

## WORKSHOP REPORT:

### **A NEW PARADIGM: CRISES IN WORLD ORDER – CAN AND HOW LAW AND ECONOMICS HANDLE THIS CONCERN?**

The three-day workshop titled "**A New Paradigm: Crises in World Order – Can and How Law and Economics Handle This Concern?**" explored the intersection of law, economics, history, and technology. The event brought together students, academics, and practitioners to discuss how these disciplines interact to address global challenges. It was organized from **7th to 9th January 2025** by **GNLU Centre for Law and Economics and GNLU Centre for Empirical & Applied Research in Law & Interdisciplinary Studies (CEARLIS)** at **Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar** in physical mode. The speaker for this workshop was **Ms. Krishna Aggarwal**, an LLM candidate at the University of Cambridge and alumna of Gujarat National Law University (GNLU).

The workshop provided a platform for thought-provoking discussions on the intersection of law and economics. Drawing from history, sociology, constitutional law, and economics, the workshop encouraged participants to critically analyze how these disciplines converge to address global crises. The sessions explored the role of law and economics in shaping international law, investment law, and technological advancements, emphasizing how historically economic motivations have influenced the innovations and legal frameworks we rely on today. For instance, the economic and technological underpinnings of Columbus's voyages, sanctioned by sovereign powers and justified through divine law, can be used to contextualize the colonial expansion and Thomas Edison competing with the steam industry became the reason behind invention of electricity bulbs. Scholars like Hugo Grotius and Francisco de Vitoria were discussed as pivotal figures in laying the foundations of international law, which initially legitimized sovereign expansion and the economic exploitation of colonies. And how commercial viability of the technology propels innovation. This historical context served as a lens to examine how the interaction between state interests, private actors, and legal systems continues to shape the modern global order.

A key focus of the workshop were the questions like whether technology is value-neutral, particularly in the context of artificial intelligence and machine learning. Other questions like does innovation leads to further innovation, does technology shapes science or science shapes technology, is a technological decision a form of economic decision also invited interesting

discussion among the attendees. Through interactive discussions, participants highlighted how AI systems, like ChatGPT, reflect and perpetuate societal biases embedded in training data and machine learning, thereby reinforcing stereotypes rather than challenging them. For example, AI prompts about homemakers often yield female stereotypes, while CEOs are typically depicted as white males, underscoring the influence of historical and cultural biases on technological outputs. These examples demonstrated how technology, far from operating in a vacuum, is shaped by economic, social, and historical forces. The workshop also emphasized the role of law in addressing the opacity of machine learning systems, often referred to as the “black-box problem,” and how legal regimes must adapt to regulate innovation. Participants noted that technological advancements require commercial viability and often prioritize economic gains over equity or inclusivity. As new technologies redefine societal relationships, legal frameworks like the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act are emerging to address these challenges, but in their absence, principles from older laws, such as the Indian Contract Act, can still be applied to bridge the gaps.

The workshop concluded with an exploration of the broader implications of integrating law and economics into contemporary legal education and practice. Students discussed how an interdisciplinary approach enhances critical thinking, enabling lawyers to address complex issues in litigation, corporate decision-making, academia, and policymaking. By referencing works from authors like Katherine Pistor and Atkinson, participants analyzed how legal systems are deeply intertwined with economic forces and how this understanding can help craft equitable and adaptive solutions for a rapidly evolving global landscape. The resource-person for the workshop Ms. Krishna emphasized that innovation is a socio-technical phenomenon, shaped by incentives, resource scarcity, and historical conditions, making it imperative for law and economics to evolve in tandem. The interactive nature of the workshop fostered creative responses from students, who proposed innovative ideas grounded in historical and economic insights, demonstrating how interdisciplinary thinking is essential for tackling crises in the world order.