



Centre for International Trade and Business Laws

NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad

First Dr. P. S. Rao Memorial Essay Writing Competition, 2026

The Centre for International Trade and Business Laws at NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad is pleased to announce the first Dr. P. S. Rao Memorial Essay Writing Competition on the theme “*Critical Minerals, Digital Economy, and Global Value Chains: Rethinking Trade and Development*” to honour and commemorate the birth anniversary of our founding director, Dr. P. S. Rao.

About Dr. P. S. Rao

Dr. Premmaraju Sreenivasa Rao served as the first Director of the Centre for International Trade and Business Laws at NALSAR University of Law. Prior to joining NALSAR, Dr. Rao headed the Legal and Treaties Division at the Ministry of External Affairs and acted as India’s chief legal adviser on international law matters from 1985 to 2002.

Dr. Rao was appointed as an ad hoc judge at the International Court of Justice in the case concerning sovereignty over Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks, and South Ledge (Malaysia/Singapore) between 2004 and 2008. Dr. Rao also had a distinguished tenure as a member of the International Law Commission from 1987 to 2006, where Dr. Rao served as Special Rapporteur on Prevention and Liability and later as its chairman.

In addition, Dr. Rao worked as a Special Adviser in the office of the Attorney-General of the State of Qatar, was a Visiting Professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, and contributed as a member of the Bay of Bengal Maritime Boundary Arbitration Tribunal.

About CITBL

The Centre for International Trade and Business Laws (CITBL) was established in September 2022 under the patronage of former Supreme Court Judge, Hon'ble Mr. Justice B. P. Jeevan Reddy. The Centre was founded with the vision of creating a vibrant academic and policy-oriented platform dedicated to the study and advancement of international trade law, commercial law, and global business regulation. CITBL aims to promote high-quality research, education, and dialogue on the legal frameworks that govern international commerce and economic cooperation. In an era characterized by rapidly evolving global markets, trade agreements, and regulatory regimes, the Centre seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the legal and institutional structures that shape international trade and investment. The centre has academic collaborations with the Centre for International Trade Law, IIFT, New Delhi and the World Trade Institute, University of Bern, Switzerland.

About the Essay Writing Competition

The essay writing competition, organized in commemoration of the birth anniversary and the distinguished legacy of Dr. P. S. Rao in advancing international law and global governance, is themed on "*Critical Minerals, Digital Economy, and Global Value Chains: Rethinking Trade and Development*". In an increasingly interconnected and technology-driven global economy, critical minerals and digital infrastructures have emerged as pivotal drivers of economic growth, industrial policy, and geopolitical strategy. At the same time, global value chains are undergoing significant transformations in response to shifting trade dynamics, sustainability concerns, and regulatory developments. In honour of Dr. Rao's distinguished contributions to international law and global governance, this competition seeks to encourage students to critically engage with these evolving intersections of trade, development, and technology, and to explore innovative legal and policy frameworks that can address emerging global challenges. Participants are invited to offer interdisciplinary perspectives that rethink traditional approaches to international trade and development considering contemporary realities.

Sub Themes

- Trade, Security and the geopolitics of Critical Minerals
- Deep Sea Mining and the Legal Frontier
- Critical Minerals and the Digital Transition
- Benefiting Developing Countries- Participation, Value Addition and Justice

- Preventing Extractive Injustice- Human Rights, Environment and Accountability
- Critical Minerals and the Green Energy Transition
- International Discourse and India's Strategic Interests

Note: These Sub-Themes are not exhaustive, and the authors may take up any topic within the ambit of the main theme.

Eligibility

- Undergraduate Law Students: Enrolled in a 3-year or 5-year LL. B programme.
- Postgraduate Law Students: Enrolled in LL.M or equivalent postgraduate law programmes.
- Students of International Trade, Environment, Natural Resources Policy and Mineral Governance

For Competition Protocol [click here](#)

Award and Prizes for Competition Winners

- First place: ₹10,000
- Second Place: ₹7,000
- Third place: ₹5,000, and

The winners may be invited to present their research the upcoming CITBL conference, with a fee waiver, subject to the decision of the conference secretariat. Further winners can pursue virtual internship opportunity with CITBL.

Registration Details

- Single Author Submission: ₹450 per essay
- Co-Authored Submission: ₹700 per essay (limited up to two authors)
- The fee is non-refundable and must be submitted at the time of registration.
- For the Registration form [click here](#)

Important Dates

1. Registration Opens: 28th April 2026
2. Last Date of Registration and Submission of the Essay: 30th June 2026

Bank details

Registration fees to be paid only to the following bank account:

Name: Registrar NALSAR University of Law (JRCITBL)

A/c no: 7181339488

Bank: Indian Bank, Shameerpet Branch

IFSC Code: IDBI000S166

For any clarifications, please write to citbl@nalsar.ac.in