

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

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The Centre for Policy Research (CPR) is one of India's leading public policy think tanks. Established in 1973, CPR is a non-profit, non-partisan, and independent institution dedicated to conducting research that contributes to high-quality scholarship, better policies, and a more robust public discourse.

CPR's Initiatives

TREADS: Transboundary Rivers, Ecologies and Development Studies

The TREADS Initiative is a cluster of projects pursuing research on transboundary river water governance issues. The initiative also engages with research themes of federalism and politics of infrastructure development, such as dams, roads, and smart cities.



The Politics Initiative

The Politics Initiative at CPR continued to provide high-quality research to understand the rapid changes in India's political economy landscape. Its research in 2024–25 focused on the evolving political party system, political and legislative institutions, ideological preferences of political actors, electoral behaviour, and the incentive structures shaping policy decisions.

SCI-FI: Scaling City Institutions for India Initiative

The Scaling City Institutions for India (SCI-FI) initiative researches and innovates in faecal sludge management (FSM), citywide inclusive sanitation (CWIS), and affordable slum upgradation policy, keeping the poor and marginalised at the centre.



Land Rights Initiative

The Land Rights Initiative (LRI) aims to build systematic knowledge on land rights issues in the country. The initiative's research focuses on the constitutional right to property, land acquisition, land rights in the Scheduled Areas and mapping land legislation in India.



Initiative on Cities, Economy, and Society

The Initiative on Cities, Economy and Society (ICES) engages with the process of urban transition in India, tracking its evolution in spatial, economic and social terms. In particular, the initiative focuses on how urbanisation is managed and how it affects people's engagement with the state.

Accountability Initiative

The Accountability Initiative (AI) works on strengthening transparency and accountability in governance through evidence-based research on state capabilities and factors affecting efficient public service delivery in India. With a vision to enable responsive governance, the initiative works on increasing citizen engagement in policymaking and implementation.



Foreword

Srinivas Chokkakula

President and Chief Executive



The year 2024-25 marks a paradox for the Centre for Policy Research (CPR). It is a year we could look back on with pride and satisfaction for CPR's contributions to public policymaking. Now we see the future marked by matters of survival and resilience. As I reported last year, CPR suffered grievously due to reduced funding and hence operations. Despite prolonged struggles with the continuing legal processes, CPR has sustained its research projects, initiatives and associated operations through innovative arrangements and creative deployment of its limited personnel and resources. We have also welcomed three members as faculty: Mr G Asok Kumar, Mr Saugata Bhattacharya, and Dr Champaka Rajagopal; each an acclaimed expert in their field.

The Transboundary Rivers, Ecologies and Development Studies (TREADS) Initiative, focusing on water policy and governance with specialised interests in transboundary water governance and interstate river water conflicts and cooperation, has remained active and productive. TREADS has continued the collaborative research programme with NMCG for enduring outcomes of the Namami Gange Programme (NGP) and informing policy thinking about rejuvenating India's rivers. It also organised a flagship event, the TREADS Annual Lecture by Prof Asit K Biswas on *India's Water Vision 2047: A Pipe-dream or Achievable?*

The other initiatives, too, remained productive despite limited or no funding, again thanks to the proactive efforts of our faculty members.

The Initiative on Cities, Economy, and Society (ICES) launched an impressive longitudinal study of Dhampur, a small town in Western Uttar Pradesh, tracing its transformation over the span of 40 years, led by Dr Pushpa Pathak, who funds the study. The arrival of Dr Champaka Rajagopal as a Fellow has helped strengthen our research interests in urban planning and institutions. The ICES scholars remain prolific with their public engagements as well as publications. It is a testament to CPR's urban thought-leadership that three of CPR's faculty members (Partha Mukhopadhyay, G Asok Kumar, and Srinivas Chokkakula) were invited to be part of the Working Groups constituted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India.

The Land Rights Initiative (LRI) celebrated its 10th anniversary this year and launched a new talk series on the theme of *Legal History*. The initiative, led by Dr Namita Wahli, remains prolific in its output and policy engagements with the support of limited funding from domestic sources. The Politics Initiative's *How India Votes* series, which was started in the run-up to the 2024 general elections, was a major success of the year. While remaining productive with his impactful research, Dr Rahul Verma organised and participated in several high-level events, interpreting the ever-evolving politics of India. The Scaling City Institutions for India (SCI-FI) has released a book, *Decentralisation and Empowerment: The Odisha Model for Urban Development*, co-authored by Senior Fellow Shubhagato Dasgupta and Mr G Mathi Vathanan.

I am proud to share another landmark development in the CPR's tradition of incubating institutions of excellence. The Accountability Initiative, hitherto CPR's largest initiative focusing on enhancing transparency and accountability in governance and known for its widely popular budget briefs, took the ambitious step of turning itself into a separate entity, the Foundation for Responsive Governance (ResGov). The Parliamentary Research Services (PRS) and the Sustainable Futures Collaborative (SFC) were the other notable ones incubated at CPR in recent times.

We have also initiated many new activities that are not fund-dependent. We started a blog series, *CPR Insights*, to disseminate brief policy-relevant viewpoints by the faculty. We also launched a workshop series, *Knowledge Lab*, to provide a platform for young scholars to receive advice and feedback on their research. *From the Archives* is yet another attempt to tell CPR's rich historical contributions in small bites.

Our struggle continues amid challenges linked to the action by the Income Tax Department. We reiterate our complete faith in India's institutional processes and are happy that the judiciary has allowed us to continue with our work. We are grateful to our Governing Board, led by Dr Meenakshi Gopinath, for their continued support and faith in us.

RESEARCH AREAS

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Public Finance
and Governance



Water Policy and Governance

CPR faculty and researchers continued their research on transboundary river water governance issues, with a specific focus on research themes of transboundary waters and ecologies, federalism and politics of infrastructure development, and urban water security.

INDIA WATER WEEK 2024

The TREADS Initiative, in collaboration with the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), hosted the second CPR-ICID Water Security Conclave on *Vision@2047: Paradigms and Pathways for India's Water Security* as part of the 8th India Water Week 2024, organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

The conclave featured thematic presentations on 'Coping with Emerging Risks' by N. N. Rai, Davendra Mathuria, Dinesh Kumar, R. K. Gupta, and Rumi Aijaz. This session was chaired by Marco Arcieri. This was followed by a panel discussion moderated by Asit K. Biswas. The panellists included Ashwin Pandya, G. Asok Kumar, Mukesh Sinha and Srinivas Chokkakula.

The discussion was centred on the emerging risks of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), river water quality, agricultural water scarcity and food security, dam safety, and urban water security in the wake of climate change.

The conclave highlighted the necessity to strengthen India's federal water governance structures and institutional processes. The discussions also sought to revisit and re-evaluate India's policies on storage structures.



Panel Discussion on "Vision@2047: Paradigms and Pathways for India's Water Security" with Asit K Biswas, Ashwin Pandya, G Asok Kumar, Mukesh Sinha, and Srinivas Chokkakula.

TREADS ANNUAL LECTURE



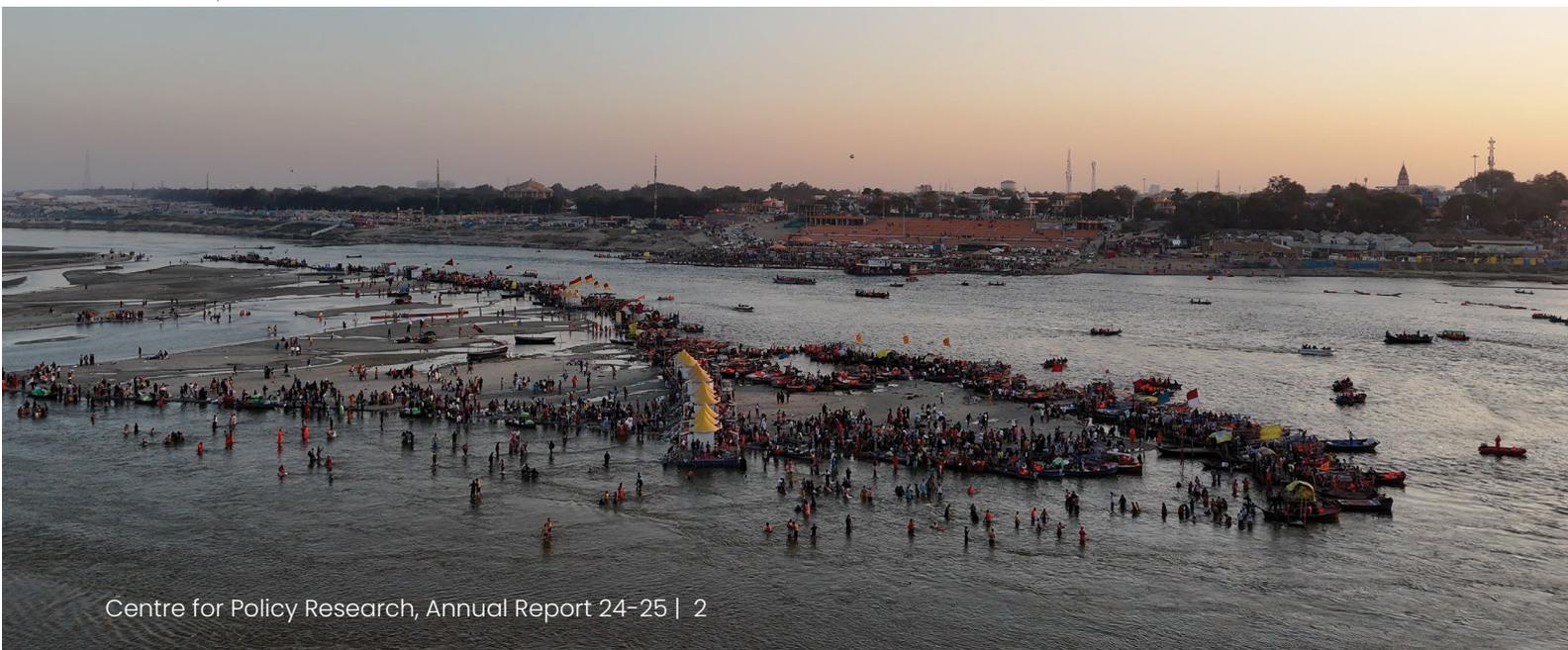
The TREADS Initiative hosted its Inaugural Annual Lecture on “**India’s Water Vision 2047: A Pipedream or Achievable?**” by Asit K. Biswas, on 16 September 2024. He was joined by Ashwin Pandya, Cecilia Tortajada and Asok Kumar as discussants.

The discussion highlighted the need for India to design its water management practices to respond to its own climatic and political realities; this necessitates crafting an India-centric water security and governance paradigm.

TREADS AT MAHA KUMBH

TREADS, in collaboration with the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), launched a pilot project titled “Reading the Rituals of Maha Kumbh for River Rejuvenation”. This project is an extension of the ongoing “Master Plan for River-Centric Urban Planning” project. It aims to provide knowledge for informed policy decisions for rejuvenating India’s rivers.

Aerial view of the Maha Kumbh



POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Srinivas Chokkula was a Member of the Working Group on “Transition Systems for Rural Urban Continuum”, constituted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) in November 2024, with a mandate to define peri-urban areas, suggest means to use urban planning as a tool for such areas, define their development mechanism, and advance planning for basic infrastructure.

TREADTALKS: WATER-CENTRIC MASTER PLANNING

CPR organised six talks in the Water-Centric Master Planning series supported by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG). The series covered various facets of statutory Master Plans in India, including law, spatial planning, urban design for riverfront development, and environmental governance.

The series highlighted various programmatic interventions, such as Urban River Management Plans and Climate Action Plans in cities like

OTHER PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

On December 10, 2024, Debarshee Dasgupta presented a comparative analysis of India's and Germany's river basin management pathways at a roundtable organised by the Hanns Seidel Foundation.

Debarshee Dasgupta was invited to the Third Pole Podcast by Dialogue Earth to share his insights on the most recent efforts to clean the Ganga and the complex structural challenges involved.



PUBLICATIONS

Srinivas Chokkakula authored an article titled “Conserving Freshwater Ecosystems in India: A Call to Action”, published in the journal *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems*, Wiley in May 2024.

Srinivas Chokkakula authored a chapter “Water Disputes and the Environment: Transboundary Dimensions” in the *Oxford Handbook of Environmental and Natural Resources Law in India*.

Debarshee Dasgupta and Subia Ahmad published an article, “Restoring India’s Rivers: European Experiences and Challenges”, for *The India Forum*.

Debarshee Dasgupta and Subia Ahmad published the article “Reimagining Indo-German Cooperation for Water Management” with the Hanns Seidel Foundation.

Subia Ahmad attended the inaugural GenSouth Programme 2024 held in Geneva, Switzerland. She co-authored a chapter titled “Collective Responsibility and the Persistence of International Humanitarian Law Violations” in a policy brief published by foraus (Geneva), titled *GenSouth: New Voices from the Global South for the Multilateral System of the Future*.

Evy Mehzabeen authored a book chapter titled, “Historicising Development: Colonisation, Cartography and Explorations in India’s Northeast” in the book *Indigeneity, Development and Sustainability: Perspectives from North East India*, published in May 2024 by Springer Nature Singapore.





Indian Politics

The Politics Team at CPR continued to provide high-quality research to understand the rapid changes in India's political economy. Its research in 2024–25 focused on the evolving political party system, political and legislative institutions, ideological preferences of political actors, electoral behaviour, and the incentive structures shaping policy decisions.

INDIAN ELECTIONS

How India Votes was an ongoing series of 24 panel discussions in the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Covering a range of diverse topics related to how the Indian electorate casts its votes, the series featured leading political analysts and academics in panels moderated by Rahul Verma. This year, CPR organised the final 4 discussions in the series, culminating in the final discussion “Verdict 2024: Analysing India's Election Results.”

Neelanjan Sircar was invited to participate in a panel discussion titled “Indian Elections and After”, organised by the Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute, Harvard University, at IIC Delhi. The discussion revolved around the various factors that impacted the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections, including welfare benefits and state-level politics, and reflected on the implications of this electoral verdict for democracy, governance, rights and citizenship.



“Verdict 2024: Analysing India's Election Results” organised by CPR at IIC Delhi. This event featured Rajdeep Sardesai, Ruhi Tewari, Yashwant Deshmukh, and Harish S Wankhede as panellists.

CPR organised a panel discussion titled “Decoding J&K and Haryana Assembly Election Results” with Rekha Chowdhary, Aijaz Ashraf Wani, Sanya Dhingra, and Kushal Pal on 10th October 2024.

CPR organised a panel discussion titled “Re-Orienting Exit Polls” with Rukmini S, Rajat Sethi, and Neelanjan Sircar as panellists and Rahul Verma as the moderator on 18th October 2024.

PUBLICATIONS

EPW SPECIAL ISSUE

Rahul Verma co-authored the overview essay of the *Economic & Political Weekly's* (EPW) special issue following the 2024 general election results titled “India’s 2024 General Election: Continuity and Change”.

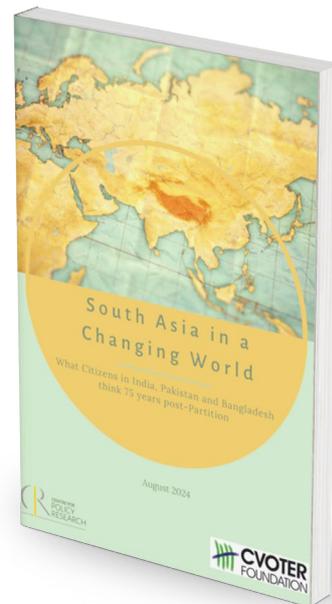
Rahul Verma co-authored another paper in EPW’s special issue on the 2024 general election titled “Does the Congress Party’s Performance in the 2024 General Elections Signal Its Revival?”

SOUTH ASIA IN A CHANGING WORLD

The Politics Initiative launched its report titled *South Asia in a Changing World: What Citizens in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh think 75 years post-Partition*. This report was the culmination of an extensive research project undertaken by CPR and CVoter to mark 75 years of the Partition.



Panel discussion and report launch with Suhasini Haidar, C Raja Mohan, Aanchal Malhotra, Pinaki Chakraborty, and Rahul Verma.



OTHER PUBLICATIONS

A paper co-authored by Rahul Verma titled “How do political families reproduce power: Evidence from Maharashtra, India” was published in the *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* journal.

“Does interstate conflict affect attitudes towards minorities? Evidence from India” a paper co-authored by Christopher Clary, Sameer Lalwani, Niloufer Siddiqui and Neelanjana Sircar, was published in the *Political Science Research and Methods* by Cambridge University Press, 2024.

“Do local leaders prioritize the poor: Identifying the distributive preferences of village politicians in India” by Mark Schneider and Neelanjana Sircar was published in *Electoral Studies*, 2024.



Rahul Verma and Neelanjana Sircar wrote prolifically for national dailies such as *The Hindu*, *Hindustan Times*, *The Times of India*, and *Dainik Jagran*.



Law and Land Rights

The Centre's experts examine how law, democratic institutions and the Constitution shape the lives of Indians. This year, CPR's Land Rights Initiative focused on extensive public and policy engagements and sustained national and international research collaboration.

10 YEARS OF THE LAND RIGHTS INITIATIVE

The year 2024 marked the tenth anniversary of the Land Rights Initiative (LRI). LRI aims to build systematic knowledge on land rights issues in India. The Initiative's research focuses on the constitutional right to property, land acquisition, land rights in the Scheduled Areas, and mapping land legislation in India. To celebrate this milestone, LRI launched a year-long series of talks on Legal History from June 2024 to April 2025.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES/ENGAGEMENTS

Namita Wahi participated in a conference celebrating the legacy of Professor Richard Tuck in the areas of natural rights theories, democracy and sovereignty at the University Centre for Human Values, Princeton University.

Wahi also participated in a workshop on “Human Rights Justifications: Methods and Legal Theories” at the Institutum Iurisprudentiae, Academia Sinica, Taipei.

She was also invited to participate in the PluriLand Workshop on “Theorizing Conflict and Contestation in Plural Land Rights Regimes” hosted by the Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Mexico City, Mexico.

CLIMATE JUSTICE: JAL, JUNGLE, ZAMEEN

Namita Wahi moderated a session on “The Fight for Land: India’s Struggles & Counter Strategies Against Deforestation” at the India Climate Summit.

The LRI team visited ghats in Varanasi and the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj for its research project on the Rights of Rivers. The project is part of LRI’s work on “Climate Justice”.

SELECT POLICY ENGAGEMENTS

Namita Wahi, Anshu Yadav, and Dhruvi Pareek presented a summary of key legal, technical, and ethical concerns related to Aadhaar while tracing its evolution, regulatory gaps, and its contested role in digital infrastructure to Amod Kumar, Deputy Director General, Unique Identification Authority of India.

Namita Wahi presented her research on “Election Finance in India: Issues and Concerns” in the International Electoral Affairs Symposium organised by the State Election Commission, Rajasthan, and the International Conference on Parliamentary Studies. The participants included state election commissioners from most Indian states.



Namita Wahi speaking on “Property Rights and Economic Development: How Property Saved Democracy in India,” with Shahrugh Alam on the panel.

LEGAL HISTORY SERIES

The year-long Legal History series hosted legal practitioners, experts, and academics to trace the evolution of laws and legal jurisprudence from colonial to postcolonial India. The series dealt with the themes of property rights and inheritance, criminal law, fundamental rights and the Constitution, electoral reforms, competition regulation, the GST regime, insolvency and bankruptcy law, and copyright jurisprudence in India, and examined how these laws converge with the socio-political and economic challenges of India’s modernity.

International Social and Economic Rights Project:

Namita Wahi spoke at a panel discussion on “Does Transformative Constitutionalism Have a Future?” at the tenth annual meeting, which focused on Litigation and Public Policy, hosted by the University of Concepcion, Concepcion, Chile.

BERGEN EXCHANGES 2024

International Partnerships for Excellence in Research and Education (INTPART) between CPR-LRI and the Centre on Law and Social Transformation, University of Bergen: INTPART is a multi-country collaboration to facilitate scholarly exchange between the University of Bergen, Norway, and institutions in India, Africa, North and South America. LRI is one of two collaborating institutions in India, and Namita Wahi is a Global Fellow at the Centre on Law and Social Transformation, University of Bergen. As part of this collaboration, Wahi was part of the following:

Namita Wahi participated in the year-long process of designing the syllabus for the Bergen Exchanges PhD Course on “Effects of Lawfare: Courts and Law as Battlegrounds for Social Change” at LawTransform, University of Bergen, as part of CPR’s ongoing institutional INTPART collaboration.

On 17 April 2024, Namita Wahi gave a lecture on “Property Rights and Economic Development: How Property Saved Democracy in India (1950–1978)” at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

On 17–18 August 2024, Namita Wahi participated in an intensive workshop for the INPART project on “Autocratisation Dynamics”.

From August 19–23, Namita Wahi participated in the annual Bergen Exchanges organised by the Centre on Law & Social Transformation, Bergen, Norway.

On August 19, 2024, Namita Wahi delivered one of the opening keynotes on “State of Democracy in South Asia” for the opening panel of the Bergen Exchanges on “State of Democracy: Global Perspectives”.

On August 22, 2024, Namita Wahi also participated in a panel discussion on “Contestations Over Land in Plural Legal Regimes”.





Urbanisation

Rapid urbanisation presents new and substantial challenges, from governance and citizenship to infrastructure, housing and the environment. CPR engages with the process of urban transition in the country, making research interventions in urban infrastructure, sustainable growth, and how urbanisation affects civic engagement with the state.

FORTY YEARS' DEVELOPMENT SAGA OF DHAMPUR

In 2024, CPR launched a major longitudinal research study titled “Forty Years’ Development Saga of Dhampur: Growth Dynamics and Regional Transformation Potential of an Indian Small Town”, led by Pushpa Pathak. The study team, including Pathak, Shubham Kashyap, and Aena Rawal, conducted intensive field work.

The Study Team of “Forty Years’ Development Saga of Dhampur: Growth Dynamics and Regional Transformation Potential of an Indian Small Town” launched a blog series based on the analysis of primary data as well as on the observation of wider transformations taking place in Dhampur town and the two case-study villages.



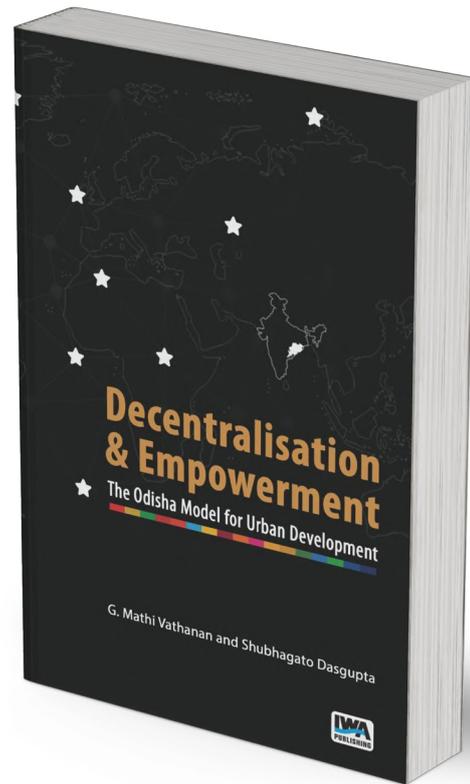
The research team, Pushpa Pathak and Shubham Kashyap, conducting field work in Dhampur.

BOOK

Decentralisation and Empowerment: The Odisha Model for Urban Development, a book co-authored by G. Mathi Vathanan and Shubhagato Dasgupta, published by the International Water Association Publishing, London, in January 2025. The book documents the key approaches and facets that underlay the highly successful urban development initiatives implemented in Odisha for close to a decade, to which the SCIFI Initiative was intimately associated. The application of the governance principles of decentralisation and empowerment across sub-sectors, including drinking water supply, environmental sanitation, municipal waste management, slum land rights, and upgrading infrastructure, has led to the development of the Odisha Model.

This book details the conceptualisation, design, learning and implementation processes behind the rapid and significant achievement of various urban initiatives rolled out in the State, many of which have been awarded multiple national and global accolades.

The book provides an insider's perspective on the thought processes that inform the development of public programmes that focus on the well-being of urban citizens.



BOOK REVIEWS

“Odisha’s development journey holds remarkable learnings for cities embarking on a path towards inclusive urbanization around the world.”

Anacláudia Rossbach

(Under-Secretary-General & Executive Director of the UN-Habitat)

“I strongly recommend this book to policymakers, water utility managers, academics and students, to learn how and why Odisha became a success story.”

Prof Asit K Biswas (Distinguished Visiting Professor, University of Glasgow, & Visiting



Book launch of *Decentralisation and Empowerment: The Odisha Model of Development* at IHC Delhi.

URBAN PLANNING INSTITUTIONS

Champaka Rajagopal initiated the Urban Planning Institutions Project at CPR in November 2024, intended to institutionalise urban planning processes for Indian cities that respond to Constitutional imperatives for economic growth, social justice, and environmental concerns.

POLICY ENGAGEMENTS

Pushpa Pathak was invited to be a Member of the Domain Working Group for formulating Knowledge Standards in the domain of Municipal Asset Management, organised by the National Urban Digital Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the National Institute of Urban Affairs. Shubham Kashyap joined as an Associate Member.

Partha Mukhopadhyay was a Member of the Working Group on Transition Systems for Rural Urban Continuum, constituted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in November 2024.

WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

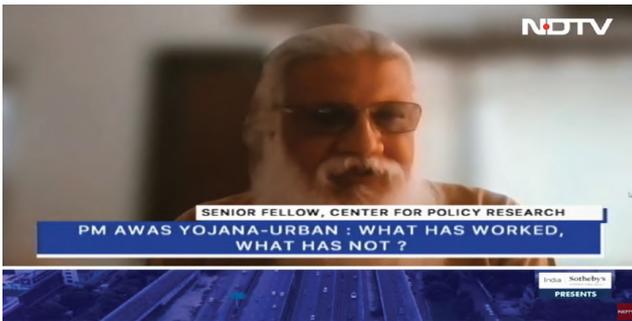
CPR-CSH Workshop Series: The Initiative continued to organise the ongoing Urban workshop series in collaboration with the Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH), New Delhi. This year, CPR organised 12 workshops and completed a sequence of 181 workshops in March 2025. This platform aims to create a space for interaction among practitioners working on various facets of urban studies, planning, and governance.

CPR organised a talk on “Historicising Indian Smart Cities” by Persis Taraporevala, moderated by Marie-Helene Zerach. This talk focused on the core democratic component of local representative government within the scope of a smart city.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

Partha Mukhopadhyay was invited to participate in “Insights: The Sustainable Cities Research Symposium”, organised by WRI India in July 2024. Mukhopadhyay was part of the Closing Plenary on Developing a Way Forward for Sustainable, Equitable and Regenerative Economic Development and Planning.



Partha Mukhopadhyay speaking on the panel of NDTV's Urban Agenda show on PM Awas Yojana - Urban: Hits and Misses, aired on 14 June 2024.

Pushpa Pathak moderated a roundtable on “Structuring Projects: Moving away from engineering-driven projects,” at a workshop on “Debating the results of the 100 Smart Cities Mission on Urban Governance: Institutions and Project Management, Capacity Building and Skills, Learning and Innovation,” at the Centre de Sciences Humaines, New Delhi.

Pushpa Pathak was invited as a panellist at the launch of a report on “Assessing India’s Enabling Framework Conditions for Subnational Climate Finance” by the UN-ESCAP, Urban Act, and Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (CCFLA).

Pushpa Pathak made a presentation on “Mofussil No More: Four Decades of Transformation of a Small Town, Dhampur, India: Preliminary Findings from the Field,” at the CSH-CPR Workshop held at CPR on 25 March 2025. The presentation described how the idea of small towns has changed over the past four decades.

Champaka Rajagopal delivered a keynote lecture at Sciences Po, Le Havre, France. Her lecture was titled “Finding the State: Tracing the Evolution of Urban Institutions in Liberalised India”.

Mukta Naik conducted a learning session on urbanisation and urban governance for journalists and field reporters from the India Development Review on 18 April 2024.

Mukta Naik was a panellist at the World Resources Institute (WRI) India’s event titled “Resilient, Equitable Housing, Opportunities and Urban Services (REHOUSE)” at a session titled “Innovative community-led practices and solutions”.

Mukta Naik spoke at a panel discussion on “Migration in Development and Urban Policy”, organised by the Urbanisation journal and the Indian Institute of Human Settlements.

In August, Mukta Naik participated in a panel discussion at “Buzz 3.0: Engaging with the City” organised by the Northern Chapter of the Indian Institute of Architects. She spoke at a session on “Delhi 2050: Perspectives”.

Mukta Naik participated in Indus Action’s seminar on “Reimagining Construction Workers’ Welfare: Exploring Data-Driven Innovations and Climate Adaptive Solutions for the BoCW Act”.

Mukta Naik delivered a talk on “Informality” & “Global North/Global South” as contested concepts’ at a workshop organised by the Gustave Eiffel University, Marne-la-Vallée, France.



Pushpa Pathak speaking on “Mofussil No More: Four Decades of Transformation of a Small Town, Dhampur, India: Preliminary Findings from the Field,” with Rama Devi and Sorabh Gupta on the panel.

SELECT PUBLICATIONS

Partha Mukhopadhyay co-authored a paper with Gurkirat Singh Juneja titled: “Integrating fares, Information, and Informal Transit” in D. Desai & N. Dawda (Eds.), *Global Policy Journal: New Approaches for Integrated Multimodal Urban Transport Systems*, published by the Observer Research Foundation, 2024.

Partha Mukhopadhyay co-authored another paper with Anant Maringanti, Director, Interdisciplinary Centre for Study of Global Change, University of Minnesota, titled “Inescapable Informality Redux”, introducing the *Economic and Political Weekly: Review of Urban Affairs* issue of February 2025. He was also part of the advisory group, which guest edited the issue.

Mukta Naik co-authored an article titled “The Governance of Internal Migration: Learning from the Pre- and Post-COVID-19 Policy Responses of Indian States” with Priyansha Singh, Harshita Sinha, and Varun Aggarwal, published in the *Sage Special Issue: The Future of Urbanisation: Migration Policies in the Post-pandemic World*. This article focuses on policies formulated by Indian state governments that are prominent recipients of internal migrants in the pre- and post-pandemic period.

Mukta Naik authored an article titled “Tracing Internal Migration Governance in India Through a ‘Mainstreaming’ Lens” for the *Sage Special Issue: The Future of Urbanisation: Migration Policies in the Post-pandemic World*.

Mukta Naik authored a journal article titled “Smaller cities as sites of youth migrant incorporation” for the *Urban Studies Journal*, Sage.

Mukta Naik authored a journal article titled “Crisis as inflection point in the urban governance of domestic migration in India: a policy frames analysis” in the *International Development Planning Review*, published by Liverpool University Press in October 2024.

Marie-Helene Zerah and Shamindra Nath Roy co-authored a chapter with Eric Denis titled “Subaltern Urbanisation and Rural-Urban Linkages in India” in the *Handbook on Rural-Urban Linkages in the Global South*, published by Edward Elgar Publishing in February 2025.



SANITATION

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

Shubhagato Dasgupta moderated a session at the “Learning Lab on Monitoring Gender in WASH: Opportunities and Challenges” organised by SCI-AI at Global Water and Sanitation Centre (GWSC), Asian Institute of Technology, in partnership with the National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management Alliance (NFSSMA) and CPR on 30th April 2024.

Shubhagato Dasgupta presented a webinar on “Risk to Resilience: Climate Change and Disaster Adaptation Strategies for WASH”, organised by the SCI-AI at Global Water and Sanitation Center (GWSC), Asian Institute of Technology, in partnership with NFSSMA and CPR on 1st May 2024.

The SCI-FI Initiative in collaboration with Global Water and Sanitation Center (GWSC), Asian Institute of Technology, the National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (NFSSM) Alliance and the TREADS Initiative, CPR organised a webinar on “Turning the Tide: Role of Statutory Bodies in Abating River Pollution”. CPR colleagues actively participated in the webinar. Shubhagato Dasgupta and Srinivas Chokkakula moderated sessions, and Debarshee Dasgupta joined as a panellist.

POLICY ENGAGEMENTS

Shubhagato Dasgupta participated in a set of high-level events at the UN-Habitat’s headquarters based in Nairobi, Kenya.

Shubhagato Dasgupta presented a masterclass on the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for inclusive sanitation at a seminar organised by SCI-AI and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) at the AIT Global Water & Sanitation Center, Bangkok.



Economic Policy

CPR faculty continued to engage with questions relating to the economy, with a specific focus on public finance and fiscal policy, as well as on understanding macroeconomic trends shaping development, markets and employment. These engagements spanned analytical writing, select policy discussions and talks.

SELECT POLICY ENGAGEMENTS

Partha Mukhopadhyay was invited to participate in a conference on the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey organised by the NSSO and the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation in June 2024.

Partha Mukhopadhyay and Saugata Bhattacharya were invited to participate in a Brainstorming Session on “Leveraging Non-Conventional Data Sources for Official Statistics” organised by the Administrative Statistics and Policy Division of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

CPR INSIGHTS

In May 2024, Partha Mukhopadhyay initiated a blog series “CPR Insights” where he analyses economic data to identify development, market and employment trends from across the world.



Partha Mukhopadhyay, along with other leading economists, in a meeting chaired by the Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman, to discuss the then-upcoming General Budget 2024-25.

SELECT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

Partha Mukhopadhyay delivered a special address on “Infrastructure Financing” in Public Finance for Indian Audit and Accounts Service (IAAS) Officer Trainees 2025 at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy.

CPR organised a talk titled “The GST Story: Whither Next?” by Rajeev Ranjan, Former Special Secretary, GST Council, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Former Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu. This talk, chaired by Arvind Subramanian, Senior Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics & Former Chief Economic Advisor, Government of India, covered the genesis and the complex and contentious journey of this policy.



Rajeev Ranjan speaking on “The GST Story: Whither Next?” with Arvind Subramanian and Srinivas Chokkakula on the panel.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Saugata Bhattacharya was appointed to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), 2 October 2024. As an external member of the MPC, Bhattacharya is tasked with assessing economic indicators such as inflation, growth, and global trends to make informed, consensus-based decisions on key instruments like the repo rate.

In October, Saugata Bhattacharya was appointed to the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) National Committee on Regulatory Aspects of the Financial Sector.



International Relations

CPR continued to engage with international relations across themes of foreign policy and diplomacy, world order and power relations, and international security debates. These engagements spanned talks and topical events, as well as participation in national and international conferences and policy forums.

FLAGSHIP EVENTS

CPR, in collaboration with IIC, organised a talk titled **“The Future of Russia and the World Order”** by Stephen Kotkin. This was followed by a conversation between him and Pratap Bhanu Mehta. Kotkin shared valuable insights on the widening gap between Russia’s aspirations and capabilities and its growing economic dependency on China. He also discussed the destabilising nature of modern technology and the changing nature of security in a world where the military-industrial complex is no longer just a physical space. The talk also highlighted the notion of Eurasian autocracy challenging American power.



Stephen Kotkin speaking on “The Future of Russia and the World Order,” with Pratap Bhanu Mehta on the panel.

CPR, in association with the India International Centre (IIC), organised a talk by Talmiz Ahmad titled **“West Asia After Bashar al-Assad: Regional and Global Ramifications”**, which focused on Syria’s internal and external politics. This talk, moderated by Gautam Mukhopadhaya, raised crucial issues of citizenship, occupation, and prospects of regional cooperation between the Gulf nations. Ahmad also made important observations about proxy wars, shifting alliances and power tussles between regional powers like Iran and Turkey.



Talmiz Ahmad speaking on “West Asia After Bashar al-Assad: Regional and Global Ramifications,” with Gautam Mukhopadhaya on the panel.

OTHER EVENTS

The Centre organised several other topical events on international relations and security. These talks explored foreign policy and diplomatic ties in South Asia, as well as India’s position vis-à-vis the United States in the face of a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.



Amit Gupta speaking on “MAGA vs The Liberals: US Presidential Election 2024 and Implications on India,” 13th June 2024



S. D. Muni speaking on “India’s Neighbourhood Policy: Lessons Learned and Unlearned,” October 21, 2024.



Amit Gupta speaking on “Is a ‘Model Minority’ an ‘Acceptable Minority?’ Indian-Americans and the US Presidential Polls”, October 29, 2024.



Rani D. Mullen speaking on “Indo–U.S. Relations in the Trump 2.0 Era,” on 27 January 2025.



Miemie Winn Byrd speaking on “Strategic Opportunities for India in Myanmar: Countering China’s Influence and Supporting Democracy”, 13 January 2025.



Raunak Mainali speaking on “Nepal’s Foreign Policy Strategies: Has Hedging Worked?”, 16 January 2025.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

Nimmi Kurian presented two papers titled “Mining Its Own Business: Chinese Capital and the Land Rights Protests in Myanmar” and “How Does a River (Discourse) Change Course? Alternative Futures for the Brahmaputra” at the British International Studies Association Annual Conference, 6-7 June 2024, Birmingham.

Nimmi Kurian made the lead presentation titled “At the Water’s Edge: How Weak Institutionalism will Weaken Sustainable Futures of the Brahmaputra”, organised by The Forum for Policy Dialogue on Water Conflicts in India, 1 February 2025.

Nimmi Kurian was invited as a panellist at the India China Institute’s 20th Anniversary Symposium on “India, China, and the US in Shifting Global Orders”, Penang, Malaysia, 15 August 2024.

Nimmi Kurian was a panellist at the International Seminar on “South Asian Regionalism – Prospects and Challenges”, co-organised by the South Asian University, New Delhi and Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement, Kathmandu, 10 December 2024.

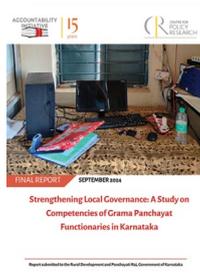
Nimmi Kurian was a panellist at the ORF Think Tank Forum on “India and the Global South: Championing Equitable Development”, New Delhi, 6 February 2025.

Nimmi Kurian spoke at a roundtable on “Women and Mediation: 1325 and Beyond”, India International Centre, 17 May 2024.



Public Finance and Governance

Public finance and governance at CPR focus on strengthening transparency and accountability in governance, with a specific emphasis on evidence-based research on governance capabilities and the factors affecting efficient public service delivery in India.

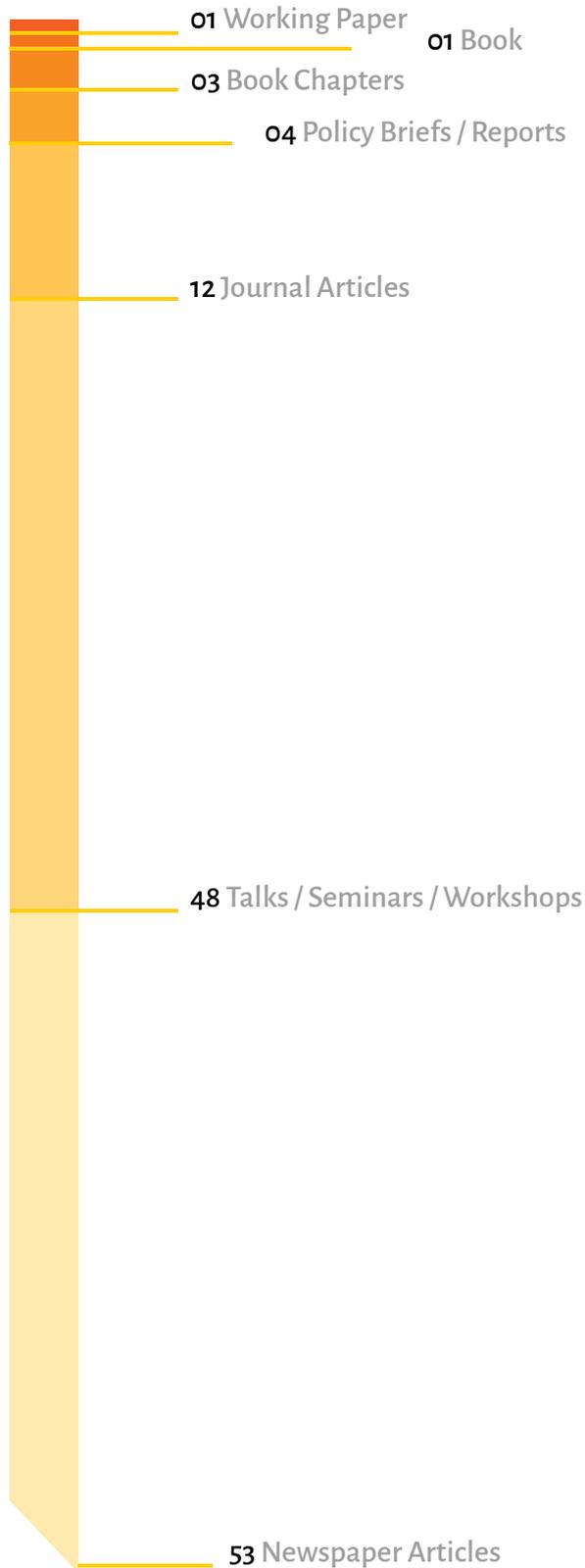


Innovative Approaches to Convergence in Karnataka's Grama Panchayats: Insights from 5 Case Studies, a report for the Centre for Policy Research by Avani Kapur, Mallika Arora, Ritwik Shukla, Sidharth Santhosh, Tanya Rana, Bhavya J, Dongrisab Nadaf, Kripa Krishna, Monisha S, Sachin E S, Shailaja S and Vijaya Kumari R Gowda.

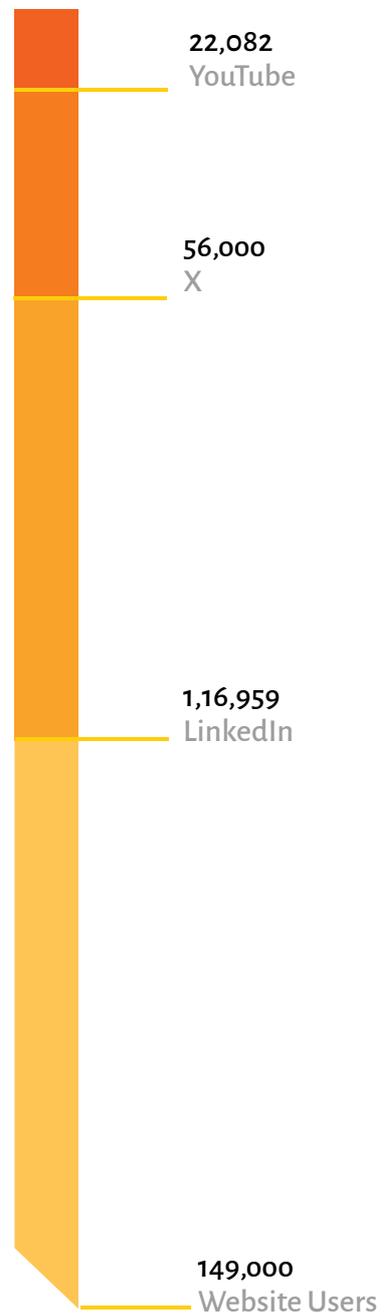
Strengthening Local Governance: A Study of Competencies of Grama Panchayat Functionaries in Karnataka, a report for the Centre for Policy Research by Avani Kapur, Mallika Arora, Sidharth Santhosh, Bhavya J, Dongrisab Nadaf, Kripa Krishna, Monisha S, Pritika Malhotra, Sachin E S, Shailaja S, and Vijaya Kumari R Gowda.

Federal Financing of Health: Implications for Health System Capacity and Priority, a working paper for the Centre for Social and Economic Progress, co-authored by Avani Kapur, Indranil Mukhopadhyay, Janak Raj, Prajakta Shukla, Ritwik Shukla, Sharad Pandey and Sandhya Venkateswaran.

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DHARMA MARG, CHANAKYAPURI,
NEW DELHI 110021
WWW.CPRINDIA.ORG