

# Annual Report 2024

## Justice, Security & Vulnerable Populations of South Asia

For the Annual Year of 2024

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**Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (CRG)**

**8 January 2025**

**Kolkata, India**

## **Main Events and Activities done in 2024 :**

In 2024, *CRG* with the support from *The Fund for Global Human Rights* organised several events on the theme of “**Justice, Security and Vulnerable Populations of South Asia**”. For the overall concept note please [click here](#) .

CRG while hosting the South Asian Segment of the programme has engaged with project related activities such as research, workshops, webinars, public lectures, conferences, publications and reports. Events and activities such as research, work of translation, workshops having practitioners from legal expertise to media, ground level dialogues, webinars and network building have been some of the approaches adopted while working on this research programme around intersectionality of issues such as, security at crossroads of food, water, gender, land, various facets of human security, climate security, digital security, public health, biosecurity, borders and marginalities, so on and so forth. We have engaged with learning about first hand local/ regional experiences of issues of social security, social protection, refugee and migrant protection, significance of conventions like the global compacts and renewed understandings of justice, care, vulnerabilities, and security. All these issues came to the forefront through discussions and research that scholars have worked on. In understanding the significance of justice for vulnerable population groups, including the displaced, and the duty to protect people as the fundamental responsibility of the state and society in a democratic set-up—with these objectives in mind, event discussions took place throughout 2024, alluding to the central theme of decolonising security studies in South Asia.

## **Programmes and Activities done : (descriptions below) - For details [click here](#)**

- 1) Research Papers and Policy Briefs.
- 2) Three Workshops (including a South Asian Conference and Policy-Peace Dialogue).
- 3) Two Public Lectures.
- 4) Creating a Network of specialists and public activities - Three Webinars under this.
- 5) Translations of relevant research output.
- 6) Publications.
- 7) Web based activities, publicity, and resource material for public access.
- 8) Evolving list of library resources for open use for scholar-activists working on themes of Security and Justice.

**The proposed year-wise activity list for both 2024 and 2025 is given below:**

- (i) Four (4) research papers addressing the specific themes - with 2 papers each year-2024 and 2025.
- (ii) A workshop for legal activists, policy analysts, teachers in security and peace studies, economists, and other social activists like media activists working on issues of non-traditional security, digital democracy, and histories of peace accords and dialogues.
- (iii) Policy dialogue - peace dialogue or local level public discussion, and public lecture by jurists/non-traditional security specialists on themes like climate security, food security, etc. (one dialogue and one lecture each year).
- (iv) Publications (including reports, research papers, policy briefs) – online and in print.
- (v) Translations of some relevant research output and policy briefs in some of the South Asian languages.
- (VI) A South Asian conference of legal experts and social leaders on security, protection, and justice.
- (viii) Creating a network of specialists and public activists on non-traditional security issues.
- (ix) Web-based activities, publicity, and resource material for public access.
- (x) Building up library resources for open use by scholar-activists on security and justice studies.

**Project Overview of 2024**

<b>A1. Research Papers</b>		
	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
	<b>Research Papers</b>	<p>i) <b>Samir Kumar Das</b> (CRG, and Calcutta University) : “Peace and People’s Security: An Agenda for Neo Liberal Times”.</p> <p>The <a href="#">paper</a> seeks to develop an agenda for people’s security: (a) A large number of people, for instance, simply loses their life or lives a life that makes her neither a healthy and rights-bearing body nor ‘lets her die’, and (b) Civil society organizations provide no answer to this chronic biopolitical insecurity. The pandemic, as CRG studies have shown, offered an</p>

<b>A1. Research Papers</b>		
		<p>opportunity of experimenting with different forms of people's solidarity. Solidarity becomes people's answer to biopolitical insecurities. This research will be published as CRG's Occasional Paper series <i>Policies and Practices</i> in January 2025.</p>
		<p>ii) <b>Saurabh Bhattacharjee</b> (National Law School, Bangalore) :  "Operationalising Human Security in India: Extending Legal and Social Protection to Migrants"</p> <p>This <a href="#">paper</a> examines various forms of human security for refugees and migrants as a continuum. This research will be published as CRG's Occasional Paper series <i>Policies and Practices</i> in January 2025.</p>
		<p>iii) <b>Ritam Sengupta</b> (O.P.Jindal Global University): "The Subject and Paradoxes of Digital Security".</p> <p>This <a href="#">paper</a> considers if the interaction of technology and law can broaden the definitions of security in a way in which the unavoidable digital existence of Indian citizens can be emboldened. This research will be published as CRG's Occasional Paper series <i>Policies and Practices</i> in January 2025.</p>
		<p>iv) <b>Sucharita Sengupta</b> (Researcher, CRG) :  "Migrants' Security: Assessing the Global Compact of Migration (GCM) for "Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration".</p>

A1. Research Papers	
	<p>This <a href="#">paper</a> talks about challenges and vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers and whether securitisation efforts through UN policies like the Global Compact makes a difference in macro and micro cases in South Asia. She argues, South Asia is important in the discussion for several reasons. This research will be published as CRG's Occasional Paper series <i>Policies and Practices</i> in January 2025.</p>

A2. Policy & Legal Briefs		
	Activities	Outcomes
i)	<b>Policy Briefs</b>	<p>i) <b>Sahana Basavapatna</b> (Legal Expert): "State's Plenary Powers And India's "Refugee Law".</p> <p>This Policy <a href="#">Legal Brief</a> intends to present an analysis of the plenary powers of the Indian state in the context of its characterization of refugees and their care and management in India. This will be published in January 2025.</p>
		<p>ii) <b>Bharat Bhushan</b> (Media Expert &amp; CRG) : "Media and Securitisation: A Review".</p> <p>This <a href="#">Policy (Media) Brief</a> has dealt with the link between the perception of an issue, the role of mass media in creating the perception, the exploitation of the issue by political actors by securitising it and then presenting themselves as the only ones capable of resolving the issue. This will be published in January 2025.</p>

<b>A2. Policy &amp; Legal Briefs</b>		
		<p>iii) <b>Rajat Roy</b> (Media Expert &amp; CRG) : The “Land Question”.</p> <p>This <a href="#">Policy Brief</a> explores the question of insecurity of the vulnerable population in its link with the question of their Right to Land. The Land Question is central to the question of insecurity of the vulnerable sections of the rural Population. This will be published in January 2025.</p>

<b>A.3. Workshops &amp; Conferences</b>		
	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
i)	A workshop for legal activists, policy analysts, teachers in security and peace studies, economists, and other social activists like media activists working on issues of non-traditional security, digital democracy, and histories of peace accords and dialogues.	<p><b>“The First Consultative Meeting to discuss research and activities for the programme on the theme of Security, Justice and Vulnerable Populations of South Asia”</b> was held on <b>6 April 2024</b> in Kolkata, West Bengal.</p> <p>The Meeting was in the form of a One Day workshop to discuss research and activities on non-traditional security, digital democracy, and histories of peace accords and dialogues.</p> <p>A brief description is given later in this Report.</p>
ii)	A South Asian conference of legal experts and social leaders on security, protection, and justice.	<p><b>“One and a half day Workshop on ‘Security at the Crossroads of Rights, Justice, and Vulnerabilities’</b>” was held on <b>27-28 July 2024</b> in Kolkata, West Bengal.</p> <p>A brief description is given later in this Report.</p>
iii)	Policy dialogue - peace dialogue or local level	<b>One day Workshop on “Food, Livelihood Security and Life Claims: Indigenous People</b>

<b>A.3. Workshops &amp; Conferences</b>		
	public discussion, and public lecture by jurists/non-traditional security specialists on themes like climate security, food security, etc. (one dialogue and one lecture each year).	<p><b>of India”</b> was held on <b>21 September 2024</b> in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with the <i>Directorate of Tribal Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu and Centre for Social Justice and Equity, Madras School of Social Work (MSSW)</i>.</p> <p>A brief description is given later in this Report.</p>

<b>A.4. Public Lectures</b>		
	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
i)	One lecture each year	A <a href="#">Reading Session</a> on Michel Foucault’s <i>Security, Territory, Populations: Lectures at the College de France (1977-1978)</i> , by Ranabir Samaddar, CRG, on 16 August 2024 (Part I) and 7 October 2024 (Part II), in Kolkata, West Bengal.
ii)	One Public Lecture on the theme of Food Security.	A <a href="#">Public Lecture</a> on “Food, Livelihood Security and Life Claims of the Indigenous People of India: An Introspection, by Virginius Xaxa, Institute of Human Development, on 20 September 2024, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu in collaboration with MSSW. <b>Video of this event could be found <a href="#">here</a>.</b>

<b>A.5 Creating a Network of specialists and public activities</b>		
	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
	Creating a network of specialists and public activists on non-traditional security issues.	Three Webinars were planned under this proposed Activity with the intention of an evolution of a potential network. The webinars have been conceptualised by Ranabir Samaddar and curated by Samata Biswas (CRG & The Sanskrit College and University).

A.5 Creating a Network of specialists and public activities		
		<p>For detailed events notification of all three webinars available in CRG’s website- <a href="#">click here</a>.</p> <p><b>i) The First webinar was on “Security at Crossroads: Land, Food, Water”, held on 13 August 2024.</b></p> <p>In the first webinar of the series "Security at Crossroads" the speakers examined different aspects of human security as they play out in India--they discussed how questions of land, food and water shape the experiences of marginal groups in India and how, if at all, can food, water and land security offer them dignified participation in the politics of life.</p> <p>The detailed <a href="#">Report</a> of the first webinar along with Speaker Bios are uploaded on CRG's website.</p> <p>The video link of the Webinar can be found <a href="#">here</a> in CRG’s you tube channel, made available in CRG’s website.</p>
		<p><b>ii) The Second Webinar was on “Security at Crossroads: Boundaries and Life”, held on 4 November 2024.</b></p> <p>In the second webinar of the series, the speakers explored various facets of human security at the margins. The purpose of this webinar was to decolonise the security question and relocate it within the ambit and issues of life - life of the nation, people, and in particular lives of vulnerable population groups relegated to a bordered existence.</p> <p>The detailed <a href="#">Report</a> of the second webinar along with Speaker Bios are uploaded on CRG's website.</p> <p>The video link of the Webinar can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>



A.5 Creating a Network of specialists and public activities		
		in CRG's you tube channel, made available in CRG's website.
		<p>ii)The Third Webinar on “Security at Crossroads: Biopolitics, Medicalisation, and Epidemiology Today”, was held on 23 December 2024.</p> <p>The third webinar of the series, discusses biosecurity in its various manifestations, ranging from biocapitalism, vulnerability and precarities, to medicalisation of borders and of everyday life.</p> <p>The detailed <a href="#">Report</a> of the third webinar along with Speaker Bios are uploaded on CRG's website.</p> <p>The video link of the Webinar can be found <a href="#">here</a> in CRG's you tube channel, made available in CRG's website.</p>

	Activities	Outcomes
<b>A6.</b>	Translations of some relevant research output and policy briefs in some of the South Asian languages.	<p>Bengali Translation is done of - <i>Migration and Circles of Insecurity</i> authored by Paula Banerjee and Ranabir Samaddar. The original work is available at CRG library - <a href="https://mcr-g-opac.blacal.in/cgi-bin/koha/opac-det-ail.pl?biblionumber=136">https://mcr-g-opac.blacal.in/cgi-bin/koha/opac-det-ail.pl?biblionumber=136</a> .</p> <p>The Bengali Translation done by Prasit Das is entitled as “স্থানান্তর ও বিপন্নতা” (“Sthanantar O Bipannata”) and is being considered for publication by end January 2025 from Setu Prakashani.</p> <p>A few more translation plans in other languages like Hindi are also under consideration.</p>
<b>A.7</b>	Publications (including reports, research papers, policy briefs) – online and in print.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All <a href="#">Reports</a>, Draft Research Papers, Policy briefs have been uploaded in the designated webpage of CRG's website.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinar Reports have been uploaded in <a href="#">Refugee Watch Online</a> - Over the past few years, feeling the necessity to bring migration related news, and scholarly works into popular domain, CRG has ventured into blog posts through <i>Refugee Watch Online</i> (RWO).</li> <li>• All Research papers are being published in CRG's Occasional Paper Series <a href="#">Policies and Practices</a> for January 2025.</li> <li>• All Policy Briefs are being published for January 2025.</li> </ul>
<b>A8.</b>	Web-based activities, publicity, and resource material for public access.	<p>First webinar report in Refugee Watch Online can be found <a href="#">Here</a>.</p> <p>Second webinar report in Refugee Watch Online can be found <a href="#">Here</a>.</p> <p>Third webinar report is in the process of being uploaded in Refugee watch Online.</p>
<b>A9.</b>	Building up library resources for open use by scholar-activists on security and justice studies.	An evolving list of Resources on the main theme and sub themes that has been discussed throughout the year is made available in CRG's website, in the Research Programme's designated webpage - <a href="#">Here</a> .

### Brief Descriptions of select points as mentioned above:

#### A3. Workshops and Conferences

i) **The First Consultative Meeting** on the theme of "Security, Justice and Vulnerable Populations of South Asia" as mentioned above was held on 6 April 2024 in Kolkata. It saw a gathering of eminent jurists, legal practitioners, activists, policy analysts, teachers in security and peace studies, economists, and other social activists like media activists working on issues of non-traditional security, digital democracy, and histories of peace accords and dialogues. The Meeting was thematically divided into six sections - 1) Macro Security and Micro Insecurities 2) Law & Security- Juridical Issues to Security of Life 3) Issues of Gender Security 4) Issues of Human Security 5) Issues of Geopolitics, Marginal Areas, and the Issue of Security and 6) Dialogues and Network: Security,

Peace & Justice. This meeting highlighted the need for organising more discussions surrounding the global compacts on safe and secure migration, to produce policy briefs, organise fruitful discussions on food security, climate security, and most importantly land security. What does security of land mean to farmers? And to hold a public lecture either in Kolkata or preferably outside West Bengal, in one of the southern states of India.

**For detailed discussions of all themes please see the [Report](#) uploaded in CRG'S website.**

**ii)The Second event of the Research Programme**, also mentioned above, was a follow up Workshop of the first Consultative Meeting. The workshop was held on 27-28 July 2024 in Kolkata. The specific purpose of the second workshop was to relocate the security question in the context of the post-colonial societies of South Asia, their problems of underdevelopment, issues of basic rights such as of food, shelter, education, work, health, the adverse impact of internal conflicts and conflicts with neighbours on these societies, and their struggles for justice – all of which redefine the problematic of security, compelling us to work for food security, social security, security from ecological and climate disasters, etc. Thus, the security question in the South is entangled with issues of life – life of the nation, people, and in particular lives of the vulnerable population groups in society. This workshop was divided into eight sessions including the inaugural and concluding sessions.

The main panels were - 1) A Conversation between Meenakshi Gopinath (Director, Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace- WISCOMP) and Paula Banerjee (CRG and Asian Institute of Technology) on the work and activism of WISCOMP's early years, 2) Constitution & Security of Vulnerable Population Groups 3) Research in Progress- where all researchers as part of the research programme, presented their writing research papers and policy briefs, presented their works in progress 4) Security of Migrants, Refugees & Borderland People 5) Media, Communication & Perceptions of Security- where eminent media activists and scholars talked about the theme including the need to build a network of relevant stakeholders working on the theme and finally 7) The South Asian Perspective where renowned scholars talked about the subcontinent with focus on India, Bangladesh and Nepal. The Workshop also threw light on the need for a renewed understanding of notions such as security and justice particularly after the Pandemic. The workshop concluded with Ranabir Samaddar retaliating to the need to have one more workshop to see where the problematic has been adequately comprehended. He also spoke of future events like holding public lectures and

dialogues on the thematic not only in West Bengal but in other parts of India. He also spoke of organising three webinars by the end of 2024 and to do one or two translations of existing works on the theme.

**For detailed discussions of all themes please see the [Report](#) uploaded in CRG'S website.**

**iii)The Third Workshop of the Programme** as suggested above was organised in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with the [Directorate of Tribal Welfare](#), Government of Tamil Nadu and Centre for Justice and Equity, Madras School of Social Work. This workshop in form of a policy dialogue, through its three main themes - a) Law, Vulnerability, and Justice in South Asia b) Human and other forms of Protection and c) Tribal Migration & Food Insecurity in Tamil Nadu discussed advocacy of food security of tribal people by organising a public lecture on 20 September 2024-mentioned above, critically reflected upon the factors of food and nutrition insecurities among tribal population in the backdrop of increased volume of tribal displacement and migration and Bring policy-makers, academics, legal experts and members of other civil society organisations across a table and initiate a policy debate on tribal food and nutrition insecurities. Environmental, Human, and other Forms of Protection was also discussed as part of one of the panel discussions, as well as Policies and Frameworks for Food and Livelihood Security.

**For details of discussions, please see the [Report](#) uploaded in CRG'S website.**

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