



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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A leading public policy
think tank

Conducting research in
multiple disciplines

Contributing to a more
robust public discourse

Foreword

It is a privilege to present the Centre for Policy Research's (CPR) annual report for 2019-20. We bring you this report in unusual circumstances. COVID-19 has upended all that we take for granted, both in terms of how we work and the established frameworks through which we seek to address policy challenges. I am proud, that in these trying circumstances, CPR has proved resilient, reinventing itself to respond to this particular policy moment, while discovering new ways of remaining creative and prolific, despite work from home and the tyranny of Zoom.

Like every year, CPR's faculty have kept the tradition of publishing scholarly, field-defining books alive. In 2019-20, CPR faculty published important books in fields as diverse as climate change, public administration and urbanisation. I would like to make special mention of Dr. Navroz K Dubash's edited volume titled, *India in a Warming World: Integrating Climate and Development*. Published by the Oxford University Press, with contributions from more than 30 leading researchers, policymakers, diplomats, and activists, this book is one of the most definitive contributions to the debate on climate mitigation and policy pathways for India. The book has received popular recognition, even featuring in all the major literature festivals held across the country. CPR's scholarly contributions were complemented by as many as 442 articles and opinion pieces in the mainstream press and non-academic journals, as CPR scholars valiantly sought to infuse evidence and nuance in an increasingly polarised public sphere. A particularly exciting initiative this year was the publication of a volume of short policy essays titled, *Policy Challenges 2019-2024*. This volume pulls together years of research undertaken by CPR faculty to offer a comprehensive view of the key policy questions and solutions confronting India today. For anyone interested in policy debates of 21st-century India, at the risk of being immodest, I strongly recommend reading this collection!

Even as we continue to produce field defining scholarship, CPR has remained actively engaged in the everyday life of policymaking, shaping ideas and offering technical expertise to resolve difficult policy problems. In 2019-20, we broadened our approach to work at the sub-national level. It is often said that the future of India lies in the States of India. In recognition of this, CPR too has begun to engage more directly with States. Our state engagement involves direct ground level partnerships and technical problem solving. The Accountability Initiative, for instance, signed a three year Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Meghalaya to provide research support to their planning and budgeting processes. The Scaling City Institutions for India (SCI-FI) program, our urban sanitation and housing initiative, is working closely with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Government of Odisha, providing technical advice in the areas of land, housing and planning. Individual faculty have also been appointed to provide technical support to State Governments in key areas. Philippe Cullet, was appointed as a member of the Group of Experts on the Madhya Pradesh Water Strategy by the Government of Madhya Pradesh. Yamini Aiyar was appointed a member of the State Advisory Council, Government of Punjab.

In early March 2020, days before lockdowns, social distancing and masks entered our everyday vocabulary, CPR organised the second edition of the CPR Dialogues. Launched in 2018, CPR Dialogues is an important addition to our repertoire of public engagement efforts and marks a strategic shift in CPR's public engagement. This shift is, partly, a response to the growing polarisation of the public sphere in India, which we believe needs sober, evidence-based discourse. It is also a consequence of a growing recognition that policy processes and long-term change need to be driven through the creation of a coherent and shared public narrative on the nature of the problem and policy prescriptions. Shaping this narrative and developing a shared understanding of the range of policy prescriptions available is a critical role that CPR can play. To this end, we have sought to move beyond the confines of our seminar room to create newer spaces for dialogue with stakeholders, civil society and the public. CPR dialogues is one such effort. The 2020 edition featured over 60 speakers across 20 panels and was attended by more than 1000 participants. The Dialogues were also an opportunity to celebrate milestones, including the formal launch of the State Capacity Initiative, five years of the Land Rights Initiative and a decade of expenditure tracking through Planning, Allocations and Expenditures, Institutions Studies in Accountability (PAISA), the Accountability Initiative's flagship survey.

Once COVID-19 struck and India went into lockdown, CPR faculty shifted gear to respond to the particular policy challenges India now confronts. Our response has been wide ranging, focusing both on the public health challenge as well as the pathways for economic relief and recovery, social protection particularly for informal, migrant workers, climate change and the environment, urbanisation and issues of federalism. Select CPR faculty came together to form a research collaborative working closely with State Governments. In April 2020, CPR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Punjab to provide real-time data analysis and design a testing strategy to identify COVID-19 cases. In addition, CPR is part of civil society collaboratives, working at the grassroots, providing relief, often in partnership with district and block administrators and documenting the effects of the pandemic. Through this work, CPR faculty have sought to highlight ground realities and bring evidence to shape policy responses to the COVID-19-induced economic crisis. As always, CPR sought to influence the public debate, infusing knowledge and expertise into the noise, through multiple new media including podcasts, webinars and opinion writing.

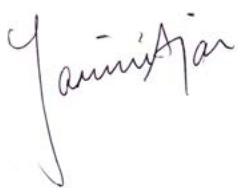
None of this would have been possible without our talented faculty and researchers, who never once allowed the trials and tribulations of COVID-19 and work from home to interfere with their passion and commitment to respond at this critical policy juncture. I am really proud to have the privilege of leading this wonderful community of scholars.

I am as always, grateful to the CPR board, under the leadership of Dr Meenakshi Gopinath, who've helped us traverse an increasingly complex regulatory environment while holding us to the highest standards of rigour and integrity. I would be remiss not to thank our wonderful administration and communications teams. Led by Mr Ravi, our administration team has patiently ensured that we maintain high standards of governance. Mr. Ravi, an institution within CPR, retired in August 2020 after three decades of service. We owe deep gratitude to him for all that he has done for us. He is the reason why CPR faculty can stay focused on research, unfettered by the daily demands of administration and paperwork. Our communications team, led by Ms Hemali Sodhi who joined us in 2020, has taken on the difficult task of pushing us to leave the comfort of our ivory towers. They are the reason why CPR has been able to pivot towards greater public engagement and find its way into the 21st-century world of social media and digital communication, with grace and style.

I would also like to remember Ved Marwah, a long-term associate of CPR, who passed away in June 2020. His life's work, his passion and commitment to excellence inspired many generations of CPR faculty. His passing is an immeasurable loss to CPR and to the wider community and we miss him deeply.

Before signing off, I would like to thank all of you, our friends, collaborators and funders. This report offers but a glimpse into the variety, scale and rigour of work that we do at CPR, all of which has been made possible because of you. We remain deeply grateful.

With warmest thanks



Yamini Aiyar
President And Chief Executive

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND GOVERNANCE	INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND SECURITY	LAW, REGULATION, AND THE STATE
5	15	21
URBANISATION	ECONOMIC POLICY	RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
41	55	61
POLICY CHALLENGES 2019-2024	CPR DIALOGUES 2020	
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Environmental Law and Governance

CPR is committed to fostering an evidence-based conversation about how to ensure a clean and sustainable environment for a growing India. The Centre's expert research topics ranging from environmental jurisprudence to the construction industry, and they engage directly with domestic and international environmental institution.

Climate, Energy and Environment

Image Source: Pixabay

In 2019, the Initiative on Climate, Energy and Environment (ICEE) contributed to global discussions on climate and energy governance and continued its engagement with policy and regulatory frameworks that are shaping climate and development outcomes in India. The initiative's research focused on four key areas: climate policy and institutions, the political economy of India's electricity sector, low-carbon energy demand patterns in urban areas, and air quality governance in India.

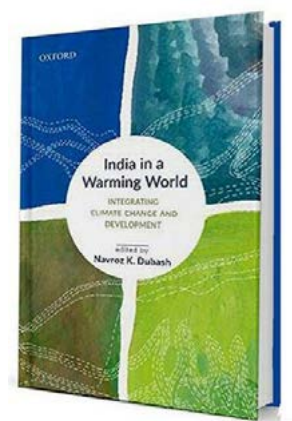
Climate Policy, Institutions and Governance

- Navroz K Dubash participated in global meetings for the upcoming Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as Coordinating Lead Author for the chapter on national and sub-national policies and institutions. In October 2019, in the backdrop of the IPCC Working Group III (Mitigation of Climate Change) meeting in New Delhi, ICEE co-hosted a panel discussion on *What are Countries Doing to Address Climate Change?* with insights on climate action from policy experts from around the world.
- In the lead-up to the United Nations Climate Action Summit in September 2019, Dubash was appointed to the Science Advisory Group for the Summit. He reflected on growing climate ambition and target-setting in journals such as *Nature* and *WIRES Climate Change*. He also commented on India's role in the climate regime in a time of gridlocked nationalist politics in *The Hindu* and *Hindustan Times*.



Navroz K Dubash and Ritu Mathur (Senior Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute) co-moderated a discussion on climate policy and action featuring IPCC authors Fei Teng (Institute of Energy, Environment and Economy, Tsinghua University, China), Heleen de Coninck (Department of Environmental Science, Radboud University, The Netherlands), Harald Winkler (University of Cape Town, South Africa), Karen Seto (Yale University, USA), and Roberto Schaeffer (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), with closing remarks by Jim Skea (Co-Chair, IPCC Working Group III).

- The editorial board of *Environmental Research Letters* recognised *India's Energy and Emissions Future: An Interpretive Analysis of Model Scenarios*—a journal article by Dubash, Radhika Khosla, Narasimha D Rao and Ankit Bhardwaj—as the 2018 recipient of its Best 'Emerging Regions' Article. The article, which finds that India's emissions from energy will at least double from 2012 levels by 2030, also received wide coverage in *Physics World*, *Carbon Brief*, *Ideas for India*, *NDTV*, and *Live Mint* in 2018.
- As part of a new research project—*Varieties of Climate Governance*—Dubash and Aditya Valiathan Pillai started work on a comparative analysis of climate institutions and governance in eight countries, including India. The project brings together leading academics, and aims to deepen understanding of institutional structures for climate mitigation and adaptation in different countries.



India's Climate and Energy Future

- Navroz K Dubash published a comprehensive edited book on climate change titled *India in a Warming World: Integrating Climate and Development* [Oxford University Press (OUP) 2019], with contributions from more than 30 leading researchers, policymakers, diplomats, and activists. The book is freely downloadable from OUP, the first such book from OUP India. Dubash was also invited to discuss the book at literature festivals in Kolkata, Bangalore, Kozhikode, and Delhi, and featured as a panellist at the Jaipur Literature Festival in an event co-hosted by CPR. The book has been positively reviewed in major publications, including *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*, *Business Standard*, *Live Mint*, and *The Hindu BusinessLine*.



- ICEE contributed to strategic thinking on climate law and policy in India. Shibani Ghosh published a review paper on climate litigation in India in the *American Journal of International Law (AJIL) Unbound*. Lavanya Rajamani and Dubash published a strategic roadmap for long-term climate policy and diplomacy as part of CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium. Dubash also continued to inform public dialogue on climate change in India via articles and quotes in outlets such as *Hindustan Times* and *India Today* magazine.

Reviews of *India in a Warming World*

'...an important compilation that's an invaluable resource for journalists, academics, civil servants, researchers and anyone who's more than instrumentally curious about all matters climate change of relevance to India...this book serves as a valuable guide to a complicated future.'

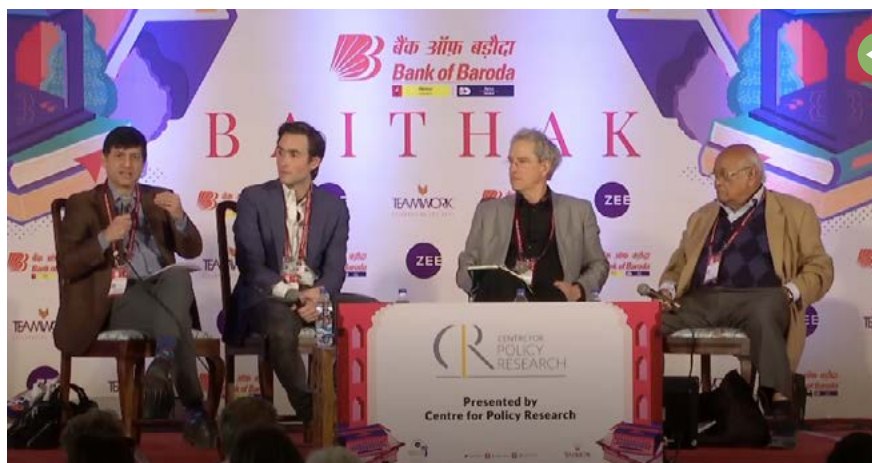
The Hindu

'The authors' list reads like a Who's Who of those involved in this domain...why this volume works very well is not only the multi-disciplinary take on the issue of climate change, but also the focus on getting to the details.'

Business Standard

'...climate change is the gravest issue of our times, and given how much India stands to lose, an anthology like *India In a Warming World: Integrating Climate Change and Development* is a welcome addition to the literature...For a coherent action plan to be articulated at the highest levels of policymaking, a book like [this] is essential.'

Live Mint



Navroz K Dubash, David Wallace-Wells, Prem Jha and Marcus Moench discussed climate change in India at the Jaipur Literature Festival in January 2020.

The Political Economy of Electricity in Indian States

- ICEE launched a new project that aims to promote the development of state-specific approaches to India's electricity transition and stimulate engagement with political opportunities and constraints in national electricity policy.
- Dubash, Ashwini K Swain and Parth Bhatia published an article in *The India Forum* on the political and institutional underpinnings of the current electricity system, and what they mean for the expansion of renewable energy.
- ICEE co-hosted several agenda-setting meetings on India's energy transition with Prayas (Energy Group) and the Regulatory Assistance Project, bringing together a community of scholars and practitioners in the field.
- Dubash and Swain analysed barriers to electricity access in a policy brief in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, and ICEE frequently contributed to *The Indian Express* to contextualise developments in the sector, discuss the importance of clean and sustainable electricity, and highlight the institutional and regulatory challenges in the sector.

Air Quality Governance and Regulation in India

- Santosh Harish, Shibani Ghosh and Navroz K Dubash published a roadmap to achieve clean air as part of CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium and wrote extensively on the issue for various media outlets. Dubash and Harish frequently appeared on TV and radio media, including NDTV, CNN, and *All-India Radio* to speak about India's approach to air quality governance; they were quoted extensively in *Hindustan Times*, *The Wire*, *Bloomberg News*, and *The Economic Times*, among other major print publications.
- ICEE has been invited to share their recommendations with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), and the Ministry of Finance in its pre-budget consultations.
- Harish contributed to civil society-led responses to the air pollution crisis, including the United Residents Joint Action's (URJA) clean air manifesto for the Delhi state elections, and the Clean Air Collective's broader efforts to mobilise Members of Parliament (MPs) to drive action on air pollution.



Energy Demand in Urban India

- Radhika Khosla, Neelanjan Sircar and Ankit Bhardwaj published research on electricity demand transitions and climate mitigation in low-income urban households in the journal *Environmental Research Letters*. ICEE co-hosted the second annual roundtable on residential electricity consumption in India with Prayas (Energy Group) and the University of Oxford. Participants shared experiences on measuring residential electricity consumption in India and tracking changes in cooling consumption.

The Indian Coal Industry

- Rohit Chandra contributed a chapter on the history of the Indian coal industry to Brookings India's forthcoming volume on the Indian coal industry.
- Chandra presented on *Four Perspectives on the Indian Coal Industry* at TERI's *Future of Coal in India* workshop in May 2019. Further, he attended and presented original material at Prayas (Energy Group)-CPR joint roundtables on market-based economic dispatch and managing a fair transition away from coal.
- Chandra also presented on *Technological Evolution of India's Coal Industry (1947-Present)* at the India Institute of Management Ahmedabad's *Economic and Business History Conference*.

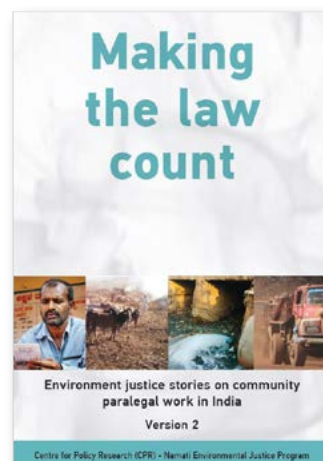
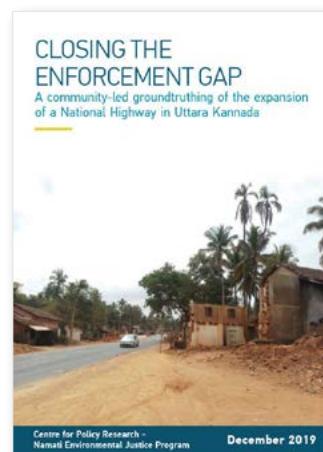
Image Source: www.TheFinancialExpress.com

Infrastructures and Ecologies

Set up in 2019, this research theme advances multidisciplinary and applied research on the political ecology of large infrastructures. It houses a cluster of new and ongoing projects, at the intersection of infrastructure development, natural resource management and legal governance frameworks at trans-national, national and state levels.

Environmental Non-Compliance and Institutional Responses

- The CPR-Namati Environmental Justice Program is a community-based action research initiative that builds evidence on the environmental performance of industries and infrastructure to inform policy and institutional responses to compliance. This year, the Program published *Closing the Enforcement Gap: A community led groundtruthing of the expansion of a National Highway Project in Uttara Kannada*. This report documents the socio-economic, environmental and health impacts arising out of the non-compliance of environmental safeguards of a road project in Karnataka.
- The Program continued its grassroots engagements through its network of paralegals to shape state and national level research and policy efforts. Out of 141 cases of industrial non-compliance studied, institutional action to address impacts were obtained in more than 100 instances. Affected communities and government regulators such as pollution control boards, district collectorates, and State Ground Water Boards conducted joint site inspections in 45 such cases. This is a shift in regulatory practice that has usually involved only project authorities, and not those affected by project operations.
- Lessons from cases were compiled by CPR's researchers and partner organisations in the publication titled *Making the law count – version 2*. The publication was compiled by Vidya Vishwanathan and has contributions by several CPR researchers.
- Manju Menon and Kanchi Kohli contributed a paper titled *Regulatory Reforms to Address Environmental Non-Compliance* to CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium. The paper highlights the absence of an effective compliance regime that has led to a large number of polluting projects operating with impunity and outlines steps to establish monitoring of projects and their overall environmental performance.



India's Forest Laws and Governance

- Kanchi Kohli and Manju Menon were part of a team that developed a free online learning tool on the history, legal frameworks and grievance redressal mechanisms related to forest governance in India. This project was undertaken with Oxfam-India and Nagrik Learning, and its English version was launched on March 21, the International Forest Day. The course material included topics such as forest rights, forest diversions, land acquisition, protected area management and compensatory afforestation.
- Kanchi Kohli authored an article on the contentious Supreme Court case on the Forest Rights Act. The article puts the issue of 'bogus' forest claims within a larger context of infrastructure uses of forests, exclusionary conservation projects and the framework of forest rights in India. The article was published by Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, New Delhi, in their dossier on *Investigating Infrastructure: Ecology, Sustainability and Society*.



Urban Infrastructure Projects and Environmental Discourses

- This participatory research, done in collaboration with several urban planning and ecology experts and urban activists, analyses the socio-ecological aspects of urban infrastructure and construction projects in Indian metro cities. The research includes case studies and legal analyses of specific commercial and infrastructure projects. This work enabled policy interventions and public engagements on aspects such as financialisation of public lands, Transit Oriented Development (TOD), and urban tree transplantation policies. The research team published a series of commentaries on the redevelopment of government housing colonies in Delhi in various news portals.

Research and Policy Engagements

- As part of the ongoing engagement with environment law amendments, CPR's researchers submitted detailed responses to several national legal and policy proposals on environment law. In March 2020, the MoEF&CC released a draft Environmental Impact Assessment Notification 2020 for public comments. Manju Menon and Kanchi Kohli wrote to the Ministry requesting them to withdraw the notification and defer the process of public comments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The letter emphasised that the lockdown would hinder meaningful public participation in the process of amending a legal instrument that has wide ramifications.
- Manju Menon and Kanchi Kohli authored a paper on the historical and political economy aspects of Environment Impact Assessments in India in the *Research Handbook on Law, Environment and the Global South*, co-edited by Philippe Cullet and Sujith Koonan. Drawing on their earlier work on the regulatory failure to protect coastal ecologies, they also contributed a chapter on India's coastal regulation law in *Nature Conservation in the New Economy: People, Wildlife and the Law in India*, an edited volume by Ghazala Shahabuddin, K Sivaramakrishnan and published by Orient Blackswan.
- Manju Menon authored an article on the legal and environmental implications of the government's re-engagement with large hydropower development in Northeast India for the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung's web series on *Investigating Infrastructure: Ecology, Sustainability and Society*.
- The research analyses and perspectives generated on these themes have been widely quoted by national and regional media and policy networks.



National Water Policy and Transboundary River Water Governance

As the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) Research Chair, Srinivas Chokkakula has been closely engaging with the MoJS and associated institutions, in addition to pursuing critical research interests around India's transboundary governance issues, with a particular focus on interstate river water disputes resolution. In November 2019, Chokkakula was appointed as a member of the Drafting Committee for the National Water Policy. This committee is entrusted with the responsibility of revising the national water policy, taking into account the emerging challenges in water governance for long-term security.

The Transboundary Rivers, Ecologies, and Development Studies (TREADS) group that Chokkakula leads has extended its interests to other relevant issues. TREADS collaborated with the Accountability Initiative and other colleagues at CPR to conduct research on federal governance for the World Bank and submitted the report on *Water and Federalism*. The research findings were presented in a national workshop in May 2019 and received much attention from policymakers. Federal water governance is evolving into a core research interest for the group.

Chokkakula's engagement as the Research Chair with key institutions of water governance in the country included institutions like the National Water Academy (NWA), the Upper Yamuna River Board (UYRB), the Yamuna Basin Organisation (YBO), the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), and the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI). The engagement involved invited talks, requests for inputs and conversations on future collaborations for research and policy engagement. Some of these are evolving into interesting research partnerships. In December 2019, the UYRB requested for a proposal to study the implications of the Delhi-Himachal Pradesh Memorandum of Understanding. Additionally, the YBO called for inputs into the proposed National Water Museum.

The TREADS group extended its engagement to states and their institutions in their efforts to explore India's history of interstate river water cooperation. These agencies include the Cauvery Technical Cell in Tamil Nadu, the Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority (MWRRA) and the Water Resources Departments in various states including Gujarat, Karnataka, and Telangana.

The TREADS group, in collaboration with the Central Water Commission (CWC), has organised six TREAD Talks under the CPR-CWC Dialogue Forum, a mandate of the Research Chair. CPR also partnered with the CWC to organise sessions at the MoJS's annual event, the Sixth India Water Week on two themes – the increasing complexities of interstate river water disputes and federal water governance challenges.

Chokkakula was invited as a resource person by the NWA, Pune. He conducted sessions for the Mandatory Cadre Training Program of senior scale officers, and other special training programs for senior officers of Central agencies and State water resources departments.

Chokkakula also delivered public lectures and talks on contemporary water governance issues, addressing a variety of groups and platforms – civic society forums, international development agencies, and academic conferences. Select talks are listed below:

- *India's 'Water Crisis: Deconstructing the Discourse*, Toxics Link Public Lecture, India International Centre, New Delhi, 28 August 2019.
- *Transboundary Politics in the Kosi River Basin*, Hans Siedel Foundation Conference, Dhaka, 16-19 November 2019.
- *Interstate River Water Governance*, Plenary talk at the conference on Transboundary River Water Sharing in South Asia, UMISARC, Centre for South Asia Studies, Pondicherry University, 20-21 February 2020.

Policy Engagements

- The CWC requested Srinivas Chokkakula to give detailed inputs on the Interstate River Water Disputes Amendment Bill 2019, passed by the Lok Sabha on 31 July 2019. Chokkakula has also been requested to provide inputs for the proposed River Basin Management Bill, and the ongoing conversations between India and Nepal over the Pancheshwar Project.
- Chokkakula provided inputs for the Task Force on Jal Jeevan Mission on larger water sector reforms for enduring outcomes of the Mission. Upon request, he also developed several concept notes for discussion at various levels targeting knowledge products and policy engagement. Some of these include: *Jal Jeevan Mission – an opportunity for consensus building on Water Sector reforms*; *A Roundtable of States on Progressive Pathways*; *Building New Federal Consensus for Water Sector Reforms: Learning from GST Council*; *An analytical frame for an evolutionary history of MWRRRA*.
- Chokkakula's work has also informed the public discourse over the Interstate River Water Disputes Amendment Bill 2019. Several MPs consulted him for their debates in parliament on the subject. His writings have been read and used during the debate in the Lok Sabha. He has also been cited and quoted extensively in popular media outlets like *The Economic Times*, *Business World*, and *Nature India*.
- As the expert member of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) Task Team on Transboundary Water Management – Agriculture Water Management (TT-TWM-AGM), Chokkakula's active participation has been instrumental in shaping the Task Team's agenda. The Task Team is set to put together a repository of knowledge on transboundary water governance building in the ICID member countries.



Dr Chokkakula also appeared in *The Big Picture* of Rajya Sabha TV

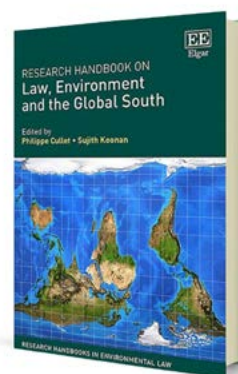
Environmental Law

Image Source: scroll.in

- *Research Handbook on Law, Environment and the Global South*, co-edited by Philippe Cullet and Sujith Koonan was published by Edward Elgar Publishing. This comprehensive research handbook offers an innovative analysis of environmental law in the global South and contributes to an important reassessment of some of its major underlying concepts. The research handbook discusses areas rarely prioritised in environmental law, such as land rights, and underlines how these intersect with issues including poverty, livelihoods and the use of natural resources, challenging familiar narratives around development and sustainability in this context and providing new insights into environmental justice.

-taken from book description

- Philippe Cullet was appointed as a Member of the Group of Experts on the Madhya Pradesh Water Strategy by the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh. Among the tasks assigned to the Group of Experts, Cullet is most closely associated with the drafting of the proposed Madhya Pradesh Right to Water (Conservation Sustainable Use) Act, 2019. Further, Cullet also made a submission on *Legal Aspects of Water* to the the Committee set up to draft the National Water Policy by the MoJS.
- Cullet authored a chapter, *The Human Right to Water—A Testing Ground for Neoliberal Policies* in the book, *Human Rights in India*, edited by Satvinder Juss. He also wrote an article, *Fostering the Realisation of the Right to Water: Need to Ensure Universal Free Provision and to Recognise Water as a Common Heritage* in the *National Law School of India Review*.





International Relations and Security

CPR's experts analyse the past and present of India's role in the shifting global order through a range of disciplinary lenses.

From nuclear strategy and military history to trans-boundary water sharing and social narratives of India's borderlands, the Centre explores international relations from both traditional and alternative perspectives.



Understanding China

Image Source: Hindustan Times

- Nimmi Kurian delivered a set of four lectures on *Development and Inequality in India and China*, at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), in April and May 2019.
- Kurian was invited to deliver a talk on *Designed to Fail: What is Wrong with the India-China Dialogue on Water?* organised by the Department of International Relations, Ashoka University, in September 2019.
- Kurian was an invited speaker at the roundtable on *US-China Strategic Engagement during Xi Jinping's Leadership*, organised by the Centre for East Asian Studies, JNU, in November 2019.
- Kurian was invited to review a manuscript proposal for a Special Issue titled *Small States and India-China Issues in the Northern Indian Ocean Region* for the *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* in December 2019.
- Kurian was invited to deliver a talk on *China and Hong Kong for the Indian Foreign Service Officer Trainees Induction Training Program* at the Foreign Services Institute in January 2020.
- Shyam Saran served as a member of the Governing Board of the Institute of Chinese Studies, India's premier think tank for the study of China.
- Saran participated in the annual India-China dialogue at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Singapore. He was also the lead speaker at the *Conference on International Cooperation* in Beijing in May 2019; a conference on the European economy and India-China relations in Genoa, Italy, in June 2019; and at the *India Forum on China*, held in Goa in December 2019.
- Zorawar Daulet Singh authored an article titled *Rethinking India's Approach to China's Belt and Road Initiative*, published in the June 2019 edition of *Economic and Political Weekly*.
- Daulet Singh delivered an address on *History of India-China relations since the 1940s* at the National Defence College, New Delhi.



South Asia

- Nimmi Kurian's research paper, *Re-engaging the International: A Social History of the Trans-Himalayan Borderlands*, was published in the *Journal of Borderlands Studies* (Joensuu, Finland), as part of a Special Issue on *Post-Colonial and Post-Partition South Asia*, in March 2020.
- Kurian's review of the book, *India's Spatial Imaginations of South Asia: Power, Commerce and Community*, (Oxford University Press, 2019) was published in the *India Quarterly* in March 2020.
- Kurian's research paper entitled, *Tibet and the Himalayan Borderlands: Thinking Sub-regionally about Sustainable Development*, was published in the edited volume titled *The State of Ecology of the Tibetan Plateau*, (Academic Foundation, 2019).
- Kurian presented a paper entitled, *Foreshadowing Faultlines: Tracing the Intellectual Roots of Ethnocultural Conflict in Myanmar*, at the international conference on *Conflict in Southeast Asia*, organised by Synod College and North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, in November 2019.
- Kurian was an invited speaker at the panel discussion on *Tibet and the Himalayan Borderlands*, organised by the India International Centre in August 2019.
- Kurian chaired a talk by Douglas Hill on *De-securitising Himalayan River Basins: People, Ecology and Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues*, organised by the Department of International Relations and Governance Studies, Shiv Nadar University, in August 2019.
- Kurian was invited to serve as External Academic Expert (2019-2021) by the Centre for East Asian Studies, JNU.
- Kurian conducted the viva voce as the external examiner for the MPhil dissertation titled *Hosting Rohingya Refugees: Explaining the Factors Influencing Bangladesh's 'Humanitarian' Response*, at the South Asian University in October 2019.
- Shyam Saran served as a Member of the Advisory Council of the World Bank South Asia Champions' Group.



India and the World

- Nimmi Kurian, Bharat Karnad, Shyam Saran, and Zorawar Daulet Singh wrote articles in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium on issues of foreign policy and national security.
- Kurian delivered the inaugural address on *The United Nations and Youth* at the Model United Nations event conducted at the DAV Public School in October 2019.
- Kurian was invited to be the reviewer for the Fulbright-Nehru doctoral, post-doctoral and Professional Excellence Fellowships in the field of International Security and Strategic Studies from August to September 2019.
- Kurian reviewed a manuscript for the *International Feminist Journal of Politics* in July 2019.
- Shyam Saran was conferred with Japan's second highest national award, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star, for his contributions to strengthen strategic ties and enhance mutual understanding between India and Japan, in May 2019.



- Saran was a lead speaker at several national and international conferences, including the World Bank Conference on *International Mediation* in Nepal, *India Connect* in Dubai, the *JP Morgan International Advisory Council meeting* in Delhi, the *World Bank Champions' meeting* in Kathmandu, and the Jaipur Literature Festival in Jaipur.
- Saran conducted a course on foreign policy at the Indian School of Business in November 2019.

- Saran continued to serve as a Life Trustee at the India International Centre, and a Trustee at the World Wildlife Fund (India). He is an Independent Director on the board of the Press Trust of India and a Member of the advisory council of the Confederation of Indian Industries. Additionally, he is also on the editorial advisory board of Business Standard.
- Saran continued to serve as the Co-Chair of the India-Bhutan Eminent Persons' Group.
- Saran also served on the board of the Welham's School in Dehradun and on the board of Sahapedia, a web based portal on India's cultural heritage.
- Gautam Mukhopadhyaya delivered the convocation address at the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Guwahati on *A Regional Strategy for the North East of India* in May 2019.
- As part of the *Distinguished Lecture Series* organised by the Ministry of External Affairs, Mukhopadhyaya delivered lectures on *Geopolitics, Act East and the North East of India* and *Indian Foreign Policy: Changing Dynamics* at the National Institute of Technology, Arunachal Pradesh and the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, respectively.
- Mukhopadhyaya analysed the US-Taliban peace deal and the developments in Afghanistan in the media through commentaries in popular platforms such as *Outlook*, *ThePrint* and *The Hindu*.
- Zorawar Daulet Singh authored an article titled *India's Civilisational Identity and the World Order*, published in the September 2019 edition of *Economic and Political Weekly*. The article explores the changing world order and how India can navigate it using its civilisational ethos of reconciling different ideas.
- Daulet Singh authored an article titled *India's Grand Strategy Needs a Second Act*, published in the December 2019 edition of *Economic and Political Weekly*. The article explores the chasm India faces between its global aspirations and the reality of its national power.

- Daulet Singh participated in a session on *Redefining Eurasia – Managing the Supercontinent* at the conference on *Indian-Russian Relations in a New Strategic Context*, organised by the Valdai Club in partnership with the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in Moscow, Russia.
- Daulet Singh delivered a series of lectures as part of the first Special Course for diplomats of various countries including Egypt, Angola, and Botswana at the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi.

Key Events

CPR scholars continued to analyse the geopolitical implications of critical developments in India and the world through timely discussions, lectures and workshops. Some of these include:

■ Panel Discussion on Article 370: *The Road Ahead* | September 2019

This panel examined the implications of the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A on domestic and international politics, including questions related to national security, Centre-state relations, geopolitics in South Asia, and Indo-US relations.



Speakers: Tilak Devasher (Member, National Security Advisory Board and Consultant, Vivekananda International Foundation); Shyam Saran (Senior Fellow, CPR and former Foreign Secretary); and moderated by Yamini Aiyar (President and Chief Executive, CPR).

■ Panel Discussion on *Options for Afghanistan : The Trump Tweets and After* | September 2019

This panel examined the status and contents of the US-Taliban talks and the importance of the Presidential elections in Afghanistan.



Speakers: Saad Mohseni (Director, Moby Group); Tahir Qadiry (Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, New Delhi); Jayant Prasad (former Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan); Amar Sinha (Member, National Security Advisory Board and former Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan); Gautam Mukhopadhyaya (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR and former Ambassador of India to Afghanistan, Syria, and Myanmar); and chaired by Jyoti Malhotra (Editor, National and Strategic Affairs, ThePrint)

■ **Talk on Afghan Peace & Regional Dynamics: India's Role** | October 2019

The talk explored India's role in the peace process in Afghanistan post Donald Trump's announcement to call off the meeting with Taliban representatives at Camp David.

Speaker: Muqaddesa Yourish (former Deputy Minister of Commerce for Afghanistan); chaired by Nimmi Kurian (Professor, CPR)

■ **The West Asia: Conflicts series discussion on The Syrian Conundrum and Conflict** | October 2019

The *West Asia: Conflicts* series is a series of events focusing on tensions and conflicts in parts of West Asia with which India has historically had close ties, and which have wider regional and geopolitical ramifications. The first event in the series aimed to understand the state of affairs in Syria.



Speakers: Gautam Mukhopadhyaya (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR and former Ambassador of India to Afghanistan, Syria, and Myanmar); V P Haran (former Ambassador of India to Syria and Bhutan); Niraj Srivastava (former Second Secretary, Embassy of India, Damascus and former Ambassador of India to Denmark and Uganda); Kabir Taneja (Fellow, Strategic Studies Programme, ORF); and chaired by Bhaskar Balakrishnan (former Counsellor and Charge D'Affaires Embassy of India in Syria and former Ambassador of India to Greece and Cuba).

■ **Discussion on Getting Off the RCEP Bus : Is There an Alternative Route for India?** | November 2019

The discussion focused on the geopolitical implications of India's decision to not join the Regional Comprehensive Cooperation Partnership (RCEP).



Speakers: VS Seshadri (former Vice-Chairman, Research and Information System for Developing Countries); and Shyam Saran (Senior Fellow, CPR and former Foreign Secretary)



Law, Regulation, and the State

CPR seeks to understand the deep drivers of India's democratic experience, engaging scholars and practitioners to explore fundamental questions about governance and social change.

The Centre's experts examine how laws, institutions, and the Constitution shape the lives of Indians, and what they mean for rights ranging from human and religious to intellectual property and land.

Tracking Social Policy Implementation

Image Source: scroll.in

- In 2019, the Accountability Initiative (AI) invested time and effort in growing activities and building on ideas with policymakers, scholars, and citizens, whose contribution is critical to enabling *Responsive Governance*—the vision of the initiative.
- AI's flagship Planning, Allocations and Expenditures, Institutions Studies in Accountability (PAISA) methodology was expanded to include three new areas – nutrition, child protection, and water, apart from education. An extensive process tracking study to understand bottlenecks and best practices in implementing publicly funded direct nutrition interventions such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), was completed in six districts across three states. Preliminary findings have been shared with NITI Aayog and have also been presented to different stakeholders.
- The year also marked a significant milestone for AI in providing long-term, direct institutional support to state-level policymakers. In January 2020, AI, in partnership with the State Capacity Initiative at CPR, signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Meghalaya to provide research support to the state. Further, AI's second study for the 15th Finance Commission using a sample survey of Gram Panchayats to determine the quantum of funds received, their implications on panchayat financing and how they were spent, was completed and is available on the Finance Commission website.
- In 2019, AI extensively studied schemes for women and children. One such study, supported by UNICEF Maharashtra as part of a longer MoU with UN Women and the Government of Maharashtra, mapped Maharashtra government's efforts towards protection against violence for women and children. Recommendations on formulating legislative and policy measures to strengthen the system have been shared, and the policy brief is available on the AI website. As part of another project, the status and fund flow mechanisms of three different schemes over two years (Financial Years 2018-19 and 2019-20) were analysed in sample districts. The schemes were: Child Protection Services (CPS), the Supplementary Nutrition Program (SNP) under the ICDS scheme, MAMATA scheme of Odisha, and the Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) focussing on adolescent health in Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh.



Volunteer surveyors of the PAISA study with a beneficiary.





A glimpse of Hum Aur Humaari Sarkaar classroom sessions in progress.

- Offering learning opportunities to potential changemakers was a top priority for AI. AI's flagship learning program – *Hum Aur Humaari Sarkaar* – primarily aimed at Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), publicly invited applications for four open courses in 2019. Courses were held in Jaipur, Udaipur, Bhopal, and Patna. A customised one for the Bhopal School of Social Sciences supported by the University Grants Commission was also conducted. A new website – humaarisarkaar.in – was launched to share resources on governance in Hindi to facilitate community building among state-based practitioners, an opportunity that they seldom have. To complement the website, a newsletter called *Pahel* was released later in the year.
- In order to spark dialogues on critical issues related to Responsive Governance, AI extensively made use of strategic communication efforts. A priority in 2019 was providing the digital community with a strong online platform to engage on governance matters. In May, a revamped website, fit-for-purpose to a variety of readers was launched. *The Edit*, AI's monthly newsletter was subsequently launched in August. Free of subscription cost, it features exclusive research insights, expert analyses and commentary.
- Four major events were organised. The first, organised in Jaipur, included research organisations, NGOs, and the media to discuss the recent school consolidation policy, and broader challenges of the public school education system in Rajasthan. Second, as part of the flagship *Policy In-Depth* discussion series, the role of Centrally Sponsored Schemes in the Indian welfare system was detailed. A special session on Responsive Governance, was hosted with Dr Gabrielle Kruks-Wisner, Assistant Professor of Politics and Global Studies at the University of Virginia. Drawing on extensive fieldwork in rural India, she presented invaluable insights into whether, how, and why citizens engage with public officials to secure their entitlements. Dr Jonathan Fox, known for his work on citizen participation, transparency, and accountability, also had a wide-ranging discussion on accountability with the AI team in Delhi.
- TR Raghunandan, advisor to AI, authored a book titled, *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Bureaucracy But Were Afraid to Ask*, published by Penguin India. The book aims to deconstruct the structure of the bureaucracy and how it functions for the understanding of the common person, and replaces the anxiety that people feel when they step into a government office with a healthy dollop of irreverence.
- Taken from book description
- Yamini Aiyar co-edited the May 2019 issue of *Seminar Magazine* with Louise Tillin. The issue focussed on the future of federalism in India and contained articles by Avani Kapur, Rahul Verma, and Neelanjan Sircar from CPR.



Other Highlights from AI

- AI's flagship *Budget Briefs* series entered their eleventh year of publication with the preparation of two volumes – one during the Interim Budget and the other after the tabling of the full Budget by the new government in July 2019. The *Budget Briefs* analysed trends in allocations and expenditures of ten major Centrally Sponsored Schemes.
- The draft National Education Policy (NEP) released in May 2019 has mooted the creation of school complexes for better resourcing of government schools and curbing low student enrollment. AI released a working paper in 2019, a first-of-its-kind account of this process.
- An analysis entitled, *Towards 'Cooperative' Social Policy Financing in India*, authored by Avani Kapur, was published as part of CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium.
- The following training sessions were conducted for top bureaucrats:
 - Comptroller and Auditor General's Advanced Management Group on the importance of probing deeper and considering the why, what and how of social policy evaluations in audit and accounts.
 - A session on understanding social accountability (tools) in public policy formulation as part of the *Workshop on Public Policy Formulation* (WPPF) for Director-level government officials in the Union Government at the Indian Institute of Secretariat Training and Management.
 - Finance Officers, Government of Odisha on the relevance of earmarking resources for children and child budgeting as a policy tool.
 - Planning secretaries on the changes in the state machinery, specifically looking at the role of the Planning Commission, its dismantling and the subsequent creation of the NITI Aayog.
 - Indian Civil Account Service (ICAS) probationers at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) on *Accountability Initiatives in Public Service Delivery* as part of the *Emerging Issues and Challenges in Public Finance and Policy*.
- Workshops for the next generation of development leaders were held at: Harvard EPoD Fellows; LAMP Fellows; Flame University; Young India Foundation, and the University of Delhi.
- *Hum Aur Humaari Sarkaar* learning program fostered institutional partnerships with: Pratham India to train their state-level staff based on their needs; Ibtada, an NGO operational in Rajasthan; and Nehru Yuva Kendra for their volunteers in Rajasthan.
- *Understanding State Capabilities learning* program was held for students of the University of Chicago Fellowship, and the Indian School of Development Management. The courses, conducted in English, explored the root causes of administrative and fiscal failures.
- Civil society engagement:
 - AI held sessions on the fundamentals of public policy with the international NGO, World Vision.
 - AI participated in a multi-national event organised by Community of Practitioners on Accountability and Social Action in Health (COPASAH), sharing ideas on building responsive governance.
 - As a panellist, AI staff shared insights on the adoption of technology in governance as part of a session organised by the Indian Institute of Public Administration, Delhi. The program included officers of All-India Services, Central Services, Defence Services, and the Technical Services.
 - AI contributed to a *Digital Dialogue Roundtable* held by Department of Information Technology, Government of Rajasthan, on the Jan Soochna Portal.
 - AI researchers were invited to participate in a colloquium organised by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA).

A group of six children, mostly of South Asian descent, are shown from the chest up. They are wearing school uniforms consisting of light blue shirts and dark blue vests. The children are smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a classroom setting. The text 'Contributing to Education Policy Debates' is overlaid in large white font on the left side of the image. On the right edge, there is a vertical text credit: 'Image Source: pixabay.com'.

Contributing to Education Policy Debates

- Kiran Bhatta worked on a research project on open government in education, which was part of an eight-country study sponsored by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) in Paris. This study involved evaluating social audits in education conducted in Delhi and Udaipur, Rajasthan.
- Bhatta also did research on the public-private divide in elementary education, the links between fascist regimes, privatisation, and the role of non-state actors in education. The first resulted in a research proposal on drawing the boundary between public and private in education, to be pursued at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris. The second led to a journal article for *International Sociology*, and the third to a proposal to write the South Asia Regional Report as part of the *Global Education Monitoring* (GEM) Report 2021, brought out by UNESCO.
- Bhatta was a member of the editorial team for the *Critical Issues in Education and Development* book series set up by the Open University, UK. She was also a member of the advisory group on the research project, *A Fair Chance for Education: Gendered Pathways to Educational Success in Haryana*, being undertaken by Warwick University, UK.
- Bhatta continued to serve on the advisory committee at NIEPA to formulate the policy research strategy for the institute. She is also a Member of the curriculum advisory committee at NIEPA to develop the curriculum for programs on education.
- Additionally, she organised and participated in several policy workshops around the draft NEP and provided inputs to members of the committee on the draft. She also lectured at the Ambedkar University and Jawaharlal Nehru University among others and published in the mainstream media. She has also participated in a number of seminars on education policy and state capacity in education.
- Bhatta authored an article titled, *The Numbers Game: Suggestions for Improving School Education Data*, published in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, highlighting how better data can improve public education in India. Yamini Aiyar authored an article titled, *Schooling is not Learning*, published in the same compendium, highlighting the learning crisis in the country.
- Jishnu Das co-authored an article titled, *Teacher Value Added in a Low-Income Country*, with Natalie Bau, published in the *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*. The article demonstrates the importance of teachers for learning as well as the variation between teachers in their 'value-added'. Das also worked on the study, *Upping the Ante: The Equilibrium Effects of Unconditional Grants to Private Schools*, forthcoming in *The American Economic Review*.



Land Rights in India

Image Source: landportal.org

CPR's Land Rights Initiative (LRI) completed five years in 2019. Credited with pioneering land rights research in the policy space, LRI's milestone year witnessed important research outputs, extensive policy engagements, stakeholder consultations, and the development of national and international research collaborations.

Understanding Land Conflict

- Namita Wahi wrote a piece on *Understanding Land Conflict in India: Suggestions for Reform* for CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, outlining legislative, administrative, and judicial factors responsible for land conflict. She also wrote an op-ed summarising some of the key findings of the paper.

Land Acquisition in India

- LRI's report, *Land Acquisition in India: A Review of Supreme Court cases from 1950 to 2016*, the first ever comprehensive study of all Supreme Court cases on land acquisition, was cited by the Solicitor General before a constitutional bench of the Supreme Court deciding between competing interpretations of Section 24 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013. Namita Wahi advised various senior advocates appearing on behalf of landowners on the law of land acquisition, and findings from the research study.
- For the second year, Wahi lectured in a training program organised by the National Institute for Defence Estates Management (NIDEM) on the law and practice of land acquisition in India.
- Wahi also participated in workshops on land acquisition and land disputes organised by the Centre for Rural Studies (CRS) at the Lal Bahadur Sastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA).

Land Rights in Scheduled Areas

- Namita Wahi served as an expert advisor to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes on a report prepared for the Commission on *Tribal Land Alienation in India*.

- Wahi participated in a national seminar organised by the Dr Ram Dayal Munda Tribal Welfare Research Institute in Ranchi to help draft a Jharkhand Tribal Sub Plan Law. At the seminar, she presented research from the report, *The Legal Regime and Political Economy of Land Rights of Scheduled Tribes in Scheduled Areas of India*, which she co-authored with Ankit Bhatia. Wahi and Bhatia also presented research from the report at the *Tribal Leadership Programme* organised by Tata Steel in Panchgani, and at *Samvaad* 2019, a tribal conclave organised by TATA Steel in Jamshedpur, respectively.
- Wahi presented findings at a discussion organised by the National Human Rights Commission on *Securing Tribal Rights through PESA: Issues, Challenges and Way Forward*.

The Right to Property

- Namita Wahi worked on her forthcoming book manuscript, *The History of the Right to Property in India*, for which she was awarded the New India Fellowship, 2018.
- Wahi was also a discussant for a World Bank discussion on *Women's Land Rights in the Context of Agriculture and Women Economic Empowerment Interventions*.



◀ Land Rights Initiative team at India Land and Development Conference 2020

(L-R) Vrinda Bhardwaj, Ankit Bhatia, Aakansha Jain, Namita Wahi, Kaustuv Debiswas, Sanjana Sethi

New Areas of Research

- LRI co-organised the fourth *India Land and Development Conference (ILDC)*, where it hosted two panels which outlined its future projects – Data Analytics for Legal Texts (DALTON) and Mapping India Land Laws (MILL):

DALTON: LRI hosted a panel discussion on *Accessing Justice: Deciphering Decisions through Data Analytics*, at which Namita Wahi, Kaustuv DeBiswas and Ankit Bhatia showcased preliminary findings from their pilot project on using machine learning to analyse legal texts in order to speed up legal analysis and enable more comprehensive, cross cutting studies on legal databases.

MILL: At ILDC, LRI also hosted a masterclass, *One Thousand Land Laws: From Archive to Architecture*, where Wahi, DeBiswas, and Aakansha Jain, gave a preview of a forthcoming interactive web portal featuring the most comprehensive repository of land laws in India. Wahi, Bhatia, Jain, and Avaneendra Khare conducted extensive archival and field research for collecting land laws, and understanding the social and political context within which these laws operate in the states of Gujarat, Jharkhand, and Punjab.

- Wahi also participated in a webinar on *Building Land Information Ecosystem in India*, organised by Land Portal at ILDC.
- Further, DeBiswas and Jain participated in a pre-conference event, *Geospatial Round Table on Land Tenure*.



LRI team conducting fieldwork in Gujarat



National and International Research Collaborations



Namita Wahi and Aakansha Jain at Bergen Exchanges, at the roundtable on "Indigenous Rights as Political Tools - Struggles over Land and Identity"

- International Partnerships for Excellent Education and Research (INTPART) Collaboration: Pursuant to the INTPART collaboration between LRI and the Centre on Law and Social Transformation, University of Bergen (LawTransform), Namita Wahi spent three months in Bergen teaching and developing research collaborations with researchers at the University of Bergen, and Chr. Michelsen Institute where she is a Visiting Fellow. Wahi lectured on *The Right to Land and Indigenous Rights* in the PhD program on *Effects of Lawfare*, and led a group of PhD scholars in developing their research proposals. Aakansha Jain participated in the PhD program, and wrote a research paper titled, *Understanding Left Wing Extremism in the Context of Lack of Effective Political Representation of Scheduled Tribes in India*. Wahi and Jain also participated in the Bergen Exchanges, a week-long scholarly exchange organised by Siri Gloppen and Malcolm Langford, Co-Directors of LawTransform. Wahi chaired, and Jain participated in a roundtable on *Indigenous Rights as Political Tools - Struggles over Land and Identity*. Jain also participated in a roundtable on *Innovative Teaching on Law and Social Change: Student Perspective*.
- Centre for Rural Studies (CRS), LBSNAA: CPR and CRS, LBSNAA signed an MoU and entered into a research collaboration that recognises both CPR and CRS as centres of excellence, and enables them to design trainings, research programs, seminars and workshops, and to disseminate research on areas of shared interest. Wahi and Yamini Aiyar are the two representatives of CPR on the core committee to execute this research collaboration.
- Property Rights Research Consortium: LRI is part of a four-institution research consortium supported by the Omidyar Network, which includes the Brookings Institute, the National Institute for Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), and the National Council for Applied Economic Research's (NCAER) Land Policy Initiative. The LRI team comprising of Namita Wahi, Ankit Bhatia, Aakansha Jain, and Sanjana Sethi, outlined its *Vision 2022* with respect to its research projects on DALTON and MILL at the consortium. Wahi is on the Advisory Committee of NCAER's Land Policy Initiative and has advised them on the making of the *National Land Records and Services Index, 2020*. She has been a discussant for NIPFP's paper, *Legislative strategy to amend the Hindu Succession Act*, and has participated in a roundtable organised by Brookings Institute on *Critical Connectivity Infrastructure Projects: Accelerating Land Acquisition Abroad to Enhance India's Regional Connectivity*.
- Stanford Law School: Wahi developed a research collaboration with the *Rule of Law program* at the Stanford Law School led by Erik Jensen, pursuant to which she helped Dinsha Mistree, Research Fellow and Lecturer at the program, to organise the *Global Poverty, Corruption and the Law: India Field Study*. Wahi gave a lecture on *Comparative Fundamentals of the Indian and US legal system*, and Rahul Verma lectured on Indian politics at the program.

The image shows the front cover and the title page of the Constitution of India. The cover is dark blue with a large, ornate gold border. In the center, the words "CONSTITUTION OF INDIA" are written in gold, with the State Emblem of India below it. The title page is white with a gold border and contains the text of the Preamble and the opening of the Constitution.

Social and Economic Rights

- Namita Wahi wrote a research paper titled, *Social and Economic rights and Distributive Justice: Land and Health Care* based on a summer course she taught at the Academy of European Law, European University Institute in 2018. The paper will be part of a forthcoming volume to be published by Oxford University Press.
- Wahi participated in the eighth meeting of the International Social and Economic Rights Programme (ISERP), co-organised by the Northeastern University Law School and the Free State Centre for Human Rights, Free State University, Bloemfontein, South Africa.
- Wahi presented a paper, *Litigating Right to Water in India*, at a panel on *Elevating Water Rights to Human Rights: Has it Strengthened Marginalised People's claim to Water* at the annual meeting of the Law and Society Association, Washington DC. Wahi participated in a roundtable on the topic as part of the *Natural Resources and Climate Lawfare* cluster at the Bergen Exchanges. Further, Wahi and Arkaja Singh also participated in a book workshop on this project, where Wahi presented her paper on *Litigating Right to Water in India* and Singh presented her paper, *The Right to Water in Indian Cities: Negotiation, Tactics and Law*. Singh will be co-editing this forthcoming book.
- Wahi participated in deliberations and drafting of arguments with lawyers representing petitioners challenging the constitutional validity of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.



State Capacity

In 2019, CPR launched the State Capacity Initiative, a new interdisciplinary research and practice program focused on addressing the challenges of the 21st-century Indian state. Through the Initiative, CPR aims to place the critical challenges of building state capacity at the heart of the field of policy research in the country, where it has always belonged but remains surprisingly marginalised. The Initiative's work focuses on the changing roles of the Indian state; institutional design, implementation and administrative capacity; local bureaucracies and frontline functionaries; the particular challenges of regulatory and fiscal capacity; and the complex and changing relations between society, politics, and state capacity in India.

In its first year, the State Capacity Initiative has focused on building a core team and developing a program of work in partnerships with a range of individuals and organisations.

- The team is multidisciplinary with a range of professional skills and diverse sectoral experience and expertise. Researchers are trained in law, economics, anthropology, sociology, political science, statistics, engineering, public management, and public policy from leading Indian and global universities. They bring professional experience as academics, policy researchers, civil servants, engineers, consultants, development practitioners, lawyers, and grant managers.
- In 2019, two highly engaged brainstorming and partnership building workshops were led by Yamini Aiyar and Mekhala Krishnamurthy (Senior Fellow & Director of the Initiative), in New Delhi in April 2019, and at the London School of Economics (LSE) in September 2019. Both were attended by senior bureaucrats, public sector leaders, global funders and development institutions, and leading scholars in the field of state capacity. Both workshops generated collaborative ideation, project development, and major grant proposals.
- The Initiative is currently engaged in research on the moral economy of the bureaucracy, bureaucratic norms and organisational cultures; consultants; resource support structures and state capacity; the administrative life of the district and frontline functionaries of the Indian state; urbanisation and state capacity; and state capacity and the economy.
- Rahul Verma, Rahul Sharma, and Priyadarshini Singh conducted a survey during the Delhi Assembly Election 2020 to understand the effect of public goods provision on voting decisions. Preliminary findings were shared at a seminar held in February 2020.
- Rohit Chandra conducted an evaluation of the Ministry of Commerce's Trade Infrastructure for Export Scheme (TIES).

BIARI 2020



CPR's State Capacity Initiative and the Brown International Advanced Research Institutes (BIARI) based at Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Providence, United States, organised a week-long residential workshop in Delhi from January 8-14, 2020. BIARI is a unique platform that convenes early career participants across academic and professional fields working on pressing global issues around the world.

BIARI 2020, titled *Seeing the State: Unpacking the Challenge of State Capacity and Development*, was co-convened by Patrick Heller, Mekhala Krishnamurthy, and Yamini Aiyar. Distinguished international faculty from Brown University, CPR, and partner institutions in Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico, as well as leaders from the civil services and civil society conducted lectures and seminars at the workshop. Thirty early career and rising scholars participated from India, US, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, and South Africa.

BIARI 2020 focused on contemporary challenges of state capacity in India and the broader methodological approaches to study the state, particularly at the frontline. Thematic focus areas included the bureaucracy and administrative reforms; federal structures with a particular



focus on local governments; core welfare functions and emerging challenges facing the Indian state such as urbanisation and cultures; and practices and norms of the Indian state. A key objective of BIARI 2020 was to examine state capacity in India in a comparative international context. The program also aimed to encourage a wider set of researchers to study the state collaboratively, and through this, contribute to the currently thin body of empirical knowledge on how the Indian state works.

Key Events

The State Capacity Initiative launched a seminar series to bring both multi-disciplinary academic research and institutional learnings and diverse case studies from the field to a wider public audience. Seminars held in 2019-20 include:

- *Why Does the Indian State Both Succeed and Fail* by Devesh Kapur, Starr Foundation South Asia Studies Professor and Asia Programs Director at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University, Washington, DC (July 2019)
- *State Capacity for Cities: Staffing and Cadre Restructuring in Madhya Pradesh* by Neelesh Dubey, Deputy Director, Urban Administration and Development Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh (September 2019)
- *Bringing Voters to the Polling Booth: What can we learn from the Banda Model?* by Heera Lal, IAS, District Magistrate, Banda, Uttar Pradesh (October 2019)
- *Government at the Grassroots: A Case Study of Field Administration* by Rashmi Sharma, Former IAS Officer, Senior Fellow, ICRIER (November 2019)
- *Growth and State Capacity: Rules, Deals and Short and Long Run Effects* by Lant Pritchett, Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR, and RISE Research Director at the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford (November 2019)
- *Building Regulatory Capacity: The Experience of MahaRERA* by Gautam Chatterjee, Chairperson, Maharashtra Real Estate Regulatory Authority (December 2019)
- A panel discussion on *What Ails India's Statistical System ?* featuring Somesh Jha, Special Correspondent, Business Standard; Rukmini S, Data Journalist; and Pramit Bhattacharya, Data Editor, Mint; and moderated by Rahul Verma, Fellow, CPR (March 2020)

Design Support to States

- The Government of Meghalaya has entered into a three-year collaboration with CPR (State Capacity and the Accountability Initiatives) on budgets and public finance.
- Yamini Aiyar was appointed by the Government of Punjab to serve as a member of the Punjab State Advisory Council to aid and advise the State Government in defining and implementing transformation governance reforms.



▲ *Bringing Voters to the Polling Booth: What can we learn from the Banda Model?*



▲ *Building Regulatory Capacity: The Experience of MahaRERA*



▲ *A panel discussion on What Ails India's Statistical System ?*

Sensitising Policymakers

The Governance and Public Policy Initiative (GPPI) engaged with various Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members and other multi-party groups of political leaders focusing on a range of issues around social implications of technology and policy requirements in India. In this regard, during the 2019 Budget Session and the Winter Session, GPPI, in collaboration with the Omidyar Network, with participation from the Technology and Society (TechSoc) Initiative at CPR, held the following two roundtable discussions:



◀ Roundtable discussion on Artificial Intelligence: Social Impact and Implications

- Roundtable discussion on *Artificial Intelligence: Social Impact and Implications* in June 2019. This discussion examined how AI is being conceptualised and deployed to address persistent development challenges such as in healthcare, education, agriculture, infrastructure and mobility in India, and the current limitations of developing such AI systems. Monojit Choudhury, Researcher, Microsoft Research Lab; Urvashi Aneja, Founding Director, Tandem Research; Pooja Rao, R&D Head & Co-founder, Qure.ai; and Vikrom Mathur, Founding Director, Tandem Research explained various aspects and implications of AI in India, particularly in the health sector.



◀ Roundtable discussion on Regulating the 'Big Tech' (FB, Twitter & Others)

- Roundtable discussion on *Regulating the 'Big Tech' (FB, Twitter & Others)* in December 2019. This discussion aimed to address the implications of Big Tech and growing privacy concerns in the Indian context. Deepak Maheshwari, Director, Government Affairs, India, ASEAN & China, Symantec; Urvashi Aneja, Founding Director, Tandem Research; and Smitha Krishna Prasad, Associate Director, Centre for Communication Governance, National Law University, Delhi discussed the growing 'tech-lash' against Big Tech companies for their growing market capture and political and social influence, particularly in influencing voter behavior. The TechSoc Initiative also prepared a primer on the issue of Pegasus, a mobile phone spyware which is known to be used by governments for snooping and surveillance. The brief highlighted the recommendations by the United Nations (UN) in addition to the immediate moratorium placed by the UN on the sale, transfer and use of surveillance technology until human rights-compliant regulatory frameworks are in place.



Technology, Law and Society

Image Source: indiatoday.in

- During the Winter Session of Parliament, the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 was introduced. Following the introduction, comments were invited from stakeholders, civil society organisations and individuals. The TechSoc Initiative at CPR made submissions on certain fundamental issues with some of the policy choices and specific provisions in the Bill. These were classified under three broad types of implications: rights and fairness; trade and innovation; and lack of regulatory vision.
- The TechSoc Initiative launched a new series on *Navigating Interactions between Technology and Policy*. The focus audience for this series includes Legislative Assistants to Members of Parliament (LAMP) fellows, parliamentary aides and others directly involved with law and policymaking in India. The following two workshops were organised:
 - The first workshop, *Privacy in the Times of Live, Constant and Mass Data Processing*, shed light on critical aspects of informational privacy. Lalit Panda, Research

Fellow at Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, discussed the fundamentals of privacy, focusing on the need for sui generis protection and the tools required to offer such protection. Nehaa Chaudhari, Public Policy Lead at Ikigai Law, detailed the regulatory structures and compliance and enforcement regime envisaged under the draft Personal Data Protection Bill, 2018. Smriti Parsheera, Fellow at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, deep-dived into facial recognition technologies to present her insights.



- The second workshop, *Regulating Emerging Technologies and Digital Businesses*, focussed on emerging technologies and related regulatory frameworks. Akhilesh Tilotia, former Officer-on-Special Duty to the Minister of State for Civil Aviation, shed light on the debates around drone regulations in India. Arjun Sinha, a legal and policy consultant to multiple e-commerce businesses, provided an overview of the e-commerce regulations in India. Shantanu Sharma, President of Blockchain Chamber of Commerce (India Chapter), addressed the regulatory issues surrounding blockchain technology, bitcoins and cryptocurrencies.



Workshop: *Privacy in the Times of Live, Constant and Mass Data Processing*



Workshop: *Regulating Emerging Technologies and Digital Businesses*

- Ananth Padmanabhan authored a working paper, *Civilian Drones: Privacy Challenges and Potential Resolution*, as part of the New America US-India Public Interest Technologies Fellowship 2019. The paper examines the privacy implications of drones in civilian airspaces. Padmanabhan made a presentation on the same subject at the *Global Technology Summit*, organised by Carnegie India in Bangalore.
- Kankshi Agarwal was a panellist at a discussion organised as part of the *How Safe is your Harbour? Discussions on intermediary liability and user rights* event organised by the Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore.

India's Political Economy

Image Source: thedailybeast.com

The Politics Team at CPR provides high quality research to understand the changes taking place in India's democracy at this critical juncture of our history. The team aims to become a pre-eminent hub of political research that both informs and shapes the discussions taking place around politics in the country.

- The team is led by Rahul Verma and features Neelanjan Sircar and Gilles Verniers, both of whom are also Assistant Professors at Ashoka University. This year, the team inducted four new Research Associates— Talha Rashid, Ankita Barthwal, Asim Ali, and Jatin Rajani. All members of the team regularly contribute to the media through commentaries in leading dailies such as *Hindustan Times*, *Indian Express*, *ThePrint India*, *Scroll.in*, *Firstpost* etc. They also appeared on various television debates, shaping opinions around key political issues.



◀ Members of the team shaped public debate on politics in India.

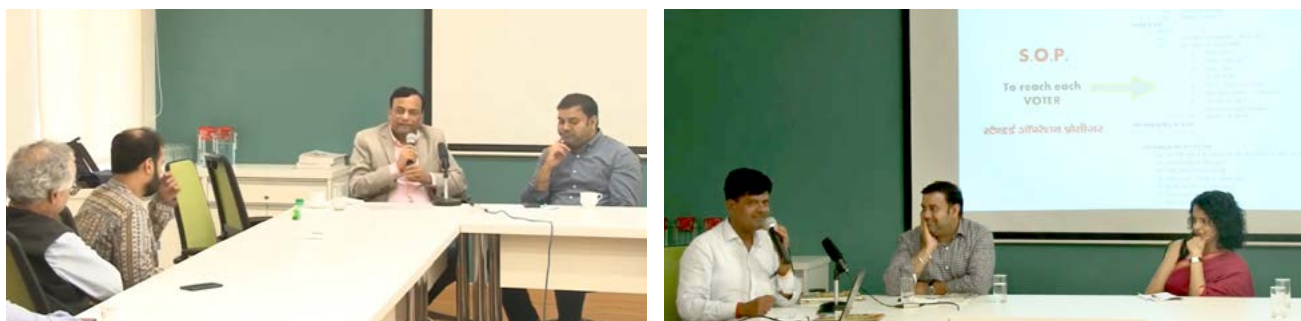
- The team organised five closed-door roundtable discussions on various themes related to Indian politics, attended by leading academicians, journalists, activists, and politicians. These roundtables aimed to create a wider community that can engage in free-flowing discussions on key questions.
- Discussions on assembly elections in Maharashtra, Haryana, Jharkhand, and Delhi were organised, offering timely and high-quality data-driven analysis. The team also held a briefing on the Delhi elections for the foreign press corps and the diplomatic community, expanding its institutional network of relationships.

The team offered data-driven analysis on assembly elections.



- The team organised monthly panel and book discussions that brought together academicians, policymakers, political practitioners, and civil society actors. These discussions aim to provide a forum for intellectually rigorous, non-partisan commentary to strengthen public discourse on Indian politics. The *CPR-Trivedi Centre for Political Data (Ashoka University) Dialogues on Indian Politics* series continued this year. The book discussions organised included – Jennifer Bussell's *Clients & Constituents*; Amit Ahuja's *Mobilizing the Marginalized: Ethnic Parties without Ethnic Movements*; Philippe Van Parijs' *Basic Income: A Radical Proposal for a Free Society and a Sane Economy*, among others.

Regular discussions brought together a range of stakeholders.



- With support from partner organisations like Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS), the team is expanding its research interests to fill existing gaps in the understanding of Indian politics. CPR in collaboration with PRAMAN is in the process of assembling an edited volume that seeks to provide a new lens to understand Dalit politics in the new millennium. Research is also ongoing on the importance of political manifestos, nature and forms of student politics in the country, the political representation of religious minorities at the grassroots, and the emerging ideological framework of India's political system.

Analysing the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections

- The team has emerged as a central hub of electoral analysis in the country. To analyse the result of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections and the factors that led to the election verdict, an event titled, *How India Voted: Making Sense of the 2019 General Election* was organised. Rahul Verma and Neelanjan Sircar made a presentation based on Election Commission data. This was followed by a panel discussion featuring Yogendra Yadav, National President, Swaraj India; Shekhar Gupta, Founder, ThePrint India; Tariq Thachil, Associate Professor of Political Science, Vanderbilt University; Vandita Mishra, National Opinion Editor, Indian Express; G Sampath, Social Affairs Editor, The Hindu; and was moderated by Yamini Aiyar, President and Chief Executive, CPR.



Left to right: Shekhar Gupta, Founder, ThePrint India; Vandita Mishra, National Opinion Editor, Indian Express; Yamini Aiyar, President and Chief Executive, CPR; Tariq Thachil, Associate Professor of Political Science, Vanderbilt University; G Sampath, Social Affairs Editor, The Hindu; and Yogendra Yadav, National President, Swaraj India

- The *Election Adda* event series, launched in March 2019, continued to shed light on key issues that dominated the Lok Sabha elections. The themes of some of these discussions include, *Modi & Millennials: Who will India's Young Voter Choose?*; *2019 Elections and the Future of the Indian Party System*; *An Uncertain Future – What the 2019 Elections mean for the Future of the Congress Party*; *Inside the BJP's Election Machine* and more.



The Election Adda series was live-streamed on social media.

- The team organised the August 2019 issue of *Seminar Magazine* on how India voted. The issue featured transcripts of CPR's event on the results of the elections and the *Election Adda* discussion on the future of the Congress party. Further, it featured articles by Rahul Verma, Neelanjan Sircar, Gilles Verniers and other prominent names in academia and journalism.
- Rahul Verma and Pradeep Chhibber published an article titled, *Rise of the Second Dominant Party System in India: BJP's New Social Coalition in 2019*. The article shed light on how the BJP attracted new voters in the 2019 elections and has contributed to the framework for many contentious discussions on contemporary politics.



Book discussion on 2019: *How Modi Won India* by Rajdeep Sardesai

- The team organised a book discussion on 2019: *How Modi Won India* by Rajdeep Sardesai featuring the author; Pradeep Chhibber, Professor of Political Science, University of California, Berkeley; Rahul Verma, Fellow, CPR; and Yamini Aiyar, President and Chief Executive, CPR.



India's Democracy and Political Legacy

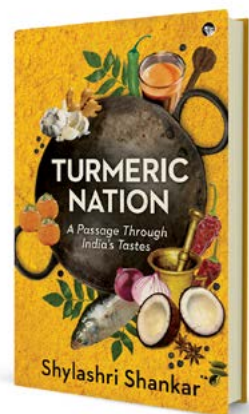
Image Source: thewire.in

- Currently on a sabbatical, Rajshree Chandra worked on the manuscript of the political biography of her grandfather, Sri Jagat Narain Lal – member of the Constituent Assembly, member of the first Linguistic Reorganisation Committee, poet, writer, scholar, professor of economics, and one of India's founding fathers. The first draft of the book will ready by August 2020. Chandra also continued to write in popular newspapers like *The Wire*, *Indian Express*, *Mint*, commenting on a host of contemporary social issues.
- Shylashri Shankar published two essays in *Open, the Magazine*, which is part of a monograph on the roots of India's attitude to democracy. In *The Shifting attitudes of Indian democracy*, she tackled the question – how to understand how Indians think about democracy when over 50% of those surveyed approve of authoritarian rule, and direct and representative democracy. In the essay, *How democratic processes damage citizenship rights*, she analysed the debate on the Citizenship Amendment Act-National Register of Citizens combine, to show how the fulfilling of election promises end up damaging the rights of Muslim minorities in India.
- Shylashri Shankar wrote a chapter, *Using Storytelling Techniques in the Legal Process: The Counter-Story of Adivasis challenging 'Encounter' Killings*, in Fiona Anciano and Joanna Wheeler edited *Broken Promises? Rethinking political values and resistance in post-colonial developmental states* (Routledge, forthcoming).
- Shylashri Shankar co-led the theme on *Political Subjectivities, Hope and Storytelling at the Margins* at a workshop on *Rethinking Citizenship* at York University in June 2019. The multi-disciplinary discussions at the workshop helped prepare a collaborative research proposal on the theme. Scholars from the UK, Canada, South Africa, Brazil and India participated in it.

Identity, Cuisine and Place

Image Source: ndtv.com

- Shylashri Shankar submitted the final manuscript of her forthcoming book, *Turmeric Nation: A Passage Through India's Tastes* (Speaking Tiger, 2020). The book examines questions such as – how do we talk about 'Indian' identity in connection with food? Do we, Indians, have a sense of collective self when it comes to cuisine? Or did the hierarchy of the caste structure and the social control exercised by the higher castes create barriers to culinary exchanges? It explores the annals of history, archaeology, anthropology, science and literature to discover how and why what we eat influences and shapes who we are. The book examines the creation and re-creation of mosaic bundles of food identities for different groups and regions and in different eras in India. The picture that emerges is one where identities are constantly being transformed in these encounters. The book draws on her monthly column in *Open, the Magazine* on how the way we think about food shapes different facets of our identity, including our sense of family, nation, religion, leisure, and class.
- Shylashri Shankar also wrote a chapter on maps and cultural memories in the old city of Hyderabad for her next book manuscript provisionally titled, *Memoir of a Walled City*. It explores questions such as – if some types of memories pass down generations, such as violence like riots or Partition, what sort of identity do they draw? How did settlement patterns change for religious groups? It juxtaposes three maps – 1914 (Leonard Munn), 1986 (Ratna Naidu), 2016 - of Hyderabad's original boundaries (now the Old City) and explores questions of cultural memory. The 2016 map is based on a survey conducted by her team, supplemented by her interviews with residents over ten years.





Urbanisation

Rapid urbanisation presents new and substantial challenges, ranging from governance and citizenship to infrastructure, housing, and the environment.

CPR engages with the process of urban transition in India from many perspectives, working to understand how urbanisation is evolving, how it is managed, and how it affects people's engagement with the state.

Urban Governance

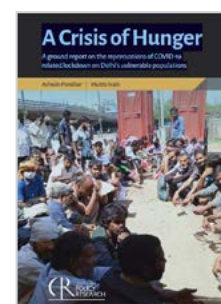
Image Source: outlookindia.com

CPR works on governance issues at various scales, viz. metropolitan, small towns and urban neighbourhoods.

- Outputs from a three-year collaborative study with the JustJobs Network (JJN) on the role of small cities in the employment of migrant youth in India and Indonesia were released on a dedicated website, <https://smallcitydreaming.org>. In-depth case reports on Mangalore, Karnataka and Kishangarh, Rajasthan offered insights into labour market structures and experiences as well as governance arrangements in non-metro urban centres, which impact migration pathways. CPR researchers also engaged with governance challenges and frameworks for settlements that are transitioning from rural to urban, highlighting the need to think about rural-urban continuities.
- In late 2019, the Government of India announced a process for regularisation of unauthorised colonies in Delhi and providing titles to their residents, following the passage of a law by Parliament. Building on work on metropolitan governance, CPR researchers analysed the new legal framework and conducted research on the impact of regularisation on the ground and the quality of life of people living in these colonies.
- As part of the *Tacit Urban Research Network (TURN)* project, CPR researchers worked with peers from the Indian Institute of Human Settlements, Bengaluru (IIHS), the Hyderabad Urban Labs (HUL) and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai (TISS) on a number of comparative enquiries on informality and knowledge structures in urban India. Researchers actively participated in a series of workshops, which reflected on themes like the role of the state, theoretical frameworks for exploring tacit phenomena, and methodology.
- CPR continued its close engagement with the *Main Bhi Dilli* campaign, a civil society initiative to increase public participation in the process of preparing the Master Plan for Delhi 2041. Researchers participated in multiple deliberations and contributed to the preparation of thematic fact-sheets covering various chapters of the master plan, basis which a consultation with the Delhi Development Authority and the National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA) – which is preparing the plan – was organised in Delhi in November 2019.



- Marie-Hélène Zérah authored a book titled, *Quand l'Inde s'urbanise: Paradoxes et diversité d'un urbanisme bricolé*, published by Editions de l'Aube. The book paints an uncompromising portrait of the paradoxes of an urbanising India, paying attention to large metropolises as well as urbanised villages, passing through medium-sized cities.
- Partha Mukhopadhyay, Mukta Naik, Sama Khan, Shamindra Nath Roy and Eesha Kunduri contributed to CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, analysing various issues of urban governance such as the 73rd and 74th Amendment, regularisation of unauthorised urban industrial areas and migration as a means to reboot the economy.
- The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown threw up sudden and extensive governance and service delivery challenges, especially in big cities. CPR researchers documented issues faced by migrant workers and other marginalised groups on the ground, engaged with government and civil society initiatives and provided policy inputs and guidance. Ashwin Parulkar and Mukta Naik authored a report titled, *A Crisis of Hunger: A ground report on the repercussions of COVID-19 related lockdown on Delhi's vulnerable populations*.



Urban Economy

- The participation of women in the urban workforce is an emerging area of research. Shamindra Nath Roy and Partha Mukhopadhyay co-authored a working paper analysing the numbers behind India's falling female labour force participation. A version of this paper was earlier published as a chapter in Oxfam India's report, *Mind the Gap: The state of employment in India*.
- The Lok Sabha elections in 2019 provided an opportunity for CPR researchers to engage with the interface between larger policy issues around the economy and more localised issues of urbanisation and urban labour markets.

Image Source: thewire.in

Urban Services

Image Source: www.indiafellow.org

The Scaling City Institutions for India (SCI-FI) initiative deepened work around water and sanitation and expanded to new research areas related to land, housing and planning.

Water and Sanitation

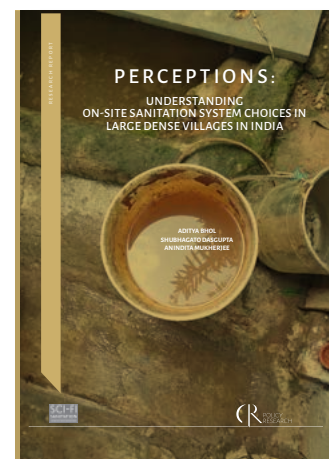
- This year, the SCI-FI initiative successfully completed *Project Nirmal* in Odisha. Through enabling institutional and financial arrangements and increased private sector participation, the project has demonstrated sustainable sanitation service delivery in small towns (Angul and Dhenkanal), leading to increased household coverage. The one of its kind community mobilisation model gave directions to the State Government to adopt the same in 114 other Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and to upscale Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) services. The key processes and learning outcomes of *Project Nirmal* were consolidated in the form of eight notes for wider dissemination.



Under Project Nirmal, a Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant in Angul, Odisha with 18 KLD capacity was developed, the trial run for which was a success. The plant is going to be commissioned post the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

- CPR researchers compiled a *Compendium of Best Practices on Community Engagement on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)* that includes primary research, a desk review and case studies from Angul and Dhenkanal. The compendium also includes case studies of other states by Water Aid, the Centre for Advocacy and Research and Ernst and Young.

- CPR researchers explored the nuances of the prevalence of on-site sanitation systems in large and dense villages of India, showing that households in large and dense villages including Census Towns, exhibit a preference for septic tanks. The report titled, *Perceptions: Understanding On-Site Sanitation System Choices in Large Dense Villages in India*, also revealed that of all the toilets in a nationally representative survey, 26% were twin pits – underscoring the compelling need to safely manage faecal waste beyond the household-level unit, integrating planning for contiguous urban and rural areas.
- CPR researchers continued to engage with research and policy inputs on the living and working conditions of sanitation workers, and the need to enforce legal protections more strictly. Shubhagato Dasgupta and Arkaja Singh analysed the plight of manual scavengers in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium.
- CPR researchers undertook a study to understand content consumption patterns of the urban poor – especially women – looking at Over The Top (OTT) content through household surveys in six cities (Delhi, Jaipur, Coimbatore, Guwahati, Pune, and Kolkata). The study was used to examine the success and potential of using OTT platforms versus traditional ones for information and education campaigns of government programs like the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).
- CPR also turned its attention to the issue of water security. Researchers developed a framework to understand the nation's water crisis and identify the role of domestic wastewater treatment and FSM for enhancing water security. The study also developed the broad contours of an integrated water program for urban India.

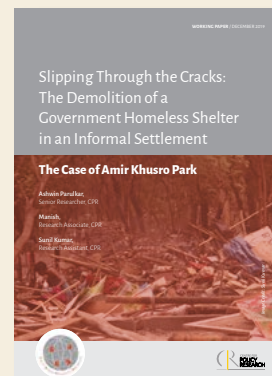
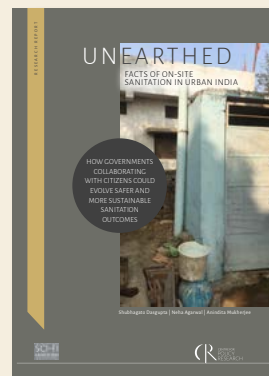


Land, Planning and Housing

- CPR is working towards creating an institutional space for research on the complex correlation between land tenure security and the different social, economic, and political aspects of human life. CPR has been supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) India to conduct primary research on the linkages between land rights and housing for the urban poor in Odisha and Kerala. Further, researchers are also documenting the learnings from the implementation of the beneficiary led construction/enhancement vertical under the *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana* (PMAY) in these states.
- GIZ India is also supporting the SCI-FI initiative to conduct research on the relationship between economic growth and demand for housing and basic services in secondary cities through an assessment of vulnerability and urban distress.
- CPR started work on the *India Housing Report*, an online archive and periodic report that brings together the rich but disparate analytical work on housing in India, weaving together key debates on housing affordability, adequacy, technology, finance and tenure with ongoing urban transformations. The archive and associated report seek to catalyse a debate on current issues and explore new directions to study housing and its complexities, intersections and novelties.
- CPR researchers continued to work on urban homelessness in Delhi, examining the role of homeless shelters and labour markets. Besides ethnographic and quantitative documentation, researchers engaged with litigation on housing, and living conditions of workers, and conducted fieldwork at the sites of two large industrial fires that occurred in the city during the year.

Other Select Publications

- Mukta Naik authored an article titled, *Negotiation, mediation and subjectivities: how migrant renters experience informal rentals in Gurgaon's urban villages*, published in the *Radical Housing Journal*. The article focuses on the experience of low-income migrant renters in the informal rental markets that are controlled and managed by village landlords.
- Sama Khan authored an article titled, *Understanding the Smart Cities Mission in India*, published in the *Hitachi Souken Journal*. The article studies the execution of the Smart Cities Mission and compares it with other urban schemes like the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission.
- Anju Dwivedi and Ranjita Mohanty co-authored an article titled, *Culture and Sanitation in Small Towns: An Ethnographic Study of Angul and Dhenkanal in Odisha*, published in the *Economic and Political Weekly*. The article decodes the cultural determinants of sanitation.
- Philippe Cullet, Lovleen Bhullar and Sujith Koonan studied Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM) in three Indian states (Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Odisha). The studies mapped the legal and regulatory framework governing sanitation, examined its' various issues, and suggested opportunities for regulatory reform.
- Shubhagato Dasgupta, Neha Agarwal and Anindita Mukherjee co-authored a report titled, *Unearthed - Facts of On-Site Sanitation in Urban India*. The study is a novel attempt to systematically analyse the state of on-site sanitation in urban India through a sample survey of 3000 households and more than 50 key informant-interviews across ten cities in four states.
- Ashwin Parulkar, Manish and Sunil Kumar co-authored a working paper titled, *Slipping Through the Cracks: The Demolition of a Government Homeless Shelter in an Informal Settlement - The Case of Amir Khusro Park*. The study aims to understand the factors that make homeless shelters in Delhi vulnerable to government sanctioned demolition and eviction and the overarching implications of the demolition in the Amir Khusro Park on other shelters in the city.
- Shubhagato Dasgupta, Anindita Mukherjee and Aparna Das co-authored a paper titled, *State of Urban Poor Rental Housing in India and Emerging Policy Trends*, for the *World Bank Land and Poverty Conference 2020*. The paper reviews the evolution of housing policies since independence and shows that the emphasis on rental housing has not been a central part of housing programs to date.
- Anindita Mukherjee, Aparna Das and Baisakhi Sarkar Dhar co-authored a paper titled, *Can the Revenue Department Remain Urban Agnostic in India?* for the *World Bank Land and Poverty Conference 2020*. The paper argues for a reimagination of the Revenue and Registration Departments in order to achieve the full potential of land titling programs.
- Véronique Dupont and Éric Denis co-authored an article titled, *Identifying and Counting of Slums in Indian Cities: From the Colonial Beginnings to the Multiplication of Measures since Independence*, published in *Histoire et Mesure*. The article analyses the emergence of the slum category in colonial India through two contrasting cases of the metropolises of Delhi and Chennai.
- Véronique Dupont and Shankare Gowda co-authored an article titled, *Slum-free city planning versus durable slums: Insights from Delhi, India*, published in the *International Journal of Sustainable Urban Development*. The article brings a challenging perspective to slum studies in Delhi by contrasting the attempts at 'slum-free city planning' (referring to housing programs for the urban poor) with the 'durability' of certain slum settlements.
- CPR scholars regularly wrote in leading media platforms such as the *Indian Express*, *ThePrint India*, *The Wire*, *Hindustan Times*, analysing issues of urbanisation, urban governance and sanitation.





Policy Engagement

Image Source: todayonline.com

Multilateral

- CPR researchers were involved in advising the Asian Development Bank on the theme chapter of *the Asian Development Outlook 2019 on Fostering Growth and Inclusion in Asia's Cities*.

Centre

- Shubhagato Dasgupta, Anindita Mukherjee and Anju Dwivedi presented emerging findings from the study on developing an Integrated Urban Water Management (IUWM) program for the country to the Joint Secretary, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT).
- Anju Dwivedi and Anindita Mukherjee met the Advisor (SDE&MU), NITI Aayog to brief him about the work related to urban sanitation and FSM undertaken by the SCI-FI initiative at CPR. Further, Shubhagato Dasgupta, Anju Dwivedi and Neha Agarwal met with the Joint Advisor and Advisor, Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), to shed light on the same.
- Anindita Mukherjee, Aditya Bhol and Neha Agarwal met with the Deputy Director General, at the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, to discuss possible changes in the proposed Census 2021 questionnaire to account for FSM.
- Neha Agarwal met officials of the Delhi Jal Board to discuss their interventions for the eradication of manual scavenging under the Small Scale Sustainable Infrastructure Development Fund (S3IDF).
- The SCI-FI team met with the Additional Secretary (Water), Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS), to discuss the water use challenges in rural and peri-urban areas in the wake of the Ministry's focus on providing universal access to all rural households.

- CPR researchers engaged intensively with the MoHUA, post the formation of a new government, to explore the reorganisation of central support to urbanisation, through improved integration of schemes and more outcome-based support to local bodies. They were also involved in mentoring the inaugural group of Smart City Fellows at the MoHUA.
- CPR researchers are part of an advisory group working with the Managing Urbanisation vertical at NITI Aayog on their visioning document, looking at urbanisation in 2035 and 2047, within the broad framework of national objectives.

State

- CPR has been supporting the Housing and Urban Development Department, Government of Odisha through technical advice in the areas of land, housing and planning. Key areas of advisory support include legislative changes for land and budget earmarking for the urban poor, preventing slum proliferation in the city, and comments on the draft Zero Slum Behrampur Plan.
- Based on the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) plans of Angul and Dhenkanal FSTPs, a sustainable FSM plan was developed for Odisha, comparing models of Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, and Dhenkanal FSTPs. Various recommendations on models, including operational and financial were proposed to the Principal Secretary and Odisha Water Supply and Sewerage Board (OWSSB) officials to ensure efficient FSM delivery in the state.
- CPR engaged extensively with the Department of Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water (PRDWD), Government of Odisha for drafting the Odisha Rural Sanitation Policy 2020, kicking off the process through a conception meeting with Roopa Mishra, Director, PRDWD; UNICEF, and partner organisations in January 2019. Over the course of the year, a number of consultations were held with D K Singh, Principal Secretary and Director, PRDWD, along with the members of the state-level project management unit and UNICEF to receive feedback on and review the draft policy. The final draft of the policy was submitted to the State Government in February 2020. CPR is also supporting the department in piloting two modes of sanitation service delivery for rural areas in Dhenkanal district, with the objectives of leveraging available urban FSTPs to safely manage faecal sludge.

Local

- Working closely with Udaipur Municipal Corporation (UMC) to streamline the FSSM value chain for the city, CPR scaled up its effort in strengthening capacities of ULBs, especially on developing O&M models, sustaining FSM services and organising information, education and communication activities. A number of consultations have been carried out with district officials and other stakeholders in the past year to discuss the funding arrangements for the upcoming FSTP. CPR researchers also participated in site visits to successful projects in Vadodara, Gujarat and Wai, Maharashtra.



Public Engagement

Image Source: thewire.in

- Anju Dwivedi, Ambarish Karunanithi and Prashant Arya presented on *Designing and Implementing FSSM Policies and Strategies in Small Cities* and on *Private Sector Participation in Sanitation Value Chain* at the SFD Week organised by the Centre for Science and Environment in April 2019 in Nimli, Rajasthan.
- Mukta Naik presented her work on informal rentals and migrant housing at the India China Institute, New School, New York in April 2019.
- Marie-Hélène Zérah presented on *Exceptional governance structures at the heart of the SCM: an evaluation of Special Purpose Vehicles* at a workshop titled, *How sustainable are India's Smart Cities?* at the Centre for Indian and South Asian Studies (CEIAS), Paris, in May 2019.
- Anju Dwivedi was invited as a speaker in the National Conclave on *Institutionalising Gender-Responsive Sanitation* organised by the Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) in June 2019.
- Véronique Dupont and Shankare Gowda presented their paper on *Construction and deconstruction of the neighbourhood's idea: Kathputli Colony, a 'slum' in Delhi, through outsiders' eyes and as revealed by the ecology of local action* at the International Convention for Asian Scholars (ICAS11), in the panel on *Neighbourhoods and the city* in Leiden, The Netherlands in July 2019.
- At the same conference, Mukta Naik presented two papers titled, *It's complicated! Articulating 'the urban' through migrant experiences in small cities in India and Indonesia* and *At the receiving end: How small cities in India and Indonesia reconcile top-down investments with localised policymaking*.
- Mukta Naik taught a session on *Thinking through housing demand* at a Faculty Development Program at Apeejay School of Architecture and Planning, Greater Noida, in July 2019.
- Kanhu Charan Pradhan presented a paper titled, *Does state border matter in migration in India?* at the YSI Asia Convening 2019 in Hanoi, Vietnam, in August 2019.
- Marie-Hélène Zérah presented on *Following the panels: a bottom up lens to see urban changes in the peripheries of Delhi* as well as a paper titled, *New Powers for Cities: Are India's Smart Cities transitioning to low-carbon energy*, co-authored with Ankit Bhardwaj at the Royal Geographical Society-Institute of British Geographers 2019 Conference in London, UK in August 2019.

- Anindita Mukherjee participated in a [podcast](#) put out by the Indian Express on the issue of open defecation in India in October 2019.
- Mukta Naik remotely presented her work on small cities in India at the *Cities, Mobility and Membership Research Collaborative Launch* held in Florence, Italy in October 2019.
- Véronique Dupont spoke at the Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata on *Slum-free city planning versus durable slums: Insights from Delhi, India* in October 2019.
- Sharonee Dasgupta presented an ethnographic study on *Women's role and contribution in Mobilisation across bastis/slums in Delhi* at a conference titled, *Movements: Body, Space, Politics*, organised by the English Department at Jadavpur University, Kolkata in November 2019.
- Partha Mukhopadhyay presented on *At the Frontiers of the Urban: thinking concepts and practices globally* and Marie–Hélène Zérah spoke on *Is the 'neoliberal' trope enough to think (through) water infrastructure? Reflections from Indian urban diverse realities* at a conference titled, *At the frontiers of the urban: thinking concepts & practices globally*, organised by University College London in November 2019.
- Several CPR researchers participated in the *International Water Association Water and Development Congress & Exhibition* held in December 2019 in Sri Lanka. Anju Dwivedi and Ambarish Karunanithi presented a poster on *Faecal Sludge Management Solution for smaller towns in India: A Case Study of Partnership Model*. Anindita Mukherjee and Prashant Arya presented a paper on *Scaling up Small-Scale Business Models of Informal Cesspool Operators- Lessons from Eight Indian Cities*. Anju Dwivedi presented on *Inclusion in Sanitation* in the session titled, *Missing Link in The Sanitation Chain: Health and Safety of Sanitation Workers*, organised by WaterAid India. Shubhagato Dasgupta and Ambarish Karunanithi organised a workshop on *Water and Sanitation-Wise Secondary and Small Cities in South Asia* at the conference.
- Marie–Hélène Zérah, Eric Verdeil and Bérénice Girard presented on *Thinking about energy transition in the Global South* at the World Resources Institute, New Delhi in December 2019.
- Kanhu Charan Pradhan presented on *Workforce Composition and internal migration in India* at the *61st ISLE Labour Economics Conference* in Patiala in December 2019. He also presented this paper at the *XXIXTH Annual General Conference*, Department of Economics, Jadavpur University, Kolkata in the same month.
- Mukta Naik was a panellist at Space10's event on *How Can We Create a Liveable, Affordable and Sustainable City?*. She also co-conducted a creative workshop with Space10 and Unbox on *What If We Were Nomadic In The Future?* in February 2020.
- Mukta Naik taught about internal migration and urbanisation at the *Fourth Orientation Program on Migration* held by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences Patna Centre in February 2020.
- Mukta Naik was a panellist on *Interrogating inequalities* at the Ambedkar University Delhi's School of Global Studies in February 2020.
- Mukta Naik was a panellist at the *Localising Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Secondary Cities* conference held by Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) in New Delhi in February 2020.

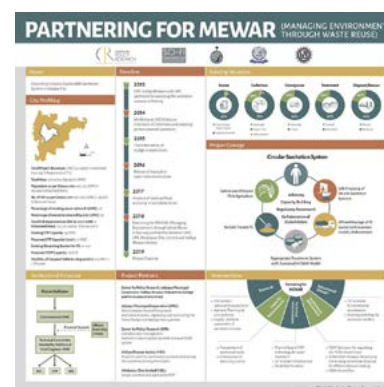
Key Events

National Workshop on WASH Futures: Subsidiarity for Service Delivery | November 2019



The inaugural session saw unveiling of research work by Nicholas Osbert, Chief of WASH, UNICEF India; Rajiv Ranjan Mishra, DG, National Mission for Clean Ganga; Yamini Aiyar, President & Chief Executive, CPR India; and VK Madhavan, Chief Executive, Water Aid India.

CPR and Water Aid India jointly organised a poster exhibition during the workshop, covering various themes of the sanitation landscape of India.



Supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the SCI-FI initiative, in partnership with UNICEF, Water Aid India and GIZ, organised a two-day National Workshop to deliberate issues related to safe and wise water and faecal sludge management through improving subsidiarity practices.

The workshop promoted cross-learning between stakeholders including governments at all levels, academics, researchers, National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (NFSSM) Alliance members, policymakers, Civil Society Organisations, and other development partner agencies. The deliberations yielded key recommendations and strategies to strengthen institutional capacities at all levels for delivering integrated WASH solutions and provided insights in the formulation of such schemes.

RC21 Research Conference on *In and Beyond the City: Emerging Ontologies, Persistent Challenges and Hopeful Futures* | September 2019

CPR, along with Ambedkar University and Delhi Contemporary hosted the RC21 annual international conference, which unfolded across 43 streams, 17 panel discussions, five round tables, two book discussions and five plenary sessions. More than 600 registered delegates from over 30 countries participated.

Part of the International Sociological Association, Research Committee 21 on Sociology of Urban and Regional Development (RC21) is a premier international association for theory and research in the sociology of urban and regional development. The 2019 conference was the first RC21 event in a developing country.

Several CPR researchers presented their work at the conference. Mukta Naik co-chaired a stream on Boundaries, Contestations and Citizen/State/Capital interfaces. Asaf Ali Lone co-ordinated a stream on Discrimination and the city. Kanhu Charan Pradhan and Shamindra Nath Roy convened a panel on Diffuse Urbanisation: Regional Landscape across the Globe. Véronique Dupont and Shankare Gowda presented their paper, Multi-layered illegalities: The production of illegal residents within illegalised settlements in Delhi, India. In addition, Manish presented work on urban transport regulation; Ashwin Parulkar, Manish and Sunil Kumar presented their working paper on the Khusro Park homeless shelter; and Mukta Naik, Eesha Kunduri and Sharonee Dasgupta co-presented their work on the use of the RTI Act to negotiate services in Delhi's informal settlements.



Sanitation Insights at CPR Series | October 2019

On the occasion of 2nd October, celebrated as Swachh Bharat Diwas, the SCI-FI initiative launched a series of webinars on the sanitation landscape of India, highlighting various aspects from key challenges to progress made.



Tacit Urban Research Network (TURN): Events and Convenings

Research Workshops

The TURN collaborative leveraged cross-institutions and interdisciplinary workshops to ideate and evolve research. The following workshops were held this year:

- Cross Informing through Mapping, April 2019 in Hyderabad
- Inter-referencing and Outputs, May 2019 in New Delhi
- Gesturing the Tacit, July 2019 in Bangalore
- Deliberating the Tacit State, September 2019 in Mumbai



Stills from the Sanitation Insights at CPR webinars

RC21 Special Event | September 2019

Additionally, the collaborative organised a special session at the RC21 Conference to introduce its thinking and work to Indian and international scholars. CPR's Partha Mukhopadhyay, HUL's Anant Maringanti, IIHS's Gautam Bhan and TISS Mumbai's Ratoola Kundu made short presentations and conducted an interactive session with the audience.

Do Din | December 2019

Against the backdrop of intense public debate on issues of citizenship and identity, *Do Din* – an annual event – was organised around the theme of the *Incomplete City*. Discussions explored the urban as a dynamic, ever-changing and evolving system, site and experience. Besides panel discussions and presentations, several visual, theatrical, musical and poetic explorations enriched the event.



RC21 special event



Do Din event

Ongoing Workshop and Seminar Series

- The *Community of Research and Practices (CORP)* seminars continued to disseminate research on various topics related to access to safe sanitation and issues around sanitation work.



- The monthly events of the *CPR-Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH) Urban Workshop* series were conducted uninterrupted during the year, with speakers addressing themes like technology and digital platforms, labour and migration, politics, housing, regional planning as well as art and culture.





Economic Policy

A modern nation's economy must both ensure growth and productivity and maintain equity and participation for its citizens.

CPR's faculty approach India's economic policy with this balance in mind, working on topics ranging from macroeconomic dynamics and trade policy to the intellectual foundations of service delivery and the design of welfare schemes.

Jobs

Image Source: resized.indiatvnews.com

- 2019 marked the first year of the Jobs Initiative – a research partnership between CPR and the JustJobs Network (JJN). As data in the freshly published Government of India's *Periodic Labour Force Survey* (released May 2019) underscored the labour market challenges confronting the nation, the Jobs Initiative engaged with a range of stakeholders – from policymakers and private sector representatives to grassroots organisations – to provide analysis and insights toward improving employment outcomes in India and abroad.

Comparing Indian States on Just Jobs

- The Jobs Initiative was a partner in the launch of a *State-level JustJobs Index (S-JJIndex)* for India – compiled by JJN, and supported by the Azim Premji University. A comprehensive, data-driven tool to measure the quantity and quality of jobs at the state level in India, the *S-JJIndex* analyses fifteen indicators along five dimensions – employment, formality, benefits, income equality and gender equality. The launch of the Index and the ensuing workshop, co-organised by the Jobs Initiative, drew business representatives, policymakers, experts and practitioners as well as significant media attention.



From the left: Sabina Dewan (President and Executive Director, JustJobs Network and Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR); Anurag Behar (Vice Chancellor, Azim Premji University and CEO, Azim Premji Foundation); Amitabh Kant (Chief Executive Officer, NITI Aayog); Dilip Chenoy (Secretary General, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry); Partha Mukhopadhyay (Senior Fellow, CPR); and Divya Prakash (Senior Research Associate, JustJobs Network)

Future of Work: Technology, Jobs and Gender

- Sabina Dewan participated in a range of international meetings and working groups examining aspects of the global jobs crisis that also help place the challenges confronting India in context. These engagements include being a member of the Think Tank 20's Working Group on Migration as well as the working group on the Future of Work aimed at providing policy inputs to global leaders in the Group of 20 (G20). These working groups met on the fringes of large global summits where Dewan was a speaker including the *Global Solutions Summit 2019* in Berlin and the *Think Tank 20 Summit* in Japan co-organised by the Asian Development Bank.

- The Jobs Initiative is leading a collaborative project entitled, *Ecosystems of Engagement: Women's Work and Platforms in India and Sri Lanka*, funded by the Canadian International Development Research Centre. The project examines how Indian and Sri Lankan women access and engage with the emergent ecosystem of digital work to improve their livelihoods and empowerment. CPR is collaborating with LIRNEasia, Sri Lanka; the Indian Institute of Human Settlements; and the World Resources Institute, India for this project. With this project, CPR has joined a wider consortium of researchers from around the globe that focus on the nexus of technology and work, particularly *Women, Work and the Gig Economy*.
- In CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, Dewan highlighted how India can address its employment crisis. Dewan also contributed frequently to the discourse around jobs and employment in the media. She was quoted in leading platforms including *Livemint*, *Al Jazeera*, *IndiaSpend*, *Indian Express* and *ThePrint India*.

Social Change and Enterprise Development

- D Shyam Babu advised Tata Sons Private Limited on refashioning their affirmative action policies to promote the interests of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) individuals in ways that have not been tried by the company and the government. In November 2019, he addressed senior executives of the company, who are in-charge of the group's affirmative action initiatives and its corporate social responsibility policies.
- Continuing his involvement in promoting entrepreneurship among SC/ST communities, D Shyam Babu served as a Member of the Governing Board the Centre for the Study of Caste and Capitalism (CSCC), whose twin mandates are to study how an open society (both as a prerequisite and a consequence of capitalism) helps bring down the walls that separate one group from another within a society, and to encourage SC/ST communities to take up entrepreneurship.
- D Shyam Babu continued to serve on the Editorial Board of *Dalit Enterprise*, a monthly magazine that seeks to provide a forum for news, views and policy debates on entrepreneurship among SC/STs.
- D Shyam Babu continued his research work on social change and social justice. In CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium he highlighted how India's social justice system is in need of structural reform. His commentaries appeared in *The Hindu*, *The Times of India*, *ThePrint India* and *Deccan Herald*. He commented on a range of issues including the Uttar Pradesh government's move to include several backward castes in the list of SCs; the Central Government's move to grant quotas to the poor among the upper castes; India's language policy and how it is inimical to the interests of poor, lower castes and rural masses; the failure of lower-caste mobilisation to promote social justice; and Jawaharlal Nehru's Kashmir policy.

Image Source: scroll.in



Infrastructure, Economy and Finance

- Rohit Chandra attended India Infrastructure's private roundtables, co-convened with the NITI Aayog on *Asset Monetisation and Recycling* in October 2019 and on the *Future of Non Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) in Infrastructure Financing* in January 2020.
- Chandra presented on *Developments in Infrastructure Finance in India: 1990 – Present*, at Ahmedabad University's Conference on 50 Years of Bank Nationalisation in November 2019.
- Chandra co-authored an article with Michael Walton titled, *Big Potential, Big Risks? Indian Capitalism, Economic Reform and Populism in the BJP Era*, to be published in *India Review* in May 2020. The article includes research that Chandra had presented in a workshop organised by the Centre for Advanced Study of India (CASI) and Carnegie Endowment in September 2019.
- In an article co-authored with Noopur Sen in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, Michael Walton explored how India can create dynamic capitalism to realise its growth potential and avoid a middle-income trap of low productivity growth and entrenched inequality.
- In an article titled, *A Relook at Infrastructure*, in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, Partha Mukhopadhyay explored how India can ensure better infrastructure to meet its economic goals, outlining key actions that need to be taken in the major sectors to make them financially viable. In another article titled, *Of Investments and Jobs*, published in the same compendium, Mukhopadhyay explored the Indian economy's attractiveness for investment and its potential to provide jobs.



- Partha Mukhopadhyay participated in a workshop on *A Dialogue toward a New Global Aid Regime*, co-hosted by the Peking University and Tsinghua University, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation in Bellagio in May 2019. The workshop discussed emerging forms of aid and new countries in the international aid regime, including China.

Chandra initiated a series of seminars on the Indian economy. Events organised as part of this series included the following:

Panel Discussion on *Misfortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: The State of Rural Demand in India* | October 2019

Speakers: Himanshu (Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning); Harish Damodaran (Rural Affairs and Agriculture Editor, The Indian Express); Kunal Bhardwaj (Vice President of Business, Ninjacart); and moderated by Rohit Chandra (Fellow, CPR)

The discussion shed light on the collapse in rural demand, its impact on the Indian economy and measures governments and companies can take to address the downturn in consumption.



Book Discussion on *The Lost Decade (2008-18): How India's Growth Story Devolved into Growth Without a Story* by Puja Mehra | November 2019

Speakers: Puja Mehra (Economic Journalist); Rathin Roy (Director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy); Nitin Desai (Former Chief Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance); and moderated by Rohit Chandra (Fellow, CPR)

The discussion shed light on India's economic slide and the political context in which the economy failed to recover lost momentum.



Agriculture

Image Source: theprint.in

- Mekhala Krishnamurthy and Shoumitro Chatterjee co-authored an article titled, *Understanding and misunderstanding e-NAM*, published in the January 2020 issue of the *Seminar Magazine*. The article explored the opportunities e-NAM presents and how it can be used to address challenges in Indian agriculture.
- In an article titled, *Back-End First: A National Agenda for India's Agricultural Markets*, published in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, Mekhala Krishnamurthy explored how India can reform its agricultural markets against the backdrop of growing agrarian distress, declining agricultural productivity and low farm incomes.
- Mekhala Krishnamurthy was invited to be the keynote speaker at the *Rural Development and Food Security Forum*, organised by the Asian Development Bank in Manila, Philippines in October 2019.
- Mekhala Krishnamurthy was the Co-Principal Investigator (along with Co-PI Shoumitro Chatterjee, and collaborators Marshall Bouton and Devesh Kapur) on a major multi-state, multi-district, multi-commodity study of agricultural markets and farmers' incomes in India with a focus on Bihar, Odisha and Punjab. The study is anchored at the Center for the Advanced Study of India (CASI) at the University of Pennsylvania and funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The first publications from the study will be released later in 2020.
- In an article titled, *Should PM-KISAN and MGNREGS Co-Exist?*, published in CPR's *Policy Challenges* compendium, Yamini Aiyar and Partha Mukhopadhyay discussed how the government should take the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme forward.



Healthcare

- Philippe Cullet and H Yuanquiong co-authored an article titled, *Medical Patents and the Right to Health—From Monopoly Control to Open Access Innovation and Provision of Medicines*, published in the *German Yearbook of International Law*.
- Jishnu Das worked on the study, *Antibiotic prescription practices in primary care in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis*, along with Giorgia Sulis, Pierrick Adam, Vaidehl Nafade, Genevieve Gore, Ben Daniels, Amrita Daftary, Sumanth Gandra and Madhukar Pai, to be published in *PLoS Medicine* in June 2020. The authors performed a systematic review and meta-analysis of studies conducted in primary care in low and middle income countries to estimate the prevalence of antibiotic prescriptions as well as the proportion of such prescriptions that are inappropriate.
- Das worked on the paper, *Two Indias: The structure of health care markets in rural Indian villages with implications for policy*, along with Benjamin Daniels, Monisha Ashok, Euy-Young Shim and Karthik Muralidharan, to be published in *Social Science and Medicine* in June 2020. The study is a first of its kind nation-wide survey of rural healthcare in India.
- Das published papers on the use of standardised patients (SP) in the measurement of quality of healthcare. He co-authored an article titled, *How to Do (Or Not to Do) ... Using the Standardised Patient Method to Measure Clinical Quality of Care in LMIC Health Facilities*, along with Jessica King, Ada Kwan, Benjamin Daniels, Christina Makungu, Tim Powell-Jackson and Catherine Goodman, published in *Health Policy & Planning*. He co-authored another article titled, *Use of standardised patients for healthcare quality research in low- and middle-income countries*, along with Ada Kwan, Benjamin Daniels, Sofi Bergkvist, Veena Das and Madhukar Pai, published in *BMJ Global Health*. Further, he co-authored an article titled, *Lessons on the quality of tuberculosis diagnosis from standardised patients in China, India, Kenya, and South Africa*, along with Benjamin Daniels, Ada Kwan and Madhukar Pai, published in the *Journal of Clinical Tuberculosis and Other Mycobacterial Diseases*.
- Das co-authored an article titled, *Use of standardised patients to assess gender differences in quality of tuberculosis care in urban India: a two-city, cross-sectional study*, along with Benjamin Daniels, Ada Kwan, Srinath Satyanarayana, Ramnath Subbaraman, Ranendra K Das, Veena Das and Madhukar Pai, published in *Lancet Global Health*. The authors used data from SP visits to assess whether gender differences in quality of care occur because of provider practice.
- In an article titled, *Zen and the art of experiments: A note on preventive healthcare and the 2019 nobel prize in economics*, published in *World Development*, Das discussed Banerjee, Duflo and Kremer's work on preventive healthcare in low-income countries. In another commentary titled, *The viability of social accountability measures*, published in *Lancet Global Health*, Das discussed the work of Camilla Fabbri and colleagues.



Research and Engagement on the COVID-19 Pandemic

Leveraging Existing Research to Tackle New Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light challenges that were never experienced before. Apart from minimising the health impact and containing the spread of the virus, crucial questions arose about India's welfare architecture, its federal dynamics, the already-strained economy, and the country's approach to migration, mobility and public service delivery. Since its inception, CPR has been engaging on these issues, producing groundbreaking research. It is this longstanding commitment to academic rigour that enabled CPR scholars to respond swiftly to the COVID-19 crisis. Leveraging CPR's on-going research on urbanisation, federalism, state capacity, agriculture, health and other areas, scholars offered critical analysis and policy inputs through dialogues and discourse with a range of stakeholders.



Engaging with Stakeholders at all Levels: From Grassroots to Government

CPR worked closely with several state governments like Punjab, Delhi, West Bengal and Odisha to provide advice on combating the COVID-19 challenge and on formulating post-COVID economic recovery plans. CPR also worked with local-level bureaucracy and grassroot organisations, building a network to address the challenges of COVID-19. Among some of the significant steps in CPR's involvement with COVID-related initiatives and post-COVID recovery plans were:

- Yamini Aiyar was appointed to the Group of Experts to shape Punjab's post-COVID economic recovery.
- CPR signed an MoU with the Government of Punjab to advise the state on its testing and containment strategy.
- CPR scholars were involved in relief efforts with other organisations in Delhi-NCR.
- Jishnu Das was appointed to the West Bengal global advisory board to fight COVID-19.
- CPR scholars advised the Government of Odisha on its urban employment guarantee programme.



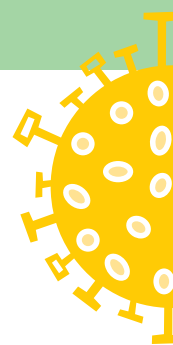
- CPR scholars advised the Government of Delhi on its policy of emergency relief

- The Accountability Initiative at CPR initiated the Platform to Understand, Learn, Share and Exchange (PULSE) for Development. This is a knowledge-sharing collaborative of 60+ social sector organisations working on the challenges of the pandemic.

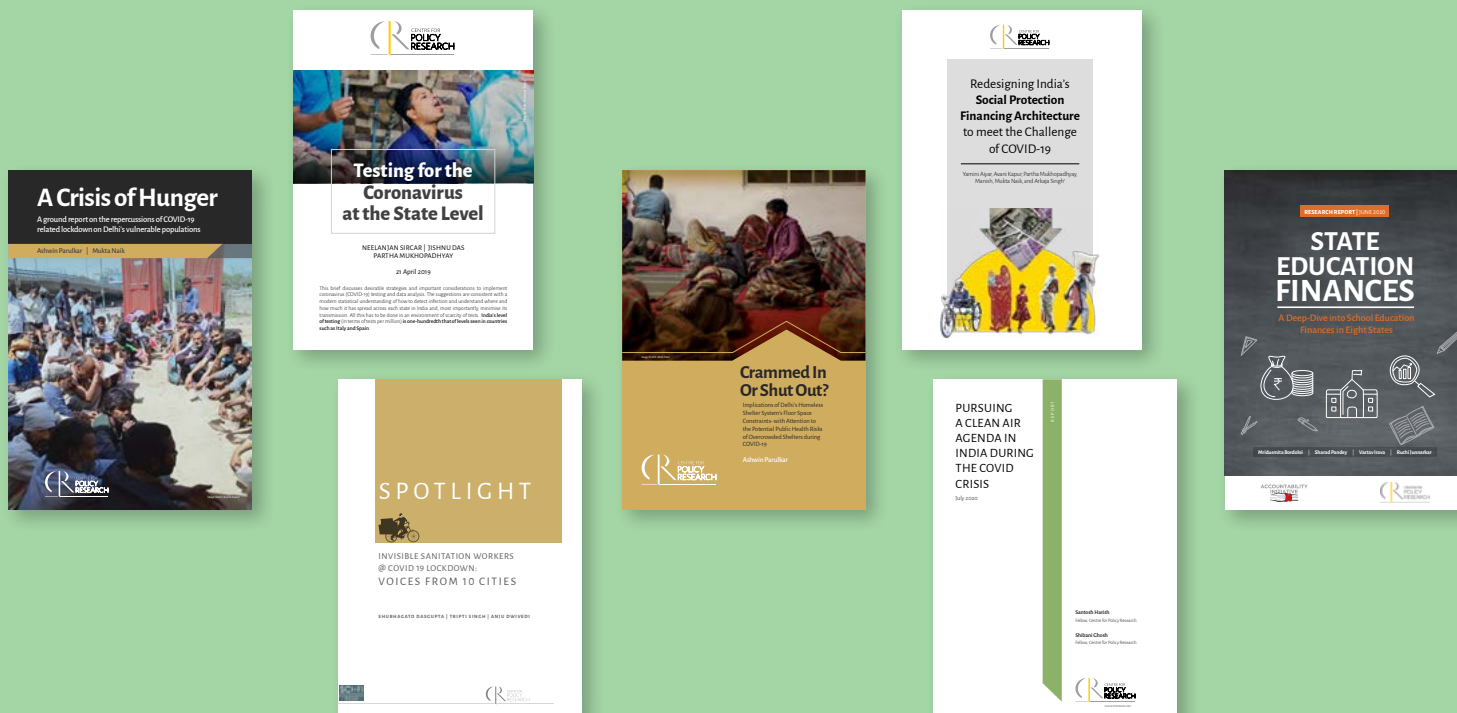
- CPR researchers engaged with block-level officials, panchayat functionaries and frontline workers in five Indian states to understand the challenges and best practices while dealing with COVID-19.

- Additionally, through existing long-term relationships, CPR scholars engaged with state and central government officials informally, offering sharp insights and advise on their COVID-19 strategies.

Key Areas of Research and Engagement



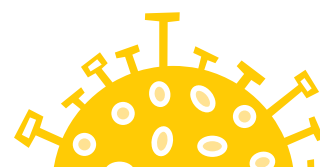
Key Research and Publications



CPR's longstanding commitment to rigorous research enabled the faculty to respond swiftly to the COVID-19 crisis on multi levels: leveraging ongoing research, scholars offered critical analysis and policy inputs, and tracked government welfare policies and testing systems, offering key recommendations and solutions. Through cutting-edge and field-defining research, CPR effectively bridged the gap between policy and implementation when it came to the COVID crisis; it also helped shape the public debate on COVID-19 through a series of reports and studies, increased digital engagement, and new media tools.

Some examples:

- CPR scholars authored a report on desirable strategies and important considerations to implement COVID-19 testing and data analysis at the state-level.
- CPR scholars authored a report titled, *Redesigning India's Social Protection Financing Architecture to meet the Challenge of COVID-19*, highlighting an agile financing system responsive to needs of individual states.
- CPR scholars authored a report titled, *A Crisis of Hunger: a ground report on the repercussions of COVID-19 related lockdown on Delhi's vulnerable populations*. The report highlighted key recommendations for the Delhi Government to address the hunger crisis.
- CPR scholars also authored groundbreaking studies on the impact of COVID-19 on India's environmental discourse, the challenges of sanitation during the pandemic, the geopolitical implications and India's regional recovery, and the *Atmanirbhar Bharat economic package*.
- The International Relations team at CPR authored a report titled, *India as the Engine of Recovery for South Asia: A Multi-Sectoral Plan for India's COVID-19 Diplomacy in the Region*. The report highlights how India can take the lead in the region and includes practical policy recommendations for critical areas of health, food security, ecology, trade and finance.
- A series of research notes were released based on CPR's collaboration with the Government of Punjab to design active learning-oriented testing strategies and analyse testing data to better understand the spread of COVID-19. The notes covered critical aspects of the disease and its spread, including the role of asymptomatic carriers and the spatial dimensions of COVID-19 spread.



Shaping the Public Debate through New Media Tools

- CPR launched a [dedicated website](#) for research and policy analysis on the COVID-19 pandemic. This repository was updated daily and saw a monthly traffic over 16,000+ users from around the world.
- CPR scholars contributed to the discourse on the issue through a variety of opinion pieces and interviews in national and international media, in platforms like *Hindustan Times*, *NDTV*, *Aljazeera*, *ThePrint India*, *Indian Express*, *Scroll*, *The Wire* etc.



130+
Media commentaries



80+
Blogs



13+
Podcasts



35+
Webinars

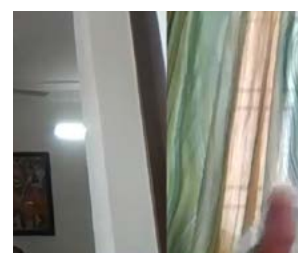


20+
Research outputs

- CPR launched a podcast series on the pandemic as part of its podcast, ThoughtSpace. The podcast episodes featured renowned experts like Dr Jishnu Das, Dr Rathin Roy, Shyam Saran, Dr Mahesh Vyas etc. who offered possible solutions to the challenges posed by COVID-19.



- Substituting regular offline events with webinars, CPR engaged with Indian and global audiences on various facets of the COVID-19 pandemic. CPR faculty also participated in webinars organised by several reputed organisations.



Policy Challenges 2019-2024:

The Key Policy Questions for the New Government and Possible Pathways



India is at an important juncture in its development trajectory. From rapid urbanisation to declining agricultural productivity; from weak human capital to the need for creating productive jobs; from new security threats to the need to re-position itself in a changing global order; from growing energy demands to the need to address rapid environmental degradation, India today has to negotiate multiple and conflicting socio-economic challenges. Decisions and actions taken over the next five years will be likely to shape the future of our economic and political trajectory. To spark debate and ideas on how India can negotiate these transitions across a range of sectors, CPR launched a compendium titled, [*Policy Challenges 2019-2024: The Key Policy Questions for the New Government and Possible Pathways*](#).



Authored by 31 CPR scholars, the compendium articulates key policy challenges and possible solutions across a range of issues that confront India today. These include:

- Foreign policy and national security
- Climate, energy and the environment
- The economy
- The welfare state
- Federalism
- Urbanisation
- Regulation and resources
- Inclusive citizenship

The compendium was launched in July 2019 through a set of three panel discussions featuring:

- Suhasini Haider (National Editor, The Hindu) and Gautam Mukhopadhyaya (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR)



- Ajay Mathur [Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)] and Navroz K Dubash (Professor, CPR)



- KP Krishnan (Former Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India); Devesh Kapur (Director, Asia Programs and Starr Foundation Professor of South Asian Studies, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies); Jyoti Malhotra (Editor, National and Strategic Affairs, ThePrint India); Partha Mukhopadhyay (Senior Fellow, CPR); and Yamini Aiyar (President & Chief Executive, CPR)



ThePrint India was the digital partner for the event. Shorter versions of the essays from the compendium were also carried by *ThePrint India* in the run up to the launch.

CPR dialogues²⁰²⁰

Policy Perspectives for 21st-century India

March 2nd & 3rd, 2020



On 2nd and 3rd March 2020, CPR held the second edition of CPR Dialogues, an annual public forum where leading policy practitioners, academics, and thought leaders address the most critical policy issues of our times. The theme for this year was *Policy Perspectives for 21st-century India*.

CPR Dialogues 2020 provided a window to the India of the future. Experts from around the country and the world engaged with and debate the very significant development and policy challenges that India faces in the coming decade.

ThePrint India was the media partner for the conference.

**CPR Dialogues 2020
featured over 60
speakers and more
than 1000 attendees.**

Some of the issues addressed during the CPR Dialogues are:

- As norms of engagement and the global order change, how should India define its geopolitical position?
- Can the Indian state deliver cutting edge public services to all its citizens and build 21st-century public institutions?
- How can India create productive jobs while responding to challenges of technology, rapid urbanisation and global economic changes?
- How can India move towards a more inclusive and environmentally sound future while responding to its energy needs as a growing economy?
- How can citizen-state engagement create more inclusive citizenship?
- What are the underlying dynamics and emerging trends in India's politics and how do these shape policymaking in the 21st century?

Key sessions included:



[Inaugural address by Hon'ble Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar \(Minister of External Affairs, India\)](#)



[Panel Discussion on At the Threshold of a New Decade: Navigating the Emerging Geopolitical Landscape](#) featuring James Steinberg (Professor, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs; Former United States Deputy Secretary of State); Frank N Pieke (Professor of Modern China Studies, Leiden University); and Shyam Saran (Senior Fellow, CPR; Former Foreign Secretary, India)



← [Panel Discussion on *Creating an Inclusive Economy in a Digital World*](#) featuring Himanshu Wardhan (Managing Director, Etsy India); Rituparna Chakraborty (Co-founder & Executive Vice President, TeamLease Services); Berges Y Malu (Director, Public Policy & Policy Communications, ShareChat); and Sabina Dewan (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR; President & Executive Director, JustJobs Network)



← [Panel Discussion on *What would happen if we were to believe in Indian Agriculture?*](#) featuring Saurabh Garg (Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Empowerment, Government of Odisha); Harish Damodaran (Rural Affairs and Agriculture Editor, The Indian Express); Ajay Vir Jakhar (Chairperson, Bharat Krishak Samaj); Ramesh Chand (Member, NITI Aayog); and Mekhala Krishnamurthy (Senior Fellow, CPR)



← [Panel Discussion on *Technology and Administrative Reform: Experience from India and the World*](#) featuring Arun Sharma (Director, DBT Mission, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India); Saurabh Garg (Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Empowerment, Government of Odisha); Shrayana Bhattacharya (Senior Economist, Social Protection and Jobs, World Bank in India); Varad Pande (Investment Partner, Omidyar Network); and Yamini Aiyar (President & Chief Executive, CPR)



← [Panel Discussion on *Rights in Times of AI: Emerging Technologies and the Public Law Framework*](#) featuring Shashi Tharoor (Member of Parliament, India); Madhav Khosla (Associate Professor of Political Science, Ashoka University); Smriti Parsheera (Fellow, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy); and Ananth Padmanabhan (Visiting Fellow, CPR)



[Panel Discussion on *What would it take to build a 21st-century state for India?* Launch of CPR's *State Capacity Initiative*](#) featuring Mekhala Krishnamurthy (Senior Fellow, CPR); Sanjay Mitra (Former Chief Secretary, West Bengal); T V Somanathan (Secretary, Department of Expenditure, Government of India); Junaid Ahmad (Country Director, World Bank in India); and Yamini Aiyar (President & Chief Executive, CPR)



[Panel Discussion on *The role of ideas in shaping policy*](#) featuring Lant Pritchett (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR); Navroz K Dubash (Professor, CPR); Partha Mukhopadhyay (Senior Fellow, CPR); and Yamini Aiyar (President & Chief Executive, CPR)



[Panel Discussion on *Tracking Government Spending: Challenges in Social Policy Financing*](#) featuring Rathin Roy (Director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy); TR Raghunandan (Adviser, Accountability Initiative; Former Indian Administrative Service Officer); Jeffrey Hammer (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR); and Avani Kapur (Fellow & Director, Accountability Initiative, CPR)



[Panel Discussion on *Article 21 and India's Social and Economic Rights*](#) featuring Sudhir Krishnaswamy (Vice-Chancellor, National Law School of India University, Bangalore); Namita Wahi (Fellow and Director, Land Rights Initiative, CPR); Shibani Ghosh (Fellow, CPR); Kiran Bhatta (Senior Fellow, CPR); and Arkaja Singh (Fellow, CPR)



[Panel Discussion on Are India's financial institutions in crisis? Understanding India's Economic Slowdown](#) featuring B Sriram (Former Managing Director, State Bank of India and IDBI Bank); Upendra Kumar Sinha [Former Chairperson, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)]; Naina Lal Kidwai (Former Chairperson, HSBC India & Senior Adviser, Advent Private Equity); and KP Krishnan (Former Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India)



[Panel Discussion on Emerging Trends in Indian Politics](#) featuring Rahul Verma (Fellow, CPR); Vandita Mishra (National Opinion Editor, Indian Express); Mukund Padmanabhan (Consultant & former Editor, The Hindu); Mukulika Banerjee (Director, South Asia Centre, LSE); Gilles Verniers (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR; Co-Director, TCPD, Ashoka University); and Neelanjan Sircar (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR; Assistant Professor, Ashoka University)



[Panel Discussion on Indo-US Relations](#) featuring James Steinberg (Professor, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs; Former United States Deputy Secretary of State); Shivshankar Menon (Former National Security Advisor & Foreign Secretary, India); and Shekhar Gupta (Founder, ThePrint India)



[Panel Discussion on Political Elites and Local Bureaucratic Capacity](#) featuring Rahul Verma (Fellow, CPR); Shekhar Gupta, (Founder, ThePrint India); Deepak Sanan (Senior Visiting Fellow, CPR); Patrick French (Dean, School of Arts and Sciences, Ahmedabad University); Jayant Chaudhary (Former Member of Parliament, India); and Mukulika Banerjee, (Director, South Asia Centre, LSE)



Panel Discussion on *Challenges in Public Education: Balancing State and Non-State Actors* featuring NV Varghese (Chancellor, National Institute of Education Planning and Administration); Rashmi Sharma (Senior Visiting Fellow, ICRIER; Former IAS Officer); Priyadarshani Joshi (Global Education Monitoring Team, UNESCO); Parth J Shah (Founder President, Centre for Civil Society); and Kiran Bhatta (Senior Fellow, CPR)



Panel Discussion on *The Air Pollution Crisis: Making Political Salience Count* featuring Gaurav Gogoi (Member of Parliament, India); Rohit Negi (Associate Professor, Ambedkar University Delhi); Shreya Gadepalli (South Asia Director - Institute for Transport and Development Policy); Shibani Ghosh (Fellow, CPR); and Santosh Harish (Fellow, CPR)



Panel Discussion on *Land and the Constitution: Solving Land Conflict in India* featuring Shyam Divan (Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India); KP Krishnan (Former Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India); Nitin Sethi (Independent Journalist); Usha Ramanathan (Independent Law Researcher); and Namita Wahi (Fellow & Director, Land Rights Initiative, CPR)

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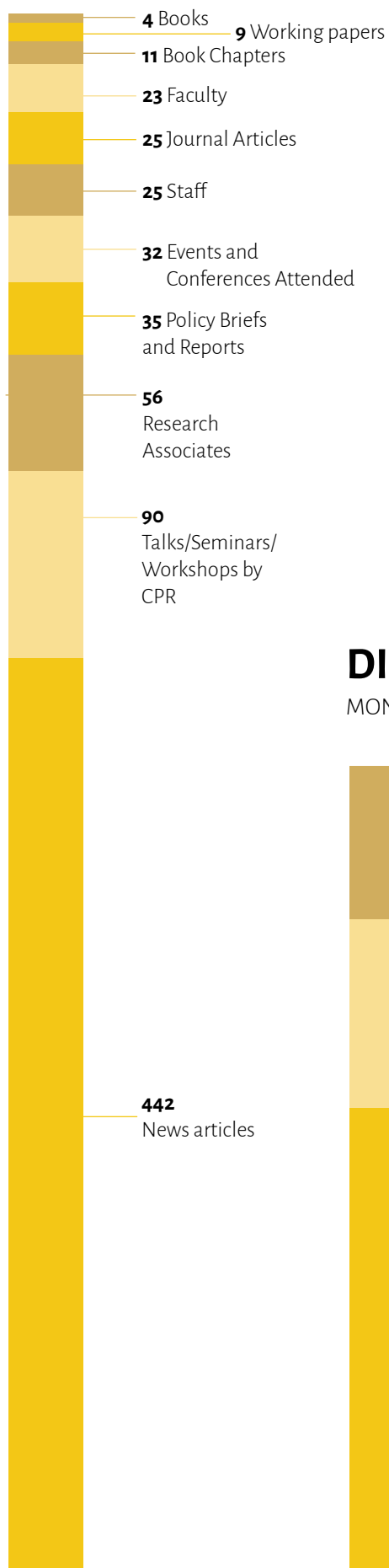
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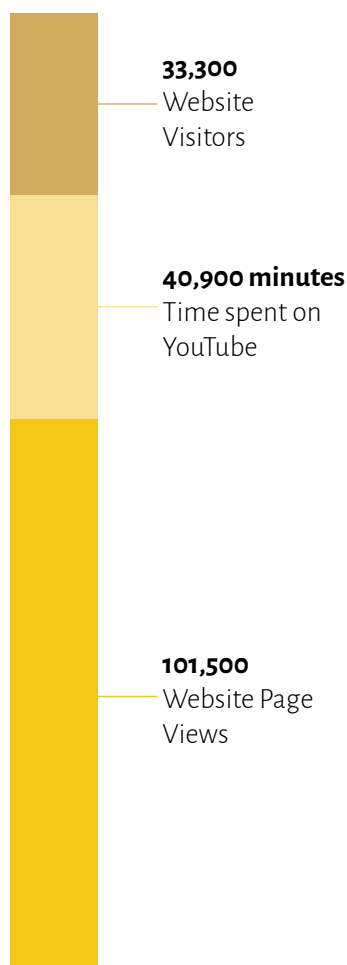
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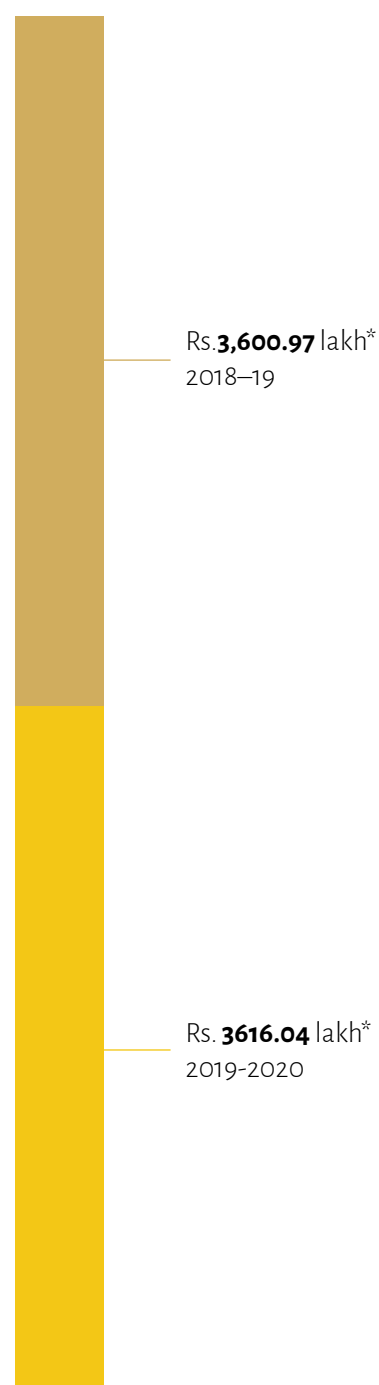
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