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**Jindal School of Government
and Public Policy**
India's First Public Policy School

JINDAL JOURNAL OF PUBLIC POLICY

VOLUME 6 ISSUE II
OCTOBER 2022

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and Progress
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Editorial

Dear Readers,

As we return to the post pandemic world, re-adjusting our lives to a ‘new-normal’, we realize that the devastation caused by COVID-19 has been catastrophic and perhaps long term. The past couple of years have been full of uncertainty, angst, and exhaustion, but as India celebrates 75 years of independence, we remain optimistic that we have emerged more resilient and our institutions better prepared. While we must reflect on the challenges our country faces even after having achieved and retained political freedom, it is also important to recognize that India’s trajectory as a nation has been one of accomplishments, change, and progress. It is indeed a proud reality that India’s democracy, although with deviations, has survived for 75 years. At this juncture, with a sanguine view, we bring to you the second issue of the sixth volume of our Jindal Journal of Public Policy.

Whilst we have made enormous economic progress in the past 75 years, the current volume brings out some key issues pertaining to India’s transformation as a nation, what we have achieved and what we are yet to achieve. Our young and experienced authors discuss the Government’s current science, technology and innovation policy; highlight the importance of patents in information and communication technologies for fostering innovation and development; comment on our electoral system; examine the past, present and a way forward for the coal sector; and document environmental concerns particularly relating to the status of forests. In addition, we bring to you articles that delve into India’s geo-political relations with a specific focus on India and China’s emphasis on the use of renewable energy, a discussion on China’s dual circulation policy as well as India’s crucial role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict amidst the pandemic.

Tenzin Ngawang, Naresh Singh and Namesh Killemsetty’s paper sheds light on India’s Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) and attempts to understand the extent to which the 2020 STIP policy addresses the critiques and limitations of its predecessor policy launched in 2013. The authors provide a critical comparative analysis of policy documents across essential parameters such as the role of innovation and inclusivity, focus on informality, support for research and others. On similar lines, Anurag Verma, Neha Pandey, and Shubhankar P., in their paper describe the importance of Standard Essential Patents (SEPs) in fostering innovation and development in Information and Communication Technologies. Considering that India is said to be the second largest mobile telephone market in the world, they suggest that addressing the challenges in developing a conducive and robust IPR regime that encourages and rewards innovation is essential for the country.

With India’s continued dependence on the coal sector for energy despite pressure from the north to lean more towards non-fossil fuels, Shivjeet Parthasarathy, in his essay examines the desirability of establishing a regulator for the sector. In a stimulating account narrating the history of the sector abundant with concerns of inefficiency, scams, and environmental issues, he highlights the need for an independent regulator which can steer the sector into efficiency while balancing its competing interests. Veena Mahor calls our attention to the need to protect and preserve India’s forests for combating the climate crisis. While discussing the National Forest Policy, 1988 and the amendments to the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, the article underlines the risk of making forests a contested market commodity among private players and deteriorating the status of forests, taking away the element of public good. Vinod Vyasulu’s commentary on how we elect the president of India indicates a need for amendments to the manner in which the process is conducted. As such, he provides recommendations with the aim to deepen our federal democracy and improve representation.

Avinash Godbole's invited piece discusses China's dual circulation policy and the possibility that it may propel China into becoming an innovation, research and development hub in the long run. The recently-announced strategy aims to refocus China's economy towards prioritizing domestic circulation instead of external circulation. While documenting China's policies since the pandemic, and the drivers of this strategy, he contemplates the future and fate thereof given the inflationary global trends. Varunesh Singh provides a comparative analysis of India and China's policies for the use of renewable energy. Attempting to assess whether the countries are on track for meeting their energy demands while achieving their sustainable-energy targets, the paper provides recommendations for addressing some of the challenges. Jyotsna Bapat reviews the links between the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the role of India's foreign policy in the same. Considering the highly unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 shock, the paper discusses the macro trend of international security that has emerged as essential. In the context of Russia's war on Ukraine, her paper attempts to explain the outcomes at the geopolitical level and India's unique position.

We are happy to share that we are able to publish our journal at a regular intervals for fifth time consecutively in spite of the difficulties brought about by the pandemic. This would not have been possible without the numerous contributions from our colleagues. We are deeply indebted to Meenuka Matthew, for almost single-handedly managing all the correspondence with the authors, reviewers, and editors and helping us in all possible ways. Special thanks are due to our esteemed colleagues Swagato Sarkar, Manveen Singh, Pradeep Guin, Rajnish Wadehra, Debajit Jha, and Pratik Phadkule for taking the time to patiently review submissions and resubmissions. Active involvement, mentorship and encouragement from our Dean R. Sudarshan helped us at crucial junctures. We would be remiss not to mention the tireless efforts of Shweta Venkatesh for carefully reading all the articles, making language and grammatical changes and also providing critical suggestions related to the content with impeccable efficiency despite the difficult deadlines. Our heartfelt thanks to Shweta for being patient with us and responding to our repeated requests with grace. Mani Mala, Manager & Academic Co-ordinator of the Jindal School of Government and Public Policy was forthcoming with support whenever we were in need. Joydeep Mukherjee's prompt support in designing the issue. We sincerely appreciate their efforts. We are also deeply indebted to our international board of advisors for their continuous mentorship.

Our special gratitude to M. Madhan, Director of Global Library and his team for facilitating the transition to the new hosting platform of the journal, making the journal more accessible and facilitating a smooth submission and management process. The journal can be accessed on the new webpage, and we invite you to connect with the journal through our social media handles, Twitter and LinkedIn.

We have announced the call for our next issue which is a special issue focused on Migration and Refugees. Through the special issue, we are looking forward to providing young and experienced voices with a common platform for a healthy discourse on public policy.

Enjoy reading and stay safe!

Thanks, and warm regards,

Indranil and Manini

Co-editors, Jindal Journal of Public Policy

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