor programmes in Cyber Law and Law relating to Intellectual Property Rights, and doctoral and post-doctoral programmes. Its curriculum is designed to integrate foundational legal principles with contemporary developments, ensuring that students are equipped to respond to the evolving demands of law. Located in the historic and vibrant city of Thiruvananthapuram, the Department of Law continues to uphold the University of Kerala's legacy of academic distinction, while striving to shape future leaders committed to justice, equity, and the rule of law.

About the Conference

The National Conference on Constituent Assembly Debates, “From Deliberations to Destiny: The Constituent Assembly and Beyond”, returns for its ninth edition on **26, 27 & 28 November, 2026**. The event brings together scholars, students, academicians and legal professionals for deliberative and analytical engagement with the Constituent Assembly Debates (CAD), their contents, contexts and continuing legacy.

Building on the success of the past eight editions, which featured legal luminaries such as Devan Ramachandran, J., Cyriac Joseph, J., Adv. Sanjay R. Hegde, S. M. Vijayanand IAS, A. K. Jayasankaran Nambiar, J., A. Muhamed Mustaque, J., and Alexander Thomas, J., this edition will also feature some of the most prominent voices in the field.

Research Statement

The past year has pressed constitutional questions that the framers debated at length. Parliament has considered unfreezing delimitation and operationalising women's reservation. It has also examined a proposal to remove ministers held in custody for thirty days. Electoral roll revision, the independence of constitutional bodies, the Governor's office and simultaneous elections have all drawn fresh scrutiny. A nine-judge bench has revisited the relationship between faith, equality and reform. Census 2027, with caste enumeration, is under way.

In each of these debates, the Constituent Assembly is invoked, selectively and often contestedly, as an authority. This edition asks a central question: **when contemporary institutions and litigants turn to the Constituent Assembly Debates, what do those debates actually say, and how far can they responsibly guide present constitutional choices?**

The Conference invites papers that read CAD closely and in context, tracing the competing positions, compromises and silences. It asks that they then test these against current

constitutional controversies and institutional practice. Papers should go beyond passing references and treat CAD as primary evidence. They should address both what the framers intended and what constitutional dynamism now requires.

Theme & Sub themes

The following sub-themes are indicative and not exhaustive; submissions on any related topic aligned with the conference themes are welcome.

1. Exploring Constitution: Origins, Dilemmas, and Deliberations

- Foundational constitutional values and principles – Rationales for specific provisions or models [*Papers that critically engage with comparative analysis of constitutional principles will be given preference*]
- Contribution of individual members [*Papers critically analysing contributions of lesser-studied members, regional and thematic studies will be given preference*]
- Women members of the Constituent Assembly [*Analytical studies focusing on scope and breadth of contributions will be preferred over descriptive studies*]
- Contestations and compromises in the Assembly
- Influences of Indian Knowledge Systems [*Papers that critically engage with primary ancient texts or other classical sources identifying interlinkages between IKS and Constitutional interpretations will be preferred*]
- Historical ripples in the Indian Constitution
- Adoption of National Song and Anthem in the CAD

2. Working of Indian Constitution: Evaluation, Reforms, and Prospects

- Representation and delimitation: federal balance, population-based seat allocation, and the framers' views on 'one person, one vote'
- Women's political reservation: from the 106th Amendment to its operationalisation
- Electoral integrity and the Election Commission: independence, appointment, roll revision and the right to vote
- Simultaneous elections and the parliamentary-federal design
- Constitutional justice: gender, distributive and social justice
- Caste enumeration and the Census
- Protection of marginalised communities
- Democratic decentralisation and fiscal federalism
- Global constitutionalism and the Indian experience with specific reference to Global South Constitutionalism

[Papers that adopt a socio-politico-legal framework, engage critically with competing and dissenting viewpoints and offer substantive reform proposals will be preferred]

3. Constituent Assembly Debates: Relevance, Dynamics, and Changing Discourses

- Relevance and significance of CAD, CAD as an aid of interpretation Reconciling CAD with constitutional dynamism

- Advisory jurisdiction and constitutional questions: the Presidential Reference and the Assembly's design of the Court's roles
- Religion, reform and equality: CAD on Articles 25-26, social reform and 'essential religious practices'
- Finding justifications in CAD for new found or borrowed frameworks: basic structure, transformative constitutionalism, constitutional morality, competitive federalism, etc.
- Evolving constitutional culture

[Papers studying interpretational exercises in specific cases will be preferred over doctrinal studies on principles of interpretation]

4. Contemporary Challenges: Attempts at Resolving through CAD

- Removal of ministers on arrest: presumption of innocence, ministerial responsibility and federalism (130th Amendment Bill)
- Delimitation, Lok Sabha expansion and regional equity (131st Amendment Bill)
- Changing dimensions and challenges to right to protest and right to dissent
- Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, citizenship, franchise and the Election Commission's powers
- Religion, equality and temple entry: the Sabarimala Reference
- Homogenisation of culture, language, and the three-language debate
- Judicial accountability, appointments and reforming constitutional bodies
- Algorithmic governance, digital rights, data protection and surveillance: privacy, liberty and constitutional accountability in the CAD
- Same-sex marriage and legislative-judicial boundaries after *Supriyo*

[Sub-themes are illustrative and papers are expected to be analytical case studies]

Eligibility

Papers are invited from judicial officers, legal officers, policymakers, academicians, advocates, researchers, and students (UG and PG).

General Guidelines

1. The Conference will be conducted offline.
2. Submissions must substantially explore intersections of identified themes and Constituent Assembly Debates. Mere passing references will result in rejections.
3. Acceptance of abstract does not automatically guarantee opportunity to present in the conference.
4. Full papers will undergo a rigorous double-blind peer-review to ensure impartiality and high academic standards, post which a final decision on selection of papers will be taken.
5. Co-authorship is permitted up to one person.
6. The best paper will be considered for publication in the next edition of Kerala University Journal of Legal Studies, subject to revisions being made to meet editorial policy and standards.
7. There is no registration fee.

Submission Guidelines for Abstract

1. All submissions are to be made in .doc/.docx format. PDF submissions are not accepted.
2. Submissions are to be made [here](#).
3. Participants are required to limit their abstracts to a maximum of 500 words and provide at least five keywords connected to the central theme of the conference.
4. The list of sub-themes is merely suggestive and participants may explore other relevant areas as well.
5. The abstract should include the title, background, methodology, key findings and a suggestive conclusion. The background and methodology should clearly explain how CAD will be incorporated into the paper.
6. Ensure that no personal or institutional identifiers are provided within the manuscript. Violation of this rule will result in rejection of the abstract.
7. Font & Style: Times New Roman, 12 pt, 1.5 spacing.

Submission and Formatting Guidelines for Full Paper

1. The full paper must incorporate the suggestions made to the approved abstracts, if any.
2. The body of the manuscript must follow the following specifications:
3. Font style – Times New Roman
4. Font size – 12
5. Line spacing – 1.5
6. Footnotes must be in Times New Roman, font size 10, with single spacing
7. Word limit: 2500 – 4000 words (including citations and references)
8. Citation style: Bluebook 21st Ed.
9. Only original and non-plagiarised work will be accepted. The plagiarism level must be below 10%.

Important Dates

Deadline for submission of abstracts	31 October, 2026
Decision of abstracts	3 November, 2026
Deadline for submission of full papers	15 November, 2026
Decision on full papers	17 November, 2026
Paper Presentation	26-28 November, 2026

Contact

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Link to submit abstract:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeTtvYuEd1nieLLs06NPyzlphf4FdfIz98ZK4dTZOrmJanKCA/viewform?usp=header>