

Professional in the Making

Hardworking, curious and determined, Bala is one of the youngest students of the seventh MPP-cohort. She graduated with first class honours in BA (Honours) in Political Science from Miranda House, University of Delhi. Along with pursuing academic excellence, Bala was also an integral part of her college ecosystem through her leadership positions in the Political Science Student Union.

Her passion for political science and desire to foster change inclined her towards public policy. She explored her hand at a wide variety of fields- foreign policy and diplomacy, promotion of constitutional values; gender and development, through a research internship in the ICSSR-funded Research Project on Sex-selective Abortion and Domestic Violence in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. She finally found her true passion in urban policy and local governance through her internship in Bangalore Political Action Committee (BPAC) where she worked on a range of projects involving safety, mobility and environmental consciousness within Bengaluru. Another engagement at NGO Reap Benefit allowed her to explore the importance of civic-technology apps in urban governance. She is still associated with Reap Benefit as a part of a Local Policy Network.

A belief that public policy as a field would enable her to explore the nuances of policy even as it let her contribute and actively participate in the ecosystem, motivated her to join the MPP course at NLSIU. As a part of her Client-led project, Bala interned with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA). Here, she researched on the Right to the City of the Urban Poor and their access to the city. She got the opportunity to present her work in the '4th International Graduate Seminar on Quality of Living in Informal Settlements' organised by TISS Hyderabad's School of Public Policy and Governance. She is still engaged with NIUA, presently working on understanding the impact of the Ejjipura slum-evictions in Bengaluru.

Bala is also a peer reviewer at The Policy Corner, an inclusive, independent platform for students and young professionals to publish research-based articles on global issues, supported by the German Academic Scholarship Foundation. At NLSIU, she was Secretary of the MPP Student Council in her first year and a member of the Feminist Alliance. While Bala's interests after joining MPP have broadened to include technology policy and sustainable development, her broader vision for making cities more inclusive is one that ties her motivation to engage with the 'wicked problems' characterising urban policy. She hopes to fruitfully contribute towards building more inclusive, resilient and future-looking urban spaces as a policy professional, while impacting social change.



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