



Loyola College (Autonomous)
Chennai - 600034



Department of Sociology
&

Surana & Surana International Attorneys

Cordially invite you to the

Fr. Jerome D'Souza Memorial Endowment Lecture

instituted by

Surana & Surana Public Charitable Trust

Dr. Ananth Padmanabhan

Dean - School of Law
Vinayaka Mission's Law School



will talk on

The Rise of the Attention Economy

Rethinking Society in the Age of Attention

TUESDAY

3

DEC 2024

At 11:30 a.m.

Lawrence Sundaram Auditorium

11 : 30 a.m.

Prayer

11 : 35 a.m.

Welcome Address &
Chief Guest Introduction

Dr. Vinod Surana
Managing Partner & CEO
Surana & Surana International Attorneys

12 : 05 p.m.

Felicitations

Rev. Dr. A. Louis Arockiaraj SJ
Principal, Loyola College

12 : 15 p.m.

Chief Guest's Address

Dr. Ananth Padmanabhan
Dean - School of Law
Vinayaka Mission's Law School

12 : 50 p.m.

Q & A Session

01 : 00 p.m.

Vote of Thanks

Prof. R. Dhiyanesh
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology

01 : 05 p.m.

National Anthem

Report on "The Rise of Attention Economy"
Fr. Jerome D' Souza Memorial Endowment Lecture:

Date: 3rd Dec 2024

Time: 11 a.m.

Venue: L.S hall

The Fr. Jerome D' Souza Memorial Endowment Lecture, titled "The Rise of Attention Economy," commenced with a solemn prayer song, setting a reflective tone for the event. The welcome address was delivered by Dr. Vinod Surana, Managing Partner and CEO of Surana & Surana International Attorneys, who introduced the esteemed chief guest, Dr. Ananth Padmanabhan.

Dr. Surana highlighted the growing relevance of the attention economy in today's fast-paced, information-saturated world, where the struggle for consumer attention has reshaped industries, behaviour, and societal norms. He emphasized Dr. Padmanabhan's expertise in technology and law, underscoring his suitability to decode the complex interplay between human cognition, media evolution, and technological advancements.

Following the introduction, Rev. Dr. A. Louis Arokiaraj SJ, Principal of Loyola College, felicitated the chief guest and underscored the importance of the lecture in understanding the profound influence of media and technology on individual and collective behaviour in the digital age.

Dr. Ananth Padmanabhan delivered a compelling lecture, tracing the origins and evolution of the attention economy, a concept introduced by Herbert Simon in the late 1960s. Simon argued that an abundance of information inevitably leads to a scarcity of attention—a phenomenon increasingly relevant in today's digital world. Dr. Padmanabhan elaborated on the role of behavioural psychology in this context, exploring how the interplay between logical and impulsive brain functions often leads to cognitive biases and errors in judgment.

He highlighted historical milestones, including the sensationalism of the 1830s, epitomized by the New York Sun, which captured public attention with bold headlines and pioneered

advertising as a driver of consumer engagement. He also explored the transformative impact of early technological innovations like radio and television, which revolutionized advertising but also facilitated misinformation through sensationalized content, such as William Herschel's fabricated "life on the moon" narrative.

Dr. Padmanabhan discussed the internet's evolution into the "wild west of information," with platforms like Google and Facebook shaping the attention economy through algorithms, search engine optimization, and data-driven advertising. He also examined modern developments, such as Instagram's focus on individuality and self-expression, and the emergence of generative artificial intelligence, which drives the fourth wave of the attention economy. This shift, from an "I" to an "It" economy, signifies the growing influence of AI on human behaviour and decision-making.

Emphasizing the need for human-centred AI, Dr. Padmanabhan advocated a multidisciplinary approach integrating sociology, technology, and ethics to address challenges posed by the attention economy. He highlighted key legal and ethical issues, referencing Section 230 of the U.S. Communications Decency Act, which shields internet platforms from liability for user-generated content, and the landmark *KS Puttaswamy vs. Union of India* case, which underscores the critical importance of privacy in the digital era.

The lecture concluded with a call for balanced solutions that harmonize technological innovation with ethical considerations to effectively address the complexities of the attention economy. The session transitioned into an engaging Q&A segment, where Dr. Padmanabhan addressed audience queries, enriching the discussion.

Prof. R. Dhiyanesh, Assistant Professor of the Sociology Department, delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks, acknowledging the enriching insights shared. The event concluded with the National Anthem, leaving participants with a deeper understanding of the historical, technological, and ethical dimensions of the attention economy.

