

MAHANIRBAN CALCUTTA RESEARCH GROUP

Annual Report for 2009-2010

1. Action Taken Report
2. Programmes
3. Publications, Seminars, and Public Lectures
4. Website
5. Library and other Assets
6. Members of the staff
7. Membership
8. Tasks for 2010-2011

**1. Action Taken Report**

1.1 CRG's founder-member, its ex-Vice President, and a noted labour activist, Jayanta Das Gupta died from illness in February 2010. In his memory CRG has decided to institute an annual Jayanta Das Gupta Memorial Lecture on themes related to labour.

1.2 An International Research Advisory Committee has been set up on receiving the consent of the following members. The Committee will be formally notified after the Annual General Meeting. The following persons have given their consent:

Anisuzzaman (Bangladesh)  
Itty Abraham (U.S.A/India)  
Hamida Hossain (Bangladesh)  
Daho Djerbal (Algeria)  
Meenakshi Gopinath (India)  
Rubina Saigol (Pakistan)  
Jean Luc Racine (France)  
Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu (Sri Lanka)  
Sonia Dayan-Herzbrun (France)  
Sharit K. Bhowmik (India)  
Roberta Cohen (U.S.A)  
Brett Neilson (Australia)  
Sandro Mezzadra (Italy)  
Heikki Patomaki (Finland)  
Oren Yiftachel (Israel)

1.3 As per the resolution of the preceding AGM, Kumar Rana was invited to CRG to be a member, and he has accepted the membership.

1.4 In spite of the MOU with IGNOU collaboration has not started, as IGNOU did not proceed with what it was supposed to do. Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury has corresponded with the IGNOU on this.

1.5 Based on the resolution of the preceding AGM discussion in the International Association for Studies in Forced Migration, CRG has agreed to host the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of IASFM in 2013. Paula Banerjee, our Secretary and the Vice-President of IASFM, will soon submit a note on the preparatory tasks on this.

- 1.6 Apart from the two areas of research identified last year - Globalization and Governance - CRG is taking steps to return to its core area of strength – research on migration and forced migration in particular. This is important given the fact some of the research projects with their funding sources may end next year.
- 1.7 On the basis of recommendation in the AGM last year, effort has been made to explore establish contacts with China. Efforts towards new collaborations are also on.
- 1.8 Some of the steps recommended in the Annual Report last year were undertaken, and this has already earned attention. CRG has been recommended by the British Researches Council as an institution with remarkable capacity to innovate in research method. Similar commendation has come from elsewhere.
- 1.9 The problem of inadequate staff strength remains in spite of efforts.

## **2. Programmes of the CRG**

### *2.1 Programme on Forced Migration:*

The Seventh Annual Winter Course on Forced Migration was completed on December 15 2009. Each year the Winter Course Selection Committee puts in a lot of effort to select the best participants and try to maintain a fine balance in the group in terms of country of origin, residence, occupation, research interest and age. The Course forms the platform where South Asian participants from countries like Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are joined by participants from countries outside South Asia. This year we had participants from all over South Asia, including Bangladesh and Pakistan, especially difficult places to have participants from, because of the strict visa regimes. Outside South Asia, participants came from Nigeria, Canada and the USA. This year, the Selection Committee had extended invitation to twenty two participants out of which two could not attend due to visa related issues. One of them was from Bangladesh and another from Pakistan. The Winter Course Committee is happy that there was one participant from Pakistan. There was an application from Afghanistan also. The faculty constituted of forced migration experts, journalists, lawyers and researchers from Burma, Canada, Finland, Israel, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the UNHCR office at Geneva, Switzerland apart from members from within India.

Following the realization of the need to make the Course a much more two way process where the participants come to not only accumulate knowledge but also contribute with their own field and research inputs, the number of interactive sessions in the fifteen day workshop schedule were increased, and the number of classes was commensurately reduced in order to lend the course a more interactive orientation. This year there was a large number of interactive sessions and one roundtable (on “Ethics of Care: How Humanitarian our Humanitarian Institutions and laws are?”) exclusively for the participants. In all the other interactive sessions, participants were invited to take part as panelists.

Besides there were a number of public events and two follow up programmes attached to the Winter Course. Lectures were delivered by several notable scholars, such as Oren Yiftachel, Bertil Lintner, Francois Crepeau, Andrew Solomon, and Khalid Koser. Some of these lectures were held in collaboration with other academic institutions in Kolkata. The first follow up programmes was organized in Visakhapatnam (Andhra University) and the second one in Guwahati (in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla). A special report on the Guwahati workshop was published in the Economic and Political Weekly (22 May 2010).

The Media Segment, with a one-day workshop on media and displacement where the participants participated by presenting their media assignments under a discussion on “New Media Technologies and Citizen Journalism: Issues of Forced Migration”, also deserves special mention. Besides, the creative and the media assignments presented by participants in the Seventh Annual Winter Course deserve attention and praise.

Anu Hirsiäho from Tampere University spent fifteen days in Kolkata for a short research on forced migration, in addition to participating in the Winter Course as a resource person. Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury and Rani Varghese visited Finland to conduct studies on forced migration and displacement with special emphasis on themes like displacement due to environmental degradation and return migration of Ingrian Finns to Finland.

The Winter Course programme has concentrated on producing research work relevant to the field of forced migration. Under the umbrella of the programme, CRG has initiated research on themes like displacement in India’s north east, the responsibility to protect, the draft National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, gender dimension of forced migration, studies of camps and camp lives etc. The research initiatives are made available to the Course participants were made available to the participants as resource materials. The Seventh Winter Course participants and faculty members were given the Issue number 33 and 34 of the *Refugee Watch* journal as well as selected issues of the *Policies and Practices*. The research work produced in this year includes:

- *Policies and Practices 32: Two Studies on Asylum Seekers and Other Immigrants in Finland*, Essays by Sahana Basavapatna and Geetisha Dasgupta
- *Policies and Practices 30: Environment and Migration, Purulia, West Bengal*, Essay by Nirmal Kumar Mahato
- *Policies and Practices 28: Protecting the Rights of the Tsunami Victims: The Sri Lanka Experience*, Essay by Nirekha De Silva
- *Policies and Practices 26: Cyclone Aila and the Sundarbans: An Enquiry into the Disaster and Politics of Aid and Relief*, Essay by Amitesh Mukhapadhyay.

Apart from the research paper series, research works were also published in the *Refugee Watch* (Issues 33 and 34). Some of the notable writings were –

- A Billion Indians in a Changing Climate by *Alina Pathan*
- The Point of No Return - Exploring Law on Cross-Border Displacement in the Context of Climate Change by *Vikram Kolmannskog*
- Struggles on the Borders of Higher Education: The Subjectivation of Indian Students in Australia by *Brett Neilson*
- Global Citizenship: The Case of Migrants and Residents by *Raffaele Marchetti*
- Waging Peace: Women, Restorative Justice, and the Pursuit of Human Rights in the Solomon Islands by *Elizabeth Snyder*

The entire programme was held in collaboration with the UNHCR, Government of Finland, and the Brookings Institution. PANOS South Asia collaborated in holding the Media segment. Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, Ishita Dey and Geetisha Dasgupta coordinated the programme. The report of the programme including the follow up activities has been published. Copies of the report were sent to all Society members. It is also on CRG’s website (<http://www.mcrg.ac.in/WC2009.pdf>)

Steps were taken to open a special South Asian resource centre on forced migration studies, which would be attached to the CRG library, in the period under review. Apart from books, documents, and other print, visual, and web-based resources, the resource centre will have small fellowships, provisions of exchange visits, regular seminars, etc. It will act as a referral centre also. The website was thoroughly updated on this occasion. The Finland Embassy gave a special grant to begin the work. Under the resource centre two small research assignments were also

undertaken and completed. They will be now published. In the coming days, the resource centre will assume increasing importance.

## *2.2. Programme on Development, Democracy, and Governance – Lessons and Policy Implications:*

The research and dialogue programme on “Development, Democracy, and Governance - Lessons and Policy Implications” has now completed its first year. This is a three year programme whose components are: research, organization of dialogues, workshops, conference, public forums, and public lectures (mainly in the nature of outreach and dissemination activities, though they combine input gathering purpose as well), and organization of web based material for wider circulation, interaction, and publications

Under the research segment a two – day research workshop was organised in Kolkata on 17 -18 July 2009 to design the research programme and schedule. Several research proposals were presented by scholars from various parts of India. Eminent experts were invited to comment on the research proposals. The importance of developing a network of scholars working on the theme of Development, Democracy and Governance was mentioned. The whole research program has finally been modified and divided into four clusters now

- Law, Legality, Legitimacy, and Issues of Governance
- Science, Technology, and the New Style of Governance
- Governance and Production of Subjectivities
- Identity Needs, Developmental Needs, and the Securitized Response

It was decided that the first draft of papers were to be submitted by 6 months, and then they would be discussed in the second research workshop. In 2011 the research findings along with other research notes would be discussed in the Fourth Critical Studies conference. A publication plan also has been drawn up.

The details of the research clusters are given below –

### Cluster 1:

- Ashutosh Kumar on *“Ideals of Developmental Governance – Imaginations and Manifestos of the Political Parties”*
- Benjamin Zachariah on *“The Indian State, Nehruvian (Anti-) Nationalism, and the Question of Belonging”*
- Kalpana Kannabiran on *“Citizenship, Popular Constitutionalism and Social Transformation: A Preliminary Exploration”*

### Cluster 2:

- Dipankar Sinha on *“Development and E-Governance: Reflections on India’s Democratic Experience”*
- Manish Kumar Jha on *“Whose Breach was it? Disaster and Development Experience through Embankment Years”*
- Parthasarathi Banerjee on *“Science and Technology for Governance and Coordination”*
- Sutirtha Bedajna on *“Between Growth and Sustainability – The Illusions of Environmental Governance in India”*

### Cluster 3:

- Anup Dhar on *“‘Developmental Democracy’ through Education: Production of New-fangled Subjectivities and Corpulent Psychic Economies”*

- Badri Narayan Tiwari on “*Culture, State and Governance: A Study of North Zone Cultural Centre, Allahabad*”
- Rajarshi Dasgupta on “*Governing a Democracy and Guiding Development - Recent Policy Explosion in India and Ethics in Governance.*”
- Ranabir Samaddar on “*Governing the Minorities*” – Discussant: Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty

Cluster 4:

- Amit Prakash on “*Identity Needs, Developmental Needs, and Governmental Responses Reflections on India’s Democratic Experience*”
- Ratan Khasnabis on “*Governing the Economy of Rural India*”
- Sujata Dutta Hazarika on “*Conflict and Development – Implications for Democracy and Governance*”
- Swarna Rajagopalan on “*Security and Development – Implications for Democracy and Governance in India*”

There were also public lectures as part of this programme:

- “Spatial Reorganization of North Eastern Parts of British India, 1905 to Present” by David Ludden, Department of History, New York University, 12 September 2009
- ‘The Background of National Environmental Policy in India – Exploring Influences’ by Sutirtha Bedajna, Calcutta Research Group
- ‘Development, Government, and Nehru Era’ by Benjamin Zachariah, Reader in South Asian History, University of Sheffield, and Visiting Scholar to Calcutta research Group, 4 January 2010
- ‘The *Devas* and the *Asuras*: Interpretative Adventures of Indian Nationalism’ by Sanjay Palshikar, Department of political Science, University of Hyderabad, and Fellow, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 5 February 2010

A special web segment for this programme has been created on CRG website and was launched on 29 March 2010. This is a secured section. Only the registered users can have the access of this section with particular user id and password. The second year of the research should see proper uploading of material, different resources, updating them, posting of the reports, and laying down a format of discussion.

Finally there were two publications under this programme:

- Distinguished Lecture Series – 2, *Rethinking 1905: Spatial Inequity, Uneven Development and Nationalism* by David Ludden, Department of History, New York University
- Policies and Practices – 31, *Local Dynamics, Universal Context: Border Trading Through Moreh, Manipur* by Dulali Nag, Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management, Kolkata

This programme is carried out with the support of the Ford Foundation. Ranabir Samaddar and Sutirtha Bedajna are supervising the programme.

### 2.3 Right to Food:

In first consultation meeting for the Right to Food Project, held in September 2008 (report available at - [http://www.mcrge.ac.in/first\\_rfc.doc](http://www.mcrge.ac.in/first_rfc.doc)), it was suggested that in this Project, one of the possible aims would be to find out what went wrong with the PDS and what kind of a policy would be helpful in resuscitating it. There have been a multiple of research initiatives to know the faults, and mostly, the problems have been found to lie with the administration. Each survey came out with the same report and similar recommendations. A different angle was suggested for CRG to look into the matter: the angle of food entitlement. The reason being that, at present there are as many as 9 projects that are running which pledge to work for better distribution of food. But none of these can be as such said to have any direct relation to food itself. Neither are the people

entitled to the benefits categorically defined. Moreover, there is a huge gap for lack of representation, for example, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to represent the disabled, weak, destitute, old people, lactating or pregnant women. Their agency is also very difficult to obtain. Political parties could have been functional, but they also failed to take up the responsibility.

Accordingly, it was decided that the programme will involve focused research and advocacy work for one year. This programme should lead to a greater study and campaign with the NHRC. The research was conceptualized primarily keeping in mind a few concerns: the research would focus on the rights perspective of the food security paradigm, considering the fact that basic research on availability of food is already being carried out by several researchers all over India. CRG's research began with accepting the fact that food scarcity exists in this country, and exists to the point of causing starvation death in pockets. Taking a step further from present and ongoing body of research and reporting, the project therefore seeks to grasp the nature of right to food – how the agenda food entitlement shapes on the basis of contention and negotiation of the right between the state, which has to deliver the food, and the subject; who assumes different collective and individual identities at different levels and points of time.

The research was initially conceptualized on five themes: (a) an inquiry looking into the state of the right to food in the tea plantations in Jalpaiguri, North Bengal by Geetisha Dasgupta; (b) a similar inquiry to take stock of the situation in South Bengal, specifically Paschim Midnapore, where starvation and hunger deaths have been repeatedly reported by Geetisha Dasgupta; (c) one paper on the legal development of the Right to Food as a concrete right by Ruchira Goswami, (d) the fourth aspect was related to a study of the popular movement in West Bengal in 2007-08 against the unavailability of food in the Public Distribution System which influenced considerably the results of the Panchayat elections that took place soon after the agitation had stopped; the analysis being based on a study of a Panchayat region of Burdwan District in West Bengal by Manisha Banerjee; and (e) finally, a paper summarizing how inequality in accessing food became categorical and durable in West Bengal, and categories of caste, gender, location, age, income, and class made certain inequalities durable in society; narrating the political story of the right to food in West Bengal over the last fifty years beginning with the food movements of the fifties and sixties in West Bengal and culminating into the present day struggles over the public distribution system. The last study was done by Kumar Rana. An additional introductory chapter by Geetisha Dasgupta was added to the body of study, which summarized the evolution of right to food as a case inside the Court room, including the several interim orders issued by the Supreme Court of India, facilitating the access to food and reach out of the right by the Supreme Court Commissioners. It also recounts the way in which the right was shaped outside the Courts through peoples' participation.

The first study was published in CRG's research paper series "Policies and Practices" issue no. 24 under the title "Whither Right to Food: Rights Institutions and Hungry Labour in the Tea Plantations of North Bengal" in May 2009. The fourth and the fifth study have been published in a combined issue of Policies and Practices (Issue number 25, in August 2009) titled, "Hunger, Food Scarcity and Popular Protests in West Bengal."

The programme ended in September 2009.

The final meeting to discuss the research findings was held in Kolkata on 21 September 2009. This meeting was attended by experts, journalists, lawyers and researchers and activists associated with the right to food in India in general and West Bengal in particular. The studies were presented in this meeting and received valuable comments and suggestions. The proceedings have been compiled in a report on right to food titled "Right to Food: Reports from West Bengal" and have been circulated, especially to relevant bodies like the NHRC, SHRC, PUCL, HRLN etc. However, NHRC for whose benefit the study was conducted has not got back to us on this.

Presently a book is being planned with Frontpage Publications to publish the studies. CRG has now planned to add a new paper to the existing body of studies. It will be on the theme of "The

Significance of the Right to Information for the Realisation of the Right to Food.” Sibaji Pratim Basu has authored the paper. Geetisha Dasgupta and Sibaji Pratim Basu are the co-editors. Geetisha Dasgupta coordinated the entire programme. It was carried out with support from the Asia Pacific Forum of Human Rights Institutions and the Ford Foundation.

#### *2.4. EURASIA-Net Project on Regional Instruments for Protection of Minority Rights*

The EURASIA-Net project on “Regional Instruments for Protection of Minority Rights” initiated at Italy on 15 April 2008 came to successful end with CRG organizing the final conference of the programme from 18–20 March at Swabhum, Kolkata. The project concentrated on exploring conditions of minority rights in both South Asia and Europe in a trans-regional platform. On the one hand, the programme encapsulated research through original papers and reports of exchange programmes, and on the other hand these research papers and reports were discussed and embodied through meetings, workshops and publications. The focal points of the research programme are enlisted below:

*Study Visits* – The Study visits were a major part of the research programme. About twenty-five participants drawn from different parts of South Asia and Europe were part of these study visits. The idea behind organizing such study visits was to promote cooperation and circulation of South Asian Research results within the European Scientific Community and vice-versa. A wide array of research topics were covered as part of the Study visits. The European Academy hosted five visits, Brunel hosted four visits, Frankfurt hosted one visit, the University of Paris hosted one, The University of Dhaka hosted three visits, The Democratic Commission of Human Development hosted one visit, South Asia Forum for Human Rights hosted two visits and CRG hosted five visits.

*Summer Schools* – The Summer Schools were another pivotal part of the EURASIA-Net programme. The first Summer School was held in Bolzano July-August 2008. The second School was held in Kathmandu in August 2009. It was organized by the Democratic Commission of Human Development, a project partner. There were 25 participants drawn from Europe and South Asia. Besides lectures, there were also several interactive sessions in which resource persons held sessions with the participants. The Summer school generated very good study material concerning minority rights and the material was circulated among the participants and partners of the research project. Samir Das and Ranabir Samaddar participated as faculty members.

*Workshops*: CRG held a dialogue on “Minorities and their Alienation” in Kolkata as part of the programme on 8 August, 2009. About 30 participants drawn from different fields of work from all over India attended the dialogue. They included academics and researchers, feminist scholars and representatives of indigenous people, legal activists, and minority and human rights activists. It was suggested at the dialogue that we require a much wider database on minority conditions in India. Participants also felt the need for deeper ethnographic exploration of the dialogues taking place in everyday life among different groups in society. Details of this workshop can be found on the website of CRG, more specifically in the webpage maintained for the research section of protection of Minority Rights. The second dialogue took place on the occasion of the EURASIA-Net Final Conference on Trans Regional Platform and Joint Research Agenda on Minority Rights. It was held in Kolkata on 18–20 March, 2010. The conference was the final culminating point of the project. The key objectives were to bring together the outcomes of all project activities undertaken as part of the two year research programme and to work on the recommendations discussed during the course of the conference, for effective implementation in future. The inaugural lecture was delivered by I. A. Rehman of the Human Rights Commission, Pakistan. The conference came to an end with the valedictory lecture by Justice Rajinder Sachar. The print media of the city carried the news of the programme widely. The two and a half day workshop comprised of several sessions. The details of this Conference along with the programme schedule and list of participants could be found on the website of CRG.

*Website:* CRG has maintained a separate web section for the protection of minority rights, furnishing information about the EURASIA-Net project. Besides doing this, CRG also from time to time has posted invitations and online registration forms for willing participants to the workshops it organized under the project. The details of the dialogues organized by CRG, the material circulated in the final conference and published book and research papers by CRG are all uploaded in the relevant section of CRG's website.

The project has also generated a wide corpus of research material:

*Relevant Publications by CRG:*

- Samir Kumar Das, (ed.). *Minorities in South Asia and in Europe : A New Agenda*, (Samya , Kolkata,2010)
- Samir Kumar Das and Ranabir Samaddar, *Ways of Power, Minorities, and Knowledge on Minorities*, Policies and Practices 23 (CRG, Kolkata, 2009)
- Subir Bhaumik and Sumon K. Chakrabarti, *View from India: Media and Minorities in Europe*, Policies and Practices 27 (CRG, Kolkata,2010)
- Amarjeet Singh Narang, *Nation-Building and Minority Alienation in India*, Policies and Practices 29 (CRG, Kolkata 2010).

*Other Project Publications -*

- Thomas Benedikter (ed.). *Europe's Ethnic Mosaic*, (EURAC, Bolzano, 2008)
- Rautz, Tomaselli and Zabielska (eds.). *Material for Specialized Media*, (EURAC, Bolzano, 2008)
- *Text Book Reader* - Borhanuddin Khan and Muhammad Mahbubur Rahman from University of Dhaka have co-authored the text on *Protection of Minorities: A South Asian Discourse*. As it is meant to be a text book targeted at the University level, and given the diversity of situations across South Asia, the volume is organized around country specific chapters. This was released during the final conference at Kolkata.
- *Readings on Minority Rights in South: New Challenges-* Tapan Bose and Rita Manchanda edited this volume and this was published by South Asia Forum for Human Rights. This was also released during the final conference at Kolkata.
- *EYMI Special Issue on South Asia* was released during the final conference by the European Academy at Kolkata.
- There is plan to publish a selection of study visit reports in the frame of *Counter Gaze: Media, Migrants, Minorities*. Subir Bhaumik, eminent journalist and member of CRG will edit the volume.

Samir Das with the support of Sucharita Sen Gupta conducted the entire project. The programme was funded by the European Commission.

## *2.5 Research Programme Globalization, Democracy, Citizenship, Gender and Peace Studies*

This is a two year long research programme undertaken with the support of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). The research programme began on 24 March 2009 and will end on 23 March 2011. The original research theme was shortened as advised by the ICSSR. It now focuses on two sub-themes: (a) globalization and sustainability of rights; and (b) women and borders.

The first segment deals with various aspects of the question of rights after globalization. It enquires into the questions of commons, common property resources, labour in the special economic zones, some of the relevant critical legal issues, and how all these impact on the nature

of citizenship. The second segment deals with issues of border and border regions and enquires into the conditions of women as borderland community. It also reflects on women as borderland existences in society. This section therefore deals with both external borders of India as well as the internal boundary-making exercises.

The research programme was devised in a consultative mode through wide ranging dialogues. There were workshops, internal discussions, in-house evaluation of research papers, and rigorous discussion on methods of research. The methods of research adopted here are both ethnographic and narrative, and analytic. The question of method was important as the research programme investigated the issues of border as a method of analysis, particularly in the second segment dealing with women and borders. The research programme has partly been completed. The main part of the actual research is over. The research has produced in all 16 papers - 8 in each segment. Some of the papers are being prepared for publication under the CRG research paper series.

The papers will be finally published in 2 volumes. Under the broad theme of the programme these papers address (a) the issues of the post-globalisation conditions in which rights can be attained, at times the rights get transformed, and at times they call for new agencies and new institutional framework; (b) the issue of information and law acquiring increased significance in the realization of rights; (c) the way labour is transformed in new work-places and the way this transformation impacts on the profile of citizenship; (d) the question of how gender predicates the question of border, and makes the question of boundary-making exercises an integral problematic of a society in its interface with globalization. The research proposal had mentioned the inquiry into the concerned questions as its objectives, and the research hopefully has been able to substantially address the questions.

While we are now engaged in finalizing the papers for publications CRG will make summaries of the writings available on website. In addition it will present an annotated list of key words and a list of key texts for the benefit of the future researchers in this field. Again the details of the web-based plan are mentioned in the segment reports. On the whole we may say, the research has been able to shed light on three important questions:

- What do we mean by rights in the age of globalization? What do we mean by sustainability of these rights? Does the story of these rights tell us of a new way by which the people are being governed? The research tells us with the help of instances from the worlds of labour, common property resources, and mobility, how rights hitherto accepted as unproblematic for a democratic society suddenly become problems for a globalizing country, and rights in such conditions call for new agencies, new institutionalization, and produce new discourses. But of there remains continuity. In this way, the research problematises the given notion of sustainability.
- What are the different ways in which the boundary making exercises continue today, and in that perspective how do women constitute themselves as border-negotiating communities and beings? The research programme through carefully selected case studies of both internal and external borders and boundary making exercises will demonstrate the need for studying women as borderland community/ies and understanding how as borderland communities women negotiate boundaries and borders, and create new spaces of negotiation and dialogues in an age when borders are getting in many respects hard and tight. The research will shed light on what can be called the task of new history of women as borderland communities.
- What are the appropriate methodologies for such investigation? Here the research project has been able to shed light on (a) border as an analytical tool or anchor of study; (b) development of feminist mode of analysis; and (c) the significance of ethnography in understanding the micro-forms of interface between different actors or agencies and globalization, and therefore power and resistance.

The findings of the research programme when completed and revised, will have added significance due to the wide ranging nature of the issues addressed here as well as due to the diversity of background which the researchers present.

Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, Paula Banerjee, Ishita Dey, and Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury are coordinators of the programme.

### *2.6 Work on IDPs in Nepal:*

The work on documentation on forced migration in Nepal in post-conflict situation was organized in collaboration with Nepal Institute of Peace (NIP). A planning meeting was held. There were several rounds of discussions as the work progressed. The planning meeting was organized on *Documentation of Forced Migration of Nepal in the Post Conflict Times* on 25 Aug, 2009 at Kathmandu and that was attended by thirty people primarily representatives from the government, NGOs working on internal displacement, political leaders and civil society members, researchers, displaced persons and journalists. The main objective of the meeting was to exchange ideas about how to document issues of forced migration in post conflict Nepal.

The English version of the website on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) <[www.idps-nepal.org](http://www.idps-nepal.org)> was reorganized and upgraded. The Nepali version website would be operational soon. Three e-bulletins on IDPs were also issued, and widely disseminated. The first issue on an overview of internal displacement situation in Nepal was uploaded on 1 June 2009. The second issue covered the situation of IDPs caused by the Koshi floods and the third issue focused on individual narratives of the people displaced by Koshi flood. The following articles were submitted for publication in journals:

(i) *Post Conflict Displacement in Nepal,*

(ii) *Flood Affected Internal Displacement in Nepal: The Case of Koshi River Flood*

Resource materials on forced migration comprising of the reports, news articles and research essays, published in various newspapers and journals were compiled in three CDs. The material was also uploaded on the website ([www.idps-nepal.org](http://www.idps-nepal.org)) and distributed to the participants of the Seventh Winter Course on Forced Migration 2009 organized by CRG.

The voices of the Koshi flood affected IDPs in four highly affected VDCs Paschim Kusaha, Sripur Jabdi, Haripur and Laukahi of Sunsari District were recorded in October 2009. They were recorded in Nepali and efforts are underway to develop them with English sub-title.

A two-day workshop was organized on "The Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security" in Kathmandu during 22-23 August 2009. The objective of the workshop was to share the research findings of Nepal and North-East India about implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in those two countries.

The programme was supported by the Oxford University Refugee Studies Centre. Paula Banerjee and Ishita Dey coordinated with Nepal Institute of Peace for the execution of the project. The work was carried out by the Nepal Institute of Peace and has earned appreciation for the thoroughness of the work.

### *2.7 Third Critical Studies Conference:*

CRG organized the Third Critical Studies Conference on Empires, States and Migration on 10-12 September 2009 in Kolkata. This was the third in the series of the Critical Studies Conferences organized by CRG, the previous ones being held in 2005 and in 2007. This year the conference began with a pre-conference roundtable on "My Right of Return" by Edward Said. The participants in this roundtable were Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, Stephen Wright, Brett Neilson and Pradip Kumar Bose. The roundtable was moderated by Ranabir Samaddar. The roundtable discussed Said's text and his ideas on return, mobility, partition, home and homelessness.

On 11 and 12 September, there were several interesting panels that discussed on themes like *Empires, Population Flows and Identity Construction, Colonialism and Migration, Migration, Nation States and Citizenship, Migration and Issues of Justice, and Return to the Labour Question in Migration Studies*. Participants included Christine de Gemeaux (François Rabelais University), Philip Golub (Institute of European Studies Université Paris 8), Anjali Gera Roy (Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur), Martine Spensky (Université Blaise Pascal), Mahendra Lawoti (Western Michigan University), Samir Kumar Das (University of Calcutta and CRG), Eva Gerharz (University of Bielefeld), Julie Mostov (Drexel University), Ishita Dey (CRG), József Böröcz (Rutgers University), Mahua Sarkar (Binghamton University), Swati Ghosh (Rabindra Bharati University), Dina Siddiqi (Brac University, Bangladesh) etc. Some of the very interesting papers included “The Image of Migrants in the European Media: The Case of France and Spain” by Anne Marie Autissier (Institute of European Studies, University of Paris 8), “The Collapse of State Socialism in the Former 'Soviet Bloc' and Global Labour Migration” by József Böröcz, “Colonialism, Resource Crisis and Forced Migration” by Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty (CRG), and “Why Should We Study Immigration Flows in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries?” by Ranabir Samaddar (CRG).

The conference ended with a very engaging valedictory lecture by David Ludden (New York University) on ‘Spatial Reorganization of North Eastern Parts of British India, 1905 to Present’. This was a public lecture attended by a large audience. The text was later published as the Second Distinguished Lecture under the CRG Distinguished Lecture Series.

The abstracts and the papers are available on the CRG website. The conference enhanced CRG’s reputation as a centre that encourages critical thinking on issues of social concern and strengthened CRG’s links with similar centres and universities.

The entire conference was held at the Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata and was coordinated by Samir Kumar Das with assistance from Geetisha Dasgupta, Ishita Dey, and Sanam Roohi.

## 2.8 Visiting scholars

In the year under review CRG hosted three visiting scholars – Professor Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka of Bielefeld University, Dr. Stephen Wright of the International College of Philosophy, Paris, and Dr. Anu Hirsiaho of Tampere University.

## 3. Publications, Seminars, and Public Lectures

### 3.1 Books

- State of Justice in India: Issues of Social Justice (4 Volumes) – Series Editor, Ranabir Samaddar (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2009). The details of the volumes are given below:
  1. *Social Justice and Enlightenment: West Bengal* - eds. Pradip Kumar Bose and Samir Kumar Das;
  2. *Justice and Law: The Limits of the Deliverables of Law* - eds. Ashok Agrwaal and Bharat Bhushan;
  3. *Marginalities and Justice* - eds. Paula Banerjee and Sanjay Chaturvedi
  4. *Key Texts on Social Justice in India* - eds. Sanam Roohi and Ranabir Samaddar
- *Minorities in South Asia and in Europe* - ed. Samir Kumar Das (Samya, Kolkata, 2010)
- *Terror, Terrorism, States and Societies: A Historical and Philosophical Perspective* – ed. Samir Kumar Das and Rada Ivekovic (New Delhi: Women Unlimited, New Delhi, 2010)

*Other books published by CRG researchers:*

1. *Gandhi's Dilemma in War and Independence* - by Ranabir Samaddar (Kolkata: Frontpage, 2009)
2. *Emergence of the Political Subject* - by Ranabir Samaddar (Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2010)
3. *Borders, Histories, Existences: Gender and Beyond*- by Paula Banerjee (New Delhi: Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2010)
4. *Migration and Circles of Insecurity* – Ranabir Samaddar and Paula Banerjee (New Delhi: WISCOMP and Rupa, 2010)
5. *Blisters on Their Feet: Tales of Internally Displaced Persons in India's Northeast* – ed. By Samir Kumar Das (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2008) / (It was not reported last year)

3.2 Distinguished Lecture Series 2: *Rethinking 1905: Spatial Inequity, Uneven Development and Nationalism* - by David Ludden (MCRG)

3.3 *Research Paper Series (Policies and Practices)*

Research Paper Series: Policies and Practices :

- Ways of Power, Minorities, and Knowledge on Minorities: An Assessment of Research Policies and Practices – by Samir Kumar Das and Ranabir Samaddar (PP No.23)
- Whither Right to Food?: Rights Institutions and Hungry Labour in Tea Plantations of North Bengal - by Geetisha Dasgupta (PP No. 24)
- Hunger, Food Scarcity, & Popular Protests in West Bengal – by Kumar Rana and Manisha Banerjee (PP No. 25)
- Cyclone Aila and the Sundarbans: An Enquiry into the Disaster and Politics of Aid and Relief – by Amitesh Mukhopadhyay (PP No. 26)
- View from India: Media and Minorities in Europe – by Subir Bhaumik & Suman K. Chakrabarty (PP No. 27)
- Protecting the Rights of the Tsunami Victims: The Sri Lanka Experience – by Nirekha De Silva (PP No. 28)
- Nation Building and Minority Alienation in India – by A. S. Narang (PP No.29)
- Environment and Migration, Purulia, West Bengal – by Nirmal Kumar Mahato (PP No. 30)
- Local Dynamics, Universal Context: Border Trading Through Moreh, Manipur - by Dulali Nag (PP No.31)
- Two Studies on Asylum Seekers and Other Immigrants in Finland - by Sahana Basavapatna and Geetisha Dasgupta (PP No. 32)

3.4 *Reports*

- *Seventh Annual Winter Course on Forced Migration*

3.5 *Refugee Watch*

- No. 33 (August 2009) / Annexure 1
- No. 34 (December 2009) / Annexure 2

Ranabir Samaddar is the editor. Suha Priyadarshini and Ishita Dey have helped him in the editorial work. Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury has regularly helped in proof reading.

However, there is considerable decline in the collective editorial involvement of CRG researchers in running the journal.

### 3.6. Public Lectures and Staff Seminars

- Sanjay Palshikar, *Department of Political Science, University of Hyderabad and Current Fellow, Indian Institute of Advance Study*," The Devas and the Asuras: Interpretative Adventures of Indian Nationalism", 5 February, 2010;
- Antoine Garapon, *Secretary General of the Institut des Hautes Etudes sur la Justice, Paris*, "Two Films on Legal Culture: Vérité & To Kill a Mockingbird", 18 January, 2010;
- B.M. Zachariah, *Reader in South Asian History, University of Sheffield*, "Development, Government, and Nehru Era", 4 January, 2010;
- François Crépeau, *Professor of Public International Law, Faculty of Law, McGill University*," Protecting Migrants' Rights as a Test for Democracies", 15 December, 2009;
- Oren Yiftachel, *Ben Gurion University*," Reproduction of Partitions, Urban Restructuring, and Displacement of Population Groups", 14 December,2009;
- Bertil Lintner, *Eminent Journalist*," Burma's Foreign Policy: Issues of Regional Security and Refugees", 9 December, 2009;
- Andrew Solomon, *Deputy Director and Fellow, Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, Brookings Institution*, "Justice, Accountability, and the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons",1 December, 2009;
- Bodil Folke Frederiksen, *Associate Professor, International Development Studies, Roskilde University*, "Denmark on Researching the Life and Works of an African Public Intellectual: Which Contexts Matter? ", 25 November, 2009;
- Sutirtha Bedajna, *Research & Programme Associate, CRG*" The Background of National Environment Policy of India-Exploring Influences ", 14 November, 2009;
- Suha Priyadarshini Chakravorty, *Research & Programme Associate, CRG*" Voices from Jadugoda: Understanding the Changing Dynamics of Managing Common Property in the Wake of Uranium Mining and Associated Risks in a Globalizing Economy", 14 November, 2009;
- Ishita Dey, *Research & Programme Associate, CRG*" Negotiating Rights: Case Study of the Falta Special Economic Zone ", 14 November, 2009;
- David Ludden, *Professor of Department of History, New York University*" Spatial Reorganization of North Eastern Parts of British India,1905 to Present ",12 September, 2009.

## 4. Website

The website has proved significant as the interactive site in the distance education phase of the Winter Course. It has been also essential while organizing conferences, dialogues, online registrations, notifications. It has now a document archive, also a photo archive section. It has plans to generate an audio section, particularly related to Winter Course. It has provided search engine for searching books, documents, compact diskettes, video diskettes, and documents (electronic and in print) which are in our Library, information of newly released books, journals, reports and research papers. In some cases it has full reports and research papers. It contains details of our research work. We are developing the online archive section further. It has also a

secured section for some of our research works where the website provides details such as previous related works, projected themes and possible questions, proposed activities, possible research papers, abstracts and papers, website links, news, views, and discussants' comments on research papers.

It contains the complete archive of all issues of Refugee Watch and has a special section called "Refugee Watch Online". Ishita Dey and Geetisha Dasgupta have as in the last year put in efforts towards improving "Refugee Watch Online". Last year two ex-participants of the CRG orientation course on forced migration, Priyanca Mathur and Sahana Basavapatna added their efforts towards developing the "Refugee Watch Online". Their collective efforts have met with some success. Sections such as news, comments, perspective and review notices are posted every month. Plans are being taken to further develop them.

CRG has taken 300 MB hosting space and 150 MB mailing space from e-ICON ONLINE SERVICES PVT LTD, Hyderabad. Our domain mcrg.ac.in was registered from ERNET India, New Delhi.

The South Asia resource centre on forced migration studies is a special section of both the library and the website. The idea and the plan of the resource centre with an electronic referral system show the link between the library and CRG's online activities and presence through the website. The resource centre has started with a small grant from the Finland Embassy. It has also received commitment of support for personnel of the resource centre from the Refugee Research Network based at the York University and the Refugee Studies Centre at the Oxford University. Next year we shall be able to report on its activities and development in more details.

Samaresh Guchhait is in charge of the website. He also works as system administrator. CRG will plans to recruit a research and programme assistant for managing the resource centre.

## **5. Library and Other Assets**

### *5.1 Library*

The CRG library is now developing as a reference library, equipped with books, documents, journals, manuscripts, research papers, and CDs. The library has been a source of support to various research activities of this institution. Also it has supported various research scholars, students, faculty members of colleges, universities, research institutes and NGOs. It contains 1600 books relating to mainly to law, gender studies, forced migration, food, environment, justice, autonomy, displacement, literary works, minority rights, media, advocacy material, child right, and human rights. Some of the books are gifts from institutions and individuals.

In the journals and documents section, besides documents CRG has journals and magazines also. The documents are in the following ten categories, namely, Northeast, gender, child right, minority rights, human rights, forced migration, law, advocacy series, media, and miscellaneous. We have an exclusive collection of newspaper clippings on northeast India. We have various reports of The Brooking Institution, and copies of the *Forced Migration Review* and *Economic and Political Weekly*. It subscribes to news clipping service for the Northeast. The document section has gained from contributions by researchers in CRG research work. Some documents are on-line. CRG subscribes to JSTOR service also.

The CD section contains 100 CDs on human trafficking, gender, violence, migration, displacement, ethnic conflicts, and human rights. Some of the notable CDs are on Educational Material on Sustaining Rights, Burma Human Rights Yearbook 2006, World Investment Report 2005, Ensuring Food Secure Future, Right to Land, and Report on Human Trafficking etc.

Mention has been made already made of the resource centre. CRG will have a separate library assistant cum resource centre assistant soon to manage the library efficiently. Special efforts were made early this year to complete accession, classification, and cataloguing, with proper search method consisting of key words. New software was taken and a new programme was written to

begin this work. CRG hired a consultant for three months. This was done with the small grant from Finland Embassy, to which reference has already been made. CRG members are requested, if they like, to apply for password to Webmaster or the library assistant to access the online resources.

The library and the resource centre needs separate space to run properly. CRG appeals to its members to contribute relevant resource material to the resource centre and help it to grow in all possible ways.

### *5.2 Other Assets:*

To speed up the work at the CRG most of the computers which were quite old and were not functioning properly were replaced with new computers. The repair and updating cost of these machines was so high that decision was taken to acquire new computers with updated programme/s. During the period under report we bought 9 (nine) computers. Besides computers there are other assets. Members can inspect the asset register on request. There are arrangements in place for maintenance and insurance.

## **6. Academic and Office Staff**

### *6.1. Academic staff:*

The core group of honorary senior researchers as reported last year still remains. They are Paula Banerjee, Samir Kumar Das and Sabyaschi Basu Ray Chaudury. Steps were taken to strengthen the research capacity of the institution, as advised by the Society last year, by inducting new research and programme associates and research and programme assistants. Dr. Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury, Suha Priyadarshini, and Sutirtha Bedagna joined as research and programme associates. CRG also appointed two research and programme assistants. However one research and programme associate left in January. Two experienced research associates will leave soon. Plus one research and programme assistant has left – all for higher studies.

CRG has as reported earlier a library assistant.

The individual accomplishments of some of the members of the core group and some other members of the CRG are enclosed here separately as **Annexure - 3**.

### *6.2. Administrative and accounts staff:*

The services of Ratan Chakraborty, M. Chatterji, Ashok Kumar Giri and Samaresh Guchhait were reconfirmed with a revision of their salary. The part time service of R. K. Mahato as Typist was also retained. Together they combine the work of administration, accounts, library, internet, website, assets and computer management.

### *6.3 Director:*

The Director heads all academic and administrative activities. His term has been extended for a further three year term. This is his third term as Director.

### *6.4 Benefits:*

The social benefit schemes for employees reported in the preceding annual report continue. Members of the regular office staff (academic and administrative) enjoy a ten per cent or more annual pay rise.

### 6.5 Problem:

The rapid turnover of members of the academic staff is becoming a serious problem. They leave projects and research work midway. Also honorary senior researchers in view of increasing workload elsewhere are able to support less and less the collective activities of the institution (such as, project proposal writing, fund raising, running a journal, supervising the research paper series, deliberating on new research themes, etc.). Members have to decide an appropriate personnel policy. This is important, particularly in view of funding uncertainties.

## 7. Membership

The CRG's current roll of Members (26) is as follows :

- Pradip Kumar Bose
- Samir Kumar Das (President)
- Paula Banerjee (Secretary)
- Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury (Treasurer)
- Subir Bhaumik
- Krishna Banerjee ( Vice-President)
- Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty
- Anita Sengupta
- Mushirul Hasan
- Prasanta Ray
- Sanjay Chaturvedi
- Asha Hans
- Soumitra Dastidar
- Kalpana Kannabiran
- Keya Dasgupta
- Pallav Goswami
- V. Ramaswamy
- Shibaji Pratim Basu
- Nasreen Chodhory
- Madhuresh Kumar
- Ruchira Goswami
- Dipankar Dasgupta
- Bharat Bhushan
- Ritu Menon
- Kumar Rana
- Ranabir Samaddar (invitee)

## 8. Tasks for 2010-2011:

- The Research Advisory Committee has to start functioning.
- In view of increased research activities the research staff strength of the institution will have to be strengthened, and specific measures will have to be adopted.
- New research projects have to be undertaken on themes of CRG's core strength.
- Greater attention has to be given to fundraising, given the fact that two funding applications failed.