

SIS FACULTY WALL OF HONOUR

This Faculty Wall of Honour has been conceived, designed, built and dedicated at the altar of School of International Studies (SIS) by Bharat H. Desai, Chairperson of the Centre for International Legal Studies, SIS, JNU (Jawaharlal Nehru University) by virtue of the mandate (April 19 and August 25, 2023) given by the Committee of Advanced Study and Research (CASR): “the Committee requested Prof. Bharat H Desai to take lead in the matter and authorized him...for establishment of 'Wall of Honour' in physical mode”. The SIS Board of Studies (December 22, 2023) affirmed it and expressed "deep appreciation for the contribution and dedication".

The primary *raison d'être* for the SIS Faculty Wall of Honour is to: “collectively help the School to have a *Wall of Honour* to memorialize all the past faculty members whose contributions have made the SIS. In fact, all of us stand on the shoulders of those who sow the seeds and did the groundwork to the best of their abilities. By honouring these past SIS faculty members, the School would honour itself. As a pioneer of international studies in India, we need to continue the SIS legacy of resolute scholarship, consistent traditions and empathy” (Desai note to CASR; 19 April 2023).

The Wall of Honour comprises photo portraits (organized by the year of superannuation), years of service in JNU and primary area of scholarship of all the faculty members who build the edifice of ISIS (Indian School of International Studies) and its successor – SIS – as the pioneering institution for International Studies in India. It traces the 'origin' of SIS to the ISIS that emerged from the idea mooted in 1951 for pioneering experiment for “post-graduate research” and an “objective study of international affairs in India.” Recommendations of the committee of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) comprising Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, A. Appadorai and others gave a concrete shape to the idea. It led to registration of the ISIS as a “society” and its inauguration by the then Vice-President of India, S. Radhakrishnan on October 03, 1955. In March 1955, University of Delhi “admitted the School to the privileges of the University for the purpose of preparing students for the Ph.D. degree” and in September 1961, the Union Government granted ISIS the status of a “deemed to be a University” under the UGC Act 1956. Finally, the ISIS merged with JNU in 1970. A. Appadorai served as the ISIS founding director (1955-65). He was succeeded by M.S. Rajan as the second director (1966-71), who negotiated the merger of ISIS with JNU to be renamed as SIS.

In the wake of its long journey since 1955, the School shifted base from Sapru House (1955-1968) to 35 Firozshah Road (1968-1970) to JNU Old Campus (1970-1989) and, finally, to the current location (since 1989) in JNU New Campus. The Wall of Honor is a sequel and in the footsteps of the spirit of the initiative for *Making SIS Visible* (2008-2013) as well as aims to sensitize the SIS community about the pioneering foundational objectives, impeccable pedigree and scholarly contributions made by a galaxy of outstanding scholars over a period of 68 years (1955-2023) to usher the School into a bright future. It celebrates institutionalized unique Indian knowledge tradition in International Studies to address the global *prolematique* for India and the world at large.

The Wall of Honor seeks to translate into action on the home front of SIS, the essence and spirit of Sanskrit adage: विद्वान् सर्वत्र पूज्यते (learned are worshipped, everywhere) as well as gives effect to JNU's new (2023) motto: तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय (darkness unto light). As the existing corpus of SIS faculty members stand on the shoulders of earlier generation of torchbearers, the Wall of Honor seeks to resuscitate the life-time legacy of those scholars of yesteryears by invoking their spirit, energy and heritage for SIS to vindicate its role as the JNU 'think tank' to aid India (Bharat) in addressing the contemporary challenges of international affairs.

➤ *Unveiled on December 27, 2023 by Santishree D. Pandit, as SIS alumna & JNU Vice-Chancellor, in the presence of the Dean Srikanth Kondapalli, all the faculty members, staff and students.*