



**Azim Premji University Colloquium Series**  
presents a lecture on

**“The Political Ecology of Palk Bay Fisheries: Geographies of Capital, Fisher Conflict, Ethnicity and Nation-State”**

Speaker:

**Ajit Menon,**

Associate Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies

**Date: March 26, 2015 (Thursday)**

**Time: 2.00 to 3.30 pm**

**Venue: 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Auditorium, Pixel A, (Azim Premji University)**

Watch the live broadcast of the talk by clicking <http://lectures.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/>. It can be accessed from Android and iOS devices too.

### **About the Lecture**

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**Abstract:** Increasing tension between Indian trawl fishers from the state of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lankan artisanal fishers from the Northern Province in the Palk Bay has resulted in the Sri Lankan government patrolling the international maritime boundary line (IMBL) more stringently and increased arrests of Indian trawl fishers. Indian trawl fishers regularly engage in cross-border fishing to the detriment of Sri Lankan artisanal fishers whose nets are irreparably damaged. This paper argues that the present ‘fisheries crisis’ in the Palk Bay must be understood from a political ecology perspective that takes cognisance of the circuitous and contradictory nature of capital accumulation. It also emphasises the need to pay attention to how accumulation and the spatial practices of trawl fishers have been shaped by geographies of capital, fisher conflict, ethnicity and the nation-state.

### **About the Speaker**

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**Ajit Menon** is Associate Professor at the Madras Institute of Development Studies, where he works on the political economy of natural resource conflict and political ecology. His research is aimed primarily at understanding how and when the environment becomes important, as well as the contestations both material and ontological that underlie conflicts over the environment in general and the commons in particular. Forested landscapes in south India have provided the site for most of his research but he is increasingly interested in the political ecology of fisheries as well. He believes the practice of interdisciplinarity is central to the study of the environment,

and is very interested in collaborative research across disciplines and the epistemological challenges of such research. Dr. Menon has published several journal articles and book chapters on forest management, conflicts over the commons, and environmental policy, and most recently, the co-edited volume: Sharad Lele and Ajit Menon (eds). 2014. *Democratizing forest governance in India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.