

# IRFAN AHMED NAZIR

PhD (Submitted), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi  
irfanahmednazir.in@gmail.com  
[www.irfanahmednazir.com](http://www.irfanahmednazir.com) | ORCID: 0000-0002-4150-6118

## Profile

I am a researcher in international relations and Middle Eastern studies, specialising in migration, national identity, and education in the UAE and the wider Arab Gulf. With a PhD thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University, I bring expertise in fieldwork, qualitative research, and policy analysis. I have published with leading academic presses and contributed to policy and media platforms. Born and raised in Dubai, I draw on both academic expertise and lived experience to produce high-quality, policy-oriented research on the Arab Gulf and the broader Middle East.

## Research Interests

International relations and politics of the Middle East  
Politics, society, and foreign policy of the UAE  
National identity in the Arab Gulf  
Migration and diaspora in the Arab Gulf  
Education policy and expatriate schooling  
India-Middle East relations  
South Asia-Arabian Peninsula socio-cultural linkages

## Education

<b>Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi</b> PhD in West Asian/Middle Eastern Studies <i>Thesis: National Identity and School Education in the United Arab Emirates Since 2008 (Thesis Submitted; Viva Voce Pending)</i>	2021–26
<b>Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi</b> MA in Politics with specialization in International Relations	2019–21
<b>Christ (deemed-to-be) University, Bangalore</b> BA in History, Economics, Political Science	2015–18

## Publications

### Articles

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2026. 'Accomplishing Zayed's 'Ambition': Space Exploration and National Identity in the UAE'. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Wiley), 3 April. DOI: [10.1111/sena.70040](https://doi.org/10.1111/sena.70040).

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2024. 'Kerala and the Gaza Crisis: Solidarity, Politics and Media Responses'. *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* (Sage), 11 (4): 466–491. DOI: [10.1177/23477989241289686](https://doi.org/10.1177/23477989241289686). [For an updated version of the article, see Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2026. 'Kerala's Response to the Gaza Crisis: Politics, Religion, and Media'. In *Modi, 7 October, and the Gaza War*, edited by P. R. Kumaraswamy and Md. Muddassir Quamar, 89–124. New Delhi: KW Publishers.]

### Chapters

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2025. 'The UAE'. In *COVID-19 in Middle East and North Africa: Pandemic, Impacts and Responses*, edited by P. R. Kumaraswamy, Sameena Hameed and Md. Muddassir Quamar, 257–272. New Delhi: Bloomsbury India. DOI: [10.5040/9789361316951.ch-20](https://doi.org/10.5040/9789361316951.ch-20).

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2025. 'Jordan'. In *COVID-19 in Middle East and North Africa: Pandemic, Impacts and Responses*, edited by P. R. Kumaraswamy, Sameena Hameed and Md. Muddassir Quamar, 117–131. New Delhi: Bloomsbury India. DOI: [10.5040/9789361316951.ch-8](https://doi.org/10.5040/9789361316951.ch-8).

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2024. 'India's *Rashtradoots*: Engagement with the Diaspora'. In *Transformation of India's Foreign Policy: Shaping the Global Order as a Responsible Power*, edited by Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, 150–183. New Delhi: KW Publishers and London: Routledge. DOI: [10.4324/9781003539063-7](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003539063-7).

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2022. 'COVID-19 and Migrant Workers in the GCC Countries: End of the Gulf Dream?' In *COVID-19 in the MENA: Two Years On* (POMEPS Studies 47), edited by Marc Lynch, 75–79. Washington, D.C.: POMEPS.

#### Policy Papers

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2024. 'Teaching National Identity to Non-Nationals: Indian Curriculum Schools in the UAE'. Policy Paper 73. Ras Al Khaimah: Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research. DOI: [10.18502/aqf.0216](https://doi.org/10.18502/aqf.0216). [For related blog, see Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2024. 'Unity in Diversity: My UAE Identity Journey'. *Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research*, 1 July.]

#### Book Reviews

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2024. 'Joseph A. Kéchichian and Fahad L. Alsharif, *Sa'udi Policies Towards Migrants and Refugees: A Sacred Duty* (Brighton, United Kingdom: Sussex Academic Press and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, 2022, Hardcover, ISBN: 978-1-78976-144-3, Price: £60.00, 362pp)'. *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* (Sage), 11 (1): 116–118. DOI: [10.1177/23477989231223649](https://doi.org/10.1177/23477989231223649).

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2022. 'Gerasimos Tsourapas (2021). *Migration Diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa: Power, Mobility, and the State*. Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press. Price: £85.00. 192 pp., ISBN: 978-1-5261-3209-3 (Hardback)'. *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* (Sage), 9 (4): 464–466. DOI: [10.1177/23477989221116446](https://doi.org/10.1177/23477989221116446).

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2022. 'Md. Muddassir Quamar (ed.) (2022), *Politics of Change in Middle East and North Africa since Arab Spring: A Lost Decade?*, New Delhi, India: Knowledge World Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Hardcover. ISBN: 978-93-91490-76-8, Price: INR 1160.00, 298 pp'. *Financial Express*, 24 January.

#### Work in Progress

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 'The Imagined Family in the UAE's National Identity Discourses: Evidence from Primary School Textbooks.'

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 'Sociocultural Strategies for Retaining 'Foreign Talent' in the UAE: Long-Term Residency, Tolerance Discourses and the National Identity'.

#### Select Commentaries

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2023. 'UAE Expands the Scope of Nationalization of Workforce'. *Financial Express*, 14 July.

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2023. 'Egyptian President Sisi's Visit will boost India-Egypt Relations and India's Presence in the Middle East'. *Financial Express*, 23 January.

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2022. 'Kerala's Kettungal Village Exhibits Love and Gratitude to their 'Second Home' this World Cup'. *Financial Express*, 12 December.

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2022. 'How FIFA World Cup 2022 Could Make Qatari Identity More Resilient'. *Indiatimes*, 17 November.

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2021. 'UAE's Green Visa and Implications for Foreign Workers'. *Middle East Institute New Delhi*, 6 October.

Nazir, Irfan Ahmed. 2020. 'COVID-19 Pandemic: The Plight of Indian Expatriates in the UAE'. *The Kootneeti*, 27 April.

<b>Select Presentations</b>	<p>‘Education for Expatriates: The Evolution of Indian Curriculum Schools in the UAE’, <i>Two-Day Young Scholar Conference on ‘West Asia in World Affairs: Defining India’s Role,’</i> Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 30–31 October 2025.</p> <p>‘Diaspora Philanthropy at the Time of Crisis: A Case of Kerala, India’, <i>International Webinar on ‘Beyond Borders: The Evolving Role of Diasporas in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,’</i> Indian Diasporic Network, New Delhi (online), 23 June 2024.</p> <p>‘Labour Migration and National Identity Construction in the GCC Countries’, <i>Tenth Young Scholars’ Conference on ‘West Asia and North Africa in the Global Crosscurrents,’</i> Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2–3 May 2024.</p> <p>‘COVID-19 and Migrant Workers in the GCC Countries: End of the Gulf Dream?’, <i>POMEPS ‘COVID-19 in MENA: 2 Years Later’ Workshop,</i> Project on Middle East Political Science, Washington, D.C. (online), 1 April 2022.</p> <p>‘Identity and Migration: A Portrait of Second-Generation Indian Expatriates in Dubai, United Arab Emirates’, <i>Two-Day National Seminar on ‘India’s Interconnection with West Asian Countries: Historical Understanding of Socio-Economic Relations and Future Prospects,’</i> Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi (online), 18–19 September 2021.</p> <p>‘Gender and Migration in South Asia: Challenges and Opportunities’, <i>International Conference on ‘Understanding International Migration,’</i> Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement, Kathmandu (online), 7 February 2021.</p>
<b>Invited Talks &amp; Lectures</b>	<p>‘Everyday Nationhood in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah’, <i>Thursday Seminar,</i> Centre for West Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 9 October 2025.</p> <p>‘National Identity and International Schools in the United Arab Emirates’, <i>Alumni Networking Event,</i> Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research, Ras Al Khaimah (online), 27 June 2024.</p> <p>‘The Role of Education in Promoting National Identity in the UAE’, <i>Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power Guest Lecture,</i> Master of Arts in International Affairs, American University in Dubai, 18 October 2023.</p>
<b>Interviews &amp; Podcasts</b>	<p>‘<u>Episode 3: Migrant Communities in the Gulf</u>’, <i>Gulf and Diaspora,</i> a podcast hosted by Rhea Abraham exploring second-gen migrant life in the Gulf, 3 November 2025.</p> <p>‘<u>Irfan Nazir: Unity in Diversity</u>’, <i>Muhadatha: In Conversation with Tiffany and Abdullah,</i> a monthly podcast from the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation, Ras Al Khaimah, 23 January 2025.</p>
<b>Panels &amp; Roundtables</b>	<p>Discussant, Session on ‘Perspectives on Statecraft and Gender’, <i>Eleventh Young Scholars’ Conference on ‘Turmoil and Transition in West Asia and North Africa,’</i> Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 7–9 May 2025.</p>
<b>Fellowships &amp; Grants</b>	<p>Senior Research Fellowship, University Grants Commission (India), 2024–26</p> <p>Doctoral Research Grant for Data Collection in the UAE, Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research, Ras Al Khaimah, 2023–24</p> <p>Travel Grant for Conducting Research within NYUAD Archives and Special Collections, Humanities Research Fellowships for the Study of the Arab World, New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD), 2023</p> <p>Junior Research Fellowship, University Grants Commission (India), 2022–24</p>
<b>Engagements</b>	<p>Visiting Scholar, Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research, Ras Al Khaimah, 1 October 2023 – 31 May 2024</p> <p>Research Intern, Middle East Institute New Delhi, 1 September – 30 November 2021</p>

Research Intern, National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi, 14 June – 23 July 2021

Research Intern, Kerala Institute of Local Administration, 27 April – 26 May 2017

**Services** [Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi](#)

Member, Organising Committee, G20 University Connect Lecture Series on *Pathways and Paradigms for India's G20 Presidency*, 21 August – 6 September 2023

Member, Student-Faculty Committee, Centre for West Asian Studies, 2022–23

Co-Convenor, Ninth Young Scholars' Conference on *Emerging Trends in West Asia and North Africa*, Centre for West Asian Studies, 27–28 April 2023

Member, Student-Faculty Committee, M.A. Programme (Politics with specialization in International Relations), School of International Studies, 2019–21

[Christ \(deemed-to-be\) University, Bangalore](#)

Facilitator, Skill Development Programme (Research and Writing), Department of International Studies and History, 2017–18

Volunteer, Writing Centre, Centre for Academic and Professional Support, 2016–17

**Certifications** [Professional Certificates](#)

National Eligibility Test Certificate for Assistant Professorship in *Political Science*, University Grants Commission (India), 2022

National Eligibility Test Certificate for Assistant Professorship in *International Relations and Area Studies*, University Grants Commission (India), 2020

[Course Certificates](#)

CITI Program Certificate, *Human Subjects Research – Social-Behavioural-Educational (SBE) Foundations*, 2023

Coursera Specialization Certificate, *Methods and Statistics in Social Sciences* offered by the University of Amsterdam, 2021

**Research Methods & Technical Skills**

Qualitative fieldwork and interview-based research

Policy analysis and report writing

Archival research

Discourse and content analysis

MAXQDA (qualitative data analysis)

Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, WordPress

**Languages**

English (native/bilingual)

Malayalam (native/bilingual)

Arabic (basic reading/writing)

Hindi (basic)

**References**

Will be furnished upon request

**Last Updated**

6 April 2026