

Society Annual Report 2025-26

Informal Discussion Group

Orientation

Date: 9th September, 2025

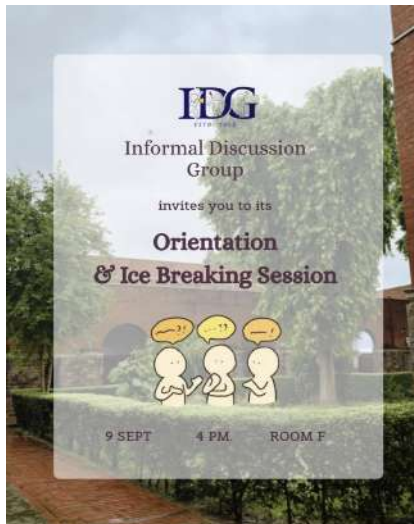
Resource Person(s):

No. of Participants: 30

Description

The Informal Discussion Group of St. Stephen's College conducted its orientation in Room F on 9th September, 2025. The event was meant to give the newly admitted first-year students a brief introduction to the society, its workings, and the nature of talks and events it hosts. The agenda included a concise overview of IDG's history and purpose, an introduction to the new council, and several interactive games and activities to engage the audience.

Photographs of the event



Inaugural Lecture with Salman Khurshid

Date: 12th September, 2025

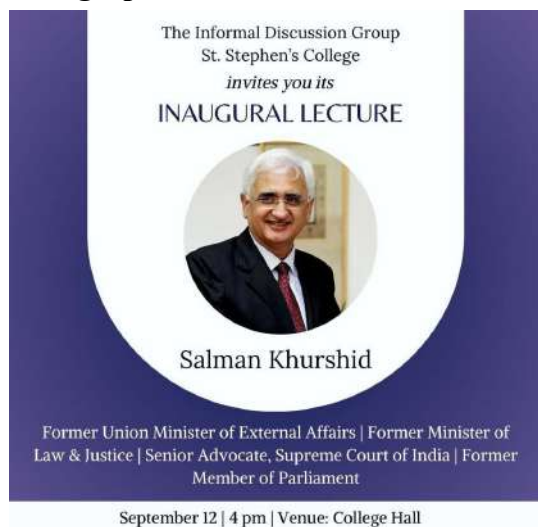
Resource Person(s): Mr Salman Khurshid

No. of Participants:

Description

The Informal Discussions Group, St. Stephen's College, had the pleasure of hosting Mr. Salman Khurshid for its Inaugural Lecture in the College Hall on 12th September, 2025, for an enriching session. We engaged in a thoughtful discussion on the persistent lack of female representation within both the government and the judiciary. Mr Khurshid also touched upon the recent revolution in Nepal, where he expressed his optimism regarding the future. He placed considerable trust in the enthusiasm, awareness, and potential of the present generation.

Photographs of the event



Late Night Discussion with Akash Banerjee

Date: 23 September, 2025

Resource Person(s): Mr Akash Banerjee

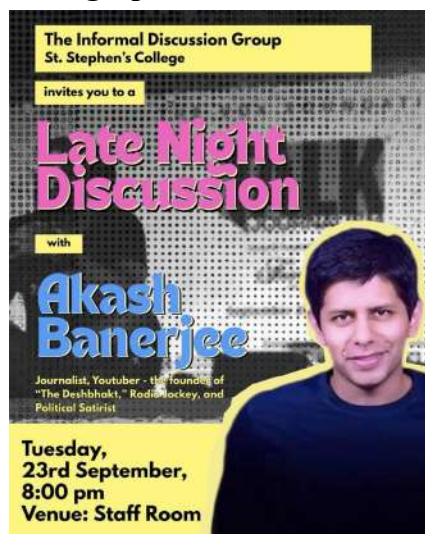
Participants: 100

Description

The Informal Discussion Group hosted Akash Banerjee, popularly known as ‘The Deshbhakt’, for a Late Night Discussion centred on contemporary media and political discourse. Banerjee encouraged participants to engage critically, leading to discussions on the authenticity of global media, the role of independent journalism, censorship, and the politics surrounding issues such as ‘Mughal-Mutton-Machli’. He also reflected on his experiences in college and his time in Rudra South, offering personal insights alongside broader commentary on journalism and public opinion.

The interactive nature of the session fostered lively debate and thoughtful questioning, creating an engaging space for discussion on the evolving relationship between media, satire, and democratic discourse.

Photographs of the event



Late Night Discussion with Manu Anand

Date: 12th November, 2025

Resource Person(s): Mr Manu Anand

Participants: 30

Description

The Informal Discussion Group (IDG) hosted cinematographer Manu Anand for an engaging and reflective discussion. The session began with Mr Anand reminiscing about his years in college and how photography first emerged as a creative interest during that time. He spoke about gradually moving from photography to cinematography and shared insights into his introduction to filmmaking and visual storytelling as a profession.

A major part of the discussion focused on the changing nature of photography and cinema over the years. Mr Anand reflected on how photography was once an expensive and technically demanding hobby, in contrast to the accessibility of digital photography today. The conversation later shifted to changing audience habits and the experience of watching films in contemporary times. The session concluded with an interactive Q&A, where participants continued the discussion through questions on filmmaking, creativity, and the evolving language of visual media.

Photographs of the event



Informal Discussion with Rahul Ram

Date: 4th February, 2026

Resource Person(s): Mr Rahul Ram

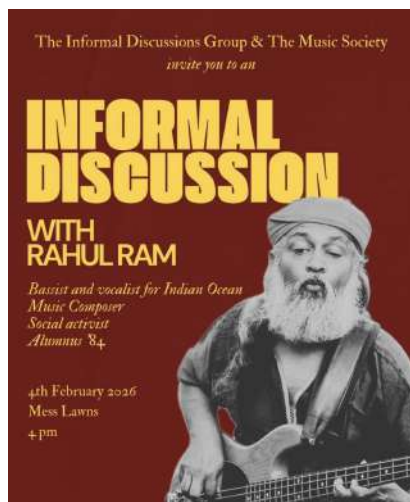
Participants:

Description

The Informal Discussion Group, in collaboration with the Music Society, hosted esteemed musician and activist Rahul Ram for an enriching session. The discussion focused on Mr Ram's journey as a musician, beginning with his years in college and his early experiences with performing, practising, and balancing music alongside academic life.

A large part of the conversation centred on student life and artistic expression during his time in college. Mr Ram reflected on the musical activities he participated in, the spaces where students explored creative interests and how those experiences shaped his growth as a performer and artist. The discussion also explored the realities of working in the music industry, including collaboration within bands and the challenges and opportunities associated with pursuing music professionally. The session concluded with a Q&A between the guest and participants, maintaining the open and conversational atmosphere of the evening.

Photographs of the event



Informal Discussion with Alok Ranjan

Date: 17th February, 2026

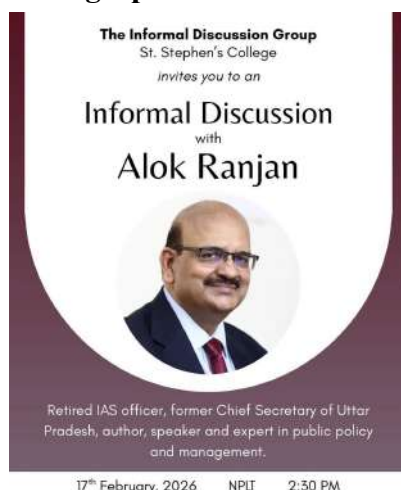
Resource Person(s): Mr Alok Ranjan

Participants: 20

Description

The Informal Discussion Group hosted senior civil servant Alok Ranjan for another insightful discussion. The session explored Mr Ranjan's academic and professional journey, beginning with his experiences in college and later at the Indian Institute of Management, before moving into reflections on his long career as a civil servant. A significant portion of the discussion revolved around the functioning of bureaucracy and the responsibilities of civil servants within a democratic framework. Mr Ranjan spoke about working closely with political leadership while ensuring administrative efficiency and maintaining professional integrity in public service. The interaction also included conversations about student life, higher education and career choices.

Photographs of the event



Late Night Discussion with Rana Ayyub

Date: 27th February, 2026

Resource Person(s): Ms Rana Ayyub

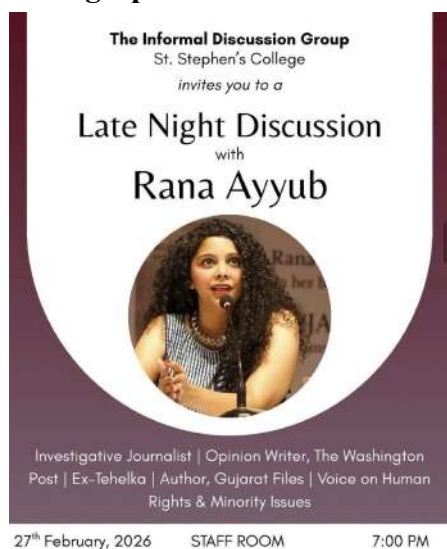
Participants: 50

Description

The Informal Discussion Group hosted investigative journalist and author Rana Ayyub for a Late Night Discussion on journalism, media polarisation, and the challenges of independent reporting. The evening began informally with Iftari in the mess, followed by a discussion in the Staff Room on the changing nature of journalism and the growing role of social media in shaping public narratives. Ms Ayyub reflected on the difficulties of maintaining credibility in an increasingly polarised media environment, as well as the hostility and personal attacks she faces as a woman journalist.

She also spoke about her experience working undercover during the Gujarat Sting Operation under the identity of "Maithili Tyagi," describing the emotional strain and isolation involved in such investigative work. Participants engaged with her on questions of media ethics, misinformation, and the future of independent journalism in India. The discussion later continued informally over tea at the Green Cafe, maintaining the reflective and conversational spirit of IDG's Late Night Discussions.

Photographs of the event



Late Night Discussion with Atishi Singh

Date: 23rd March, 2026

Resource Person(s): Ms Atishi

Participants: 80

Description

The Informal Discussion Group hosted former Chief Minister Atishi for a discussion on politics, governance, and public service. Moderated by Anubhav, the session explored Ms. Atishi's entry into politics and her reflections on the inaccessibility of the political sphere for many young people. Participants engaged her with pointed questions regarding governance in Delhi, leading to a candid and rigorous exchange on policy, administration, and contemporary political challenges.

The discussion was marked by active audience participation and sharp inquiry, creating an atmosphere of critical engagement. Ms Atishi responded extensively to questions on governance and political accountability, offering insights into the realities of public administration and electoral politics. The event concluded with an informal interaction between the guest and participants, continuing the spirit of dialogue central to IDG discussions.

Photographs of the event



Informal Discussion with Shivshankar Menon

Date: 24th March, 2026

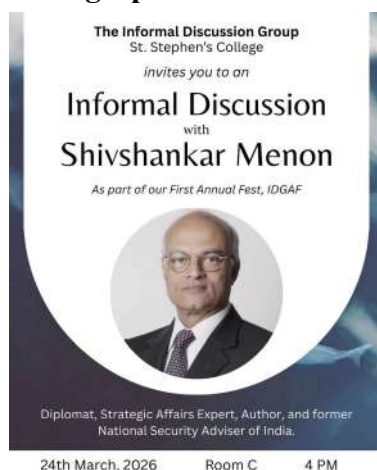
Resource Person(s): Mr Shivshankar Menon

Participants: 40

Description

The Informal Discussion Group hosted diplomat and former National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon for an Informal Discussion as part of IDGAF 2026. The session focused on India's foreign policy in an increasingly globalised world, with Mr Menon reflecting on the need for greater pragmatism in international relations and strategic decision-making. Moderated by Paakhi, the discussion moved between questions of diplomacy, global politics, and India's changing position in world affairs. Participants continued conversations with the speaker later at the café, extending the reflective and informal atmosphere of the event.

Photographs of the event



Informal Discussion with Wajahat Habibullah

Date: 25th March, 2026

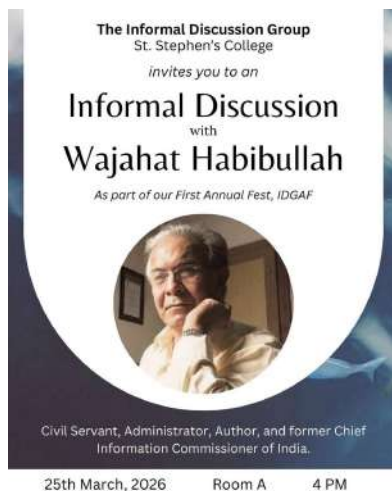
Resource Person(s): Mr Wajahat Habibullah

Participants: 50

Description

The Informal Discussion Group hosted former Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah for an Informal Discussion as part of IDGAF 2026. The conversation centred on democracy, governance, and Kashmir, with Mr Habibullah reflecting on what he described as the unfulfilled promises of democratic politics in the region. Moderated by Saman, the session remained highly interactive, with the speaker engaging closely with participants and moving across the room to respond personally to questions. Combining reflections on administration, public life, and Kashmir's political realities, the discussion maintained the conversational and participatory spirit central to IDG events.

Photographs of the event



Informal Discussion with Vikram Grewal

Date: 11th April, 2026

Resource Person(s): Mr Vikram Grewal

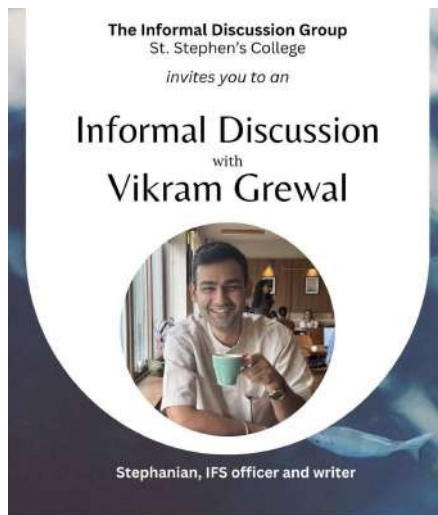
Participants: 50

Description

The Informal Discussion Group hosted IFS officer, writer, and alumnus Vikram Grewal for the final Staff Room discussion of the academic year. Moderated by Anubhav, the session centred on Mr Grewal's experiences in college, his involvement with Cine Club, and the many hours he spent in the tech room during his student years. Reflecting on campus life, he also spoke about the eccentric traditions of Dr Baker, affectionately referring to him as "Dumbledore."

The discussion further explored the origins of his writing and blog, along with his much-discussed success in clearing the Civil Services Examination on his very first attempt. Participants engaged with Mr Grewal on themes of public service, student life, and storytelling, keeping the conversation grounded in shared experiences of college and its culture. The informal and reflective atmosphere of the evening made for a fitting conclusion to the year's Staff Room discussions.

Photographs of the event



11th April, 2026

Staff Room

8:15 PM

