

Ambassador Rajendra Abhyankar to deliver Lecture on India's policy towards Middle East region at ICG on 24th July

The International Centre Goa and UGC Centre for Latin American Studies at Goa University in collaboration with the Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India will organise a lecture on 'Current Developments in the Middle East and India's policy towards the region' by Ambassador Rajendra Abhyankar (IFS Retd.) at 11.00 am on Friday 24th July 2015. This lecture cum interactive session is part of Distinguished Lecture by Eminent Persons and will be co-chaired by Yatin G Kakodkar – President, The International Centre Goa and Dattesh Parulekar – Assistant Professor, Centre for Latin American Studies, Goa University. The programme will be held at The International Centre, Dona Paula, entry is free and open to all interested in attending.

Ambassador Rajendra Abhyankar has been teaching at School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA), Indiana University, Bloomington since 2012. He was appointed Professor of Practice from August 2014. He teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses in the Practice of Diplomacy.

Rajendra Abhyankar retired from the Indian Diplomatic Service in August 2005 as India's Ambassador to the EU, Belgium and Luxembourg after more than 37 years of multi-faceted diplomatic experience of people, places and issues. In his long and varied career he has had the opportunity to meet and interact with a number of world leaders, official and policy-makers. He was Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India from 2001 to 2004. He has served as India's High Commissioner to Cyprus (1987-90) and Ambassador to Syria (1992-96), Turkey and Azerbaijan (1996-98). He was India's Deputy High Commissioner in Sri Lanka (1982-84) and Consul General of India, San Francisco from 1998 to 2001. His other diplomatic postings have been in Geneva, Brussels, Baghdad and Rome. Since retirement from the diplomatic service Ambassador Abhyankar has been involved in academics, track II dialogues, philanthropy and consultancy.

During the lecture, Ambassador Abhyankar will focus on India's policy towards West Asia, North Africa and the countries; which give out on the Persian Gulf has remained anchored to its support to the Palestine cause. It was structured in the context of India's secularism and diversity. After India's economic reform process in 1991 and the opening to Israel this policy became dynamic in its practice. After 2000 it truly became a mutually beneficial partnership. The so-called Arab Spring starting 2010 has required India to manage the emerging challenges and opportunities.

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