

Respected President and Esteemed Members,

At the outset of the Annual Report it is important to point out that while the Report covers the period from April 2019 to March 2020, the situation by the middle of March went for a huge change owing to the outbreak of the pandemic caused by Novel Corona Virus and the ensuing lockdown that put everything out of gear. The activities of the CRG too were heavily impaired after the lockdown. The Honorary Director, senior members of CRG, and the staff members had to meet on digital platform on numerous occasions to formulate newer strategies and programmes for carrying on the regular research and publication activities of the CRG during this trying time. CRG successfully ensured the publication of two major digital texts relevant to the situation: i) *Borders of an Epidemic: COVID-19 and Migrant Workers* and ii) *Burdens of an Epidemic: A Policy Perspective on Covid-19 and the Migrant Workers*, addressing the present humanitarian crisis. CRG also partially reformulated the themes of the CRG research programme in order make them more responsive to present context and thus new themes like pandemic, migrant workers, and public health policy, epidemics and migrant labour etc., were taken up. Several programmes had to be redesigned or deferred or postponed. Efforts have been made to find out alternative modes to carry on with the regular programmes, and the team has quickly adapted to the new digital modes. CRG has created on its website a "living archive" of migrant workers in the time of an epidemic. The CRG has organized several Webinars and collaborated in holding two teachers' workshops in this period on online platforms. Other programmers too are being similarly given new life in the changing context of migration. However, the basic structure remains intact. All these have been done in collaborative mode involving the grant giving agencies also.

The present report (2019-2020) is divided into the following sections:

1. Research Programmes
2. Public Lectures
3. Report on the Distinguished Chair
4. Publications
5. Library, Website and Assets
6. Highlights of Members' Achievements
7. Academic and Administrative Staff
8. Roll of CRG Members

Section One

Research Programmes:

1.1 Populism and Populist Politics in South Asia with Special Reference to India(completed)

- I. Planning Committee meeting: A planning meeting on 'Populism and Populist Politics in South Asia with Special Reference to India' was organized by CRG in collaboration with Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung on 12 February 2019 at Hotel Akash Deep, Kolkata. 31 scholars attended the meeting.
- II. Researchers:
 - i) Contracted Researchers:

“Populism as a Crisis of the Liberal Script: Reflections on Politics and Policy in India” by Prof. Amit Prakash from the Centre for Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

“Populism and Deployment of Social Justice: Caste as a Coordinate in the Politics Bihar and U.P.”
By Prof. Manish Jha from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

“Political Parties and Populist Policies in Contemporary India: Some reflections on AAP”
By Sumona Dasgupta, researcher and independent consultant and a Senior Visiting Fellow with Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)

“Mamata Banerjee’s Populist Politics” by Prof. Sibaji Pratim Basu of Vidyasagar University, Midnapore.

ii) Staff Researchers:

“Populist Initiatives in a Competitive Democracy Chhattisgarh: A Case Study” by Rajat Roy, Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group

“Kanyashree Scheme: Populism & Governmental Feminism” by Ria De, Research Associate (2019) at Calcutta Research Group

III. Populism Public lectures:

“Popular Beliefs, Unpopular Economics” by Achin Chakraborty, Professor of Economics and the Director of the Institute of Development Studies Kolkata (IDSK) on 16 December 2019. In all 52 participants attended the lecture held in Hotel Pearl.

In the recent decades, a good number of surveys conducted across the world with the aim of eliciting what people think about various public policy issues have thrown up challenges to the ‘experts’ who are increasingly uncomfortable with the emerging fact that people’s beliefs are, more often than not, orthogonal to what is known to the experts as ‘expert knowledge’. In their recently published book *Good Economics for Hard Times*, Abhijit V Banerjee and Esther Duflo report several such cases of deep disconnect. There are public policies motivated by ‘real concerns’, such as the cooked mid-day meal programme in schools, which are typically not backed by a mainstream economist and would readily be dismissed by the financial press as ‘populist. There are policies, on the other hand, which a typical economist would advocate on theoretical as well as empirical ground but unlikely to get accepted for implementation by the popularly elected governments for the fear of being unpopular. People’s beliefs do affect public policies, especially in democratic regimes, and economists have long viewed it as a cause of potential conflict between economics and politics. In his lecture Prof. Chakraborty tried to understand the disconnect between popular beliefs and what is often claimed as ‘sound economics’.

“The Threat of Populism and the Opportunity of Radical Politics” by Anirban Chattopadhyay, former Editor of *Anandabaza Patrika* held in Hotel Pearl on 16 December 2019.

The Speaker opined that from a perusal of populism literature, three fundamental elements of populism prevalent in the U.S. and the EU can be traced: “the people”, the “elite” and the “others”. This kind of populism pits a virtuous and homogenous peoples against a set of elites and dangerous others. The concept of “elite” versus the “people” is inherently an amalgamation of western philosophy with the concept of representative democracy. According to the speakers, the discussion on “people” versus the “others” is important to understand in the context of India’s current majoritarian rule where the rulers try to typecast the “others” as vicious, dangerous and anti-national. However, in regards to counter-strategy, he said the first strategy will be to deny that there is one homogenous people in India. Indians should convey how diverse they are as an attempt to decry what the rulers want to disseminate. The speaker also mentioned strategies like constructing an alternative and radical definition of “people” and construction people out of different kinds of social movements taking place. The speaker opined that one must think of alternative constructions of not just one, but many types of “people” on the basis of different social movements around us.

Populism Friday lectures:

"On Left-Wing Populism"

Friday Lecture by Ranabir Samaddar, Distinguished Chair, Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group on 7 June 2019 at Calcutta Research Group

In a large number of countries from the global north to the global south, including South Asia, populist politics is fast gaining ground. South Asia and India has been the crucible of several types of populism over time. In this context Professor Ranabir Samaddar's lecture included a review of Chantal Mouffe's book 'For a Left Populism' as well as his observations ranging from Machiavelli's *The Prince* to more contemporary thinkers regarding the future of populism. Different possibilities of populist politics in South Asia and India were discussed in the lecture and their potential to pose a challenge to neo-liberalism probed. The lecture is part of CRG's ongoing research project on Populism and Populist Politics in South Asia and was attended by about 35 participants.

"Re-articulating 'Agrarian Populism' in Postcolonial India: Considerations around D.N. Dhanagare's *Populism and Power: Farmers' Movement in Western India, 1980-2014* and Beyond"

Friday Lecture by Atig Ghosh, Assistant Professor at the Department of History, Vidya-Bhavana, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan held on 18 July 2019 at Calcutta Research Group

To take the example of D.N. Dhanagare's study of the farmers' movement in western India, especially Maharashtra, from the 1980s to 2014 (*Populism and Power: Farmers' Movement in Western India: 1980-2014*), we find ourselves on the trail of rich archival sources and informed field studies where the umbrella category of 'agrarian populism' is woven warp and weft into the fabric of 'political populism'. Situating his study in the aporia between populism as an ideology, on the one hand, and as political power within the democratic state structure, on the other, Dhanagare, in fact, explores the complex crosshatching between populist ideology and mass participation. How well did it fare at the hustings? Sometimes it fared well; sometimes not. Against this backdrop of mixed electoral fortunes, the 'popular' emerges as the demotic idiom that undergirds the book's chief problematic; demos, in my reading then, comes to constitute the 'popular' interstice between Dhanagare's meta-binary: ideology and political power. The seminar was attended by 18 participants.

Conference on Populism held on 31 August -1 September, 2019

Public lectures by Badri Narayan Tiwari and Syed Badrul Ahsan

"Hindutva and Populism" by Badri Narayan Tiwari, Director of Govind Ballabh Pant Institute of Social Science, Allahabad held on 31 August 2019 at The Sojourn hotel, Kolkata

Populism creates hope and desire through connect, trust and memory base of the society. While the Indian National Congress claims to have a language that dates back to the late 19th century, Sangh Parivar traces the origins of its language that are as old as 5000 years. While economic populism has to do with the politics of gift, this public lecture focuses on the practices of cultural populism that are deeply ingrained in the katha tradition through a series of ethnographies conducted in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. Hindutva involves appropriation of the icons of the marginalized communities. Their politics entails a displacement of both Naxalite and Dalit politics. The appropriation of the icons and cultural practices also means that resistance is drying up day by day. Ambedkar – unlike Kanshiram – cannot be called a populist leader. 97 participants attended the lecture.

"Populism in the Shaping of Politics in South Asia", public lecture by Syed Badrul Ahsan, Editor-in-Charge, *The Asian Age*, Dhaka, Bangladesh held on 31 August 2019 at The Sojourn hotel

Populism is certainly not a positive term when one observes it being applied to politics geared to a denial of such critical issues as climate change. Neither does it hold on to its traditional meaning when it brings into focus the rise of the right-wing, in terms of an advocacy of ideas generating a growth of extremist and divisive ideology across the globe. And, of course, there is that rather queer condition when in these times we inhabit, it becomes hard to prevent a blurring of

populism and nationalism as a consequence of the rise of politics which threatens to upend our view of political values and principles, indeed of statecraft --- as we have known it till now. And the view we have held on to where the role of populist politics in South Asia, or to use the old term the Indian subcontinent, is concerned, is simple and unadulterated. We hold that the history of politics in the region has essentially been underpinned by populism, to a point where such an approach has both been beneficial to the populace and detrimental to their future.

IV. Populism Conference:

A daylong conference on Populism and Populist Politics in South Asia was held at the Hotel Sojourn on September 1, 2019. The programme had eight panels. A total of 71 participants attended the programme.

The eight panels were:

Populism, Popular Culture and the Production of the Public (A), chaired by Paula Banerjee, discussant: Iman Mitra
Populism, Popular Culture and the Production of the Public (B), chaired by Rajesh Kharat, discussant: Samata Biswas
Land, Caste & Identities (A), chaired by Byasdeb Dasgupta, discussant: Nasreen Chowdhury
Land, Caste & Identities (B), chaired by Kalpana Kannabiran, discussant: Sudeep Basu
Parties, Leaders & the Democratic Question (A), chaired by Bharat Bhushan, discussant: Anjuman Ara Begum
Parties, Leaders & the Democratic Question (B), chaired by Anjoo Sharan Upadhyay, discussant: Anup Shekhar Chakraborty
Schemes, Policies, Politics (A), chaired by Mouleshri Vyas, discussant: Xanzoi Barbora
Schemes, Policies, Politics (B), chaired by Mahalaya Chatterjee, discussant: Arup Sen

Apart from the contracted and staff researchers for the populism project (Manish Jha, Amit Prakash, Sibaji Pratim Basu, Sumona DasGupta, Rajat Roy and Ria de), there were 13 presenters in the conference.

- Gopa Sabharwal, Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi
- Sounita Mukherjee, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta(CSSSC)
- Muhammed Puthusseri, BITS Pilani, Pilani
- Muhsina K K, University of Hyderabad
- Harender Singh, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad
- Indrani Talukdar, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi
- Rashad Ullah Khan, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad
- Kapil Tamang, University of Hyderabad
- Lipin Ram, The Graduate Institute, Geneva
- Maidul Islam, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta(CSSSC)
- Atig Ghosh, Visva Bharati University, Shantiniketan
- Nirmal Kumar Mahato, University of Gour Banga, Malda

Six research papers were published in Policies and practices:

- Populism -I: Politics, Policies and Social Justice (PP-106) <http://www.mcrg.ac.in/PP106.pdf>
- Populism -II: States and Political Parties (PP-107) <http://www.mcrg.ac.in/PP107.pdf>
- Populism -III: Leadership and Governmentality (PP-108) <http://www.mcrg.ac.in/PP108.pdf>

A Hindi edition of selected papers was published in December 2019. Selected papers from the International Conference on “Populism and Populist Politics in South Asia”, organized by Calcutta Research Group on September 1, 2019 was published in Hindi language to reach largely a Hindi readership. This was meant to diversify our readership and disseminate knowledge about populism to a more non-English and predominantly Hindi-speaking group.

The Bengali translation of the book on the populism project titled *Populism: Ekti Jonopriyatabadi Rajnitir Utthan* is published in July 2020. The book is edited by Prof. Sibaji PratimBasu and Mr. Rajat Roy. Eight selected papers are accommodated in this book. The papers are written by Sibaji PratimBasu, Amit Prakash, Manish K Jha, Kapil Tamang, Maidul Islam, Rajat Roy, Ria De, Shefali Jha and Sumona Dasgupta.

1.2 International Workshop and Conference on Migration and Forced Migration Studies (2019)

The research workshop and international conference on, Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees, was held from 25-29 November 2019. The programme was conducted with the help of Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Germany and several other Indian Universities and Institutes. Participants included academicians, activists, researchers and journalists from 18 countries around the world. The workshop was preceded by a few months of online interaction between workshop participants and module coordinators. Research material were shared through an online web portal on CRG's website. As part of the project, three public lectures were organised with collaborating universities. First public lecture was delivered by Simon Behrman, Assistant Professor, Royal Holloway College, University of London on 7th August 2019 at the Department of International Relations Jadavpur University, Kolkata. The title of the lecture was "The Politics of Climate Refugees". The lecture generated wide participation of academicians, activists and environmentalists. The second one on the 'The Role of Formal and Informal Institutions and Asylum Seeking from Afghanistan' delivered by Dr Liza Schuster, City University of London, London and Reza Hussaini, University of Kabul and Afghan Research Centre, Kabul at the School of International Relations and Strategic Studies, Jadavpur University on 26 November 2019 generated wide interest among the teachers and students at the University. Another Public Lecture on the 'Rice and Nomads in Asian History' was delivered by Professor Ravi Anand Palat of The State University of New York, Binghamton at the Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata on 27 November 2019. Other than this, a public lecture was also delivered by Ranabir Samaddar, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata on 'The Memories of the Forgotten' held at the Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata. There was wide participation of the students and faculty in the discussion. Apart from this, a panel discussion on the theme of 'Migration, Displacement and Resilience' was organised at the Conference venue on 27 November 2019 on collaboration with SANDD. The panelists were Som Nirula, Alliance of Social Dialogue, Kathmandu and Shatabdi Das of Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata. The discussion was chaired by Liza Schuster, City University of London, London.

Two field visits were organised to different migrant quarters as part of the research workshop on 28 November 2019. An interaction with migrant settlers at Metiabruz near Khidirpur dock area was organized by a platform called Know Your Neighbour in course of the field visits, who work to maintain communal harmony in Bengal. Another field trip was at Priya Manna Bustee at Howrah, to talk with the labour migrants. This field trip was coordinated by V Ramaswamy, social activist and member, CRG. The participants of the workshop and conference interacted with the migrants. Some of the participants shared their experience of this field interaction on social media like Twitter which in turn generated wide interest (For details: https://twitter.com/KYN_Bengal/status/1068041200769224704). (??)

Building on the key ideas and arguments presented at the workshop and the conference on "Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees" was organized on 29th November, 2019. The panelists were discussed on the ethics and care of the protection regime and the new research initiatives and methods and challenges. A special lecture by Professor Shalini Randeria of IWM Vienna and Graduate Institute Geneva on "Demographic Panics, Ethno-nationalism and the Violence of Soft Authoritarianism" was delivered at the end of the conference.

(For details: see, http://www.mcrg.ac.in/RLS_Migration/Kolkata_Declaration_2018.pdf).

The latest issue of *Refugee Watch: A South Asian Journal on Forced Migration* (Issue 54) has been published. Two books (one in Bengali and another in Hindi) were already published. The publication of selected papers on the Populism and Populist Politics project in an edited volume by Professor Manish Jha is underway.

(For details: http://www.mcrg.ac.in/RLS_Migration/Report_Refugees_and_Migrants.pdf).

Apart from this, several research papers have been published under this project. These are:

- Samir Kumar Das "Citizens, Governance and Democratic Politics," *Interrogating Citizenship: Perspectives from India's East and North East, Policies and Practices* 109

- Aditi Mukherjee “Migration and the Evolution of a ‘City of Protection’: Kolkata from 1939-1960,” *Interrogating Citizenship: Perspectives from India’s East and North East, Policies and Practices* 109
- Yordanos S. Estifanos “Auto Ethnography as a Research Method: Lessons from Field Research in South Africa’s Informal Economy,” *Policies and Practices* 110
- Byasdeb Dasgupta “Borderland and Migrant Workers,” *Borderlands, Migration and Labour, Policies and Practices* 111
- Anoushka Roy “The In-Betweens: An Enquiry into the Quality of Life of Self-Employed North Easterns in Kolkata, India,” *Borderlands, Migration and Labour, Policies and Practices* 111

An article on the Fourth Annual Research and Orientation Workshop and Conference on Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees was published in Kolkatar Korcha, *Anandabazar Patrika* on 25 November 2019.

An article was published in *Anandabazar Patrika Digital* on 19 December 2019, titled ‘*Sharanarthider Pashe Daranor Anyo Galpo Suniye Gelen Olga*’ on City Plaza movement.

Read full article at: <https://www.anandabazar.com/calcutta/olga-lafazani-visits-kolkata-with-the-message-to-support-refugees-dgtl-1.1084823>

The details of the research project is available at http://www.mcrg.ac.in/RLS_Migration_2019/Report_on_Migration.pdf

Audio Visual Resources

A series of video interviews was conducted with international experts on migration who participated in the workshop and conference on the Global Protection of Migrants & Refugees, 25-29 November 2019. In the discussion the idea of protection was problematized from different angles.

1. **Politics of Aid and Protection in Afghanistan: An Interview with Orzala Nemat, Director, Afghanistan Research & Evaluation Unit, Kabul.**

The discussion centred on how various international actors and aid workers in Afghanistan often serve their own strategic interests in the name of providing protection to war victims. Interview conducted by Madhurilata Basu, Sarojini Naidu College for Women, Kolkata

2. **Refugee Squat in City Plaza, Athens: An Interview with Olga Lafazani, University of Thessaly, Volos**

Olga Lafazani, one of the main coordinators of the refugee squat in City Plaza, Athens discussed how they planned a large-scale housing squat for refugees in City Plaza in Athens and how it became a focal point for refugee solidarity movement in the region. Interview conducted by Rajat Ray, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata.

3. **Labour Migration in South Africa: An Interview with Yordanos Estifanos, Independent Researcher, Addis Ababa**

Yordanos Estifanos discussed his research on labour migration in South Africa and the vagaries of the informal labour market. Interview conducted by Sarah Nandi a Fulbright scholar affiliated to the Sanskrit College and University, Kolkata.

4. **Protection of Women in Armed Conflict in Bangladesh: The Making of a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: A talk by Meghna Guhathakurta, Research Initiatives Bangladesh, Dhaka.**

Meghna Guhathakurta from Research Initiatives, Bangladesh deliberated on the refugee protection regime in Bangladesh and stressed the need for gender sensitive protection mechanisms.

Documentary film:

A documentary on theme of 'Calcutta, A Migrant City' and with the same title has been filmed. Like any other major megacity, Calcutta, with more than three hundred years of recorded history, is a city of the migrants. It is a city of migrants in a sense that people who came and settled here for centuries had gradually built the city bit by bit.

The migrant history of Calcutta needs to be different, drawing on the influences of people who came and lived here, not always people we know about. Migration, in Calcutta as elsewhere, has always been linked to labour. In Calcutta, more specifically, the labour literally required to build a city, to plan its sanitation and conservation, to supply workers to the jute mills and the wholesalers at Burraabazar.

To watch the film please click: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpREEq7Ar-Y>

1.3 Migration and Forced Migration Studies with particular focus on South Asia and its European-Asian Dimension

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted a restructuring of CRG's original timeline for the work undertaken under the IWM-CRG Annual Project on the Europe-Asia Research Platform on Forced Migration (2020). The outcomes are as follows:

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I. 5th Annual Research and Orientation Workshop

CRG organised a Task Force under the leadership of Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury for administering the workshop efficiently in the work-from-home format. There was a module reorientation for the workshop in light of the pandemic. The new themes are: a) **Global protection of refugees and migrants with emphasis on protection in the time of a pandemic.** Module coordinator: Nasreen Chowdhury; b) **Migrants and the epidemic: Gender, race, and other vulnerabilities.** Module coordinator: Samata Biswas; c) **Neo-liberalism, migrant labour, and the burden of the epidemic.** Module coordinators: Arup Kumar Sen and Iman Mitra; d) **Statelessness with emphasis on de facto statelessness and the rightlessness of sections of population.** Module coordinator: K.M. Parivelan; e) **Legal regimes of protection and the time of the pandemic.** Module coordinator Oishik Sircar; and f) **Ethics of care, public health, and migrants and refugees.** Module coordinator: Paula Banerjee. Module lectures will be uploaded on the CRG website by August as online resources for workshop participants.

II. Research Agenda

i) Publications

Situating Social Media: Gender, Caste, Protest, Solidarity, published by Women Unlimited was undertaken with the generous assistance of IWM. It is now available for purchase on <https://www.amazon.in/Situating-Social-Media-Protest-Solidarity/dp/9385606271>.

CRG published two research documents on COVID-19 and Migrant Workers under the editorship and mentoring of Prof. Ranabir Samaddar: *Borders of an Epidemic: COVID-19 and Migrant Workers* (http://www.mcrg.ac.in/RLS_Migration_2020/COVID-19.pdf) and *Burdens of an Epidemic: A Policy Perspective on Covid-19 and Migrant Workers*

http://www.mcrg.ac.in/RLS_Migration_2020/Burdens_of_an_Epidemic.pdf.

ii) Discussions/ Webinars

Webinar at NZIRI: Prof. Ranabir Samaddar on ‘Borders of an Epidemic: Covid-19 and Migrant Workers’ with Profs. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay and Douglas Hill on June 24, 2020.

IWM, Vienna: roundtable conference on ‘Borders of an Epidemic: COVID-19 and Migrant Workers’, June 24, 2020.

Online Book discussion at Centre for Global Migration Studies, University of Göttingen: Prof. Samaddar and Dr. Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay, April 30, 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yWRHyOML1E&feature=youtu.be>

CRG #bordersofanepidemic Lecture One: ‘Public Health and the Sudden Visibility of Migrant Workers’, Prof. Samaddar and Prof. Samita Sen held on June 12, 2020.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-YxDbkwVqw&feature=emb_logo

CRG #bordersofanepidemicLecture Two: ‘COVID 19: Redrawn Borders, Redefined Lives’, Prof. Sandro Mezzadra and Prof. Paula Banerjee, moderated by Dr. Samata Biswas on July 8, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fzIDVbmoHY&feature=youtu.be>

CRG #bordersofanepidemicLecture Three: ‘COVID 19 and Migrant Labour: Laws, Policies, Practices’, Prof. Kalpana Kannabiran and eminent journalist Bharat Bhushan, moderated by Prof. Parivelan KM. On July 30, 2020.

CRG #bordersofanepidemic Lecture Four ‘Covid 19 in South Asia: regional perspectives on Vulnerabilities and Dispossessions’, speakers: Amena Mohsin, Hari Sharma, Reza Hussaini, Saqib Jafarey, Moderator paula Banerjee, August 24, 2020.

‘Migration: Dimensions & Perspectives’, Dr. Shyamalendu Majumdar and Dr. Samata Biswas, moderated by Dr. Arup Sen, in collaboration with Netaji Satabarshiki Mahavidyalaya on June 15, 2020.

One day international Teachers’ Workshop, organised in collaboration with Sivanath Sastri College, Kolkata, on July 9, 2020. Speakers Samir K Das, Paula Banerjee, Samita Sen, Xonjoi Barbora, Samata Biswas, Sucharita Sengupta. Moderator K. Parivelan.

iii) Researchers:

a). Contracted Researchers:

- Anjuman Ara Begum- Dealing with Illegal Immigrants in Assam: Understanding the Jurisprudence in Past, Present and Future;
- Francis Adaikalam- Invisibility of Deceased International Labour Migrants: Politics of Recognition
- Jyothi Krishnan – Life after Floods: Coping with Livelihood Uncertainties in Post-Flood Kerala
- Nasreen Chowdhory, Shamna Thacham Poyil –Biometrics and the Notion of Governmentality in Rohingya Refugee Camps
- Sohini Sengupta –Climate Change, Drought and Migration in Maharashtra

b). Staff Researchers:

- Kusumika Ghosh: How Protected are the Refugees: A Comparative Study of the Contemporary States of Germany and India in Light of the Geneva Convention, 1951

iv) The unused fund for travel and logistics has been reassigned to undertake research on migrants and public health. Three papers will be written as part of this research: “Migrant Workers in the COVID - 19 Pandemic: Crisis of Work and Life” by Mouleshri Vyas and Manish K. Jha; “Migrants in India’s Health Infrastructure: Ethnography on India’s frontline workers” by Ishita Dey, and “Public Health, Migrant Workers and a Global Pandemic: From a Social Crisis to a Crisis of the Social” by Iman Mitra.

III. Four Visiting Fellows from South Asia have been chosen to work with CRG. They are Neetu Pokharel, Mujib Ahmad Azizi (Afghanistan), Dr. Niloy Ranjan Biswas (Bangladesh), and Nadarajah Sooriyarah (Sri Lanka). The original schedule was redesigned to have them visit in March 2020, but had to be reworked due to COVID-19 and the countrywide lockdown that followed it.

V. Public Lectures: CRG's scheduled public lectures have had to be postponed due to COVID-19. To accommodate changes in the mode of delivering lectures from physical to virtual, CRG instituted a Webinar Committee to specifically organise all public lectures and events to be held during the lockdown. For details of CRG's webinar series, see Section II ii).

V. Preparatory and Follow-up Programmes: The following changes have been made due to COVID-19 induced restrictions:

i) Shifted part of the funding to public health research. For details, see section II, Part iv).

ii) CRG planned a one-day workshop on issues around the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the Darjeeling Hills in north Bengal. However, COVID-19 induced restrictions have required the workshop to be stalled until the situation improves. If possible, CRG will execute this workshop in January 2021.

VI. An Advisory Committee Meeting for planning the CRG's work plan for the year was held on 24th and 25th January, 2020, at The Hotel Sojourn, Kolkata.

VII. Participation in Workshops and Conferences: Due to COVID-19, scheduled international and domestic workshops have been cancelled. Part of the money, as reported in the Research Agenda, has been diverted to research on migrants and public health.

VIII. Refugee Watch: The most recent issue was published in January 2020. It can be found on <http://www.mcrg.ac.in/ci.asp> and in the CRG library. The next two issues are in the pipeline. The Refugee Watch editor, Prof. Paula Banerjee, is exploring to collaborate with SAAND, where she may bring in co-editors from other South Asian countries. Refugee Watch Online hired its first group of interns and continues to produce short commentaries, reviews, reports and opinion pieces. See <https://refugeewatchonline.wordpress.com/>

IX. Teachers' Workshops: With the lockdown, CRG has been compelled to shift the workshop to the virtual mode. A series of lectures/panel discussions and meetings with College and University teachers has been planned. The possible themes of these lectures are: (a) Methodologies of Forced Migration Studies (b) Epidemics, Borders, and Migration (c) A Discussion on Our Book. The series may end with one meeting on the Challenges of Forced Migration Studies in Academia. A consultative committee has been set up with professors Amit Prakash, Nasreen Chowdhury and Kalpana Kannabiran. The workshops are planned in September, 2020.

X. Audio-visual Material for Education: CRG will produce a short film, a continuation of *Calcutta: a Migrant City* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpREEq7Ar-Y>), filmed in 2019.

XI. Website and Digital Resources: CRG's subscription to JStor and *Economic and Political Weekly* has been renewed. The process for subscribing to Project Muse has begun and will be completed shortly. CRG will subscribe to similar academic platforms as and when suitable. A new section on COVID-19 is under construction on <http://www.mcrg.ac.in/>.

On 19 March, CRG started compiling a living archive using material from the media and other sources on Migrant workers in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. (http://www.mcrg.ac.in/COVID_19_Migrant_Workers.html) The newly added section on the website contains information, news reports, photos and videos covering the migrant workers' crisis during the lockdown and is being regularly uploaded and updated.

XII. Translation: Rajat Roy is editing a translated version 'Borders of an Epidemic' in Bengali. Until June 30, 10 papers of the total 14 in the book have been translated by two translators. The policy brief ('Burdens of an Epidemic') has also been translated into Bengali.

XIII. Media Segment: After COVID-19, a media committee was formed to organize, a media workshop in the second week of October, and contract a media person to curate a media handbook on migrant workers as a ready reckoner, supplemented by relevant laws and conventions. The handbook will be edited by Bharat Bhushan. CRG chose four journalists — Siddharth Yadav (Madhya Pradesh), Geetika Mishra (Maharashtra), Amit Sengupta (Delhi), Swati Bhattacharjee and Abhijnan Sarkar (Kolkata) — as media fellows. The media workshop is being planned. A second media planning workshop was held on July 28, 2020, with external panellists.

XIV. Library and Archive Building: A new Library officer, Nandini Dasgupta, has been hired for the CRG library. The library reopened after due sanitation of premises. Ms. Dasgupta will also assist the website committee and monitor relevant web-based activities.

Section Two

Public Lectures:

2.1 "On Left-Wing Populism"

Friday Lecture by Ranabir Samaddar, Distinguished Chair, Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group held on 7 June 2019 at Calcutta Research Group. For details, see above.

2.2 "Re-articulating 'Agrarian Populism' in Postcolonial India: Considerations around D.N. Dhanagare's *Populism and Power: Farmers' Movement in Western India, 1980-2014 and Beyond*"

Friday Lecture by Atig Ghosh, Assistant Professor at the Department of History, Vidya-Bhavana, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan on 18 July 2019 at Calcutta Research Group. For details, see above.

2.3 "The Politics of 'Climate Refugees'?"

Public Lecture by Simon Behrman, Royal Holloway, University of London on 7 August 2019 at the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University. For details, see above.

2.4 "Hindutva and Populism"

Public Lecture by Badri Narayan Tiwari, Director of Govind Ballabh Pant Institute, Allahabad on 31 August 2019 at The Sojourn hotel. For details, see above.

2.5 "Populism in the Shaping of Politics in South Asia"

Public Lecture by Syed Badrul Ahsan, Editor-in-Charge, The Asian Age, in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 31 August 2019 at The Sojourn hotel. For details, see above.

2.6 "Role of Formal & Informal Institutions & Asylum Seeking from Afghanistan"

Public Lecture By Liza Schuster, City University London on 26 November 2019 at Jadavpur University
Professor Schuster's research project was looking into the plight of Afghan deportees and refugees which led her to open up a civil society organisation along with two other colleagues. Their goal was to provide updated, accurate and unbiased information to those deportees who were returning to Afghanistan. Professor Schuster highlighted how risky it was for a deportee to seek asylum and how the UNHCR had complete disregard for the rights of these migrants. The first part of her lecture highlighted the *formal institutions* for a deportee to be registered with and under a process to seek asylum and the second part of her lecture threw light upon the *informal institutions* which sprung up in Afghanistan as a response to the dysfunction of the former. As a result of a fractured nature of the formal institutions, the deportees, somewhere, find a safe haven in the informal institutions. Even in this circuit, the information from friends and families are often inaccurate and commodified. This severe dichotomy poses a challenge for those who have no access to rights and feel helpless at the altar of the ignorance of a country which has been torn by war for the past two decades.

2.7 Rice and Nomads in Asian History"

Public Lecture by Ravi Palat, State University of New York, Binghamton on 27 November 2019 at Rabindra Bharati University

Ravi Palat's lecture on 'Rice and Nomads in Asian History' was a crisp account of a connected history – sweeping across Asia and a comparative analysis of Europe. India was the American dream of the 15th Century. And yet this positional superiority Asians, particularly Indians and Chinese, enjoyed over Europeans suddenly reversed itself between 1757 (the Battle of Plassey) and 1842 (the Opium Wars). He criticized the Eurocentric lens of comparing Asia and Europe which says Asia was on the path to Capitalism but Europe got there first, because of their conquest of the Americas, but this view fails to critique Capitalism and does not look at the dynamics of Asian history. Free market, private enterprise, free trade, private property and land – these do not necessarily lead to Capitalism. It is the monopolies which lead to Capitalism. European princes had to develop monopolies, financiers to lend them money for waging war. The Asian rulers on the other hand were rich with huge lands and a large tax basis. Their treasuries could bear the

expenses of war. Thus, the relationship of state and capital were very different in Asia and Europe, and the reason for this was the enormous productivity of the rice economies. Rice cultivation, said Palat, was labour intensive, not capital intensive, which implied there was no economic advantage to accumulate capital in areas of rice cultivation. Land ownership gave social status, even political power but not economic clout. Thus, he argued, there may have been very wealthy individuals, but they did not control the state. He poignantly quoted Fernand Braudel to say Capitalism triumphs only when it identifies with the state, and it could not break ground in Asia because neither did Asian rulers provide incentives to capitalists, nor enable further accumulation of capital through laws. None of the powerful lot in Asia were Capitalists. The vector of development in much of Asia was the relationship with nomads and rice cultivation.

2.8“Popular Beliefs, Unpopular Economics”

Public Lecture by Achin Chakraborty, Professor of Economics and the Director of the Institute of Development Studies Kolkata (IDSK) on 16 December 2019 at Hotel Pearl. For details, see above.

2.9“The Threat of Populism and the Opportunity of Radical Politics”

Public Lecture by Anirban Chattopadhyay, former Editor of The Anandabazaar Patrika on 16 December 2019 at Hotel Pearl. For details, see above.

2.10“Krishna Memorial Lecture” delivered by Anita Agnihotri, IAS (Retd.) and noted litterateur on 7 February 2020 at Hotel Sojourn

The Seventh Krishna Memorial Lecture and Award Ceremony was organized on 7 February 2020 in collaboration with CRG. The programme was held at Hotel Sojourn. This year the awardees were Punam Toppo, a theatre activist from Ranchi, Jharkhand, Naznin Mullick, an educationists from Howrah, West Bengal and Dooars Jagron working for Education of Women in Tea Plantations in Dooars, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal. This was followed by the Krishna Memorial Lecture delivered by Anita Agnihotri, a noted Litterateur.

The lectures of previous years and information on the Trust are available on http://www.mcrg.ac.in/krishna_trust/index.html Krishna

2.11“The Politics of Populism”

Friday Lecture by Ranabir Samaddar, Distinguished Chair of Migration and Forced Migration Studies, CRG on 6 March 2020 at Calcutta Research Group

Populists are most damned when it comes to economy. Populists spend excessively on people’s welfare. They have no sense of economics. In the context of this widely prevailing allegation, this presentation investigated the last ten years of economic experience of West Bengal and posed the question: Is anything we can term as the economic sense of the populists? In course of this investigation, it also asked: What is this type of rationality in the style of thinking, in the old type of calculating that consists in persisting with the idea that capital formation takes place in history only in one mode, or if we recall the slogan, “agriculture is the base, industry is the future”? Is it not the same old story of verification of our ideas by market, calculations of economy, and the dream of an unlimited economic development in relation to a world market? Can the experiences of populist management of economy be considered as the other scene of economy, the other site of “national economy”, represented, say, by the national finance budget? The difference between the way a “national economy” is seen and managed by the rulers of the nation and the way a “state economy” is seen by the populist rulers of the state deserves attention. This difference can be looked at as constitutive of the populist sense of the economy of our time.

**A Friday lecture was scheduled for 13 March 2020 by Professor Nikos Marantzidis on “European public opinion attitudes and the 2015 Refugee crisis in Europe: the Greek case 2015-2019”. But the lecture was cancelled as a precautionary measure according to a West Bengal government advisory in the context of COVID 19.

Section Three

Report of the CRG Distinguished Chair in Migration and Forced Migration Studies

1. The fourth year of the five year term of the current occupant of the Distinguished Chair ended and the final - the fifth year began in 2019-2020. The fourth year of the five year term ended in August 2019 and the final year began in September 2019. In a subsequent Governing Body meeting (in February 2020) the final year of the Chair was extended till December 2020, when the Chair's term will end.
2. During the year under review the principal efforts of the Chair were four: (a) stabilise the new design of the Winter Workshop on migration and forced migration studies developed in 2018-19; (b) develop a cluster of research themes and activities around the theme of protection; (c) establish synergy among various research segments undertaken by CRG in recent years, such as protection and the global compacts on refugees and migrants, logistics and labour, informal labour, populism and the issue of migration, citizenship debates, and the dynamics of popular movements; and, (d) develop new global links of researchers around the redesigned Winter Workshop thus adding strength to the programme. The entire programme on migration and forced migration studies is held under the Chair.
3. The Chair is happy to announce that all the four efforts have achieved success in different degrees. New links have been developed. The design of the programme has improved. New segments have been added. New collaborations have been established. New themes of research have been undertaken around, for example, the media, college and university teachers, and audio-visual pedagogic mode. Among the new collaborators besides the universities which joined CRG in holding the Winter Workshop (such as the Rabindra Bharati University and Jadavpur University), mention must be made of the IWM, Vienna, which encouraged the idea of developing new segments of activity around the Winter Workshop. At the same time the collaboration with the RLS which originally facilitated the new design was made stronger. The Chair's deep thanks are to RLS, IWM, and the two Universities. These institutions made it possible for the programme on migration and forced migration to be held under the Chair. Collaboration with institutions in other South Asian countries was revived and expanded. However, the synergy among the various segments of the entire programme is yet to develop fully. It will need further planning.
4. In the last few years there has been a spectacular increase in research output in CRG's migration and forced migration studies to which Chair contributed. The last three years of the Chair were devoted to the broad research theme of the postcolonial dimension of the age of migration. Members will be happy to know that the Chair's research has been published now under the title *The Postcolonial Age of Migration* (Routledge, 2020). The Chair also helped the research programmes on populism and migration and forced migration studies as far as possible. The Chair also co-edited with Dr. Anita Sengupta, the previous Director, *Global Governance and India's North-East: Logistics, Infrastructure, and Society* (Routledge, 2019). The publication was possible mainly due to Dr. Sengupta's efforts. It was an outcome of CRG's three-year (2016-18) research on the said theme. Chair's published papers during this year are listed below:
 - (i) "The Global Gaze of Care, Protection, and Power", *Refuge*, Volume 36, No 1, 2020
 - (ii) "Migrant, City, and Changing Lives" in S. Irudaya Rajan and Sumeetha M. (eds.), *Handbook of Internal Migration in India* (New Delhi and London: Sage, 2020)
 - (iii) "An Insurgent Constitutionalism is Driving Popular Politics in India Today", *Alternative International Journal*, February 2020
 - (iv) "Authoritarian Power and Populist Resistance", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Volume 18, No 3, Fall 2019
 - (v) (Co-written with Snehashis Mitra), "Bridge of Spaces – East by Rear East" in R. Samaddar and Anita Sengupta (eds.), *Global Governance and India's North-East: Logistics, Infrastructure, and Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019)
 - (vi) "Is There a Theory of Population in *Capital*?" in Achin Chakraborty, Anjan Chakrabarti, Byasdeb Dasgupta, and Samita Sen (eds.), *'Capital' in the East: Reflections on Marx* (Singapore: Springer, 2019)

- (vii) (Co-written with Paula Banerjee), “Insecure Nation, Insecure Migrant – Postcolonial Echoes from India’s Northeast” in Susan McGrath and Julie E. E. Young, *Mobilizing Global Knowledge – Refugee Research in an Age of Displacement*(Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2019)
 - (viii) “India: A General Election, Emerging Model of Power, and Populist Resistance”, *Open Democracy*, 25 June 2019 – <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/openindia/india-general-election-emerging-model-power-and-populist-resistance/>
 - (ix) (Co-written with Paula Banerjee), “Why Critical Forced Migration Studies has to be Postcolonial by Nature” in Alice Bloch and Giorgia Dona (eds.), *Forced Migration: Current Issues and Debates* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019)
5. The Chair spent three months in 2019 (February-April 2020) as a visiting fellow at the IWM, Vienna. He also spent seven days at the University of Bremen as a visiting faculty member in the research programme on “Soft Authoritarianism”. At the same time he declined an invitation to a month long visiting fellowship at the centre for the study of statelessness at Melbourne University.
 6. He also delivered several public lectures, gave interviews, and participated in some significant events. A brief list is given below:
 - (i) “Ei Patporibortan Abhutapurba” – interview with Subhoranjan Dasgupta, Anandabazar Patrika, 7 June 2019 – <https://www.anandabazar.com/editorial/political-situation-is-actually-amazing-now-said-academician-ranabir-samaddar-1.1001947>
 - (ii) “Statelessness in South Asia”, IWM, Vienna, 11 March 2019 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPGKsb38zco>
 - (iii) “Two Lectures of Professor Ranabir Samaddar on Critical Border Studies”, Uppsala University and Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm, 6-7 March 2019 – <https://www.criticalborderstudies.com/two-lectures-by-professor-ranabir-samaddar/>
 - (iv) Public Lecture on “The Two Global Compacts”, Gottingen University, Germany, 5-6 April 2019
 - (v) Lectures at Oldenburg University, Germany, on issues of forced migration,
 - (vi) Expert Consultation on draft comparative Study: Protection of Rohingya Refugees in South and Southeast Asia, organised by Refugee Solidarity Network, Kuala Lumpur, 16-18 April 2019
 - (viii) Participated in DSRC/DSA workshop titled, *Rewards More Equitable Interdisciplinary Research Partnerships* on 25 April 2019 at SOAS University of London
 - (ix) Meeting with ILO technical project on EU- India Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility, 2 May 2019
 - (x) Public lecture on Data Centres and Digital Capitalism, Science-Po, Paris, 18 April 2020
 - (xi) Presented a paper on ‘Globalisation and Migrant labour: Then and Now,’ at the International Conference on *Marx 201: Rethinking Alternatives*, International Conference on 8-11 May, University of Pisa
 - (xii) Keynote Speaker for Roundtable on “Improving Conditions of Work and Living for Circular Migrants in India” organized by Action Aid India in collaboration with Workers Solidarity Network (WSN) and Citizen’s Rights Collective (CiRiC), and supported by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS). It is being held at YMCA, New Delhi , 3-5 June 2019
 - (xiii) Delivered a lecture on '*Left-wing Populism*', as part of the Friday Lecture Series, CRG, Kolkata, 7 June 2019.
 - (xiv) Visited the University of Bremen as an Honorary visiting faculty member and participated in a programme on *Worlds of Contradiction* organized by the University of Bremen from 1-5 July 2019
 - (xv) Delivered Lecture on *Civilization and Crisis* at ‘Bijit Kumar Dutta Memorial Lecture’ held on 28th August 2019 organised by Bangla Akademi
 - (xvi) Delivered a lecture on '*Memories of the Forgotten*', as part of the Friday Lecture Series, CRG, Kolkata, 20 September 2019.
 - (xvii) Attended as a panel member in the GCRF organised meeting on protracted displacement supported by ESRC at London, 7 -11 October 2019
 - (xviii) LECTURED in a conference on Migration and Development in the ‘Global South’: Research Challenges and Policy Implications, 24-25 October, Koc University, Istanbul
 - (xix) Delivered Lectures at Oldenburg University, Germany, on issues of forced migration, 28-31 October 2019

- (xx) Delivered a special lecture on *Who Comes After the Citizen?* A two-day national seminar on Citizenship in Contemporary Times organised by Institute of Development Studies Kolkata, supported by ICSSR-ERC, 19-20 November 2019
 - (xxi) Delivered a lecture titled, *The Economic Sense of the Populists* as part of the Friday Lecture Series, CRG, Kolkata, 6 March 2020.
7. The Chair associates are currently Utsa Samin and Kusumika Ghosh. They are helping the Chair when any help is sought from them. Information on the Chair Associates is available on the Chair's page.
 8. The Chair's page on CRG website (http://www.mcrgh.ac.in/Distinguished_Chair_CO.asp) has information on Chair's activities in the last four years. The page needs improvement and regular updates. CRG may kindly discuss if the Chair needs a dedicated Chair Associate on a full or part time basis or the present system of requesting CRG's research and programme associates and assistants to work also as Chair associates should continue. CRG may think of having a Chair associate whose primary duty will be to assist the Chair and maintain the page as the primary duty and as a secondary task help the CRG programmes. CRG may kindly deliberate also on how to extend Chair's collaborative activities with other institutions. This will help institutionalise the Chair on a firmer footing. It will require separate full or half funding for the Chair, which will not be tied to other programmes. The present arrangement is necessary from the point of practicality and finance. However the Chair also needs to devote adequate attention to the mandate of the Chair (http://www.mcrgh.ac.in/Distinguished_Chair.asp). On the completion of the fifth year of the Chair CRG may go back to the mandate and review the 5-year term.
 9. The Chair expresses thanks for the full and unstinted support of all the members of the CRG staff. Particular thanks are to the Director and three advisers, Professors Paula Banerjee, Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, and Manish Kumar Jha. The Chair also extends thanks to the past Director, Dr. Anita Sengupta for her consistent help to the Chair. Thanks are also to the funding institutions which made the implementation of the mandate possible.

Section Four

Publications

4.1 Journal: CRG's journal *Refugee Watch*, A South Asia Journal on South Asia founded in 1998 continues to provide an important space for the discussion of displacement and forced migration. Issues 53, 54 edited by Paula Banerjee were published in June 2019 December 2019

4.2 Online Journal: Refugee Watch Online

CRG maintains an online co-publication of Refugee Watch, which presents brief news, reports, views, and comments while drawing political and social attention to the human rights of the forcibly displaced persons.

4.3 Research Papers: Policies and Practices

CRG publishes a series of research papers with the aim of disseminating important works and findings for discussion among scholars, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and activists

The following were published during the reporting year.

Sr.No	Title	Authors	Date of Publication	Link
111	Borderlands, Migration and Labour	Byasdeb Dasgupta & Anoushka Roy	2019	http://www.mcrq.ac.in/PP111.pdf
110	Auto-ethnography as a Research Method: Evidence from Field Research on Ethiopian Irregular Migrants in South Africa	Yordanos Seifu Estifanos	2019	http://www.mcrq.ac.in/PP110.pdf
109	Interrogating Citizenship : Perspectives from India's East and North East	Samir Kumar Das and Aditi Mukherjee	2019	http://www.mcrq.ac.in/PP109.pdf
108	Populism -III : Leadership and Governmentality	Sibaji Pratim Basu and Ria De	2019	http://www.mcrq.ac.in/PP108.pdf
107	Populism - II: States and Political Parties	Sumona Dasgupta and Rajat Roy	2019	http://www.mcrq.ac.in/pp.asp
106	Populism-I: Politics, Policies and Social Justice	Amit Prakash and Manish K. Jha	2019	http://www.mcrq.ac.in/PP106.pdf

4.5 Books

- Samata Biswas & Atig Ghosh (eds.) *Situating Social Media: Gender, Caste, Protest, Solidarity*, published by Women Unlimited
- Achin Chakraborty, Anjan Chakraborty, Byasdeb Dasgupta and Samita Sen (eds.) *Capital in the East, Reflections on Marx*, published by Springer
- Anita Sengupta and Ranabir Samaddar (eds.), *Global Governance and India's North East: Logistics, Infrastructure and Society*, South Asia Edition published by Routledge
- The Bengali volume of the book on the populism project titled *Populism: Ekti Jonopriyatabadi Rajnitir Utthan* (eds.) Sibaji Pratim Basu and Mr. Rajat Roy, published by Sampark publication
- The Hindi volume of the book on the populism project titled, *Bharat mein loklubhavan badrajniti ka sandarbh*, edited by Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya, published by CRG

4.6 Online Publication

- Ranabir Samaddar edited, *Borders of an Epidemic: COVID 19 and Migrant Workers*
- Ranabir Samaddar edited, *Burdens of an Epidemic : A Policy Perspective on COVID-19 and Migrant Labour*

4.7 Reports

- [Reports on Global Protection of Refugees and Migrants](http://www.mcrq.ac.in/RLS_Migration_2019/Report_on_Migration.pdf) is available at http://www.mcrq.ac.in/RLS_Migration_2019/Report_on_Migration.pdf
- Reports on *Populism and Populists Politics in South Asia With Special Reference to India* http://www.mcrq.ac.in/RLS_Populism/Populism_Report_2019.pdf

4.8 Reading Materials

- NRC Fact-sheet (educational materials) compilation of news paper articles by Subir Bhaumik, Samir Purkayasta, and Samrat Chaudhury

Section Five

Library, Website and Assets

5.1 Library

The library of Calcutta Research group, situated in the ground floor of HB232, Salt Lake, is home to a significantly specialized collection of print and audio resources on topics pertinent to areas of Social Science such as human rights, peace, justice, post colonial democracy, migration studies, and more. It is also home to a Resource Centre on *Forced Migration Studies*. This Resource Centre is linked with the Refugee Research Network, responsible for gathering information from a number of institutions and networks. The sole focus of the Centre is on South Asia. The library has digital access, allowing members of nine colleges, universities, research institutes and NGOS, along with research scholars, students and faculty access to academic material. Books and CDs, however, are available only as hard copies in the library.

In terms of numbers, the Library and Resource Centre has about 3045 books, 1383 documents and 237 audio CDs, video and lectures on topics such as law, migration, food, environment, urbanization, displacement, minority rights, advocacy, child rights, human rights, and migration from Northeast India, India's Look East policy, and more. There are exclusive collections of Newspaper clippings on Northeast India, and archived materials on forced migration. The library also has a good collection of donated books on topics such as Modern India, human culture, the sociological imagination, Dalit literature, and more. The Calcutta Research Group institute is a subscriber to journals of repute such as JSTOR and Economic and Political Weekly.

At present, there is a Library Committee consisting of Ranabir Samaddar, K K Bannerjee, V Ramaswamy, Purna Banerjee and the Director, Professor Samir Kumar Das. They are responsible for determining the rules and modes of operation. The committee met on 18th June, 2019 with the twin objectives of (i) enhancing the outreach of the library in terms of making it reader-friendly and (ii) streamlining and rationalizing accession and cataloguing of library documents. A detailed roster with the aim of exhorting researchers to spend more time in the library to achieve their academic ends has also been prepared.

A further committee consisting of student-members has been set up to take stock of library holdings and give suggestions for improvement of the library. It submitted its report under the leadership of Dr.Purna Banerjee. The Director has been working on its recommendations. Lockdown has slowed down the progress.

A new librarian, Nandini Dasgupta, has joined the office commencing July, 2020, and has taken over most functions of the library. She is preparing a list of necessities, such as books on classification and subject headings, which will further help in managing and giving a structure to existing and incoming library resources.

5.2 Website

The website of the Calcutta Research Group (<http://www.mcrg.ac.in/>) has assumed primary importance in this time of increased digital interaction. The global pandemic of COVID-19 has necessitated social distancing, thus shifting human interactions to the virtual world. CRG's website has been updated to keep up with the changes. In addition to its existing collection of information, resources and publications, it has listed its current projects **Global Protection of Migrants**

and Refugees (2020) and Migration and Forced Migration Studies with Particular Focus on South Asia and its European-Asian Dimension (2019-2021) with all relevant details under the ‘Research & Programmes’ tab. The educational initiative of CRG has found place in its webinars, advertised and archived regularly on the website. Responding to the nationwide crisis of migrant workers induced by the pandemic and its resultant lockdown, it has published two significant volumes **Borders of an Epidemic: COVID-19 and Migrant Workers** and **Burdens of an Epidemic: A Policy Perspective on Covid-19 and Migrant Labour**, both available in the PDF format on the website. In addition, there is also a living archive on COVID-19 and Migrant Workers that is updated regularly to document media reportage on migrant workers during the pandemic. The website is significant as an online distance education system. It hosts a resource centre with basic and advanced search engines accessible to registered users. It also hosts the online co-publication of Refugee Watch “[Refugee Watch Online](#)” updated and maintained by Samata Biswas and has started recruiting interns. Samaresh Guchhait looks after the designing, development, and regular updating of the website with the help of Research & Programme Associates. He also works as system administrator to maintain the windows 2003 server, mailing system, and provides technical support. He is now being assisted by Nandini Dasgupta, the new Assistant Librarian and Information Officer at Calcutta Research Group.

5.3 Assets

During this period two laptops which were quite old and were not working properly were replaced with two new HP laptops. In addition to that one monitor, one printer and one executive chair were purchased. Details are available in the Asset Register. The register is maintained on regular and the updated register is open for inspection.

Section Six

Highlights of Members Achievements

Anjoo Sharan Upadhyay edited the volume in Hindi on Populism and Populists Politics with reference to India published by CRG. **Nirmalaya Banerjee** edited book ‘The Buddha and the Borders’ was published. The book is a study of the cultural, historical and economic links in the trans-Himalayan region, with focus on the eastern Himalayas; how these links have been disrupted by big power rivalry in the Himalayan region, culminating in the Sino-Indian border dispute and how this has affected lives of people living in this area. The book is essentially a journalistic exercise. It has been published by Palimpsest Publishers, Delhi, a paperback edition. **Nirmal Mahato** draws attention to the following significant publication;

Mahato, Nirmal Kumar. 2020. **Sorrow Songs of Woods: Adivasi-Nature Relationships in the Anthropocene in Manbhum**, Primus Books, New Delhi.

Book Chapter:

Mahato, Nirmal Kumar. 2020. Environmental Change and Forest Conservancy in South West Bengal, in Ranjan Chakraborty, *Critical Themes in Environmental History of India*, Sage & ICHR.

Blog post:

Indigenous People's Assertion against Tree Felling in Purulia during Covid Lockdown, Centre for Environmental History, University of Sussex, June 5, 2020.

Madhuresh Kumar has recently been appointed a **Resistance Studies Fellow at University of Massachusetts Amherst and started a weekly column titled *Deshaantar*** on people's struggles for freedom and democracy globally on a popular Hindi website and can be read here at <https://junputh.com/tag/deshaantar/>

His recent publication includes:

Kumar, Madhuresh (2020) “NGOs and social movements: partnership or solidarity?”. March 29,

2020 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/ngos-and-social-movements-partnership-or-solidarity/>

Samata Biswas participated in the US Department of Home's IVLP program on "Regional Responses to Refugee and Migration Issues", for which she travelled to four American cities engaging with NGOs, rehabilitation agencies, policy makers, legal advisors, government and security agencies, border control, civil society and refugee alliance. Refugee Watch Online (www.refugeewatchonline.wordpress.com) received more than 5000 visitors and published and reported extensively on relevant issues.

Samata Biswas and Atig Ghosh's edited volume *Situating Social Media: Gender, Caste, Solidarity, Protest* was published by Women Unlimited. CRG members Anup Shekhar Chakraborty and Ishita Dey have contributed to this volume, as well as former researchers Ria De and Apala Kundu.

Anup Shekhar Chakraborty published two monographs, *Religion and Politics in Mizoram* and *Hegemonies, Hyphenations, Hybridisations*.

Nasreen Chowdhory published a co-edited volume, *Citizenship, Nationalism and Refugeehood of the Rohingyas in South Asia*

Section Seven

Research and Administrative Staff

Samir Kumar Das was appointed as Honorary Director of CRG. In June 2019, He heads all the administrative and research Work. Rajat Roy was retained and for the RLS project on *Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees* as Research and Programme Associate from 1 January 2020. Aditi Mukherjee, Shatabdi Das, and Ria De left CRG on completion of their projects. Utsa Sarmin joined as Research Fellow for the RLS project on *Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees* for a period of 10 months. Kusumika Ghosh joined CRG as Research and Programme Assistant for CRG -IWM on 'Migration and Forced Migration Studies with particular focus on South Asia and its European-Asian Dimension' from 1 March for a period of 10 months. Sangeeta Roy joined CRG as Research and Programme Associate for the same project in March and left CRG soon after joining. Rajat Kanti Sur was supposed to join in April 2020 as a Research Fellow for the CRG- RLS project on *Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees* but due to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown imposed by the govt. of India, his contract was put on hold and was joined in June 2020 for a tenure of 9 months. Piya Srinivasan joined in August 2020 as Research & Programme Associate for the IWM project for a period of 6 months.

Nandini Dasgupta was selected and appointed as Library Assistant and Information Manager in April 2020 for one year. But due to lockdown, her joining was postponed and she joined in July.

The services of Ratan Chakraborty and Ashok Kumar Giri were renewed in November 2019 and October 2019 respectively. From 1 January 2020, they were given a revised contract under the IWM project. Samaresh Guchhait's service was reconfirmed in January 2020. Subhashree Rout's service was also renewed in August 2019 and again a revised contract was given to her in January 2020 under the IWM project. R. K. Mahato's contract was renewed in August 2019 for one year and he joined as part-time Library Assistant.

Section Eight

Roll of Members

Last year Madhurilata Basu and Sucharita Sengupta were invited to be members of the Society. Both of them accepted the invitations. CRG welcomes them to the Society.

CRG deeply mourns the loss of its two members, Dr. Amrita Patel and Prof Ilina Sen

I am sure, with your help and kind cooperation we will be able to tide over the crisis the global pandemic has forced on us. Look forward to receiving your continuing help and cooperation in future.

The present roll of members stands as follows. It will be subject to revision after the AGM to be held on 7 September 2020

1. Amit Prakash
2. Ananya Chakraborty
3. Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya
4. Anjuman Ara Begum
5. Anup Shekhar Chakraborty
6. Arup Kumar Sen
7. Asha Hans
8. Atig Ghosh
9. Bharat Bhushan
10. Bishnu Mohapatra
11. Byasdeb Dasgupta
12. Iman Mitra
13. Ishita Dey
14. Jishnu Dasgupta
15. K. M. Parivelan
16. Kalpana Kannabiran
17. Khesheli Chishi
18. Krishna Bandyopadhyay
19. Kumar Rana
20. Madhuresh Kumar
21. Madhurilata Basu
22. Mahalaya Chatterjee
23. Manabi Majumdar
24. Mandira Sen
25. Manish K. Jha
26. Manjuri Chatterji
27. Mouleshri Vyas
28. Nasreen Chowdhory
29. Nirmal Kumar Mahato
30. Nirmalya Banerjee
31. Pallav Kumar Goswami
32. Paula Banerjee
33. Pradip Kumar Bose
34. Prasanta Ray
35. Rajesh Kharat
36. Ranabir Samaddar (Invitee)
37. Ritu Menon
38. Ruchira Goswami
39. Sabir Ahamed
40. Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury

41. Sahana Basavapatna
42. Samata Biswas
43. Samir Kumar Das
44. Samita Sen
45. Sanam Roohi
46. Sanjay Barbora
47. Sanjay Chaturvedi
48. Shyamalendu Majumdar
49. Sibaji Pratim Basu
50. Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty
51. Subir Bhaumik
52. Sucharita Sengupta
53. Sudeep Basu
54. Sumona Dasgupta
55. Suthirtha Bedajna
56. Uttam Kumar Ray
57. V. Ramaswamy

Dr. Shyamalendu Majumdar
Secretary