

**DETERMINANTS OF CRIME ACROSS CONFLICT AND
NON-CONFLICT STATES IN INDIA**

Sofia Amaral¹
Siddhartha Bandyopadhyay²
Samrat Bhattacharya³
Rudra Sensarma⁴

The paper has two main goals. First, using district level panel data we examine the key determinants of violent crime, non-violent crimes and crime against women in India for the period 1990-2007. Second, using the district level variation in Maoist conflict, we examine how conflict affects both crime as well as the roles of various determinants of crime. In addition to looking at the conventional determinants of crime (law enforcement and economic variables), we examine how variation in sex ratios affects crime. We also look at whether the gender of the chief political decision maker in each state (i.e. the Chief Minister) affects crime. We find that improvements in arrest rate decrease the incidence of all types of crimes. Socio-economic variables have relatively little explanatory power. We also find evidence that unbalanced sex ratios, in particular in rural areas, may adversely affect crime. Female political representation with greater decision-making power particularly diminishes violent crime and crime against women. Finally, we find a counter-intuitive result that in districts affected by the Maoist insurgency, all types of crime are lower and we offer explanations for why that may be the case.

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For further details, including copies of working papers, please write to:

*Research, Conference & Publications Office,
IIM Kozhikode, IIMK Campus PO, Kozhikode 673 570, Kerala, India*

Phone: (91)0495 2809238

Email: rcp@iimk.ac.in

¹University of Birmingham

²University of Birmingham

³PNC Bank

⁴Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode, IIMK Campus PO, Kozhikode-673570, Kerala, email: rsensarma@iimk.ac.in