

LATEST NEWS

Since its launch in December 2016, the NTS-Asia Website has been successful in attracting many visitors. The aim of the NTS-Asia website is to promote Consortium members' activities and publications and be the hub for NTS knowledge-sharing in the region.

This issue is unique as we feature five researchers' profiles. The first two are researchers from Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences: Dr Nguyen Binh Giang, a Vice Director of Institute of World Economics and Politics who also serves as a Professor at the Graduate Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam; and – Mr Nghiem Tuan Hung, an Acting Head of Center for International Security and Strategy at Institute of World Economics and Politics. He also serves as a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of International Studies, Vietnam National University.

Two other researchers are from the SMERU Institute's. Mr Luhur Bima is a senior researcher at the Institute, and his research passion is on the quality of education in Indonesia. He believes that good and equal education is the key to alleviating poverty in the country. Ms Mayang Rizky is the young researcher at the SMERU Institute whose current research projects are centered on the issues of poverty and inequality.

The last researcher is Ruji Auethavornpipat, a PhD candidate at Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University. His PhD research investigates the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) policy on migrant worker rights protection. Partially funded by the ASEAN-UK Research and Impact Award, Ruji is currently an Asia Studies Visiting Fellow at the East-West Center in Washington DC. During his fellowship he is going to examine US-ASEAN cooperation on human trafficking.

We congratulate members of the Consortium for their successful past events. The SMERU Research Institute—supported by The Ford Foundation—launches the 2015 Indonesian Poverty and Livelihood Map on 18 April 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia. This map offers poverty estimates in all the villages/kelurahan in the country (more than 75,000 villages/kelurahan).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Regional Centre for Strategic Studies Activities (RCSS)

International Conference on “China in South Asia/South Asia in China: OBOR and the Sri Lankan Experience”
30 - 31 August 2017 | Kunming, China

Department of International Relations, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University

US-ASEAN Engagement on Human Trafficking: Assessing a Paradigm Shift
September 2017 | Washington, DC

International Society for Academic Research on Shamanism, in collaboration with Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences

Expanding Boundaries: Ethnicity, Materiality and Spirituality
1 - 4 December 2017 | Hanoi, Vietnam

Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

RSIS World Humanitarian Day
17 August 2017 | Singapore

Nuclear Safety and Security Culture: Powering Nuclear Governance in East Asia- RSIS Roundtable at the Singapore International Energy Week 2017
27 October 2017 | Singapore

Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) in Colombo, Sri Lanka, collaborated with Konrad Adenaur Stiftung (KAS), held a seminar on “Implications of Climate Change in South Asia: The Experience of Sri Lanka” on January 19, 2017. WISCOMP organized a three-day National Consultation on ‘Effective Intervention and Communication Strategies to Counter Violence Against Women’ on 28-30 November 2016, in New Delhi.

We also like to congratulate Centre for International Security Studies at the University of Sydney who have just been awarded a new US400,000 grant by the Carnegie Corporation of New York for their Project Q research.

This upcoming event shared by our member, might be of interest to your colleagues in the area. RCSS is going to organize a conference on “China in South Asia/South Asia in China: OBOR and the Sri Lankan Experience” on 30 – 31 August 2017 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. This conference is an endeavor to assess the implication of One Belt, One Road (OBOR) in South Asia region and especially in Sri Lanka.

We hope that you will enjoy this issue as we do, and we look forward to your positive feedback and contribution for the next one.



In this issue

- 1 LATEST NEWS
- 2 UPCOMING EVENTS
- 3 MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT
- 4 MEET THE EXPERT
- 5 YOUNG RESEARCHER PROFILE
- 6 REFLECTIONS
- 7 RECENT PUBLICATIONS
- 8 PAST EVENT SUMMARIES

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT



Members of the NTS-Asia Consortium were once again gathered in Singapore for the 2017 annual meeting held on 30–31 March. The 2017 meeting brought together members and friends of the NTS-Asia Consortium coming from 20 Asia-Pacific countries to discuss ways to strengthen the network and foster more meaningful collaborations. We are glad to share with you the main discussion points from the annual meeting. Four points of interest were discussed in the session: 1) NTS-Asia website, 2) research collaboration, 3) membership, and 4) the next NTS-Asia Consortium annual meeting.

The live and running NTS-Asia Website is the primary platform for the Consortium communication and outlet of publication.

The NTS-Asia Website is envisioned to be the one-stop centre for NTS issues. We would like to encourage members of the Consortium to submit entries to populate the website. During the meeting members have commended positively on the current content and recommended to further develop and improve it. Suggestions offered by members include: 1) to develop a case bank on success stories from members' projects and programmes and to archive files and materials related with NTS, 2) to populate the website with more short video commentaries. We hope that these suggestions can be materialised and members' active participation is key into making this a reality.

Several members also raised the need to

NEWSLETTER TEAM

SECRETARY GENERAL - Mely Caballero-Anthony
 RESEARCH FELLOW - Rini Astuti
 ASSOCIATE RESEARCH FELLOW - Margareth Sembiring
 DESIGNER - Joey Liang

revisit the categorisation of experts on the website, for example, by categorising them according to where they are based or subject of expertise. By the end of the session, it was agreed that each of the organisation would appoint a focal point to maintain flows of information. We would like to gently remind members of the Consortium who have yet to do so to inform Dr Rini Astuti (isrini@ntu.edu.sg) or Ms Margareth Sembiring (ismsembiring@ntu.edu.sg) of their respective contact person.

We are thrilled that the network is eager to foster more research collaborations. The previous partnership was shaped in cluster system and a new method for more efficient research collaboration is deemed necessary. Dr Jonathan Bogais, from the University of Sydney, suggested that research cluster can be developed based on a field study or a wider concept of interest with interdisciplinary approach in it. Additionally, Major General Rtd Muniruzzaman encouraged interested members to collaborate to write a research proposal and submit it to the Norwegian Government for potential research funding.

We are happy to welcome IRRI (International

Rice Research Institute) as the latest member of the Consortium. And as for the next NTS-Asia Consortium Annual meeting in 2018, Prof Yu Xiaofeng of Zhejiang University offered the possibility to host the gathering in Chengdu, China.

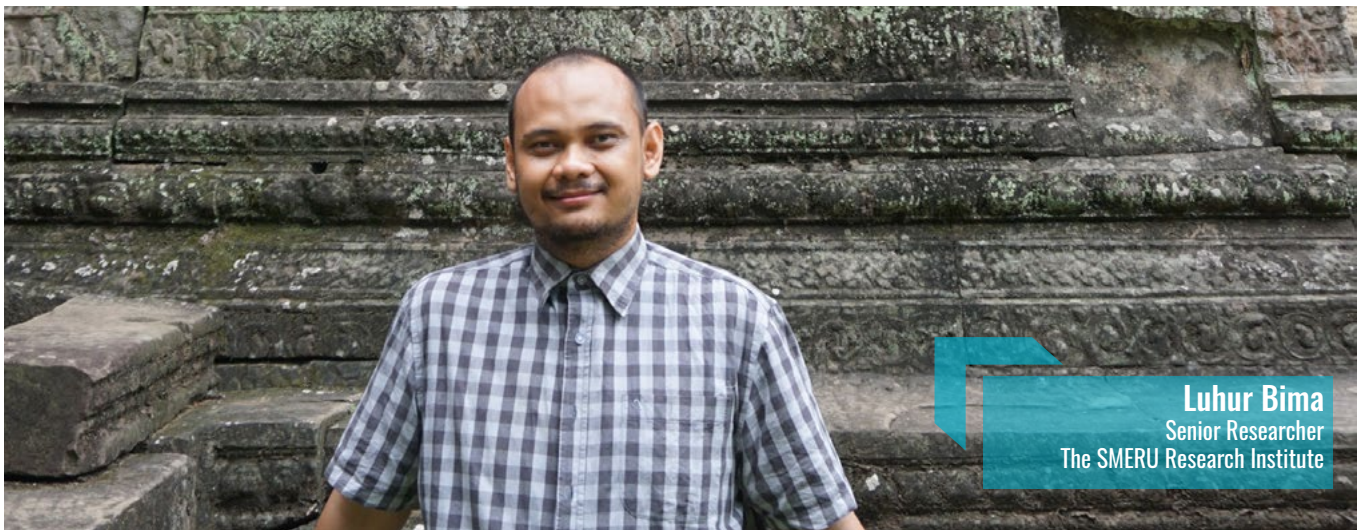
In his closing statement, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong of RSIS, stressed the importance of inviting and engaging the policy makers and the private sector in the next NTS-Asia

Consortium Conference. This will facilitate better dissemination of members' work and enable NTS research to have impacts on policy making in the region.

Warmest regards,
Mely Caballero-Anthony
Secretary-General
NTS-Asia Consortium Secretariat



MEET THE EXPERT **Luhur Bima**



Luhur Bima
Senior Researcher
The SMERU Research Institute

My memory goes back to the end of 2013 when I visited an elementary school in West Kalimantan. It took me about seven hours of road journey, 40 minutes of boat trip crossing the Kapuas River and another one and half hour of road journey through a palm oil plantation in order to reach the school. When I arrived there. I observed that there were only two classes which had a teacher giving a lesson inside the classroom. I was informed that the principal of that school was frequently absent from the school; the reason was that he preferred to work at home because there is no electricity at the school. Nevertheless, I also later on learnt that some other factors such as weak monitoring by the district office of education and the distance between school and principal's house influenced his decision to be absent from the school.

The absence of teachers and principals from school also exists in many other places in Indonesia, particularly in remote areas. According the latest survey, teacher absence rate in Indonesia is 10.7% (See ACPD report on Study on Teacher Absenteeism in Indonesia 2014). The

good news is that the national absence rate declined in the last couple of years. Moreover, the rate is relatively low, compared with other developing countries such as Senegal (18%), Ecuador (14%) and India (25%) (Chaudury et al, 2006; Kimenyi & Routman, 2013).

However, the bad news is that a decrease in teacher absence rate does not automatically mean an improvement in learning process. All elements in the systems of education should be coherent across system in all levels in order to have significant impact on the learning outcomes of student (Pritchett, 2015). All stakeholders in the sector of education should have the same perception on the concept of education systems coherence in order to make the effort in improving student's learning more effectively.

Another issue in the education sector is that everyone in general may agree that better education will promote higher children's wellbeing, both in their current and future life. Nevertheless, education policy discourses, particularly in developing

countries are still stressed in input, process and outputs instead of life experiences and outcomes (Thin, 2009). Therefore, it is a big challenge for everyone who concerns with children's wellbeing to influence policy makers in order to have policies that can improve wellbeing through better quality of education.

Since I graduated from my master program at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, I have worked for SMERU and have involved in various researches, including some studies on basic education. My involvement in those studies raises my passion to do more researches on education in as my contribution to a better quality of education in my country. I have a strong believe that improving education system will increase the wellbeing of my future generation.

MEET THE EXPERT

Mr. Shafqat Munir

Human trafficking has been at the top of agenda for the Thai government since 2014 when the storm of criticisms highlighted poor working conditions and forced labour among migrant workers in Thailand. The issue has been met with a swift response from the Thai government and numerous legislative reforms in the past few years.

In the most recent example, citing “unavoidable urgencies” in maintaining “national or public safety [and] national economic security,” the government passed the Royal Ordinance on Foreign Workers Management. This new law came in effect on June 23, 2017 and imposes severe penalties for both employers and migrant workers. While the former can be fined up to \$24,000 for each undocumented migrant, the latter can be jailed for up to 5 years and/or fined up to \$3,000.

Although this new law is also officially viewed as a measure to tackle human



Mr. Shafqat Munir
Research Fellow
Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies (BIPSS)

trafficking, it has led to unintended consequences, which civil society organizations perceive as a “drama” in Thai policies, creating chaos and confusion.

Particularly, it results in a mass movement of irregular migrants, with the figures varying from 2,000 to 8,000 migrants who already fled Thailand within a week. It is further reported that employers have abandoned migrant workers, leaving them to return home on their own. Labour shortage concerns are also emerging.

The government is now backtracking from such policy by invoking Article 44 of the Interim Charter that bestows absolute power to the government and giving 120 days before the punishment applies.

It is of utmost importance Thai policies on migrant workers are devoid of complication. Otherwise, it would only motivate migrants and their employers to eschew legal channels, hence further driving them into smuggling networks and irregular migration where migrants can easily become victims of trafficking.

MEET THE EXPERT **Dr Nguyen, Binh Giang**



Dr Nguyen, Binh Giang
Vice Director
Institute of World Economics and
Politics, Vietnam Academy of Social

Dr Nguyen Binh Giang is currently a vice director of Institute of World Economics and Politics – a member institution of Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. He also serves as a professor at the Graduate Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam.

Dr Giang’s research interests include global value chain, production networks, water security and sustainable development, labor mobility, migrant workers, economic impacts of climate changes, and especially workers’ rights in industrial zones. He was a leader of the bilateral project between Vietnam and Japan “Social impacts of industrial zones and export processing zones”, studying working conditions

and gender inequality within industrial zones, social security-related issues and environmental effects on surrounding communities. In addition, since 2013 he has been an editor of annual reports on world economy and polity which reviews global economic performance and political matters such as conflicts, wars and non-traditional security issues. He was also involved in the national research project “Water resource for growth and sustainable development: Cases study of Israel, Egypt, Zimbabwe and lessons learned for Vietnam” and “The impacts of global climate changes: policy responses of some nations and lessons for Vietnam”...

YOUNG RESEARCHER PROFILE

Mayang Rizky

I am a researcher at the SMERU Research Institute, Jakarta, Indonesia. I completed my master degree in Behavioural Economics at the University of Nottingham, England. Prior to joining SMERU, I worked at the Demographic Institute at the Faculty of Economics University of Indonesia while completing my undergraduate thesis. It was the time when I realised I do have a passion on research, specifically on development issues.

For me, doing research is not just being critical to the situation but also stimulating us on how to contribute solving the problems using creative thinking and



Mayang Rizky
Researcher at The SMERU Research Institute

analytical skills given the limited resources and possible opportunities. Not only shaped my research paths and interests, joining SMERU enable me to contribute to solve the development problems faced by Indonesia through its research projects. My current research projects are on poverty and inequality: an update of poverty estimates down to the village

level in the interval between censuses and the role of good governance in reducing inequality. Both research projects aim to contribute to the improvement of current data of poverty and inequality, and use it to provide different perspectives of policies to reduce poverty and inequality in Indonesia, through non-economic factors.

YOUNG RESEARCHER PROFILE

Ruji Auethavornpipat

Ruji is completing his doctoral studies at the Department of International Relations, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University (ANU). His PhD thesis examines the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) policy on migrant worker rights protection. It traces the emergence of migrant worker rights norms and looks at the socialization process in Southeast Asia. In particular, it seeks to explain the divergence of national policies despite the convergence at the regional level. This study moves beyond the debate between ASEAN skeptics and ASEAN boosters that centres on the impact of the ASEAN Way norms such as non-interference and consensus-based decision-making. It further contributes to the current constructivist literature on norms, which interrogates scope conditions for divergence in socialization. As such, his PhD project sheds a new light on the diverging policy implementation



Ruji Auethavornpipat
Department of International Relations, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University

that points out the limited explanatory power of the "traditional" analysis based on the ASEAN Way.

Ruji is currently an Asia Studies Visiting Fellow at the East-West Center in Washington, DC where he is conducting a pilot project investigating US-ASEAN cooperation on human trafficking. This study investigates regional cooperation on anti-trafficking, based on the "3P" framework – prosecution, protection and prevention. It closely examines the role of the US government in creating policies for anti-labour trafficking, especially among migrant workers in Southeast Asia. This project is supported by the East-West Center and partially funded by the ASEASUK Research and Impact Award from

the Association of Southeast Asian Studies in the United Kingdom.

From October 2017, Ruji will be a Visiting Doctoral Fellow based at the Bamberg Graduate School of Social Sciences (BAGSS), University of Bamberg, Germany.

He has published an article assessing ASEAN cooperation on migrant workers rights protection in *Global Change, Peace & Security*. He has also contributed to shaping public perception on human trafficking policies in Southeast Asia in *New Mandala*. He previously was a Visiting Researcher at the ASEAN Studies Centre, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore and Centre for Strategic and Security Studies (CSIS), Jakarta, Indonesia.

YOUNG RESEARCHER PROFILE

Nghiem Tuan Hung



Nghiem Tuan Hung
Acting Head
Center for International Security
and Strategy, Institute of World
Economics and Politics Sciences

Mr Nghiem Tuan Hung is currently an Acting Head of Center for International Security and Strategy at Institute of World Economics and Politics. Mr Nghiem Tuan Hung holds the Bachelor's and Master's degree in International Relations from Vietnam National University – Ha Noi, and he is going to finish his PhD dissertation. Additionally, he is a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of International Studies, Vietnam National University. As a senior research fellow, Mr Nghiem Tuan Hung has taken part in several key national research projects on conflicts, regional security architecture, defence and non-traditional security matters. He is also the member

of Vietnam's Network of International Relations Research.

Mr Nghiem Tuan Hung's research interests include dominant international relations theories as well as new theoretical approaches which can be used in security and strategic studies. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is the issue which he concerns the most. Meanwhile, he also concentrates on newly emerging aspect of security studies or non-traditional security issues including international migration and the responses of Vietnam to those new challenges.

REFLECTIONS

Transmission of Risk and Trust

Preferences: Does Parent Matter?

By Mayang Rizky (The SMERU Research Institute)

Risk-taking and trusting often represented as two forms of individual attitude related to preferences and beliefs. Willingness to take risk is important since economic decisions involve uncertainty, and willingness to trust others is critical as it determines the way individuals approach social interaction. Apart from its importance in economic decision-making process, often the endowment of the two is taken for granted. Several existing literatures suggest that parents play an important role in shaping individual preferences and beliefs. Scaglioni et al. (2008) and Ngai et al. (2013) found that there is a need for parental roles in building preferences for children's nutritional behaviour as well as for friendship networks during transition from child- to adult-hood. If parents really do matter, the transmission process of attitudes from parents to children becomes the key to producing a better generation.

Following a study in Germany (Dohmen et al., 2012), I also borrowed a model in cultural transmission as the theoretical foundation for this empirical investigation on attitude transmission in Indonesia. The measures of risk and trust preferences are derived from the elicited preferences of children and parents in the Indonesian Family Life



Survey (IFLS). The study found that parents do transmit risk and trust preferences to their children. It is also influenced by the preferences in the community and the shared similarity within parent. Although both father and mother are shown to have a significant influence on their children, the share of magnitudes among them differ between preferences and across contexts. Fathers tend to matter more in the transmission of risk preferences while mothers in the area of trust. Even within trust preference, mothers matter more in the context of generalised trust while fathers in the particularised trust.

Is this socialisation or genetics that play a role in the transmission channel? Without eliminating the possible effect of genetics,

the findings so far indicate that there could be a role of socialisation. Finding from the role of preference in the community might explain this socialisation effect. The tendency of fathers to be more influential in risk while mothers in trust preference and fathers in particularised while mothers in generalised trust could be also an indication that they have unequal share of socialisation regarding the aspect of preference. Careful assessment of parenting style patterns, particularly with respect to risk-taking and trust behaviour will be a crucial next step in the development of a better future generation.

REFLECTIONS

Thailand's new migrant worker policy is a step onto uncertain ground

By Ruji Auethavornpipat (PhD Candidate in the Department of International Relations, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, The Australian National University.)

Since 2014, Thailand's coup-led government has prioritised eliminating human trafficking, especially among migrant workers. This renewed attention has been in direct response to a storm of international criticism aimed at the poor working conditions suffered by migrant workers. So far, the government has responded with hasty action and a number of legislative changes.

Thailand's most recent move on migrant worker policy — the Royal Ordinance on Foreign Workers Management — has been a debacle. While not a complete failure, a shift in policymaking is needed.

Coming into effect on 23 June 2017, Thailand's government cited 'unavoidable urgencies' in preserving 'national economic security' as the reason behind the Royal Ordinance. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha further explained that the new law is necessary for Thailand to live up to its international commitment on human trafficking.

The Royal Ordinance has made progress in this regard through Article 49, which states that labour recruitment processes cannot incur any fees on migrant workers. This Article is consistent with the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) standards. If enforced, Article 49 could be a powerful tool to address the problem of debt bondage — an undefined period of labour services as security for a debt — among migrants.

Despite some progress, the new Royal Ordinance has had unintended consequences. The new law has created chaos and confusion in the management of migrant workers.

Due to the abrupt nature of the policy change, both employers and migrant workers were confronted with new severe penalties overnight. Employers can be fined a maximum of 800,000 baht (US\$23,800) for each undocumented migrant, while workers can be jailed for up to 5 years or fined up to 100,000 baht (US\$3000), or both.

These overnight changes sparked an exodus of migrant workers similar to 2014, when the government announced a crackdown on irregular migrants. In the week of 23–28 June 2017, reports suggest that approximately 60,000



migrants fled Thailand. Employers have also attempted to avoid penalties by laying off and abandoning at least 500 migrants, leaving them to find their own way home despite just arriving in Thailand. Migrant worker advocates are also concerned migrant extortion could rise as laid off workers journey home.

This recent development has triggered mixed reactions and grave concerns among the private sector. In the wake of the exodus, a labour shortage is looming in the agriculture, construction, service and seafood industries — the sectors also hardest hit by the new Royal Ordinance.

To reverse the crisis, the government is now backtracking from the policy by invoking Article 44 of the Interim Charter, issuing a 180 day grace period to employers and migrants to comply with the new law before penalties will be enforced.

This latest episode of the migrant worker 'drama' reveals Thailand's outdated, top-down, security-driven approach in managing labour migration. The presence of migrant workers is often viewed as the cause of Thailand's communicable diseases, environmental degradation and rising crime rate. As noted by the ILO, Thailand's security-driven outlook places heavy emphasis on the admission process, the suppression of irregular migration and employment and the repatriation of workers. As a result, the protection of migrants is a marginal concern and often in contradiction to preserving Thailand's national security.

This trend of management is no longer feasible, as migrant labour is vital to Thailand's labour-

intensive economy. Thailand is fast becoming an ageing society with a rapidly declining fertility rate. Thailand's workforce is expected to decrease by 11 per cent by 2040 — a rate higher than any other developing country in East Asia.

Thailand needs migrant workers now more than ever. The welfare of migrant workers should not be considered as a national security concern, but rather central to the wellbeing of Thailand and its economy. A well-documented ILO study has found that migrant workers positively contribute to Thailand's productivity.

It is time for a shift in policymaking away from a security-driven approach. Policymakers can start by reconsidering Article 15 of the Royal Ordinance, which authorises the Minister of Interior to confine the residence of migrants to particular zones. Thailand's policies — whether it be the registration program, memorandum of understanding agreement or nationality verification — also need to be simpler, inexpensive and accessible for migrants. Otherwise, Thailand's policies will continue to drive migrant workers into irregular migration that relies on smuggling networks, making them vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking.

Put simply, Thailand's policy should be 'migrant worker friendly'.

Thailand cannot afford any more complications in the management of migrant workers. During the given 180-day grace period, policymakers need to widely consult relevant stakeholders and reach out to both employers and migrant workers with extensive information campaigns on further changes. This will help prevent further debacles in Thailand's migrant worker policy.

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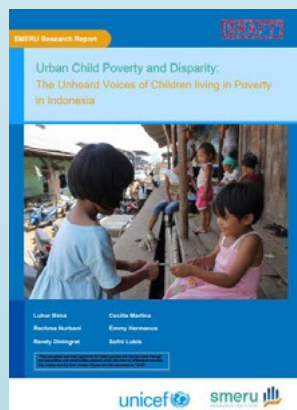
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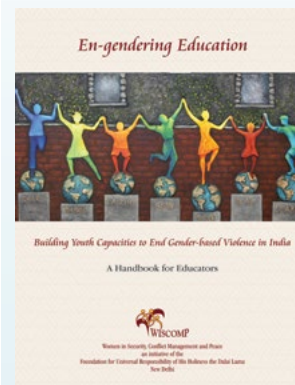
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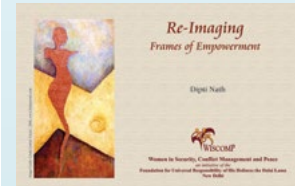
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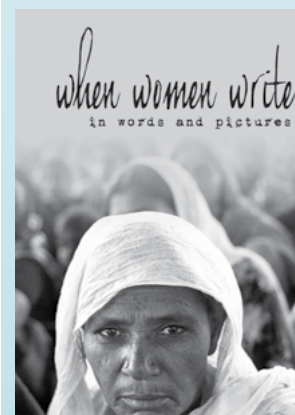
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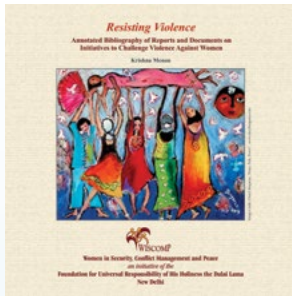
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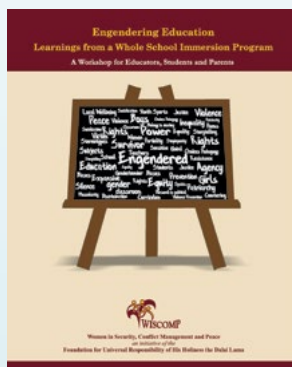
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PAST EVENT SUMMARIES

The SMERU INSTITUTE



Discussion Series "Understanding Sources of and Finding Solutions to Reduce Inequality

5, 9 & 23 May 2017

Jakarta, Indonesia

In effort to take policy discussions to another level to formulate policy options to reduce inequality and to prepare ourselves for the 2017 Indonesia Development Forum (IDF), The SMERU Research Institute—with the support from Knowledge Sector

Initiative of DFAT—held a discussion series on “Understanding Sources of and Finding Solutions to Reduce Inequality”. The event was aimed at building an understanding on factors that affect economic development and the dynamics of inequality in Indonesia. There were two roundtable discussions in the series, in which SMERU presented its study results. Each presentation was then followed by responses and discussions involving 30 participants from government institutions, academics, and

nongovernmental organizations.

The first part of the discussion series, held on 9 May 2017, was on “The Dynamics of Economic Development and Inequality in Rural Areas”. The theme was chosen because economic development and welfare improvement of rural community are still regarded as critical issues in Indonesia’s current development agenda. The discussion was particularly aimed at highlighting the dynamics of economic

growth and inequality in rural areas, in the context of both rural-urban relations and rural development. The second part of the discussion series, held on 23 May 2017, was on “Finding New Evidence of Sources of Inequality in Indonesia”. The discussion centered on factors that contribute to the dynamics—increase and reduction—of monetary inequality, measured by expenditure inequality.

Focus Group Discussion “Shaping a Disability-Inclusive Development in Indonesia”

26 May 2017

Jakarta, Indonesia

In effort to support public policy formulation to accelerate disability-inclusive development in Indonesia, The SMERU Research Institute—with the support from Knowledge Sector Initiative of DFAT—is conducting a preliminary (desk) study titled “Barriers to Disability-Inclusive Development in Indonesia”. It is expected to give an initial picture of the conditions and progress in relation to what has been done to shape a disability-inclusive development and to provide feedback to public policymakers and further research. On 26 May 2017, SMERU held a focus group discussion aimed at exploring the perspectives of various stakeholders regarding recent conditions in relation to what has been done to shape a disability-



inclusive development in Indonesia. It was attended by representatives from government institutions, academia, and nongovernmental organizations. There were three resource persons who explained about government policy, conditions of people with disability, and lessons learned from fostering disability-inclusive

development. The results of this discussion are expected to provide early feedback to the study, especially on identifying barriers to shaping disability-inclusive development, and to priority strategy formulation.

Institute of World Economics and Politics, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences

Taking on Inequality: World Bank’s Report on Poverty and Shared Prosperity

20 June, 2017

Hanoi, Vietnam

On a visit of World Bank’s senior specialists in Hanoi, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences in collaboration with World Bank held an international conference focusing on sharing experiences on ending extreme poverty, shared prosperity and taking on inequality. The aim is to learn lessons from international experiences on poverty alleviation and discuss policy implications for sustainable development in Vietnam. The

specialists indicated the current situation of extreme poverty, shared prosperity and income gap in the globe; and success stories of Brazil, Cambodia, Mali, Peru and Tanzania in the fight against inequality.

China’s foreign strategy since the beginning of the 21st century: From historical and theoretical perspectives

29 June, 2017

Hanoi, Vietnam

The seminar on China’s strategies is held bimonthly by the Institute of World Economics and Politics in collaboration with

Vietnam Institute for Economic and Policy Research, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. The latest seminar focused on China’s foreign policy in the 21st century from the historical and theoretical perspectives. As a rising power, every China’s move strongly affects the international and regional system. Chinese traditional ideologies and modern leaders’ thought are foundation for China’ foreign policy in the early 21st century. The main features of China’s foreign policy in the 21st century and domestic factors which influence the making of foreign policy were presented and debated by senior scholars in the seminar.



President BIPSS goes to RSIS as Visiting Senior Fellow

17 January, 2017
Singapore

President BIPSS Major General A N M Muniruzzaman (Retd.) was invited by S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Singapore as a Visiting Senior Fellow to deliver lectures and seminars at their Non Traditional Security Centre. He also interacted and advised the faculty of the RSIS's programme on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). He delivered two seminars titled "Soldiers as Humanitarians –The Role of the Military in HADR Operations" and "The Digital Age of

Humanitarian Aid –Harnessing the Power of Technology for HADR Operations" at RSIS which were attended by members of the faculty, senior officials from different ministries of the government of Singapore, media, diplomats and others.

General Muniruzzaman was also invited by the National Security Coordination Secretariat (NSCS) at the Prime Minister's Office to give a brief on regional security. He attended a briefing meeting at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) in Singapore. Major General A N M Muniruzzaman is authoring a policy brief on the Impact of Technology on HADR Operations which will soon be published by RSIS in Singapore.

BIPSS hosts its joint seminar with KAS on "Security Implications of Climate Change: Focus on Bangladesh."

23 January, 2017



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) with the collaboration of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) of Germany held a seminar on 'Security Implications of Climate Change: Focus on Bangladesh.' The keynote presentation was made by Professor Abu Zayed Mohammed, Research Fellow, BIPSS and the session was moderated by President BIPSS Major General ANM Muniruzzaman (retd), the seminar was also addressed by Dr. Peter Hefele, Director, Regional Project, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and Ms. Ina F Islam, Assistant Director, ICCCAD, IUB.

President BIPSS was invited by the Dutch Defence Minister as a Keynote speaker in the Future Force Conference in the Hague

9 February, 2017

President BIPSS Major General Muniruzzaman (retd.) was invited by Mr. J.A Hennis-Plasschaert Defense Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as a Keynote speaker in the Future Force Conference in

the Hague. This major security conference organised by the Dutch Defence Ministry was attended by ministers, senior military leaders and policy makers from over 60 countries.

The conference looked at future scenarios of security and conflict. President BIPSS in his keynote address on "Emerging Threat Landscape: Implications for Global Stability and Security Ecosystem" focused on the hybrid nature of the evolving threats specially in the context of climate change impacts. He also gave a talk at a breakout session on "Resource Conflict", touching on the emerging competition and conflict over scarcity of key resources.



A Security Outlook for Bangladesh in 2017- A BIPSS E-Publication

10 February, 2017

Security forecasting is a key area for BIPSS. Recently BIPSS has conducted a security overview for Bangladesh in 2017 and has identified a number of issues to watch.

BIPSS hosted a Roundtable on "Iraq and the Middle East: the Emerging Politico – Security Landscape"

14 February, 2017
Singapore



On February 14, 2017, Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies hosted a Roundtable on "Iraq and the Middle East: the Emerging Politico – Security Landscape." The keynote presentation was delivered by Mr. Konstantinos Vardakis, Minister Counselor and Deputy Head, the European Union Delegation to Bangladesh.

The discussion was led by an in-depth look at the history of the region as well as the implications for the US, EU, the adjoining Middle Eastern countries and international system.

Notable dignitaries from respective institutions were present in the roundtable. The presentation was followed by an engaging question and answer session. The Institute hopes this seminar has initiated a greater conversation on the dynamic Security climate in the Middle East.

BIPSS hosted a seminar on “Entering the World of Nuclear Energy: Key Security Issues for Bangladesh”

22 February, 2017

On February 22, 2017, Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies (BIPSS) hosted a seminar on “Entering the World of Nuclear Energy: Key Security Issues for Bangladesh” at Hotel Six Seasons. The keynote presentation was delivered by Dr. Petr Topychkanov, Fellow, Carnegie Moscow Center’s Nonproliferation Program.

The presentation included critical issues of Nuclear Security, Risks and Opportunities Associated with Nuclear Energy, and Cybersecurity Issues.



53rd Munich Security Conference

25 February, 2017

Singapore



Mr. Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow at BIPSS recently attended the 53rd Munich Security Conference as part of the Munich Young Leaders programme. He is the first Munich Young Leader from Bangladesh. Mr. Munir was selected to be a part of the 25 member Munich Young Leaders, Class of 2017. Convened jointly by the Munich Security Conference and Körber-Stiftung, the Munich Young Leaders program provides a forum for future decision-makers to strengthen their international networks and inspire new thinking. The 2017 group consisted of young parliamentarians, journalists, academics, think tank professionals, civil servants and parliamentary staff members from over 20 countries.

A Decade of Discovery – 10 years of critical and innovative analysis at BIPSS

1 March, 2017

It was 10 years ago today that we started this auspicious journey. It has been a long and eventful endeavour as we complete the first decade of BIPSS! We would like to thank

our amazing team and all our partners who have made it possible to establish BIPSS as the ‘Go To’ security Think Tank not only in Bangladesh but in the South Asian region! The journey has just begun and we wish to go many more miles in the coming years.

Conference of the Consortium of South Asian Think Tanks (COSATT) in Kathmandu, Nepal

6 March, 2017

Nepal



Mr. Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow at BIPSS recently spoke at the Conference of the Consortium of South Asian Think Tanks (COSATT) in Kathmandu, Nepal. COSATT is an important epistemic network of think tanks from all 8 SAARC member countries. BIPSS is a founding member of COSATT and has been closely involved with the network from its inception.

The recently held conference examined the issue of ‘Youth Radicalisation in South Asia’. At the conference, Mr. Munir spoke at the inaugural session on ‘Understanding Youth Radicalisation through Cyberspace’. The conference was attended by representatives of COSATT members, members of the diplomatic community, civil society representatives, senior armed

forces and Armed Police Force officers and government officials from Nepal.

Under the auspices of Bangladesh Centre for Terrorism Research (BCTR), BIPSS undertakes rigorous research and analysis on all aspects of Countering Violent Extremism. BCTR is also looking at the interplay between Cybersecurity and Violent Extremism.

Conference on Countering Violent Extremism: Building Resilience & Capacity

8 March 2017



On March 8, 2017, Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies (BIPSS) organised a day long national conference on Countering Violent Extremism: Building Resilience & Capacity. The conference begun with BIPSS President Major General ANM Muniruzzaman, highlighting the need for strong policies regarding CVE here in Bangladesh: key areas of focus being: Narrative, Youth, Prison and Cyberspace.

The keynote presentation was delivered by the Associate Editor, Defence & Strategic Affairs, for The Daily Star Brig. General Shahedul Anam Khan on “Countering the Extremist Narrative.” H.E. Benoit-Pierre Laramee, High Commissioner to the High Commission of Canada in Bangladesh graced the event as the Chief Guest.

Workshop on Countering Violent Extremism: Building Resilience & Capacity.

28 to 30 March, 2017

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) under the auspices of its specialised centre -- Bangladesh Centre for Terrorism Research (BCTR), organised a three day National Workshop titled "Countering Violent Extremism (CVE): Building Resilience and Capacity", from the 28th to 30th of March 2017. The workshop incorporated participants from multiple stakeholders, including first responders, law enforcement & security agencies, paramilitary forces, media personnel, civil society associates, youth representatives and so on. The event is part of a series of capacity and awareness building interventions that BIPSS and BCTR will be undertaking over a multi-year period, supported by the Government of Canada.

The conference began with the President of BIPSS, Major General ANM Muniruzzaman (retd.) highlighting the need for comprehensive awareness of CVE here in Bangladesh. The first presentation for Day 1 was delivered by Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow, BIPSS & BCTR, on "CVE: A Primer". The following presentation was made by Chiran



Jung Thapa, an independent Security and Defense Analyst on "Violent Extremism: Understanding the Threat Landscape."

Day 2 consisted of a thought-invoking presentation by Syed Zain Al Mahmood, who covers Bangladesh and other South Asian regional news for The Wall Street Journal, on "The Role of Media in CVE" and another on "Cyber Radicalisation" by Sameer Patil, Fellow, National Security Studies & Director, Centre for International Security, Gateway House.

All presentations featured engaging Q/A sessions. For Day 3, a tabletop exercise kicked

off the morning, that created an interactive discussion on the various aspects of #CVE from a nuanced participatory demographic, ranging from groups discussing Media to Cyber.

The event concluded with a certificate awarding ceremony, where the participants were honoured for their involvement by H.E. Benoit-Pierre Laramee, High Commissioner of Canada in Bangladesh, who graced the event as the Chief Guest with Professor Abu Zayed Mohammad, Research Fellow at BIPSS, giving the vote of thanks.

Roundtable on "News and Fake News: Reporting in the Era of Post Truth"

25 May, 2017

Dhaka, Bangladesh



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) conducted a roundtable on "News and Fake News: Reporting in the Era of Post Truth". The keynote presentation was delivered by Syed Zain Al-Mahmood, Executive Editor, United News Bangladesh and Correspondent, The Wall Street Journal. The roundtable was chaired by the president of BIPSS, ANM Muniruzzaman.

The roundtable included diplomats, media personnel, and various stakeholders. Discussion and Q&A session were held on the issue of fake news and how reporting in the era of post truth has become more challenging.

Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace, India. (WISCOMP)



Effective intervention & communication strategies to counter violence against women: a national consultation

28 - 30 November, 2016

New Delhi

WISCOMP organized a three-day National Consultation on 'Effective Intervention and Communication Strategies to Counter Violence Against Women' on 28-30 November 2016, New Delhi. The Consultation brought together over 120 participants to review the work undertaken across multiple platforms by various actors including policymakers, police officers, academics, NGOs, youth groups, men's

collectives, women activists, creative artists, and media professionals towards changing attitudes and behavior on violence against women (following the Criminal Law Amendment Act 2013).

It mapped and assessed the impact of communication and intervention strategies to counter violence against women, foregrounding how issues around masculinities and femininities have been addressed. The first two days provided a platform for dialogue on best practices and lessons learnt at the national level, drawing also from regional and international experiences. On the third day of the Consultation, participants generated a

set of recommendations for policymakers and practitioners in the government and civil society sectors on equality and the prevention of violence against women.

Book discussion: women at war

1 February, 2017

New Delhi



On 1 February 2017, WISCOMP partnered with Carnegie India, Harper Collins and India International Centre to discuss Vera Hildebrand's book titled 'Women at War: Subhas Chandra Bose and Rani of Jhansi Regiment'. Ms. Ritu Menon, Dr. Babli Moitra Saraf, Ms. Sagari Chhabra and Dr. Ujjayini Ray presented their insights on the book. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Rita Manchanda. The discussion was attended by over 45 researchers from the NCR region.

WISCOMP SAAHAS AWARDS 2017 Recognizing Heroes of Courage & Release of Training and Curriculum Package

16 March, 2017

New Delhi



WISCOMP organized the Saahas Awards Ceremony on March 16, 2017 in New Delhi to honor the courage of extraordinary men, women and transgender persons who actively stood up against violence against women in their own lives & those of others; and they continue to advocate for equality and social justice. The seven Heroes of Courage who were felicitated were selected through a competitive process initiated by WISCOMP. They come from diverse geographical contexts and also belong to 'resource-poor' spaces. WISCOMP also honored feminist activist, poet & author Kamla Bhasin for her outstanding contributions to the promotion of gender

justice & equality with the Shero of Courage Award.

At the WISCOMP Saahas Award Ceremony, an innovative and path-breaking training and curriculum package developed by WISCOMP was also released. This package is especially designed to encourage individuals to think of ways in which they can incorporate meaningful changes into their daily lives to effect positive societal transformation. The package consists of:

- En-gendering Education: Building Youth Capacities to End gender-Based Violence in India is an educators' handbook which consists of training modules designed to build capacities of teenagers and young adults to counter gender-based discrimination and violence. It is a learning-cum-doing resources, which school and college educators as well as facilitators and practitioners can use to initiate workshops with participants in the 14-30 age group.

- When Women Write...In Words and Pictures, curated by Tulika Srivastava and Ridhima Mehra is a unique digitalized mobile Exhibition-in-a-Box on an intersectional understanding of the diversity of women's experiences and the contexts in which they unfold. It has been designed as a tool for advocacy and educational projects.

- Re-Imaging Frames of Empowerment: Changing Contours of Gender Equality in the Visual Media in India is one-of-a-kind multimedia exploration, collation, and analysis of the altered discourses within Indian media on the issue of VAW. It foregrounds the significant changes in audio-visual media messages—especially advertisements and public service announcements—following the rape and murder of Jyoti Singh in 2012 in New Delhi, which lead to the Criminal Law Amendment Act 2013.

- Resisting Violence is an annotated bibliography of a diverse and representative set of reports, handbooks, guides, and documents, which address the issues of violence against women and girls from diverse settings and backgrounds. The resources range from studies commissioned by governments, police departments, city councils, university regulatory bodies, and media houses to reports and toolkits designed by international organizations, local NGOs and civil society groups.

- Saahas Ke Chaar Adhyay: Profiles in Courage, directed by Sania Hashmi and Mohan Kumavat is a deeply moving film

honoring 'heroes of courage' (WISCOMP Saahas Award Applicants) who took action to counter Gender-Based Violence in India. It records the life, struggle and ultimate triumph of four outstanding individuals from diverse backgrounds and different parts of India who braved great odds—such as intimate partner violence, domestic violence, discrimination at the workplace and patriarchal mindsets; to finally reclaim their sense of agency.

Echoes and resonances: critical challenges for youth and peace building in kashmir

23 March, 2017

New Delhi



WISCOMP brought together over 40 academicians, policy makers, civil society and grassroots activists for a one-day Consultative Dialogue titled, 'Echoes and Resonances: Critical Challenges for Youth and Peace Building in Kashmir' on 23 March 2017. In the context of United Nations Security Council Resolution on Youth, Peace and Security, the dialogue focused on the possibilities of engaging with youth for peacebuilding in the region. Some of the important questions that were raised included: How to bring forth young voices from Kashmir and acknowledge their lived experiences? How youth positively respond and transcend to the existing cycles of violence while living it in these contexts? How does this violence impact young men and women differently? If so, how do we bring to the fore herstory and how does it change the understanding of victimhood and agency? How do we move forward in ways that provide alternative spaces for constructive relationship building and just peace? How does education, art and other creative mediums become an alternative space for resistance, expression and peacebuilding in Kashmir? The dialogue brought on the table the opportunities and challenges for youth and peacebuilding in Kashmir, and the possibilities to address it.

Seminar on “Implications of Climate Change in South Asia: The Experience of Sri Lanka”

19 January 2017

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Organised by Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Colombo, Sri Lanka and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Hong Kong, a seminar on “Implications of Climate Change in South Asia: The Experience of Sri Lanka” was held on January 19, 2017 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Recently, RCSS has been working with KAS on a publication called “Energy Security and Climate Change in South Asia: A Threat Analysis for Sri Lanka” in which RCSS research team have contributed research articles on cross-cutting issues related to climate change: renewable energy; disaster management; and gender. The seminar was organized to present the articles and generate a discussion on the topics and create interest among the participants to research more into the thematic areas of discussion.

Workshop on ‘Radicalization in the Levant, North Africa and South Asia’

14 - 16 February 2017

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Colombo, Sri Lanka, February 14 to 16, 2017 – The Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) in partnership with Near East South Asia Centre for Strategic Studies, National Defence University, Washington DC, had a workshop on ‘Radicalization in the Levant, North Africa and South Asia’.

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Colombo, Sri Lanka, February 14 to 16, 2017 – The Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) in partnership with Near East South Asia Centre for Strategic Studies, National Defence University, Washington DC, had a workshop on ‘Radicalization in the Levant, North Africa and South Asia’.

There were about 30 participants representing various countries in the three

At the seminar, Prof. Imtiaz Ahmed, Executive Director of RCSS, in his introductory remarks, reaffirmed the idea of the seminar that is to illustrate Sri Lanka’s understanding of climate change. He highlighted the point that RCSS works on traditional and non-traditional security and climate change has been understood as a part of non-traditional security which is gaining its momentum. Dr. Peter Hefele, Head of the Regional Project Energy Security and Climate Change in Asia and Pacific, KAS, Hong Kong, has begun his keynote speech with a brief introduction to their work at KAS including understanding the impact of climate change on social and geopolitics in South Asian region with the emphasis on Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan, which help decision makers to collaborate in order to make concrete solutions and disseminate findings on climate change to a broader generation of youth increasing their awareness and unleashing creativity. Also, he pointed out one of the main objectives of KAS is to understand how to change the way we produce and consume energy, which concentrates on how to eliminate fossil energy and find common

grounds and partners to face this problem.

Avanthi Kalansooriya, in her paper ‘Post-COP 21 Climate Change Regime and Prospects for Renewable Energy’, placed Sri Lanka’s approach on economic development on a global context of international agreements and developments. She also discussed about increasing people’s participation at all levels to meet the challenges of securing energy without harming the environment considering the current climate change challenges. The paper of Dr. Minna Thaheer, Former Associate Director, RCSS, ‘Disaster Management sans Conflict Sensitivity: A Receipt for Disaster’ discussed how natural disasters impacted daily lives in a diverse and pluralistic as well as ethnically fragile and war torn Sri Lankan state. Sumudhu Jayasinghe, Research Officer, RCSS, in her paper ‘When Mother Nature Marks Women: The Gendered Implications of Climate Change’, presented how climate change and natural disasters affect women in Sri Lanka, in which she highlighted how women in different geographical areas face different issues with regard to climate change impact.



regions. The government officials, military personnel, non-state actors and academia engaged in dialogue and discussions on radicalization and the strategies and approaches on counter radicalization and de-radicalization in their respective countries and the regions.

On the first day, the session focused on the Levant as various speakers delivered presentations on the radicalization, violent extremism and the impact of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the region and the society in general. The discussions were focused on radicalization in the

region particularly in the countries that the participants represented.

During the second and third days, there was dialogue on the pull-push factors and security implications in the sub regions and their perspectives on the pull-push factors. Among many other factors discussed, shifting identities of youth; lack of socio-economic opportunities and psychological dilemma due to lack of feeling of fulfillment, and the appealing messages of the ISIS were flagged as key factors for radicalization.

Most importantly, discussions focused on

countering radicalization through various means and de-radicalization through rehabilitation. Many of the discussants agreed on the need for education and a system of education that could lead to finding an identity that fits the youth. By way of introducing educational programmes that teach religion and theology in depth which has different connotations to militancy was thought to be successful in providing an alternative to violent extremism propagated by the militant groups. Also inter country cooperation to counter radicalization in the regions, creating counter narratives of religious extremism such as the use of a different approach from the religion to teach life philosophy, creating tolerant societies, and making available spaces to express

anger and resentment were proposed as transformative acts while as a countering measure making a strong intelligence service across countries was also proposed by the participants.

The debate on how youth get radicalized continued as different opinions surfaced on how radicalization happens. An idea surfaced that immediate networks have an impact on youth while returning fighters in the case of the Levant and North Africa also seem to impact on youth remaining in the region to get attracted to the 'cause'. Therefore the need to implement de-radicalization rehabilitation was seen as a key component in the strategy in countering radicalization that leads to extremism and terrorism.

However much the effort is put on these strategies and action to counter radicalization and de-radicalize youth or whoever could fall victim to terrorism, not having counter extremism propaganda was seen as a shortcoming in pursuing the challenge of facing radicalization. While strengthening security is also a priority in this plan, that alone is not effective to counter violent extremism and terrorism. Having the will to find a political solution altogether was seen as the major requirement as that could be the most effective way of offering something more appealing than what organizations like ISIS offer to the youth.

Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), NTU

The first Exercise Coordinated Response (EXCOORES 17) was held from 23rd to 25th January at the Changi C2 Centre in Singapore

23 -25 January, 2017

Singapore

The first Exercise Coordinated Response (EXCOORES 17) was held from 23rd to 25th January at the Changi C2 Centre in Singapore. The multilateral exercise included military participants from 18 countries including Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Cambodia, China, France, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, USA, UK and Vietnam. The exercise also engaged partners including the ASEAN Centre of Military Medicine, Corporate Citizen Foundation, Earth Observatory of Singapore, International Federation of Red Cross and



Red Crescent, Medecins sans Frontieres, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore Civil Defence Force, Singapore Red Cross, UN OCHA, UK Department of International Development, USAID, and World Food Programme. Dr Alistair D. B.

Cook, Coordinator of the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme and Research Fellow, NTS Centre and Mr Ennio V. Picucci, Research Associate observed the exercise.

#HUMTECH: Assessing the Technological Turn in Humanitarian Action

15 February, 2017

Singapore

On the 15 February 2017 the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) at RSIS hosted a workshop on "Assessing the Technological Turn in Humanitarian Action" with the aim to bring together experts and practitioners that are concerned with the question of how technological innovations can assist and have impacted humanitarian action and disaster risk management in the Asia-Pacific region.

The workshop featured 9 speakers from Australia, Indonesia, Korea, Philippines, the UK, the US, Spain and Switzerland and a total of 30 participants from multilateral organizations, government institutions and academia. Technologies that were discussed included disaster robotics for search & rescue operations, drones for mapping and the transportation of medical payload, big data and its use for development, renewable energy and humanitarian assistance, and remote sensing for early warning systems regarding floods and tsunamis.

The workshop was the first event on



humanitarian technology organized by NTS Centre's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme (HADRP) and was deemed a success as it enabled a vivid exchange of knowledge, ideas and opinions among leading actors of the region involved in humanitarian technology.

CSCAP Nuclear Energy Experts Group Meeting

27 - 28 February, 2017

Singapore

RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies and Pacific Forum-CSIS co-organised the 7th meeting of the Nuclear Energy Experts Group of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) at Hotel Jen Tanglin in Singapore from 27-28 February 2017. Forty participants and nuclear experts from 14 Asia-Pacific countries, including Singapore, deliberated on nuclear power development and nuclear governance in the Asia-Pacific; physical protection of nuclear facilities; cyber nuclear security threats; radioactive sources management; and public opinion, education and training.



Assoc Prof Mely Anthony, Head of NTS Centre, co-chaired the NEEG meeting while Mr Julius Cesar Trajano, Associate Research Fellow at NTS Centre, delivered a presentation on nuclear energy plans in Southeast Asia, including the significance of Vietnam's decision to scrap its nuclear power project. Participants identified the

challenges to the promotion of nuclear safety and security in the Asia-Pacific. They also proposed recommendations that can be considered by national governments and regional institutions such as the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) in enhancing nuclear governance regime in the region.



Group photo taken at the NTS-Asia Consortium Annual Conference

The RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Studies (NTS) hosted the NTS-Asia Consortium Annual Conference "Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals in the Asia Pacific"

30 - 31 March 2017

Singapore

The RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Studies (NTS) hosted the NTS-Asia Consortium Annual Conference "Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals in the Asia Pacific" in Singapore on 30-31 March 2017. The Conference brought together members of the Consortium from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines, and invited guests from Nepal, Taiwan, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Brunei Darussalam, and Timor Leste. The RSIS Centre of NTS Studies serves as the Secretariat of the Consortium.

Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations

(2007-2015) and Distinguished Visiting Fellow at RSIS, delivered the Keynote Address at the Opening Session of the Conference. Over a hundred people, including some students from Cedar Girls' Secondary School, attended the opening session. In her speech, Dr Heyzer remarked that climate change is a real concern, and while plans and frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are already in place, implementations remain a challenge. She highlighted five ways or 'transmission mechanisms' by which climate change can affect human lives: 1) agri-culture production and food security, 2) water stress and water insecurity, 3) rising sea levels and exposure to climate disasters, 4) ecosystems and biodiversity, and 5) human health. Dr Heyzer called for shared responsibilities and collective leadership, and proposed a Public-Private-People Partnership model as a way to tackling climate change and its potential debilitating impacts on human civilisation. She especially emphasised on the 'people' element, and suggested that efforts can begin locally and within households. Dr

Heyzer also pointed out that technology can play a significant role in addressing some climate-related challenges. In conclusion, Dr. Heyzer reminded the audience that while efforts to counter climate change seem rather slow, there is so much goodness, inspiration and idealism in the world that one can tap into in order to continue to carry out the good work towards sustainable development.

Four panel sessions then followed, with the NTS-Asia Consortium members and some selected guests participating as speakers, moderators and discussants. Panel 1 discussed about Climate Change and SDGs on Food, Energy and Water. The effects of climate change on water shortage were increasingly evident, and enhancing climate projection capability is important to enable better anticipatory responses. The unabated use of fossil fuel since the 18th century Industrial Revolution is among the primary drivers of climate change. As human civilisation has significantly impacted the nature, climate change issues need to be analysed from

both nature and human lenses. Regardless of the numerous climate challenges, many countries have come together to build a climate change regime that is participatory and inclusive. This multi-stakeholder involvement model can be replicated in the efforts to achieving SDGs.

Panel 2 talked about Climate Change and SDGs on Education, Sustainable Cities and Life below Water (Fisheries)/Life on Land (Forestry). The Philippines' experience in addressing climate change shows that there is a need for capacity building, a more robust database and a stronger institution to support and implement existing mechanisms, a clear finance roadmap, and increased private sector participation. Singapore's approach to building sustainable city-state can provide good examples to addressing challenges in urban sustainability. A study on soil degradation in a region in Timor Leste shows that soil in upstream, midstream, and downstream areas is impacted differently. Dam building activities in the Mekong River may saturate its capacity to support the lives of millions of people,

Civic engagement driving urban solutions at the 4th Singapore Sustainability Symposium

3 - 5 May, 2017

Singapore



Assoc. Prof. Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, RSIS, contributes the NTS perspective on civic engagement driving urban solutions at the 4th Singapore Sustainability Symposium

"We focus on regional frameworks, and emphasize the need to work together because when it comes to sustainable development and sustainable security, it is not possible to go it alone." This was a key message that Assoc. Prof. Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, RSIS, contributed at the opening discussion panel of the fourth annual Singapore Sustainability Symposium (S3) in Singapore on 3-5 May 2017 at Grand Hyatt Singapore.

and may therefore result in mass migration in their bids to find other livelihoods elsewhere.

Panel 3 focused on Climate Change and SDGs on Gender, Poverty and Health. The Indonesia's experience showed that while national development planning has incorporated climate change agenda, bigger challenges are found in integrating relevant strategies in local governments' development plan and budget and in empowering communicates and households, strengthening their livelihoods and reducing vulnerability in sustainable ways. The Myanmar's experience in providing health services highlighted accessibility challenges especially for the more vulnerable segments of the society. While climate-driven migration is often seen as failures in implementing adaptation strategies, it could also be regarded as an adaptation tool to combat climate change itself. Considering that climate change has all-encompassing impacts on the SDGs, sustainable development diplomacy can potentially provide a platform to address climate

America's Pacific Century: Dialogue between the United States and Asia – visiting delegations from USC and SMU

1 June, 2017

Singapore



JUN 1, 2017: The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) hosted the University of Southern California – Singapore Management University undergraduate summer programme titled "America's Pacific Century: Dialogue between the United States and Asia" to interview experts and policy professionals (May 15 – 19 in Washington, D.C.; and May 22 – 26 on USC campus in Los Angeles; and May 29 to June 8 in Singapore). RSIS' Evan Resnick, Rini Astuti and Jo Franco discussed the new US administration and its impact on East Asia, which was moderated by Al Cook. The students are expected to produce a task force report on the New US Administration and will make a presentation at a public forum to be hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce, Singapore. Geanina Bujoreanu discussed the postgraduate programmes on offer at RSIS.

challenges.

Panel 4 deliberated on Climate Change and SDGs on Partnership, Peace and Security. Three ways by which climate change can affect peace and security in the Asia Pacific include increased frequency and severity of disaster events, a global power shift, and an end of multilateralism. Some empirical evidence already shows a linkage between climate change and increased probability of armed conflict; as such, incorporating climate-induced migration and conflict management strategies in climate change policies may become necessary. Additionally, considering peace, development and SDGs are interrelated, addressing marginalisation and inequality as catalysts of potential climate-driven conflicts is critical.

The NTS-Asia Consortium Conference concluded with a session on the NTS-Asia Consortium matters. The new NTS-Asia website was presented, and the Consortium members exchanged ideas on how to move the Consortium forward.

Lecture by Prof Edward Waller on Nuclear Safety-Security Interface and Emergency Preparedness and Response

19 June, 2017

Singapore



The RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies organised a special one-day lecture on "Nuclear Safety-Security Interface and Emergency Preparedness and Response" at the RSIS Keypoint on 19 June 2017. The special lecture was delivered by Dr. Edward Waller, Professor at the Faculty of Energy Systems and Nuclear Science, University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT), Canada. 22 participants from government agencies and research institutes of NTU and NUS attended the lecture.

This lecture considered the similarities and differences between accidents and malicious acts involving nuclear or radiological material, and the contrast in response from planning, preparation, assessment, resourcing and execution. Specific topics included safety-security culture, security by design, material control and accountancy,

reliability-centred maintenance and the use of modelling and simulation. A framework for emergency response personnel to work with security responders was also presented for discussion. This lecture discussed, in broad terms, the major components related

Disaster Response Regional Architecture: Assessing Future Possibilities

18 - 20 July 2017
Bangkok, Thailand

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies and the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies co-hosted a workshop titled "Disaster Response Regional Architectures: Assessing Future Possibilities" from 18th to 20th July 2017 to facilitate analysis among relevant stakeholders and subject matter experts to achieve a common understanding of challenges and opportunities associated with regional disaster response coordination in four distinct Asia-Pacific regions; identify current and emerging response-related issues, trends and strategic implications; and make recommendations for improved and collaborative regional disaster response architectures. The workshop findings will be jointly published by RSIS and DKI APCSS in a report for public distribution.

A total of 43 participants from 14 Indo-

to international guidance on radiation emergency management, based primarily on IAEA GSR Part 7. It was proposed that the topics discussed form the basis of local training in emergency preparedness and response. This lecture is a collaboration on

nuclear security education and research between two members of the International Nuclear Security Education Network (INSEN).



Asia-Pacific states and Taiwan attended the workshop. Workshop participants had a mixture of professional backgrounds leading and/or coordinating disaster management sharing efforts to include international, regional and civil society organizations, defence ministry officials, foreign affairs and national disaster management bodies. U.S. participants included the United States Agency for International Development, Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance, Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group, Center for

Excellence in Disaster Management (CFE-DM). Non-national participants included representatives from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Centre (AHA Centre), and the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Disaster Management Centre, the World Food Programme (WFP), and the International Council of Volunteer Agencies (ICVA).

RSIS-Embassy of the Philippines Panel Discussion "Women, Peace and Security in Southeast Asia" 21 July, 2017 Singapore

The RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies and the Embassy of the Philippines jointly organised a panel discussion on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in Southeast Asia at the RSIS Lecture Theatre on 21 July 2017. The Ambassador of the Philippines H.E. Antonio Morales and Assoc Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the NTS Centre, in their welcome remarks, highlighted the achievements of ASEAN in promoting and protecting women's rights in recent years and the relevance of the WPS agenda in the region where women are among the vulnerable groups in both conflict and natural disaster settings.

Panel speakers include Dr Ma. Lourdes Veneracion-Rallonza, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Ateneo de Manila University; Ms. Rahimah Abdulrahim Executive Director, The Habibie Centre in



Jakarta; and Ms. Katrina Jorene Maliamauv Programme Officer, Tenaganita Sdn Bhd in Kuala Lumpur. Dr Rallonza argued that the WPS agenda needs to be applied to both natural disaster and armed conflict settings. Given that several ASEAN Member States have been plagued by protracted conflicts and natural disasters, there is a need to locate gender issues, particularly the protection of women's rights, in the interface of armed conflicts and natural disasters. Dr Rallonza reviewed several institutional mechanisms

and policy initiatives of the Philippines, along with other ASEAN Member States in enhancing the WPS agenda. She proposed the creation of a regional technical working group in ASEAN to draft a regional plan of action on mainstreaming women's rights protection in both conflict and disaster situations in Southeast Asia.

Ms. Rahimah discussed the level of women's participation in politics and public policymaking in Southeast Asia. To illustrate

the limited participation of women in politics, she cited the low percentage of female members of parliaments and cabinets in ASEAN Member States. Due to deeply rooted institutional limitations to increased female participation in politics, she recognized the role of CSOs in advancing civic engagement for women by women. CSOs can provide women the political space to organise and articulate their rights. Nonetheless, there is an urgent need to have institutional reforms to increase women's access to politics and policymaking.

Ms. Maliamauv focused on the plights of

abused female migrants, refugees, and victims of human trafficking in Southeast Asia. She presented case studies of abused female domestic workers and Rohingya refugees and accentuated the lack of protection agenda for this vulnerable sector at the regional and national levels in Southeast Asia. The particular use of language and its power in determining mindsets, with reference to female migrant workers especially in national legislation, was also a concern that was highlighted by Ms Maliamauv.

The open forum discussions explored several mechanisms that can mainstream

the WPS agenda at various levels, from ASEAN, to national governments, business sector and down to communities. The security sector, including the military, for instance, needs to be constructively engaged in and sensitised to the protection of women's rights, given that the military is a main actor in both armed conflicts and disaster response operations in the region. More importantly, there must be a change of mindset at various levels in terms of the role of women, their access to security, including human security, and their inherent vulnerabilities in conflict and disaster settings.