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1st International Symposium on Crime Studies for New Criminal Justice Protocols during a global pandemic

Sonepat 28 October 2020: The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted crime phenomenon disproportionately; while property crimes are low, human and wildlife trafficking, illegal markets, online frauds, economic crimes are on a rise. **Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences (JIBS) inaugurated a unique discourse on how the pandemic and the restrictions that various States have imposed in their versions of a global lockdown has redefined crime trends and citizen rights.** It has also highlighted the fragility of State-citizen relationships and illustrated a need for better policing practices across the globe.

Additionally, the health crisis also presents unique risks and challenges for the policing and prison systems to address. This situation has presented a unique learning opportunity for all criminal justice systems worldwide to recognize their shortcomings and to create new protocols to continue their work in such crisis.

The International Symposium on Crime Studies (28-29 October, 2020) is the first international event organized by the Centre of Criminology and Forensic Studies, the fourth research centre to be instituted in January 2020 at Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences. Renowned experts in various fields of criminology, forensics and related crime studies discussed new research and insights on emerging crime phenomena, especially in the COVID era.

The themes under discussion included:

- Interdisciplinary Crime Studies in COVID Pandemic
- Environmental Crimes and Wildlife Forensics
- Maritime Crimes
- Forensic Criminology in Modern India

Dr. Sanjeev P. Sahni, Principal Director, the Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences (JIBS) said, “With the increasing advent of technology into everyday lifestyle for majority of the population, certain crimes such as online frauds, identity thefts, dark web illegal markets are presenting unique challenges to law enforcement. There is a present need to train our law enforcement in digital strategies and investigation techniques. Such studies into emerging crime trends, policing and rehabilitation activities will provide useful takeaways for the criminal justice system to implement in the post-pandemic world. At the same time, the internet is also a good way for effective community policing and improving public education and awareness regarding crimes.” Dr. Sahni is a noted behavioural expert who is also a Professor at O.P, Jindal Global University and is the Director of Centre for Criminology and Forensic Studies.

The virtual event paid respect to the late Dr. Ashwani Kumar, former CBI Director, who passed away earlier this October and was an advisor and beloved ally to O. P. Jindal Global University. Renowned speakers like **Dr. Mitra Sharafi from University of Wisconsin Law School, USA,** a legal historian working on history of forensics in South Asia; **Dr. Anamika Twyman-Ghoshal from Stonehill College, USA,** whose research ranges from maritime piracy to green criminology and indigenous rights; **Dr. Mark Briskey of Murdoch University, Australia,** who has been working on State and citizens' rights and public safety in the pandemic; **Dr. G. K. Goswami, a well-published IPS officer and former CBI Joint-Director,** who has consistently advocated for better forensic practices and regulations in Indian investigations, and **Dr. Anish P. Andheria, President of Wildlife Conservation Trust,** an NGO dedicated to wildlife conservation across 160 sanctuaries and national parks in India, spoke to around 950+ attendees from across 25 countries. Students, academics and practitioners tuned in to listen to these experts from criminology and forensics discuss their diverse research and insights on emerging crime phenomenon from both an international and regional perspectives.