

NTS-Asia Newsletter

CONSORTIUM OF NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY STUDIES IN ASIA

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WHAT'S NEW

The year has been shaped by multiple crises, arising from intensifying climate risks, and ongoing conflicts globally, with widespread impact on non-traditional security (NTS). In this time of global fragmentation, governments are confronted by trade-offs and multiple pressures while navigating a more uncertain global order.

Disruptions to the Strait of Hormuz raised oil prices, increasing food prices and placing pressures on cost-of-living of households, pressing governments around the world to scramble for alternatives. With the strait being a critical corridor for global fertiliser supply, food supply chains were exposed to significant risks, affecting production as farmers grapple with reduced fertiliser availability. Furthermore, the wars in Gaza, Russia and Ukraine have not abated, prolonging the suffering of millions from displacement, violence and famine. Increased conflict and militarisation have resulted in higher levels of gender-based violence and can further exacerbate gender inequality. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has posed both opportunities and challenges, especially regarding its governance, ethical use, environmental and social impact.

The future of the planet hinges on its collective response to climate change. Urgency for greater climate action is needed, as global temperatures have annually reached record levels. While it is likely that global temperatures will temporarily exceed 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels, the challenge would be to limit and reduce average temperatures below the threshold in the long-term. The Emissions Gap Report showed that greenhouse gas emissions would need to fall by 55 percent by 2035, to reach the 1.5-degree Celsius target. Seven of nine planetary boundaries have been breached in 2025, leading to further environmental degradation and heightened human health risks. Progress in addressing the threat of climate change would require sustained political will and resolve in accelerating the energy transition and reducing carbon emissions.

How states adapt to these developments are contingent on their willingness to cooperate on NTS issues and to uphold just and inclusive principles in governance and policy implementation.

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NEWSLETTER TEAM

Mely Caballero-Anthony and Danielle Lynn Goh
Designed by Joey Liang



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT



We recently gathered for our annual conference in Singapore to examine the implications of a fragmented global landscape for non-traditional security. Discussions addressed the different facets of the global governance crisis, the geopolitical contestation of resources over energy and food, climate change, as well as the evolution of the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda in the Indo-Pacific and Planetary Health as an emerging security lens in climate governance. In September 2025, we launched the NTS Perspectives podcast, expanding the reach of our work in the Consortium to new audiences and platforms.

This edition of the NTS Asia newsletter features articles by Professor Barry Buzan at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and Jannatul Toba Jhumu from the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), engaging with themes of planetary health, climate change, and on development narratives. Barry Buzan's "Effective Sustainable Development" unpacks the historical concept of development and argues that there is a need for a rethink about progress. The current unrestrained models of development that are tied to rising GDPs are fundamentally unsustainable and flawed. For effective sustainable development, the article suggests that policy would need to redefine notions of progress, practice

'material leanness', and advocate meaningful global coordination. Jannatul Toba Jhumu's "From Environmental Risk to Human Security: Climate Change and Public Health" asserts that climate-related health risks are a present threat and reality that must be addressed with urgency. The article traces the impact of climate change on various facets of human health, including vector-borne diseases, food and water systems, and mental health. While there is substantial evidence of the linkages between climate change and health, policy responses remain inadequate. Ultimately, health must be considered closely alongside climate policymaking, together with emissions reduction efforts and economic development.

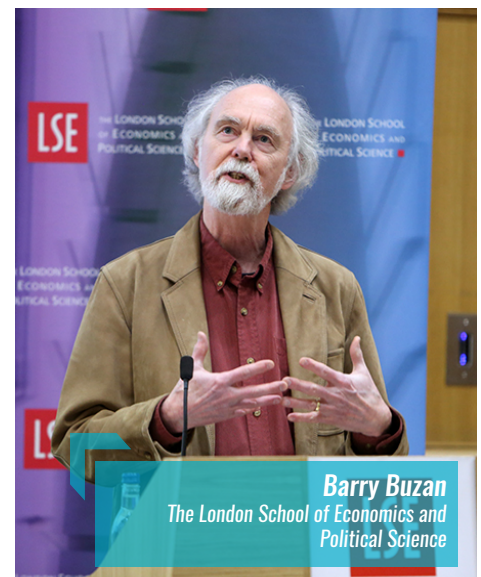
These essays invite the reader to reflect on the current environmental policies, for a reconfiguration of development approaches, and the need for a health-centred human security framework in climate governance. Our response to the climate crisis will determine the future of humanity and generations to come.

Warmest regards,
Mely Caballero-Anthony
Secretary-General

RESEARCHER PROFILE

Barry Buzan

Barry Buzan is Emeritus Professor of International Relations at the LSE (formerly Montague Burton Professor); honorary professor at Copenhagen, Jilin, and China Foreign Affairs Universities; a Senior Fellow at LSE Ideas; and a Fellow of the British Academy. He has written, co-authored or edited over thirty-five books, written or co-authored over one hundred and eighty articles and chapters, and lectured or presented papers in over twenty countries. An intellectual giant in the field of International Relations, Buzan, along with Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde shaped the discourse of security studies, with their seminal publication *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* in 1998. Barry Buzan's most recent books include *Timelines for Modernity: Rethinking Periodization for Global International Relations* (2025), *The Market in Global International Society: An English School Approach to International Political Economy* (2024, with Robert Falkner) and *Making Global Society: A Study of Humankind Across Three Eras* (2023).



REFLECTIONS

Effective Sustainable Development

By **Barry Buzan**

The London School of Economics and Political Science



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The concept of development emerged with decolonisation, and the obligation of former metropolitan powers to give assistance to those newly independent states still far from the leading edge of modernity. Yet it also applies to those states already at, or close to, the leading edge, who are just as keen to continue expanding their wealth, power, and knowledge.

For the leading edge, the driver is that in capitalist societies, growth allows sufficient distribution of gains to offset the political instability that otherwise arises from inequality. For those playing catch-up, the driver is a potent combination of envy, historical grievance, status seeking, fear of weakness, and a sense of entitlement to have what others have.

The pursuit of development is thus a near-universal human aspiration. Yet only in the last few decades has it risen into the consciousness and knowledge of humankind that continuing down this path is rapidly generating a major contradiction with the planet's carrying capacity.

In a long view of the anthroposphere, development has been driven by five basic forms of expansion: human numbers, social complexity, wealth, power, and knowledge. These five have been built up over millennia of practice and have huge momentum.

For most of human history, development in these terms operated without threatening the planet's physical systems. Earth systems remained largely driven by their own orbital and spin dynamics, solar intensities, and suchlike.

But with the global onset of modernity in the nineteenth century, all the processes of development accelerated sharply. The anthroposphere's insatiable demand for "progress" made ever-stronger impacts on Earth systems.

This challenge is unprecedented in human history. Never before have the deeply embedded social and biological imperatives to increase and grow run up against absolute planetary constraints. The Anthropocene crisis has come to a peak quickly, leaving the anthroposphere little time to adapt.

Yet a case can be made that one of the five imperatives for continuous growth built into the anthroposphere, one, increasing population, is solving itself, while the other four can be sustained without necessarily contradicting planetary carrying capacity. Human numbers will soon peak and possibly begin to shrink. There is no obvious reason why the increasing complexity of human societies, such as rising urbanisation, or increases in human knowledge, should be in necessary contradiction to Earth systems.

The main problem with the growth imperatives embedded in the anthroposphere hinges on the unrestrained pursuit of wealth and power. "Business as usual" in these two respects will quite quickly result in damaging, and then extremely damaging, consequences for human civilisations.

Given the powerful social momentum behind development, any attempt to confront the Anthropocene crisis by reducing or eliminating development, or requiring massive redistribution between rich and poor, will face insurmountable political opposition.

The obvious, and perhaps only, way of reconciling the developmental dynamics of the anthroposphere with Earth systems is to redefine development in terms that make it sustainable, and to get that redefinition widely accepted as the basis for confronting the Anthropocene crisis. This new understanding of development has to be presented as a plausible, fair, and engaging story that meets the needs of both the leading edge and those catching up.

The contemporary understanding of development is rooted in the nineteenth century experience of the first round of modernising societies.

A small group of mostly Western states (plus Japan and Russia) latched onto the idea of permanent progress and opened a massive gap in wealth and power between themselves and the rest. That gap was difficult to close because doing so required a social revolution. Since this core was the only model for development, they established the myth that development (modernisation) required Westernisation. This myth was widely accepted.

Driven by both a rapidly-expanding population and the technologically innovative political economy of industrial capitalism, the pursuit of wealth and power during this era was rapacious in its use of materials and energy. The global distribution of development remained highly uneven, though some catch-up occurred from the 1980s after a second round of modernisation began in East Asia.

This unrestrained model of development is the one that the Anthropocene crisis is making unsustainable. What might a development model look like that both retained the commitments to progress, and increasing wealth and power, while being sustainable in relation to planetary carrying capacity?

The idea of sustainable development has been around for decades but the mainstream pursuit of it has been flawed. An understanding of development that clings to a measure of rising GDP, as in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), will not work. Demand for energy and resources continues to rise, putting increasing pressure on Earth's systems.

An effective and politically sellable sustainable development would have to meet four requirements.

1. Easiest is a rapid transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy and electrification. There is no shortage of technologies to achieve this, and there has already been substantial progress with wind and solar.

2. More difficult is becoming much leaner in using material resources. The energy transition itself requires substantial new resources, and the mining and processing of material resources are a source of greenhouse gases. Achieving leanness will take longer than the energy transition and will require multiple pathways: new technologies, higher efficiency, more recycling, and lower consumption of material things. Complex calculations will need to be made to determine priorities in the pursuit of leanness in relation to the threats that material extraction and pollution pose to Earth systems – and those in turn pose to the anthroposphere.

The pursuit of material leanness means that the understanding of “progress” will have to be redefined. Material progress is a key feature of contemporary development. The idea that progress is mainly about the accumulation of material things will have to give way to the consumption of services and experiences that require less materials and generate less waste.

3. To this end, ESD will need to be smart. Societies will have to collect and use big data in a major way, deploy AI to analyse it and use the results across society. Since AI is in its infancy, and its development is being pushed hard by military, economic, governmental, and scientific interests, the characteristics of “smartness” in this sense will continue to unfold rapidly.

There are risks to smartness. Cybercrime and cyberwar are already well in play. Unpredictable behaviour by AIs is emergent, and its consequences will depend on the balance between its (un)reliability on the one hand, and the responsibilities it is given on the other. Societies will need to be able to prevent cybercriminals and cyberwarriors from overwhelming the networks and analytics, and prevent rogue AIs from causing major social disruption.

A key question for smartness is whether societies will choose to network themselves mainly internally, by erecting barriers to global networks, or will opt for wider networks, regionally or globally. China is currently the exemplar for closure, and the now-defunct liberal international order was the model for open networking. The current political dominance of the far right suggests that the closure model will dominate at least in the short term. Which model will produce the best balance between connectivity and risk will be determined as practices and capabilities unfold.

4. ESD will require a meaningful degree of global coordination to stop “business as usual” from pushing the planet beyond its carrying capacity. This will not revive the economic globalisation that brought down the neoliberal project in the early twenty-first century. Globalisation will rest on shared stewardship of the planetary environment. The balance between the necessary regulatory regime and the operation of the market could, in principle, be done under either authoritarian or democratic governments.

Authoritarians would have to open themselves much more to global perspectives than they currently do and accept that climate change is the top priority. Democrats would have to put a leash on capitalism in relation to both national and planetary goals. Civilisationalism, currently fashionable on the far right, might be one possible framing, but it would have to include the idea that all civilisations depend on having planetary conditions that support them.

These requirements may sound like a tall order, but none pose obstacles that cannot be overcome with creative political thinking.



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RESEARCHER PROFILE

Jannatul Toba Jhumu

Jannatul Toba Jhumu is a Research Assistant at the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS). She holds both an MSS and a BSS in Development Studies from Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP). She has authored two published journal articles and regularly writes commentaries on contemporary issues. Her research interests include inequality, social justice, climate justice, and gender issues. These themes are consistently reflected in her work. Her published commentaries on non-traditional security issues cover a wide range of topics, from transboundary water disputes and data colonialism to the changing patterns of development aid that trigger humanitarian crises. Her work combines field research with policy analysis to examine issues of inequality. One notable feature of her work is that she places marginalised communities at the heart of her research. She is particularly interested in advocacy-oriented research that focuses on disadvantaged communities across the Global South.



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REFLECTIONS

From Environmental Risk to Human Security: Climate Change and Public Health

By Jannatul Toba Jhumu

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security
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Climate change poses a threat to the environment, and to human health and security. UNDP Human Development Report in 1994 introduced the concept of human security and broadened the concept of security beyond military threats. It emphasised the protection of individuals through economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security. Climate change threatens all of these dimensions. More recently, an independent commission has urged the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare climate change a global health emergency.

The evidence that climate change is undermining public health is overwhelming. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change has already increased heat-related illnesses and deaths while intensifying health risks across regions. Over the past two decades, heat-related deaths among people over 65 have risen by approximately 85 percent, with a 2021 study indicating that 37 percent of warm season heat-related deaths in 43 countries, were directly linked to human-induced climate change. The World Health Organization (WHO) projects that climate change could cause an additional 250,000 deaths annually between 2030 and 2050 from heat exposure, malaria, diarrheal diseases, and undernutrition. Beyond these projections, the burden is expected to grow substantially. According to the World Economic Forum report, climate change could contribute to 14.5 million deaths by 2050, with floods alone projected to result in approximately 8.5 million of these fatalities.

Climate change has changed the pattern of vector-borne diseases. Rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns are expanding the habitats of mosquitoes that carry diseases such as dengue, chikungunya, and Zika. Regions once considered unsuitable for these diseases such as parts of Europe and North America are now

experiencing outbreaks. Similar trends are being observed with malaria and other climate-sensitive diseases, particularly across South Asia and Africa, where climate-induced disasters often overwhelm health systems that are already least equipped to cope with growing risks by damaging health facilities, disrupting disease surveillance and vector-control programmes, and interrupting access to essential healthcare. Pakistan's devastating 2022 floods triggered a sharp surge in malaria cases, while in Ethiopia, climate-related extreme weather has contributed to recurring malaria outbreaks that have further strained surveillance and treatment services.

Climate change is also placing increasing pressure on food and water systems. Due to the extreme weather events such as droughts, and floods, the access to safe drinking water is being disrupted and thus reducing agricultural productivity. These impacts contribute to malnutrition, foodborne illnesses, and waterborne diseases, particularly among children. In Zimbabwe, drought triggered severe cholera outbreak in 2024. Cyclone Idai triggered a threefold surge in cholera, predominantly among children under five in Mozambique.

Climate change is becoming a major mental health challenge, but it is often overlooked in climate policy. It can trigger both immediate and long-term psychological distress arising from displacement and the fracturing of social cohesion. The IPCC notes that climate change affects mental health in two ways. First, people who experience floods, storms, wildfires, and other extreme weather events often suffer from stress, trauma, and emotional distress. People with pre-existing mental health disorders also face sharply elevated mortality during extreme heat events. Second, even people who are not directly affected can experience anxiety

and fear as they become increasingly aware of the growing risks and future impacts of climate change.

What makes this crisis even more tragic is the inequality of who bears the consequences. Those least responsible for climate change suffer the most. Low-income countries contribute only a small share of global greenhouse gas emissions, yet they face the highest exposure to climate-sensitive diseases, food insecurity, and environmental hazards. Women, children, older persons, migrants, and poor communities are particularly vulnerable. These affected communities often have limited access to healthcare and resources but face the greatest risk. Climate induced displacement worsens these challenges to an unprecedented level. Displacements disrupt livelihood, weaken social network, thus increasing both physical and mental risks.

Despite mounting evidence, policy responses remain inadequate. One crucial challenge is political short-termism. Governments often operate within electoral cycles and prioritise immediate economic concerns over long-term risks. As a result, investments in climate resilience and public health preparedness frequently receive less attention than they require.

Economic structures also play a role. The health costs associated with fossil fuel use are largely borne by individuals, healthcare systems, and governments rather than by the industries responsible for emissions. Together, these create systemic barriers that leave the most vulnerable entirely exposed to the crisis.

To address this gap, there should be a shift from viewing climate change primarily as an environmental risk to understanding it as a human security crisis. Health must be placed at the centre of climate policymaking, alongside emissions reduction and economic goals. Adaptation strategies should strengthen the One Health approach, which links human, animal, and environmental health, through surveillance systems that detect zoonotic disease risks early. These should also be supported by climate-resilient health financing, guided by WHO's Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH), to help hospitals and clinics remain operational during climate-related disasters. Adaptation strategies must also expand community-based mental health services by training frontline health workers to identify and respond to climate-related psychological distress. Throughout these efforts, priority should be given to those who face the greatest risks despite contributing the least to climate change.

Ultimately, the underlying economic structures tied to fossil fuel use, and lack of momentum in addressing the human and ecological security aspects of climate change has resulted in limited progress in the global effort to reduce carbon emissions. A health-centred human security framework offers a more comprehensive and equitable approach to climate governance. As climate impacts intensify, integrating health, equity, and human security into policy decisions will be essential for building a safer, more resilient future.

The 8th NTS Asia Annual Conference: Global Governance Adrift – Pathways Forward for Non-Traditional Security

Themed “Global Governance Adrift – Pathways Forward for Non-Traditional Security,” the 8th NTS-Asia Annual Conference took place from 7 – 8 April. Organised by the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS) at RSIS, the event brought together experts from across Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and South Asia.

Since 2007, the NTS Asia Consortium has provided a platform for sustained dialogue on critical NTS issues such as climate and ecological risks, health security, food, energy and water security, human security, and resilience in Asia. The theme for this year's conference on the state of global governance today is timely, with the international order being contested and challenged, new dimensions of conflicts in the Middle East, the acceleration of artificial intelligence (AI), the urgent need to address the impacts of climate change, and the imperative to protect and steward our natural environment. A video commemorating the milestones of NTS-Asia through the years was also screened.

Professor Barry Buzan, visiting Ngee Ann Kongsi Professor of International Relations at RSIS, and Emeritus Professor of International Relations, The London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom was the keynote speaker. Professor Buzan spoke on the end of the western world order, how neo-liberalism is in a state of crisis, and the rise of the far right. He then reflected on the implications of these developments on NTS.

Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, Ngee Ann Kongsi Professor of International Relations and Head of NTS Centre, RSIS; kicked off the conference with welcome remarks. Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS; then delivered the opening remarks.



The first panel on global governance and non-traditional security discussed the state of global governance, its impact on non-traditional security and the role of regional actors and middle powers. Speakers spoke on how global governance is fragmenting and shifting away from rules-based institutions to more interest-driven coalitions. The second panel on energy transition focused on critical minerals, coalitions of climate clubs, and international trade. Following which, the third panel on food security and trade disruptions examined the national and regional approaches to resilience and enhanced food security in ASEAN. The fourth panel on planetary health discussed ecological security and on translating the Planetary Health concept into policy. Panel five looked at the progress of Asia-Pacific states in advancing Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and on how older women have not been considered in digital policy, protection frameworks and WPS. Finally, the last panel investigated the health and biological security risks in the context of global biosecurity, and weaponised supply chains in geopolitics.

As part of the future agenda, participants spoke on ideas on how to develop the consortium's activities through working groups and developing new, creative ways to increase visibility with platforms such as [podcasts](#) and the [NTS Asia website](#).

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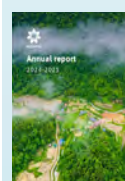
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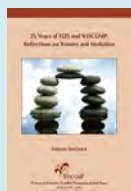
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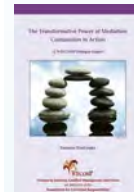
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PAST EVENT SUMMARIES

Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies (BIPSS)

Navigating Global Shifts: Fostering Energy Security and Resilience in Bangladesh



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) recently organised a policy roundtable titled “Navigating Global Shifts: Fostering Energy Security and Resilience in Bangladesh” at The Westin Dhaka. The keynote address was delivered by Mr Iqbal Hassan Mahmood, MP, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources. The session was moderated by Maj Gen A N M Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd), President, BIPSS. He emphasised the need for a diversified and resilient energy strategy to safeguard long-term growth, energy sovereignty, and national resilience.

In his keynote remarks, the Honourable Minister outlined Bangladesh’s priorities for strengthening energy security through renewable energy expansion, offshore gas exploration, infrastructure modernisation, and enhanced regional cooperation. Participants engaged in an interactive discussion on energy transition, regional connectivity, power sector reforms, and responses to global energy challenges.

In his concluding remarks, Mr Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS, noted that renewable energy should be viewed not only as a climate objective but also as a geopolitical hedge, and stressed that energy security must be incorporated as a core pillar of Bangladesh’s evolving national security strategy.

Global Trends 2026 and Beyond



BIPSS President, Major General A N M Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd.), was invited as a Guest Speaker at the National Defence College (NDC), Dhaka, to deliver a lecture on

“Global Trends 2026 and Beyond” to senior military and civil service officers of the NDC course.

The lecture explored the key forces reshaping the global landscape, spanning geopolitics, societal change, technology and health security. He examined how these interconnected trends are redefining the nature of global challenges, emphasising that the ability to withstand international crises will increasingly depend on a nation’s capacity to adapt to rapid change and cultivate robust strategic foresight.

The session concluded with an interactive discussion, where NDC course participants raised incisive questions touching on resource and economic security, humanitarian and regional stability challenges, the changing architecture of national power, the future of multilateral institutions, the climate-conflict nexus, and the shifting ideological and technological currents redefining global politics.

The engagement reinforced the value of platforms that bring strategic foresight into dialogue with the country’s future security leadership, and BIPSS remains committed to fostering such exchanges with premier national institutions.

Three Decades of BIMSTEC: Advancing Regional Cooperation for Shared Prosperity



The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) recently organised a seminar titled “Three Decades of BIMSTEC: Advancing Regional Cooperation for Shared Prosperity”. The seminar was organised in view of Bangladesh’s ongoing Chairmanship of BIMSTEC and aimed to promote informed policy dialogue on strengthening regional cooperation for shared prosperity.

H.E. Shama Obaed Islam, MP, Honourable State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, attended the seminar as the Chief Guest, while H.E. Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General of BIMSTEC, joined as a Special Guest.

In his address as the Session Chair, President of BIPSS Major General A N M Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd), highlighted BIMSTEC’s growing strategic importance in promoting regional connectivity, economic integration, energy security, climate resilience, and sustainable development, while highlighting Bangladesh’s pivotal role as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia. He noted that BIMSTEC complements SAARC by providing a pragmatic platform to address shared regional challenges through stronger cooperation.

Roundtable on "Sub-threshold Conflict: War by Other Means"

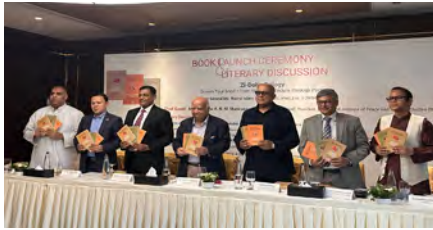


Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) hosted a roundtable on “Sub-threshold Conflict: War by Other Means,” featuring a keynote presentation by Dr. Niloy Ranjan Biswas, Professor of International Relations, University of Dhaka. The roundtable brought together academics, diplomats, members of civil society, senior officers of the armed forces, representatives of other think tanks, members of law enforcement agencies and former ambassadors among others. It explored the changing character of contemporary conflict and the growing strategic significance of sub-threshold warfare.

Moderated by Major General A N M Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd.), President of BIPSS, the discussion underscored the importance of understanding the shifting nature of conflict and prioritising holistic approaches to addressing emerging security challenges. The event concluded with closing remarks by Mr Shafqat Munir,

Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS, reaffirming the need for continued dialogue and the critical need to look at Bangladesh's security architecture.

Book Launch and Literary Discussion of The Zi-Dona Trilogy



The book launch and literary discussion of the Zi-Dona Trilogy, authored by Major General Md. Nazrul Islam, SBP, SPP, ndu, afwc, psc, G (Retd), was recently held in Dhaka.

Major General A N M Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd), President of the BIPSS, attended the event as the Chief Guest. The lead discussant and principal reviewer was Mr. Enayetullah Khan, Chairman of COSMOS Foundation and Editor-in-Chief of Dhaka Courier. Other eminent discussants and reviewers included Mr Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS; Dr Md. Sabur Khan, Chairman of Daffodil International University; and Professor Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Vice-Chancellor of North South University.

In his remarks, Major General Muniruzzaman emphasised that the future of any nation depends not merely on economic growth or technological advancement, but on the quality, character, and values of its people. As a discussant and reviewer, Mr Shafqat Munir noted that the themes explored in the trilogy are relevant not only to individual development but also to the broader progress of society.

The event brought together distinguished guests to discuss the trilogy's focus on self-governance, discipline, and purpose-driven living.

Reception for Women Leaders



The Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) recently

organised a Reception for Women Leaders, bringing together Members of Parliament, Ambassadors and High Commissioners along with diplomats from different embassies and high commissions, senior government officials, leaders from the private sector, academicians, representatives from various organisations, and members of civil society.

The reception aimed to strengthen networking among women professionals and champion greater participation of women in the workforce by fostering meaningful connections across diverse fields. The event also highlighted the importance of advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda through collaboration and inclusive engagement.

During his opening remarks, Mr Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS, emphasised that lasting stability cannot be achieved without women driving the conversation. He further noted that, through advocating for women's role in peacekeeping, BIPSS has consistently worked to ensure that women are not only present, but truly empowered.

Bangladesh First: A Foreign Policy Outlook for A New Bangladesh



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) organised a policy roundtable titled "Bangladesh First: A Foreign Policy Outlook for A New Bangladesh". The keynote address was delivered by Mr Humaiun Kobir, Adviser (Status of State Minister) to the Prime Minister for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, and the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism. He outlined the government's "Bangladesh First" foreign policy doctrine, emphasising strategic autonomy, economic diplomacy, balanced global engagement, regional connectivity, and climate diplomacy.

The Honourable Adviser highlighted the current government's commitment of creating a comprehensive national security architecture, which is pivotal to pursuing a robust foreign policy.

The event was moderated by Maj Gen A N M Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd), President of BIPSS. In his remarks, General Muniruzzaman stressed the need for a pragmatic, balanced, and nationally driven foreign policy amid growing geopolitical, economic, and technological challenges. An engaging discussion followed with the audience, which included, among others, honourable Members of Parliament, diplomats, academics, policymakers, and media representatives.

In his concluding remarks, Mr Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS, described the "Bangladesh First" doctrine as a return to strategic pragmatism centred on Bangladesh's national interests and sovereignty. He emphasised that given the growing geopolitical uncertainty and shifting global dynamics, Bangladesh requires a confident, strategically agile, and professionally driven foreign policy outlook anchored in long-term national interests.

8th Joint Forum on Yunnan–Bangladesh Cooperation



Mr Parvez Karim Abbasi, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics at East West University, and Executive Director, Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) emphasised Yunnan's strategic role in strengthening Bangladesh–China cooperation. Speaking at the 8th Joint Forum on Yunnan–Bangladesh Cooperation, he notes that Yunnan, as China's closest province to Bangladesh and a key interface with ASEAN, can support Bangladesh in exploring ASEAN membership, facilitate technology transfer and trade, and help meet standards for entry into the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. He also highlighted opportunities for collaboration in medical and health tourism between Bangladeshi and Yunnan-based companies, stressing the need for constructive engagement.

Visit to Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs



The RSIS Energy Security (Research Cluster) – Dr Alvin Chew, Julius Cesar Trajano, and Dr Margareth Sembiring – presented their analyses of ASEAN energy security situation following the Gulf conflict to Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday, 6 August 2026.

Second Meeting of the CSCAP Study Group on Biosecurity and Health Security in the Asia-Pacific



The NTS Centre and CSCAP Singapore convened the Second Meeting of the CSCAP Study Group on Biosecurity and Health Security in the Asia-Pacific, in partnership with the Asia Centre for Health Security, from 4–5 August 2026. Co-chaired by CSCAP Singapore, CSCAP Japan and CSCAP New Zealand, the meeting built on discussions from the Study Group's first meeting in March 2025.

Participants examined emerging regional risks, including developments in biotechnology and artificial intelligence, their implications for biosecurity and health security, and the continued relevance of mechanisms such as the Biological Weapons Convention in the Asia-Pacific. The meeting also featured a tabletop exercise on regional responses to synthetic biological innovation. A presentation of the exercise outcomes highlighted key considerations surrounding transparency, preparedness, regional coordination and confidence-building, prompting a rich discussion on how regional mechanisms can respond more effectively to rapidly evolving biological technology risks.

Global Health Security Conference

The NTS Centre convened a panel, "The Emerging Biosecurity Landscape in

Southeast Asia," on 12 June 2026 at the Global Health Security Conference, held in Kuala Lumpur from 9 to 12 June 2026. The panel featured presentations by Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the NTS Centre; Mr Julius Cesar Trajano, RSIS Research Fellow; and Ms Jeselyn, Research Analyst.

The three presentations were based on the following reports: "Emerging Biosecurity Landscape in Southeast Asia," "Advancing BWC Confidence-Building Measures in Southeast Asia: Leveraging ASEAN's Platforms and Mechanisms," and "Convergence of Biotechnologies and Artificial Intelligence: Implications on Biological Security."

Together, the three reports formed a coherent panel discussion on the evolving biosecurity landscape in Southeast Asia, examining regional risk perceptions, opportunities for strengthening confidence-building measures, and the implications of emerging technologies for biological security. The panel's insights were well received by representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat's Health Division and may inform ongoing biosecurity and health security initiatives in the region.



Networking Meetings with Biosecurity Experts

Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the NTS Centre; Mr Julius Trajano, RSIS Research Fellow; and Ms Jeselyn, Research Analyst, conducted networking meetings with biosecurity experts in Seoul, South Korea, from 1 to 3 June 2026. The meetings engaged experts from diverse fields, including public health, security, academia, and non-governmental organisations.



NTU Social Science Challenge (SSC) 2026 Kickstart Day



Dr Jose Ma. Luis Montesclaros (RSIS) was invited as a speaker for the NTU Social Science Challenge (SSC) 2026 Kickstart Day, where he led a Masterclass Workshop on food security as a non-traditional security issue with both global and local implications.

The session opened with a brief overview of food security in this context, followed by a case-based discussion on Singapore's "30 by 30" strategy, drawing on the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy study Singapore's Quest for Food Security – 30 by 30. Participants explored the complexities of policymaking and examined food security as a multifaceted and evolving challenge shaped by availability, access, affordability, and nutritional sufficiency. The session also introduced the Food Research Systems at NTU, highlighting its role in supporting Singapore's food and agriculture landscape.

Participants were actively engaged in analysing the challenges Singapore continues to face in strengthening food resilience. Open-floor discussions encouraged thoughtful reflection on current strategies while inviting participants to propose and debate new approaches, considering feasibility and trade-offs in addressing food security more effectively.

The workshop deepened participants' understanding of Singapore's food security landscape and served as a platform to inspire critical thinking and innovative solutions toward strengthening food security goals.

International Conference on Computer Security in the Nuclear World: Securing the Future #CyberCon26



Mr Julius Cesar Trajano, RSIS Research Fellow, participated in the International Conference

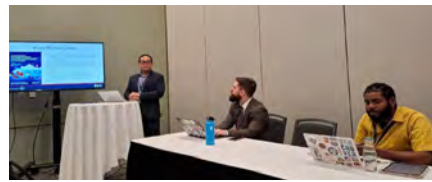
on Computer Security in the Nuclear World: Securing the Future #CyberCon26 at the IAEA Headquarters/ UN Vienna from 11 to 15 May 2026. He presented his research paper on "Regional Cooperation on Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Governance and Its Impact on Nuclear Security: The Case of Southeast Asia" as part of the panel discussions on regulatory frameworks and nuclear cybersecurity. Representing RSIS and Singapore, Mr Trajano was selected by the International Atomic Energy Agency to receive a conference travel grant which made his participation possible.

RSIS Webinar on "Energy Transition in an Era of Energy Insecurity"



The "Energy Transition in an Era of Energy Insecurity" webinar was organised by the RSIS Energy Research Cluster on Friday, 15 May 2026. It focused on three major Asian economies and large carbon emitters — China, India, and Indonesia — to draw comparative insights into how similar external shocks relating to the disruptions at the Strait of Hormuz produce varied policy responses affecting energy transition trajectories across diverse institutional and political-economic contexts.

2026 Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA)



Mr Julius Cesar Trajano, RSIS Research Fellow, participated in the 2026 Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA) in Columbus, Ohio on 22–25 March 2026.

He was part of two panels:

- Norms, Narratives and Coloniality in Global Health — where he shared the RSIS policy research on emerging biosecurity governance in Southeast Asia.
- Technology and Governance — where he presented on biotechnology governance and the adoption of BWC Confidence-Building Measures in Southeast Asia.



Dr Margareth Sembiring presented her paper titled "Selective Permeability and the Limits of Public Opinion: Domestic Contention and Regional Energy

Cooperation in Southeast Asia" at the International Studies Association (ISA) 67th Annual Conference on 22–25 March 2026 in Columbus, Ohio, USA.

National Workshop on the Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in the Republic of Indonesia



Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the NTS Centre, and Ms Jeselyn, Research Analyst, participated in the National Workshop on the Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in the Republic of Indonesia, organised by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Indonesia) in Bandung, 10–12 February 2026. Prof Caballero-Anthony presented the Centre's biosecurity baseline report, "Emerging Biosecurity Landscape in Southeast Asia", highlighting evolving biosecurity risks in the region and offering policy recommendations. She also spoke on regional cooperation, outlining the Biosecurity Programme's research and activities, and exploring potential collaboration with ACHS and RSIS.

Center for Southeast Asian Studies Indonesia (CSEAS)

ASEAN Conference "Plastic Pollution: From Land-Based Sources to the Ocean – Current Status and Solutions"



This ASEAN conference aims to provide a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue and knowledge exchange regarding regional and national perspectives, policy initiatives, and science-based solutions aimed at reducing marine plastic pollution in ASEAN, to facilitate academic exchange and thematic discussions on marine plastic pollution, and to strengthen regional collaboration among ASEAN

Member States, research institutions, and development partners.

Click [here](#) to watch the podcast.

International Conference on Marine Plastic Pollution 2026



A high-level session highlighting regional and national priorities and perspectives from key stakeholders, including the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment, government agencies, and development partners.

Webinar Series 4 "Environmental Activism in ASEAN: Community Action for a Sustainable Future"



This webinar aims to introduce environmental activism as a practical approach to protecting the environment, highlight the role of community and youth-led actions in driving environmental change, and encourage participants to take part in real environmental action in their own communities.

Click [here](#) to watch the webinar.

39th Asia-Pacific Roundtable



The Asia-Pacific Roundtable (APR) is the signature international conference of the Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia. At its core, the APR is a Southeast Asian conference discussing key issues impacting the Asia-Pacific. It is one of the region's premier Track 2 gatherings, ranking among the world's top 20 strategic-security focused conferences.

Convened by ISIS Malaysia, on behalf of the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic & International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS), a network of leading Southeast Asian policy institutes and think-tanks, APR regularly attracts more than 300 thinkers who engage in lively, frank and constructive conversations on issues shaping the security, stability, sustainability and prosperity of the region.

The APR brings together experts from across the region to explore the latest trends and developments. It aims to provide insights into how businesses and governments could navigate an increasingly complex strategic landscape.

Building on previous themes of interregnum and recalibration, APR focuses its deliberations on "Accelerating agency and action", seeking to identify regional catalysts and leadership amidst complex geopolitical fluctuations.

PRAXIS 2026



PRAXIS is ISIS Malaysia's flagship public policy conference, designed to bridge ideas and translate theory into practice. Since 2011, PRAXIS has convened policymakers, the private sector, civil society and academia to engage in topics of national interest.

PRAXIS distinguishes itself through the PRAXIS process — embedding a research

process to deliver impact from end-to-end. This process begins well before the conference with closed-door roundtables and consultations that bring together stakeholders and policymakers to identify core issues, shape agendas and frame the questions that matter. Post-conference, discussions are synthesised with cutting-edge analysis from ISIS Malaysia's researchers to produce actionable, pragmatic policy briefs to help advance dialogue to decision.

As Malaysia approaches 70 years of independence and its major national plans converge on 2030, PRAXIS 2026 asks what comes next? High income, this year's premise insists, is a starting point — not a destination.

Even the world's wealthiest nations are grappling with ecological strain, eroding trust and rising insecurity. Approaching 70 years of independence and looking past the 2030 national milestones, this flagship conference bridges high-level policy with the creative aspirations of Malaysia's youth. By translating theory into concrete institutional choices, PRAXIS 2026 gathers policymakers, experts and the next generation to redefine progress and design a secure, shared future for all Malaysians.

AI Governance Bill on 'Shaping Compliance'



Malaysia is developing an AI Governance Bill in tandem with the country's goal to become an AI nation by 2030. As the AI industry matures, advocacy for compliance to the bill is critical to safeguard Malaysians, especially in aspects of data stewardship, accountability measures, and effective redress.

To drive this initiative forward, ISIS Malaysia, Centre for Responsible Technology and MyDIGITAL Corporation in partnership with AI Malaysia and Malaysia Centre4IR co-hosted a roundtable on AI Governance Bill focused on shaping compliance. Opening the session, ISIS Malaysia Executive Chairman, Datuk Prof Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah, emphasised a whole-of-

government approach to strengthen responsibility and accountability essential for the vitality of an AI-nation.

Following this, AI Malaysia Berhad provided a comprehensive presentation on the proposed Bill, outlining the overarching approach, key areas under regulation, principles of compliance and implementation, and parameters of usage.

The roundtable brought together a diverse ecosystem of participants, including practitioners, governing authorities and civil society experts joining in-person and virtually. Participants engaged in a necessary discussion identifying challenges in the Bill's implementation along with readiness and cognisance of stakeholders for eventual compliance.

Malaysia's Strategic Outlook and ASEAN Centrality



The Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia hosted a delegation from Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Philippines recently, as part of their 'Women in security' programme. This initiative brings together a cohort of women professionals, scholars and practitioners dedicated to maritime security, geopolitics and defence within the Philippine and broader Indo-Pacific contexts.

The dialogue was a deep dive into:

- Malaysia's strategic hedging and middle-power diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific.
- ASEAN diplomacy, consensus-building, and minilateral cooperation.
- Geopolitics of maritime security issues in Southeast Asia and its implications to regional dynamics.

Kuala Lumpur-Ankara Dialogue 2026

In the first Kuala Lumpur-Ankara Dialogue, ISIS Malaysia and SETA Foundation gathered policy visionaries and movers who are keen observers and shapers of Ankara and Putrajaya's six decades

partnership and how their mutual interests impact on geopolitics and geoeconomics in their regions. The event aims to set the tone and standard for open and closed dialogues on Malaysia-Türkiye relations and West Asia-related issues.

Recognising the scarcity of specialists relative to the growing interest and needs

on both sides, the dialogue offers a space for interlocutors from Malaysia, Türkiye and regional neighbours to identify each other's aspirations and strengths. The goal is to advance collaborations in defence and security, trade, technology, and cultural and educational exchanges. Embodying the partnership spirit between Malaysia and Türkiye's leading strategic

studies think-tanks, the dialogue seeks to deepen mutual understanding of the political and cultural sensibilities underlying each partner's decisions.



The Center for People and Forests, Thailand (RECOFTC)

APEC Ministerial Meeting on Forestry



Community forestry and local governance are essential to resilient forests. RECOFTC brought this perspective to APEC - Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forestry discussions in Shenzhen, China, drawing on regional research and practical experience from across the Asia-Pacific region.

At the APEC Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade, executive director, David Ganz, highlighted how secure community rights, strong institutions and inclusive governance can help address illegal logging and forest degradation.

He also shared how the #Explore programme is generating evidence to inform forest governance, community forestry and sustainable landscape management across the region.

Read [more](#) about RECOFTC's contribution to the discussions.

Regional Conference on Biodiversity and Community Forestry



Women from communities in Asia are making it clear that biodiversity conservation is also about who holds power, whose knowledge counts and who carries the greatest risks and responsibilities.

They spoke about persistent barriers that limit women's ability to lead, including unequal land and resource rights, limited access to finance and technology, restrictions on mobility, and decision-making spaces where women are present but not truly heard. They stressed that women's participation cannot be reduced to numbers and called for full, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity. Across the region, there is a growing call to recognise women's stewardship and knowledge as central to a more biodiverse future. That means securing women's tenure, investing in their leadership, and ensuring that climate and biodiversity finance reaches initiatives led by women on the ground.

Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Forests and Resilient Communities in Cambodia



The Community Action for Sustainable Forests (CASFor) Project convened its Third Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting in Phnom Penh, bringing together government institutions, development partners, and implementing agencies to review progress, share lessons learned, and shape priorities for the remainder of 2026.

The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Chan Chesda, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and PSC Co-Chair, and Dr Ly Pryouth, Assistant FAO Representative in Cambodia.

Participants reviewed key achievements and implementation progress from January to May 2026, validated the work

plan and budget for the second half of the year, and discussed opportunities to further strengthen sustainable livelihoods, forest governance, and climate-resilient community-based forest management. Updates were also shared on the project's Mid-Term Review and the establishment of Provincial Advisory Committees to support implementation at the local level.

Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), CASFor supports Community Forestry and Community Protected Areas across five provinces, helping communities strengthen sustainable livelihoods while conserving forests, restoring ecosystems, and protecting biodiversity. Implemented by FAO in partnership with UNDP Cambodia, WCS Cambodia, and RECOFTC, the project continues to promote community-led solutions that contribute to climate resilience, sustainable forest management, and improved livelihoods.

Waves Meet 2026 "Connecting Alumni for Gender Transformative Climate and Natural Resource Governance"



On 19–20 May 2026 in Kathmandu, Nepal, RECOFTC brought together Waves alumni from across all three cohorts to reconnect, reflect and strengthen collective leadership for gender equality in climate and natural resource governance.

Workshop on Systematic Participatory Foresight Process



The Successful Intervention Pathways for Migration as Adaptation (SUCCESS) Project organised its second Participatory Foresight Workshop in Chattogram City on 24 August 2026, as part of a three-workshop series conducted in the migration destination area of Chattogram.

The workshop brought together approximately 20 participants, including representatives from Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), University of Chittagong, Premier University, Department of Women Affairs, District Social Services Office, District Relief and Rehabilitation Office, District Youth Development Office, Probashi Kallyan Bank, Chattogram Women Technical Training Center, Caritas, YPSA, Coast Foundation, volunteers, journalists, and migrants residing in Chattogram.

The workshop provided a structured, multi-stakeholder platform for examining future risks, emerging trends, and plausible scenarios likely to influence the lives of migrant communities and local adaptation pathways for Chattogram City. Through participatory foresight tools and evidence-informed discussions, participants reflected on the implications of climate-related mobility to Chattogram city, local vulnerabilities, migrants' access to citizen services, and potential opportunities for adaptive planning. The process enabled diverse stakeholders to collaboratively explore how future uncertainties may shape migration as an adaptation strategy in Chattogram and identify locally relevant response options. The workshop generated important insights to inform future planning and programming for migrant communities and local adaptation initiatives.

The outcomes of this workshop support the SUCCESS Project's ongoing efforts to promote forward-looking and inclusive approaches to migration as an adaptation strategy. These outcomes will also help inform the third workshop in Chattogram.

Inception Workshop on Promoting Anticipatory Action to Address Climate and Environment Risks for Community Transformation (PROAACT) Project



The Inception Workshop of Promoting Anticipatory Action to Address Climate and Environment Risks for Community Transformation (PROAACT) Project was organised by RMMRU on 17 August 2026 at the Islamic Foundation Model Mosque, Naria Upazila, Shariatpur.

Forty-eight participants from 11 unions of Naria Upazila from different occupations attended the workshop. The participants included people from 11 Unions. The Chief Guest was the UNO of the Naria Upazila. Then the PROAACT Team Members presented the project's objectives, activities, planning, data collection processes, systemic participatory foresight tools for risk assessment, conflict analysis, Gender, Equality, and Social Inclusion (GESI) and safeguarding aspects.

Social Cohesion and Community-Based Climate and Environmental Participatory Risk and Conflict Assessment



RMMRU organised a workshop on "Social Cohesion and Community-Based Climate and Environmental Participatory Risk and Conflict Assessment" on 16 August 2026 at Gahrisar Union Parishad, Naria Upazila, Shariatpur. It was the first Union-level workshop under the Promoting anticipatory action to address Climate and Environment Risks for Community Transformation (PROAACT) Project.

Twenty-four participants from the local community of Gharisar Union attended the workshop. The participants included Union members, farmers, head teachers, businessmen, panel chairman, advocates, village police, journalists, and housewives

who participated in the workshop. The participants were divided into two groups and used the foresight participatory process for risk and conflict assessment of their union. Each Group drew a comprehensive picture of their union or upazila, identifying major resources, natural calamities, risk zones, areas most affected by natural calamities, and also the most affected people. Each group also selected two major issues of their unions and drew a problem tree, from where they identified the main causes and effects of the issues. The participants then completed a visioning activity by drawing a picture of their union they would like to see after 15 years.

Workshop for Gathering Input on "Standardised Planned Relocation Guideline for Climate Induced Internally Displaced Population"



With the technical support of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Government of Bangladesh, successfully organised a workshop to gather inputs on the "Standardised Planned Relocation Guideline for Climate-Induced Internally Displaced Population" on 7 July 2026 at Pan Pacific Sonargaon, Dhaka.

Mr Md. Saidur Rahman Khan, Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), graced the event as the Chief Guest. In his remarks, he stated that, in line with Article 4.3 of the National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management in Bangladesh, the Ministry is developing a standardised planned relocation guideline.

Representatives from 19 ministries and government agencies participated in the workshop. Participants reflected on their experiences in implementing planned relocation programmes and identified eight key principles to steer the development of the guidelines. These principles include participation, communication, accountability, integration, process, coordination, context, and resources.

Kabir Hossain, a resident of a planned relocation site in Banshkhali, expressed

his appreciation for the government's provision of land and housing for climate-induced displaced people. However, he also highlighted several concerns, noting that the current relocation sites lack essential community facilities such as community spaces, graveyards and mosques. Another relocated resident, Md. Alin, shared that relocated families often face harassment from members of the host community when attempting to access these facilities.

Dr Tasneem Siddiqui, Executive Director, RMMRU, shared that due to slow-onset climate change processes, nearly 20 million people are projected to be displaced in Bangladesh by 2050. She further noted that, in 2024 alone, approximately 2.4 million people were displaced by rapid-onset climate-related disasters. She stated that if a durable solution is not planned now, then millions of people will be moving towards megacities.

Mr Eekhtekharul Islam, Adjunct Research Fellow at RMMRU, presented the draft framework for developing the planned relocation guideline. The workshop was moderated by Dr Md. Rashed Alam Bhuiyan, Department of Political Science, University of Dhaka.

Dissemination Workshop on "Adaptation Challenges of Climate-linked Migrants in Bangladesh and Locally-led Solutions"

The Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) successfully organised a dissemination workshop titled

"Adaptation Challenges of Climate-Migrants in Bangladesh and Locally-led Solutions" on 28 April 2026 at the CIRDAP International Conference Centre, Dhaka.

Mr Zahir Uddin Swapon, MP, Honourable Minister of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, graced the event as the Chief Guest. Mr Md. Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki, MP, Honourable State Minister of the Ministry of Planning, and Ms Lisa-Tanita Greminger, Regional Advisor for Migration and Protection at the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh, attended the workshop as Guests of Honour. Dr A K Enamul Haque, Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) also attended the workshop. The event brought together representatives from various ministries and government departments, along with national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs and INGOs), development partners, researchers, and members of civil society.

Dr Tasneem Siddiqui presented the key findings of the research on the adaptation challenges of climate-induced migrants in the urban locations. The study shows that migrants earn more money in cities than in rural areas, and their income is more regular. It also found that many more women are working in cities—more than three times compared to before. Dr Siddiqui said that migration is not only happening in Dhaka and that policymakers need to take timely and proper action. She explained that many people move to Dhaka because industries in Khulna and other areas have closed. She also said that if industries are set up in

districts and divisions, and regional growth centres are developed, people can earn money and live in their own areas instead of moving to Dhaka.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Mr Zahir Uddin Swapon, MP emphasised that climate-induced migration should be recognised as a major public policy issue rather than merely a humanitarian crisis. Speaking at an RMMRU workshop at CIRDAP, he highlighted the need to integrate migration into development planning and noted that both environmental and political factors are driving migration. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to addressing public challenges and stressed collective action to tackle climate change. The minister also urged stronger collaboration between the government, researchers, and civil society to reduce the suffering of migrants.

State Minister for Planning Zonayed Abdur Rahim Saki said that it is the government's duty to protect the rights and dignity of its citizens. He also thanked RMMRU for its work in supporting displaced people.

Dr A K Enamul Haque, Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said that many people are moving to cities because farmers do not want their children to continue farming.



The SMERU Research Institute, Indonesia (SMERU)

Strategic Dialogue with Academics and the Chair of the Government Digital Transformation Acceleration Committee (KPTDP) in Jakarta



Government digital transformation opens up opportunities to make social protection more responsive. However, data utilisation must take into account the context on the ground.

During a strategic dialogue between academics and the Chair of the Committee for Accelerating Government Digital Transformation in Jakarta (August 29),

SMERU highlighted the importance of integrating beneficiary data with regional conditions, including disaster vulnerability.

Seminar on "Achieving a Future Free of Emissions through Strengthening Regional Participation in Energy Transition"



Achieving a just energy transition requires more than just national policy. Local governments also play a crucial role in ensuring that the energy transition runs optimally in accordance with the potential and needs of each region.

On June 23, 2026, The SMERU Research Institute (SMERU) held a seminar on the results of its research titled "Achieving a Future Free of Emissions through Strengthening Regional Participation in Energy Transition." Together with the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, and local government representatives, SMERU discussed the opportunities for strengthening governance, policy synchronisation, and cross-sectoral coordination in implementing a just energy transition in Indonesia.

In this event, SMERU also introduced two practical guidelines that can be utilised to strengthen the capacity of local governments in designing and implementing a just energy transition.

Visit from the Hajj Financial Management Agency (BPKH)



On April 16, SMERU received a visit from the Hajj Financial Management Agency (BPKH) to benchmark institutional research management. This visit is part of BPKH's efforts to develop a research management system, an integrated platform designed to support the entire research cycle end-to-end.

On this occasion, SMERU shared its experience in research management, data

management, and knowledge sharing, as well as strategies for implementing a system that supports a more effective and accountable research process.

Through discussions and good practices shared, this collaboration is expected to strengthen research management and promote evidence-based policies.

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia's Ministry of Maritime Affairs

Protecting the ocean is not just about coral reefs or marine life. At its core, it is about people, especially coastal communities; and how they can remain empowered and able to build better lives.

Guided by this principle, SMERU joins the

signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia's Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries to support more inclusive and people-centered management of marine conservation areas.

This collaboration builds on a partnership that has been ongoing since 2022, with the support of Agence Française de Développement, reflecting a shared commitment to evidence-based and inclusive ocean governance.



Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka (RCSS)

RCSS Researchers Present Papers at the BCIS 'Emerging Scholars Symposium 2026'



RCSS Interns Venura Jayaratne and Hasara Vithanage presented research papers at the Emerging Scholars Symposium 2026, held on 3 September 2026 at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS), Colombo. The symposium was organised under the theme "International Relations in the Age of Climate Crisis."

The session was inaugurated by Mrs Priyanthi Fernando, Executive Director of BCIS while Mr Muditha Katuwawala, Executive Director of Pearl Protectors, delivered the Keynote Address.

RCSS Intern Venura Jayaratne presented a paper on "From Climate Stress to Conflict: Livelihood Deterioration and Institutional Failure in Nigeria and Burkina Faso", tracing how climate shocks escalated into violence in the two countries through a shared pathway of livelihood deterioration. Comparing two countries with similar climate exposure but different governance capacity, Jayaratne's paper traces how

climate shocks turn into violence, and argues that climate stress alone rarely explains it. He argues that contested land tenure, weak mediation, and limited early warning, not climate stress alone, determined whether that escalation turned violent.

RCSS Intern Hasara Vithanage presented a paper on "The Impact of AI Infrastructure on the World Water Bankruptcy", comparing data center expansion in the United States and India to argue that AI usage growth was outpacing efficiency gains. She framed this pattern as a form of Jevons Paradox, that aggregates corporate reporting obscured local water stress by hiding facility and watershed-level impacts in already strained regions such as Bengaluru.

RCSS Researchers Present Papers at ISA-South Asia



All four RCSS Research/Programme Officers and an External Expert of RCSS, presented academic papers in panels focusing on their respective specialisations, at the recently concluded Inaugural International Studies Association (ISA) - South Asia Conference held from 6-8 August 2026 in Colombo, on the theme 'South Asia in a Changing International Order'.

Shayan Peris presented on "Structural

Dependency in the Digital Age: Small States, Foreign infrastructure, and the Sovereignty Gap"; Maheshi Thellamurage on "Refuge without Convention? Sri Lanka and the Politics of Protection in Non-Signatory Southern Asia"; Chamika Wijesuriya on "Women's Capacity to Change Systems in South Asia: A Comparative Case Study between Nepal and Sri Lanka"; Thedini Herath on "Strategic autonomy in South Asia: Non-alignment (2.0), Multi-alignment and Hedging"; and Theshani Weligamage on "Crisis Diplomacy at Sea: Maritime Disasters, Regional Politics, and Governance Failures in the Indian Ocean".

RCSS Executive Director Ambassador (Retd.) Ravinatha Aryasinha chaired the session titled *Aftermaths of War: Justice, Memory, Narrative in Post-Civil War Sri Lanka*. He also presented a paper on *Major State's Behaviour Toward Small States within the U.N. Human Rights Council*, and was a panelist in 'Author Meets Critics' on Prof Amitav Acharya's recent book *The Once and Future World Order*.

Over 270 participants from across South Asia, the rest of Asia, Europe, North America and Australasia gathered for this 3-day conference, engaging in panels, round-tables and book talks, alongside events with publishers, academic journal editors, and a film screening. Keynote speeches were delivered by the Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Higher Education and Vocational Education Dr Harini Amarasuriya and Prof Shivshankar

Menon, formerly Foreign Secretary of India and presently Chair of the Centre for China Studies at Ashoka University.

RCSS Policy Study Probes the Role of New Technologies in Countering Non-Traditional Security Challenges in the Bay of Bengal Region



A study by the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) Non-Traditional Security in the "Bay of Bengal: Maritime Threats, Corrective Measures and Technological Innovations", has observed that the threat perimeter across the Bay of Bengal region - one of the world's most consequential maritime corridors, is undergoing a rapid and destabilising technological transformation, accelerating digitisation of maritime systems, from port operations and navigation to unmanned surveillance and AI-driven command architectures, which has dramatically expanded.

The latest in the 'RCSS Policy Studies' series - inaugurated in 1997 and recently revived, the study was authored by RCSS researchers Mr Shayan Peris, Ms Maheshi Thellamurage, Ms Chamika Wijesuriya, and RCSS external legal expert Ms Theshani Weligamage. It is supported by The Asia Foundation (TAF), launched at the RCSS Board Room in Colombo on 22 July 2026. The event, chaired by Ambassador (Retd.) Ravinatha Aryasinha, Executive Director of RCSS, was attended by diplomats, TAF officials, serving and retired government officials, academics, security practitioners and representatives of research institutes, civil society, and the media.

The study examines the growing range of transnational crime, economic and trade-related violations, environmental degradation and emerging technological threats affecting the Bay of Bengal region. It also assesses the capacity of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and other regional organisations including SAARC and other mechanisms to respond to these challenges, and draws reference to comparable regional bodies across the globe.

Click [here](#) to read more.

RCSS joins GPPAC Regional Conference in Kathmandu



The Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) led by Amb (Retd.) Ravinatha Aryasinha, Executive Director, participated in the Regional Conference and Youth Workshop on 'Climate, Peace, and Security' (CLIMPSE), hosted by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 25 - 30 June 2026. The conference led by the Netherlands based Executive Director of GPPAC, Mr Zahid Mövlazadə, brought together partners from across South Asia and the global partners working at the intersection of climate change, peace-building, and human security, with a purpose of sharing knowledge and narratives of community resilience. The discussions also focused on the prospects for regional cooperation for collective action.

Ms Chamika Wijesuriya, Research/Programme Officer of the RCSS also joined the Regional 'Youth Workshop' of GPPAC which provided a valuable platform for RCSS to share findings and lessons emerging from its field study "Empowering Estate Communities 'Post-Ditwah' for Climate and Disaster Resilience and Social Equity in Sri Lanka," drawing on data collected through two focus group discussions and key informant interviews conducted in Upcot, Nuwara Eliya with the Malaiyaha Tamil community, and the outcome of the multistakeholder forum held in Colombo on 5 June 2026 - in collaboration with the GPPAC (Sri Lanka) partners. The workshop brought together 16 young professionals, students, and youth aged 22-35 from across South Asia to examine the region's climate vulnerabilities and the role of youth and civil society in building resilience.

Click [here](#) to read more.

GPPAC Multistakeholder Forum at RCSS Highlights Climate-Disaster Vulnerability and Need for Community-Centred Solutions in Sri Lanka



A multistakeholder forum on 'Empowering Estate and Rural Communities for Climate and Disaster Resilience and Social Equity' convened at the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) in Colombo on 5 June 2026. The discussion revealed the inadequate infrastructure especially related to early warning, amplified community vulnerability far beyond the immediate disaster impact of cyclone 'Ditwah', and advocated for community-centred solutions.

This forum, initiated under the GPPAC Climate, Peace, and Security (CLIMPSE) project, was held in collaboration with GPPAC-Sri Lanka counterpart organisations; the National Peace Council (NPC), the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), Women & Media Collective (WMC), Viluthu - Centre for Human Resource Development, and the Association of War Affected Women (AWAW). It brought together policymakers, academics, civil society representatives, journalists, disaster risk management experts, and community members, which included a representation of women and youth from cyclone 'Ditwah' affected communities.

RCSS Executive Director Ambassador (Retd.) Ravinatha Aryasinha, who opened the forum, situated the deliberation within the broader CLIMPSE project, which lay at the intersections of climate change, disaster risk, social equity, and peacebuilding. He said Sri Lanka's contribution to this project had particular value, as it featured two recent case studies carried out by researchers from the RCSS and the NPC, which examined the aftermath of Cyclone 'Ditwah', which was identified as the second-deadliest disaster in Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami, affecting 2.3 million people and killing 639.

Click [here](#) to read more.

WISCOMP at the Youth Climate, Peace and Security Workshop and Regional Conference



WISCOMP participated in the South Asia Youth Workshop and the Regional Conference on Climate, Peace and Security: A Regional Conversation, held in Kathmandu, Nepal from June 25–30, 2026. The engagement was anchored in WISCOMP's standing as a member of the GPPAC South Asia Regional Steering Committee, and reflected the organisation's continuing commitment to bringing gender-just and locally grounded knowledge into regional conversations on climate, peace, and security.

The workshop was followed by the South Asia Regional Conference, held on June 29–30, 2026. Shilpi Shabdita, Assistant Director, represented WISCOMP at the conference which examined the role of dialogue, trust-building, and community knowledge systems in strengthening climate resilience. Shilpi's presentation foregrounded the revitalisation of indigenous and traditional epistemes as a foundation for epistemic justice in climate governance, arguing for approaches that recognise community and indigenous knowledge as central - not peripheral - to climate adaptation and peacebuilding outcomes.

Across the workshop and conference, WISCOMP engaged with a wide gathering of policymakers, diplomats, UN Women representatives, researchers, and civil society leaders from South Asia and beyond, including representatives from GPPAC's networks in Southern Africa, Latin and Central America, and Central Asia. The engagement reaffirmed WISCOMP's long-standing partnership with the GPPAC South Asia network and its continued commitment to advancing women's leadership, youth participation, and locally and indigenously grounded knowledge in the climate, peace, and security space.

Prithvi Darshana: Revitalising Indigenous Epistemes for Sustainable Futures



WISCOMP's symposium Prithvi Darshana: Revitalising Indigenous Epistemes for Sustainable Futures, held in collaboration with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), the India International Centre (IIC), and BML Munjal University at the IIC Annexe, New Delhi on 26th March 2026, was conceived not only as a climate-change event but as an invitation to rethink how climate change is understood, taught, and responded to in South Asian institutions of higher learning.

Bringing together seasoned scholars, young researchers, community practitioners, and students in an intergenerational dialogue, the symposium created a space that was intellectually rigorous, pedagogically imaginative, and grounded in the lived realities of communities on the frontlines of ecological crisis. Parallel to the discussions, the exhibition Dhānya-Vaividhya, a celebration of indigenous seed diversity, made visible the symposium's core argument: that sustainable futures must be rooted in indigenous epistemes and lived ecological wisdom, and that seeds are not merely agricultural inputs but archives of memory, resilience, and intergenerational care.

The event opened with the provocation that climate change is not only an environmental crisis but a crisis of knowledge, and that conventional academic responses are limited by binaries between university and field, expert knowledge and indigenous wisdom, and Northern science and Southern epistemologies. This framing was deepened by Prof Krishna Menon (Professor and former Dean, School of Human Studies, Dr B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi) and Prof Arindam Banerjee (Dean and Professor, School of Liberal Studies, BML Munjal University) and further enriched by the contributions of Dr Ruchira Das (Senior Associate Professor, Institute of Home Economics, DU), Dr Ranjana Das (Associate Professor, Ramjas

College, DU), Prof Anup Dhar (Professor of Philosophy, School of Liberal Studies, BML Munjal University), Dr Bhavya Chitranshi (Associate Research Fellow, Western Sydney University, Australia), Ashutosh Kumar (Doctoral Scholar, University of Groningen The Netherlands), Swarnima Kriti (Doctoral Scholar, Massey University New Zealand), Neeraj Kapoor (CEO FPO, Gurjia Charities), Shashi Shikha (Founder-Director, Kikaboni Living Pvt. Ltd.), Prof Shyam Menon (Vice Chancellor, BML Munjal University), and Dr Meenakshi Gopinath (Founder-Director, WISCOMP Life Trustee, IIC). Together, they demonstrated that the recovery of indigenous epistemes, the centrality of women's ecological knowledge, and the rethinking of climate pedagogy are not supplementary concerns but the structural heart of any adequate response to the climate crisis.

The symposium closed with a continued reflection, affirming WISCOMP's deepening commitment to the intersections of climate, conflict, and gender, and to the idea that peacebuilding in the twenty-first century is inseparable from how human communities relate to the Earth itself.

Seeking Peace, Speaking Peace: The WISCOMP Journey



WISCOMP's Silver Jubilee celebrations drew to a close with a warm and deeply reflective gathering at the India International Centre Annexe in New Delhi, bringing together friends, mentors, collaborators, and long-time supporters who have been integral to its 25-year journey. The event served as both a celebration of solidarity and a moment of collective remembrance, held in a month that also marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the UN Women, Peace and Security agenda—an agenda whose spirit has animated WISCOMP's work. The programme featured the release of a special film and a commemorative volume, *Peace Notes: Resonances from the Field*, that brought together the diverse voices, memories, and experiences that have shaped WISCOMP's journey. Throughout the gathering, there was a palpable sense of gratitude for the generosity, encouragement, and steadfast

support that have sustained WISCOMP across moments of growth as well as challenge, strengthening its resolve to continue fostering cultures of peace and coexistence in an increasingly embattled world.

Digital Security Training Workshop



In partnership with the Asia Centre, Google and the India International Centre, WISCOMP convened representatives from civil society organisations, students and educators from across schools and colleges in Delhi-NCR for an interactive training on

strengthening digital safety and building digital resilience. The training offered strategies for prevention and protection in the digital world. The training was facilitated by Sanjay Gathia, Program Manager, Asia Centre with special remarks by Dr James Gomez, Regional Director, Asia Centre.

Strengthening the IC for a Zero Tolerance Campus



WISCOMP facilitated a two-day workshop on Strengthening the IC for Zero Tolerance Campus: Strategies for Prevention, Support and Redressal at Government College for Women, M.A. Road Srinagar. The workshop

witnessed spirited engagement and rich discussion on issues of gender justice in higher education institutions of Kashmir, with an emphasis on the role of the Internal Committee under the POSH Act 2013. A dynamic group of educators from 24 different Government Degree colleges and higher senior secondary schools across the ten districts of the Valley participated in the workshop, along with young Gender Champions. As IC convenors in their respective institutes, the participants engaged in role plays and discussed myriad issues including free and informed consent; the wide spectrum of sexual harassment; unconscious bias; power dynamics in relationships; moving from victimhood to agency; lacunae in the law and conundrums; procedure and timelines for inquiry, reporting and documentation; among several others.

Centre of Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia (CSIS)

RCEP Forum 2026: "Strengthening RCEP: Issues and the Way Forward"



At RCEP Forum 2026 "Strengthening RCEP: Issues and the Way Forward", government officials, business representatives, researchers, and trade experts discussed RCEP implementation four years after its entry into force and priorities for the 2027 General Review.

The discussion highlighted the need to simplify trade procedures, including Rules of Origin, while keeping RCEP responsive to supply chain resilience and digital and green transitions.

The forum was co-organised by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Philippines and CSIS Indonesia, with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Industrial Policy for Good: Can Developing Countries Make It Work?

On 21 August 2026, the DfD Lab Lecture titled "Industrial Policy for Good: Can Developing Countries Make It Work?" was held at the Auditorium CSIS, Jakarta. The

lecture explored the re-emergence of industrial policy as a central instrument for economic transformation amid climate change, technological disruption, and growing geopolitical uncertainty.

The discussion explored what makes industrial policy work, including the importance of designing selective interventions that can create capabilities and companies that succeed over the medium to longer term, as well as understanding the constraints faced by the private sector.

The lecture featured Simon J. Evenett as the speaker, with opening remarks by Yose Rizal Damuri. The discussion also featured Mari Elka Pangestu and Shiro Armstrong as panelists and was moderated by Julia Tijaja.



DfD Lab Lecture and in-conversation Session with Professor Erik Voeten



CSIS Indonesia hosted a DfD Lab Lecture and in-conversation session with Prof Erik Voeten on "Great Power Competition

and the Politicisation of Energy Trade: Implications for Developing Countries."

The discussion explored how intensifying geopolitical competition is reshaping global energy trade and what these developments mean for developing countries navigating an increasingly fragmented international landscape.

A Knowledge Exchange Visit to Sweden



From 27–30 July 2026, CSIS Indonesia conducted a knowledge exchange visit to Sweden, engaging with the Swedish Election Authority, International IDEA, and the V-Dem Institute at the University of Gothenburg.

The visit provided an opportunity to exchange perspectives on democratic governance, with discussions focusing on political party financing, Sweden's approach to election administration, and the quantitative and qualitative measurement of democracy. Through these exchanges, the delegation gained insights into different approaches to strengthening democratic institutions and governance.