



January 2019, Issue 4

TCPD has a big year ahead of itself! We will be covering 5 State Elections (Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Odisha, and Sikkim) and the General Elections. To do this, in addition to students working with **TCPD** and individual team members, we are going to be relying on several individuals across the country. We have Sarthak Bagchi (Ahmedabad University) helping us with data collection in Bihar and Maharashtra, Mahesh Langa (The Hindu) and Sharik Laliwala in Gujarat, Jusmeet Singh Sihra (SciencesPo) in Rajasthan, Christophe Jaffrelot (SciencesPo) in Madhya Pradesh, and Gauri Bansal (Azim Premji) in Chhattisgarh. But before we look ahead, this issue looks at various **TCPD** activities this past month.

Winter Internships

We had three interns working with us over the winter break - Archit Checker (Computer Science), Prajwal Seth (Political Science) and Hargun Sethi (Political Science).

Archit: My internship experience at **TCPD** was very fruitful and I really loved the work atmosphere. I got to work on interesting and important problems which added to my skillset and I was provided appropriate mentorship. My work mainly revolved around adding various features to Surf (an entity mapping and name resolution system for Indian Names) so that it could be used for any dataset rather than specific ones. One primary consideration was also keeping it user-friendly while doing so. I also mined rules for name normalization from the data that had already been processed through Surf. I felt a part of the team and this was a major motivation for me to work sincerely on the tasks assigned to me. If given a chance, I would definitely love to intern at **TCPD** again.

Prajwal: I worked with Saloni Bhogale on scraping and analysing the Parliamentary Bills dataset in the winter of 2018. I scraped 4236 parliamentary bills introduced in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha during Lok Sabha assemblies 13, 14, 15 and 16. I found that while private member bills outnumbered government bills by a ratio of 2.7:1, not one of them was assented in this time frame. On the contrary, 71% of government bills had been assented. I also found that "money bills", in specific, had an exceptionally high assent percentage (92.3%). They took just 31 days on average to get assented, as opposed to the overall average assent time of almost 6 months. I used Tableau to create a map showing the constituencies of each MP of the sixteenth Lok Sabha, along with the total number of bills they introduced. I found that Delhi, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Kerala had the highest ratio of bills introduced by MP, while Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka fared poorly in this regard. Even though the work was painful at times (especially the part where I had to clean the data manually), my conversations with Saloni re-assured me that my efforts were not going in vain. Saloni also used to go through my code and help me out with parts where I was stuck, which I found very helpful. Overall, I felt like I had a productive internship.

Hargun: My internship at **TCPD** this winter break was an informative and enriching experience. As I had previously

never worked with data pertaining to Political Science before, I was initially nervous. However, during the course of the month I learned a lot in terms of data collection and merging. I became aware about the various sources of data collection (both private and government websites) and the flaws that come with it. I also learnt about the significance of data verification and authentication. Apart from gaining technical knowledge and experience, I was intrigued by the various research projects that were presented at the conference by **TCPD** research fellows and others associated with the centre. All in all, it was a great opportunity for me as I was able to explore the upcoming field of data-driven political analysis and at the same time interact with passionate Political researchers and analysts at the centre. I look forward to working on more projects with **TCPD** in the future!

Partnerships

TCPD is partnering with the [Peace Research Institute Oslo \(PRIO\)](#). This partnership emerged from the [Empirical and Computational Social Sciences in India \(ECSSI\)](#) conference that **TCPD** organized in December 2018. We have received a funding commitment of \$7900 from [PRIO](#) to work on building an event dataset using national and local newspaper archives. This is a part of the [Costs of Contention](#) project led by [Christian Davenport \(University of Michigan\)](#) and [Håvard Mokleiv Nygård \(PRIO\)](#). The purpose of building this dataset are several but the two main motivations are - we do not have a database where we can assess evolving forms of contention across the country over space and time. The second is to use this to understand various claims-making efforts and the outcomes. Both the methodology and data will be made public.

Publications

Quraishi, S.Y., editor. [The Great March of Democracy: Seven Decades of India's Elections](#). Penguin India, 2019.

External Engagements

Gilles Verniers presented "Transformation of Backward Politics in India" at IIM Bangalore.

Research Updates

TCPD Research Workshop

Our workshop continues to meet on a weekly basis to discuss on-going research. Our semester schedule can be viewed [here](#).

Events

Past Events

- January 30: [Maansi Verma \(Founder of Maadhyam\)](#) - "Citizen Engagement With Parliament And In Policy Making"

Upcoming Events

- February 14: [Anupam Anand \(World Bank\)](#) - "Evaluating International Environment and Development Interventions"
- February 20: [Raphael Susewind \(Kings College London\)](#) - "Complicating the 'Muslim Ghetto' in Urban India"

Other Updates

Sukanya Janarandan joined the **TCPD** team as a Research Fellow. Welcome Sukanya!