



LATEST NEWS

The NTS-Asia Consortium has recently seen a fruitful form of the expansive network it offers to its members. From December 2017 to March 2018, the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Singapore, hosted Chris Liu Hongyi, a PhD student at Waseda University, Japan. His work relating to humanitarian response matched with the expertise of the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) programme at the NTS Centre, RSIS. The short stint provided an opportunity for both Chris Liu and the HADR team to further their thinking and horizon in the HADR field. Building on this experience, we are positive that more members will be able to capitalise on the vast knowledge that we have pooled together in the NTS-Asia Consortium.

The annual NTS-Asia Consortium conference four months ago brought together old and new members to deliberate a number of issues under the theme of 'Resilience in the Face of Disruptions'. In this Newsletter, we are pleased to feature two of our panelists at the meeting. They are Adjunct Associate Professor Jean (Jonathan) Bogais from the University of Sydney and Ms Puteri Nor Ariane Yasmine from the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Malaysia. As well as getting a little bit more up close and personal with them through their short biography write-ups, we will see their invaluable take on technological development and mental health, and Malaysia's potential accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention following the change in Malaysian government in May 2018, respectively in this Newsletter.

You may update the Secretariat on news and events, nominate your resident researchers, or send in suggestions, by writing to Margareth Sembiring (ismsembiring@ntu.edu.sg) or Joey Liang (isjoeyliang@ntu.edu.sg). As always, we are truly grateful for your contributions and participations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies (BIPSS)

Colombo Defence Seminar - 2018
August 2018 | Sri Lanka

Institute of Strategic & International Studies, Malaysia (ISIS)

7th Malaysia-Germany Security Dialogue
29-30 August 2018 | Majestic Kuala Lumpur

Praxis Economic Seminar
4 October 2018 | Kuala Lumpur

11th ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand (AANZ) Dialogue
22-23 October 2018 | Kuala Lumpur

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

RSIS World Humanitarian Day 2018 Public Panel & Exhibition
14 Aug 2018 | Singapore

RSIS-PDC-ASEAN Workshop
15-16 Aug 2018 | Singapore

ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management
16-17 Aug 2018 | Singapore

RSIS Seminar by Professor Christopher Kojm, Professor of Practice of International Affairs, Elliott School of International Affairs
17 Aug 2018 | Singapore

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Mely Caballero-Anthony and Margareth Sembiring

Designed by Joey Liang

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT



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During the annual NTS-Asia Consortium convention in March this year, we proposed that you penned down your thoughts and ideas presented during the meeting and documented them in our first ever NTS-Asia Monograph. Following up on that plan, we are delighted to see your excitement as we have received drafts from many of you! We are in the process of consolidating the Monograph, and we will get back to you with updates in due time.

The NTS issues are getting increasingly prominent in our life. In the last two months alone, reports on natural disaster events have been dominating news headlines. We

heard of the rather unexpected eruption of Bali's Mount Agung that cancelled 450 flights, flooding and landslides followed by heat wave that killed hundreds across a number of prefectures in Japan, floods in multiple provinces in China that affected millions of people, and severe floods that killed twenty in Vietnam and displaced more than 100,000 in Myanmar in late July. They served as a somber reminder that disaster events are here to stay. Our work that looks into different dimensions of these pressing challenges cannot be more relevant today than it had been before.

We see the need to deepen informed and

insightful conversations among us. For this purpose, we are thinking of setting up online discussion forum on recent topics of interest on the NTS-Asia website. While the Secretariat will do the background work to get the system running, we seek your active contribution not only to participate but also to lead in getting the intellectual exchanges started. In so doing, we will be able to respond to current regional and global issues with one voice as the NTS-Asia Consortium community.

Warmest regards,
Mely Caballero-Anthony
Secretary-General

Senior Researcher Profile

A/Prof. Dr. Jean (Jonathan) Bogais

The place of mental illness in human psychology is an intriguing passage to consider technology. The rapid and increasing dependence of connected systems in modern society is a plausible explanation for growing psychological instability especially among young people and increased vulnerability. In their pathological universes the mentally ill – aware, or not – seek escape into a private world of fantasy and delirium that ultimately reinforces the morbid constraints that enslave them. This paradox is ultimately a reflection of society's own contradictions. Mental illness is not simply an imaginary

liberation from social constraints; it is also a way of being subjected to them. Schizophrenia, for example – beyond the bio-chemistry – is often interpreted as a response to the increasingly info/technological character of modern life. It is neither a fantastic projection nor an escape from technology, but a psychological manifestation of the sociological problem of alienation, which itself is a consequence of the systemisation of the world. The contemporary world makes mental illness possible, not because its techniques render it inhuman and abstract, but because the individual makes such use of the



A/Prof. Dr. Jean (Jonathan) Bogais
Centre for International Security Studies (CISS),
University of Sydney

techniques that recognising one's identity in it becomes impossible.

As a bilingual (French/English) academic and professional, I use the term 'technology' with caution as its meaning differs between English and French (*technologie*.) I use it in a Foucauldian sense to highlight the ways in which power relations operate referring to how modern social and political systems control, supervise, and manipulate populations as well as individuals. As such, technology both overlaps with and extends considerably beyond what historians of technology have called 'complex sociotechnical systems'.

A Paris Sorbonne-educated Sociologist (PhD) and Social and Intercultural Psychologist (M.A.), my experience working in spaces of violence spans over 30 years, mostly North Africa (5 years) and Southeast Asia (25 years). My research as an academic and practice as a specialist led me to explore violence and the introduction of violence in non-violent spaces. My interest is two-fold. It lies (1) with the application of ethics in the realm of deconfliction initiatives, negotiation, humanitarian intervention in spaces of violence caused by conflict or environmental disasters, and post-event spaces; (2) with new technologies. I examine how, if history is ignored, info/technology has the potential to irrevocably displace an entire social system from its historically central role in determining the future of human society. The two are connected and can lead to more uncertainty and instability, thus violence and conflict. In both cases, the need for modification of existing codes of conduct or creation of new codes is needed. For example, nanotechnologies created through civilian research for civilian use may be weaponised. The same applies to robotics. These new technologies and their applications could become hybrid, as the civilian-created technology can and could be adapted to serve military purposes. The question of knowledge sovereignty must be asked, as knowledge transfer may occur without (appropriate) consent.

This is an ethical issue. The question of weaponisation of new technology may also have a significant impact on researchers, the test & evaluation community, end-users and society at large. This conflictual space must be approached using a psycho-social lens rather than 'thinking technologically' to address the sociological and psychological questions at stake.

An important issue arises when technology causes marginalisation. This occurs when an individual becomes estranged from her/his own technique and recognises that human or living meaning in the products of her/his activity is no longer possible. The info/technological world makes mental illness possible, not because its techniques render it inhuman and abstract, but because the individual makes such use of his techniques that the perception of identity is lost. When economic and social determinants impose constraints, when finding a home in the world is no longer possible, then this individual is living a conflict that makes the mental illness syndrome possible. This is particularly relevant in spaces where workers are vulnerable to replacement by robots for example. The garment industry in East & Southeast Asia is about to experience this work transformation with dire social and economic consequences for populations. The psychosocial impact of this transformation has the potential to introduce instability as many individuals will be affected, perhaps displaced, causing a loss of belonging and identity.

Addressing these complex paradigms requires the use of a complexity lens. Too often, crises, which are asymmetric, have been caused or exacerbated by the use of linear, reductionist methods. Applying complex systems instead allows for the design of models and strategies that address asymmetry. The dynamic models I have created with the help of complex systems specialists are being currently tested in deconfliction initiatives and forecasting the potential risk for violence to emerge in spaces of non-violence. The need to create and attach a narrative to the

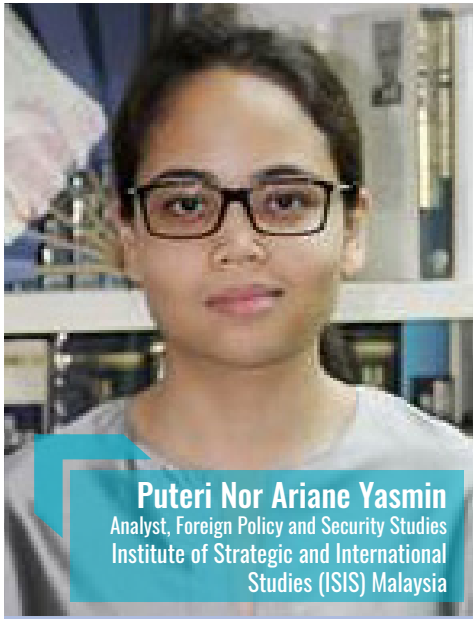
model(s) is indispensable for the creation of critical assessments. These dynamic models are also used for teaching.

Mentoring, teaching and supervising in civilian institutions (from undergraduate to post-doctoral) and military institutions (system specialists and tacticians), I also co-create pilot programs to test new systems of thinking. My research and practice with security agencies in areas of information warfare explores uncertainties and instabilities among future generations to determine and/or forecast the potential long-term risks of radicalisation.

My early interest in these areas developed after completion of my PhD (1984) exploring the politics of disruptions in cultural identity dynamics among small community members when displaced by violence and social instability. After conducting extensive research on the ground and preparing critical assessments for a French Government agency - studying the impacts on Islamic militancy on communities in the Maghreb (North Africa in the early 1980s) - I joined the United Nations in 1987 as a Special Adviser to the negotiations of the Paris Peace Agreement to end the conflict in Cambodia. As a psycho-sociologist, my role was to design and contribute to deconfliction processes to maintain – or rebuild - lines of communication between parties when disagreements occurred. Upon completion in 1991, my interest in the psychosocial determinants of disruption developed further, together with my interest in Southeast Asia. Knowledge transfer is critical and I value the opportunities to teach, mentor and take every step to contribute and advance knowledge ethically. I have just completed a four years-term on the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Sydney, where I currently hold the position of Adjunct Associate Professor within the School of Social and Political Sciences and the Centre for International Security Studies.

Researcher Profile

Puteri Nor Ariane Yasmin



Puteri Nor Ariane Yasmin
Analyst, Foreign Policy and Security Studies
Institute of Strategic and International
Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

I am a fourth-year Analyst in Foreign Policy & Security Studies at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia. Prior to joining ISIS Malaysia, I completed the MPhil in International Relations and Politics from the University of Cambridge and the BA (Hons.) in Political Science and History from the University of Melbourne.

My current research is focused on refugees and forced migration in the region. In ISIS Malaysia's capacity as co-convenor of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration – alongside Centre for Policy Development (Melbourne), Mahidol University's Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (Bangkok) and Centre for Political Studies, Indonesian Institute

of Sciences (Jakarta) – I have had the privilege to assist in efforts to formulate credible and independent policy ideas on issues of forced migration.

Highlights include (i) providing ongoing policy advice to members of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process), such as the need to further develop its response mechanism for mass displacement; (ii) developing industry links with the business community on matters of exploitative migration, forced labour and trafficking; and (iii) submitting recommendations to the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) on the implementation of the Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP).

I have also worked with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on issues relating to refugee access to employment in Malaysia. I led two studies on permission to work for UNHCR-registered refugees in the country, namely "Granting Refugees Permission to Work from the Perspectives of Malaysia's National Security and National Interest" for UNHCR Malaysia in April 2017 and "Addressing Challenges and Identifying Opportunities for Refugee Access to Employment in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand" for UNHCR Regional, Bangkok in August 2017.

Refugees and forced migration aside, drug

addiction and rehabilitation in Malaysia is another area that I am passionate about. ISIS Malaysia has spent the last year assisting the government to reform Malaysia's National Drug Policy from incarceration to depenalisation, or to a policy that is based more on users' health and societal needs. For example, we initiated a dialogue between local stakeholders and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Jakarta on drug courts in an effort to examine alternative ways of "penalising" users without overlooking their need for treatment or exhausting the criminal justice system. ISIS Malaysia is also planning to convene a roundtable on amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) with regional experts to further explore key areas such as data and epidemiology, prevention, treatment and policy.

Given Malaysia's recent change in government, it will be interesting to see how promises to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention or legitimise the status of refugees (by providing them with UNHCR cards and ensuring their legal right to work), will play out. It also remains to be seen whether the previous administration's efforts towards reforming Malaysia's National Drug Policy will continue. In the meantime, steps can be taken to help regularise the status of refugees in the country without signing UN conventions, and initiate dialogues on best practices for drug treatment and rehabilitation. My colleagues and I will continue to make such policy recommendations.

REFLECTIONS

IMPLICATIONS OF MALAYSIA ACCEDING TO UN CONVENTIONS ON REFUGEES

By Puteri Nor Ariane Yasmin
Institute of Strategic and International
Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

With the recent change in government on 9 May 2018, news reports and statements from the present administration have indicated that Malaysia could accede to more UN conventions in the foreseeable future. Specifically, the election manifesto of Pakatan Harapan promised the ratification of the 1951 Refugee Convention as well as work rights for refugees. Two months in, Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah



has stated that the new government aspires "to sign all the international human rights conventions". The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia has also echoed the new government's commitment to refugees.

What are some of the short-term implications that we can expect from such developments?

First and foremost, it should be noted that prior to the election, the Malaysian Government has never intended to assume internationally binding legal responsibilities for irregular people movements. There have always been concerns that any shift towards regularising the status of refugees and asylum seekers in the country will be seen as a softening of Malaysia's stance, which would encourage more refugees,

asylum seekers and stateless individuals to make their way into the country. A “soft” position could also unintentionally lead to a boosting of people smuggling and trafficking networks, which can burden national systems and frustrate the Government’s efforts to curb such syndicates.

Some policymakers have also been wary of inadvertently generating “push factors” towards Malaysia, whereby neighbouring countries who are also facing their own refugee management problems could “push” their refugees to the country because of favourable local conditions. Indeed, there are assumptions that it is not a question of if but when boats will start to set sail from the Bangladesh-Myanmar border for neighbouring countries like Malaysia, either on their own accord or with some encouragement by local authorities who simply cannot cope. The Government will have to address the security concerns of those who subscribe to the “floodgates” or “push factor” viewpoint, and boost local confidence in their ability to manage forced

migration flows.

Second, internationally binding legal responsibilities could put refugees in Malaysia at a disadvantage, particularly in the early stages of enacting a new refugee policy. Malaysia does host, either willingly or unwillingly, a large number of refugees and asylum seekers, including those deemed stateless or “people of concern”. Latest figures from UNHCR Malaysia (as of the end of June 2018) indicate that there are 158,620 registered refugees. The number of those unregistered in the country is not known, although estimates have pointed to a few hundred thousand at least. Notwithstanding their uncertain illegal status, issues of abuse and exploitation, and a generally tough life in Malaysia, in practice it appears that Malaysia has carried a bigger burden and provided more opportunities to such groups than countries that have signed the UN conventions.

Whether registered or unregistered, the majority manage to sustain themselves

and are employed in the informal sectors of the economy. There is no major crackdown on such groups as they are allowed, albeit illegally, to earn a living. This has been the norm for refugees in Malaysia for decades, as fourth-generation Rohingya in the country can attest to. In fact, the results of the pilot programme for 300 UNHCR-registered Rohingya to work in the plantation sector highlight that refugees stated they could secure higher salaries working “informally”, which suggests their preference for the flexibilities of remaining “off the grid”. While the regularisation of refugees will ensure the proper conduct of law enforcement without the arbitrary arrest, detention or deportation of refugees, crackdowns will ensue and they will no longer be allowed to work illegally.

Although it remains to be seen whether Malaysia's policy (of not having a policy) on refugees will change anytime soon and, indeed, how it will change, steps can be taken in the interim to ensure that UNHCR-registered refugees are accommodated without acceding to the UN conventions.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

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Education in Indonesia: A White Elephant?, Working Paper, July 2018



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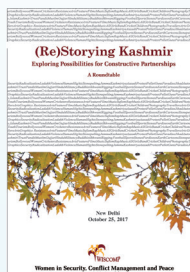
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"Security Trends: Bangladesh 2018"- BIPSS Commentary, 2018

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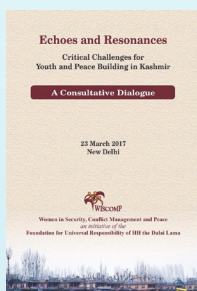
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Institute of Strategic & International Studies, Malaysia (ISIS)

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The public must fight too, Commentaries, 31 July 2018



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Making it work for all Commentaries, 3 July 2018



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Cooperation and competition in the Asia-Pacific – ASEAN and the superpower dynamics dilemma



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Issues Impacting Malaysia's Maritime Security Policies and Postures Commentaries, 18 June 2018



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Future is about attracting market-led technologies, Commentaries, 26 June 2018



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India must boost depth and durability of Asean ties, Commentaries, 20 June 2018



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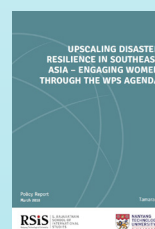
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20 March 2018



Click [here](#) to read more.

Tamara Nair, Upscaling Disaster
Resilience in Southeast Asia —
Engaging Women Through the WPS
Agenda, Policy Report, 14 March 2018



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PAST EVENT SUMMARIES

Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies (BIPSS)

BIPSS organised a roundtable on "Contemporary Bangladesh: An Open Discussion"

28 July 2018



On July 28, 2018, BIPSS organised a roundtable on "Contemporary Bangladesh: An Open Discussion" at BIPSS conference room. Discussion was led by Mr. Mohiuddin Ahmad based on his publication of recent books. Book discussion was attended by personnel from various socio-economic background that included eminent journalists, political analysts, experts from the development sectors, and students from renowned educational institutions. The roundtable was moderated by Major General A N M Muniruzzaman (Retd), President, BIPSS and Chairman, Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change (GMACCC).

An expert round table on 'CVE : A Way Forward' was held at the BIPSS Conference Room

19 July 2018



An expert round table on 'CVE (Countering Violent Extremism): A Way Forward' was held at the BIPSS Conference Room on July 19th, 2018. Eminent experts from different relevant fields, members from law enforcement agencies including Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit (CTTU), media, academia and representatives from think tanks and others were present in the discussion.

BIPSS organised a roundtable on "Security Outlook of Bangladesh in 2018"

28 June 2018



On June 28, 2018, BIPSS organised a roundtable on "Security Outlook of Bangladesh in 2018" at BIPSS conference room. The roundtable was attended by the concerned stakeholders including eminent journalists, academics, experts from the development sectors, and students from renowned educational institutions. The roundtable was moderated by Major General A N M Muniruzzaman (Retd), President, BIPSS and Chairman, Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change (GMACCC).

The participants of the roundtable discussed in detail the security outlook of Bangladesh for the year of 2018 and provided valuable insights on emerging issues that will dominate the security landscape of the country in the days ahead.

Ambassador of Spain Visits BIPSS

25 June 2018



His Excellency Álvaro de Salas, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain called on President BIPSS Maj Gen Muniruzzaman (Retd) in his office on 25 June 2018. Ambassador Álvaro de Salas expressed keen interest and appreciation on BIPSS activities. A discussion meeting was also held to share BIPSS assessment/analysis on key strategic and security issues at regional and international level. It may be mentioned

that BIPSS has got partnership with some major think tanks and institutions in Spain and will be expanding its cooperation with them in the future.

Mr. Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow and Head of Bangladesh Centre for Terrorism Research (BCTR) at BIPSS recently spoke at the 4th Counter Terrorism Conference held at Gurugram, Haryana



Mr. Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow and Head of Bangladesh Centre for Terrorism Research (BCTR) at BIPSS recently spoke at the 4th Counter Terrorism Conference held at Gurugram, Haryana. It was jointly organised by the India Foundation, Government of the State of Haryana and the Bureau of Police Research and Development of the Government of India. Mr. Munir was part of a panel on 'Constructing Counter Narratives'. In his remarks Mr. Munir emphasised on the importance of fighting the ideological battle and presenting a proper narrative to counter the nefarious narratives spread by the extremists. He also stressed on the importance of greater regional cooperation.

The Counter Terrorism Conference is a pre-eminent conclave of scholars and practitioners of CT/CVE. The conference looked at some of the cutting edge issues related to the current counter terrorism discourse. The conference was attended by delegates from over 30 countries and was addressed by senior cabinet ministers as well as senior officials from India and the wider region.

It may be mentioned that BCTR, a constituent unit of BIPSS is celebrating its 10th anniversary this month. Since its inception BCTR has been relentlessly engaged in research, training, analysis and outreach on all aspects of CT/CVE issues.

Mr. Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow and Head of (BCTR) recently participated at a conference of the Consortium of South Asian Think Tanks (COSATT) in Kathmandu, Nepal



Mr. Shafqat Munir, Research Fellow and Head of Bangladesh Centre for Terrorism Research (BCTR) recently participated at a conference of the Consortium of South Asian Think Tanks (COSATT) on 'South Asia Amidst a New World Order' organised jointly by the Centre for South Asian Studies in Kathmandu and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. It was attended by heads and representatives of think tanks from across the region as well as prominent members of the Nepalese civil society. In his remarks Mr. Munir highlighted the cyber threats faced by the region and the need for a common regional approach to meet the challenge.

The recently held conference was a special one as it marked the tenth anniversary of COSATT. Since its inception in 2008 COSATT has emerged as a powerful epistemic network of think tanks from all 8 South Asian countries. It has published numerous books, monographs and papers on issues of regional importance. It has also played a critical role in bringing together civil society from the whole region to deliberate on issues of critical importance. BIPSS is a co-founder of COSATT and been proudly associated with the network throughout the last decade.

BIPSS organized a 3 day National Workshop on Countering Violent Extremism-capacity Building Programme (CVECBP)



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) organized a 3 day National Workshop on Countering Violent Extremism-capacity Building Programme

(CVECBP) from 20th -22nd March, 2018. This was a multi-stakeholder participated workshop where all involved in the CVE community attended, which included members of the elite law enforcement agencies, eminent journalists, researchers from foreign think tanks, students from eminent educational institutes, etc. Presentations were made by CVE experts from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. It also included a table top simulation exercise.

The workshop came to an end with the awarding certificates by the BIPSS President Major General A N M Muniruzzaman (Retd). He also gave the closing remark where he emphasized on adopting a comprehensive approach to CVE.

President BIPSS, Maj Gen Muniruzzaman (Retd), attended a Track 2 Dialogue in Singapore with Myanmar on the Rohingya issue



President BIPSS, Major General Muniruzzaman (Retd), attended a Track 2 Dialogue in Singapore with Myanmar on the Rohingya issue. This is part of an on going series of Dialogues between Bangladesh and Myanmar. This is a trust building exercise and a range of issues related to the Rohingya crisis and a possible solution were discussed during the dialogue. It was attended by members of leading think tanks from Bangladesh and Myanmar.

President BIPSS, Major General Muniruzzaman (Retd), was recently invited as a Guest of Honour at the Valedictory Session of the International Conference titled "Rethinking Regionalism in South Asia" recently held at India



President BIPSS, Major General Muniruzzaman (Retd) was invited as a Guest

of Honour at the Valedictory Session of the International Conference on Rethinking Regionalism in South Asia organised by UNESCO Institute of South Asia Regional Cooperation and Centre for South Asian Studies at Pondicherry University, India. The conference was attended by eminent personalities from across the region. He also delivered a lecture at the university titled "South Asia - Mapping the Strategic Landscape" Earlier en route to the university the BIPSS delegation also interacted with leading think tanks in Delhi to discuss areas of cooperation on mutual research areas.

President BIPSS, Maj Gen Muniruzzaman (Retd). and Research Fellow, BCTR Mr. Shafqat Munir attended a workshop on 'Crisis Response in South Asia' held at Kathmandu, Nepal last week



A crisis can occur as a result of an unpredictable event that had been considered as a potential risk. Managing crises and having various contingency plans in place is vital for effective response during a crisis.

President BIPSS, Major General Muniruzzaman (Retd). and Research Fellow, BCTR Mr. Shafqat Munir attended a workshop on 'Crisis Response in South Asia' held at Kathmandu, Nepal last week. The event was jointly hosted by the Near East and South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the US National Defense University (NESA Center) and the Daniel K Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) and the Centre for South Asian Studies in Kathmandu, Nepal. Representatives of the leading South Asian think tanks and universities attended the workshop.

Voice, Representation and Sexualized Portrayal of Women in Media A Panel Discussion

1 August 2018
New Delhi

On 1 August 2018, WISCOMP collaborated with Public Affairs Section, US Embassy and UChicago Centre in Delhi for a Panel Discussion on 'Voice, Representation and Sexualized Portrayal of Women in Media' at UChicago Center in Delhi.

The Panel included presentations by Ms. Cristal Williams Chancellor, Director of

Communications, Women's Media Center, Washington, D.C. and Ms. Dipti Nath, Associate Professor, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi, New Delhi.

They drew attention towards media campaigns and programming that emphasize gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men as well as the resilience of stereotypical imagery of women as mothers and vamps in Hindi films. The discussion provided an opportunity for the participants to learn about recent research on the women's portrayal and presence in the United States



and in Hindi Cinema. The discussion was moderated by Prof. Ira Bhaskar, Professor, Cinema Studies, School of Art and Aesthetics Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

GenderScape: Walking the Talk on Building Women's Agency

30-31 May 2018
New Delhi



WISCOMP brought together a group of senior women peacebuilders and future women and men leaders from across Kashmir, Ladakh and Jammu, from diverse sectors including NGO, media, education, health and government, to create a collaborative space for sharing experiences, skill building and strengthening solidarities. Over two days, the participants engaged in trainings, reflection and conversations on understanding the continuum of violence and exclusion that women experience in private and public spaces; interrogating diverse notions of empowerment; walking through the maze of gender, agency and faith; deepening skills of networking for advocacy and transmission of concerns to policymakers; exploring the RTI as a tool for people's empowerment and just governance; enhancing understanding of legal procedures to access justice; and strengthening solidarities among women's formal and informal groups across different regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

Engendering Education: Building Youth Capacities to End Gender-based Violence in India

28-29 May 2018
Shillong



WISCOMP, an initiative of Foundation for Universal Responsibility conducted a two-day Workshop with 25 Social Justice Animators of the Edmund Rice Schools across India on 28-29 May 2018 at St. Edmund's College, Shillong. Titled, Engendering Education the workshop aimed at building the capacities of school educators and students to prevent and end gender-based discrimination and violence in India. The purpose of this Workshop was to assist the social justice animators in their efforts to engage with the subject of gender sensitization with students of Class 8 at the Edmund

Rice schools. The WISCOMP Handbook for Educators, Engendering Education: Building Youth Capacities to End Gender-based Violence in India—a manual consisting of 13 training modules—served as a guiding template, which will be used by educators to sensitize students to the issue of gender.

Exploring Partnerships amidst a Polarizing Discourse: Women Against the Violence of Exclusion

19 April 2018
Srinagar



WISCOMP organized a Conference 'Exploring Partnerships amidst a Polarizing Discourse: Women Against the Violence of Exclusion'. The Conference brought together an engaged group of NGO professionals, women's groups, educators, health professionals, media persons, lawyers and government functionaries from across Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir. The purpose was to identify the significant issues faced by women in the state and explore opportunities for building solidarity between women from different regions of Jammu and Kashmir to lead processes of social change. The coming together of the women coincided with the brutal rape and murder of an eight-year old girl in Kathua. The politicization of the horrific incident in the state was condemned by all present at the conference. Many shared deep concern over the rising incidents of sexual violence against girl child in various parts of the country including recent incidents in Unnao and Surat. WISCOMP Team and the participants at the conference expressed solidarity with the survivors, their families and those supporting and advocating for justice in all these cases. WISCOMP remains committed to taking forward the long fight against gender-based violence

and working in partnerships to cultivate cultures of gender equality, nonviolence and peace.

GenderTalk: Looking at Society Through a New Lens

12 March 2018

New Delhi



WISCOMP delivered a Lecture on 'GenderTalk: Looking at Society Through a New Lens' at the Department of Germanic and Romance Studies, University of Delhi, New Delhi. Over 100 students who are pursuing Masters and Undergraduate degrees attended the lecture. Through her lecture, Dr. Anjali Bhatia, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi, foregrounded the distinction between gender and sex, and masculinity and femininity. She stressed upon the need to move beyond the binaries and acknowledge the diversity in the society.

Women Weaving Peace

7 March 2018

New Delhi



WISCOMP organized a Panel Discussion on 'Women Weaving Peace' as a part of the 14th IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival, organized annually by IAWRT (International Association of Women in Radio and Television), India. The WISCOMP-IAWRT Panel Discussion brought together researchers and practitioners from diverse conflict contexts for a dialogue on the advocacy for women's inclusion in peace negotiations, women's contribution to conflict resolution and peacebuilding, strategies to cope with displacement and initiatives for building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. The speakers included Rosemary Dzuwiche, Head, Department of English Nagaland University, Lubna Sayed Qadri, Founder of Initiative for Development Alternatives

and Executive Director of School for Rural Development & Environment, and Dr. Sumona DasGupta, political scientist, researcher and independent consultant and also Senior Visiting Fellow with Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA). Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, Director WISCOMP moderated the discussion.

Voice Studio

7 March 2018

New Delhi



On the occasion of International Women's Day, WISCOMP organized a Seminar 'Voice Studio' in collaboration with the 14th IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival on 7 March 2018 at India International Center, New Delhi. The Seminar brought together young women from urban and rural areas across the country to collectively reflect on their experiences of democratic engagements and articulations within educational spaces to inform cultures of gender equality and respect for diversity. Moderated by Vani Subramaniam, the participants included Prajakta Shete from Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad; Shirisha Vepoor from Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad; Shirisha Vepoor from Central University of Hyderabad; Lubna Irfan from Aligarh Muslim University; Sabika Abbas Naqvi from Pinra Tod Campaign; Ushasi Pal from Jadavpur University, Kolkata; Nikita, Ekta, Sujata, Palavi and Tannu from Rewari who were accompanied by their Sarpanch; and Satarupa Chakraborty from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Gender and Society: Through a New Lens

23 February 2018

New Delhi



To commemorate International Women's Day, on 6 March 2018, WISCOMP

conducted a half-day workshop with over 100 faculty members and students of the Department of Behavioral and Human Sciences, Manav Rachna International University, Faridabad. Dr. Anjali Bhatia, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi, facilitated the workshop. The Workshop foregrounded key themes related to gender and society, using audio-visuals. The thrust of the workshop was to elicit views of the participants on the issues of construction, experience and representation of gender in national, global and historical contexts. Sites such as Sport, Cinema, Advertisements, Literature, Food and Nutrition and War were examined through the lens of gender and the grid of intersectionality. The aim of the workshop was to generate a thought provoking and stimulating discussion around the issues of gender inequality and violence, difference and discrimination; to raise consciousness and arrive at a dialectic.

Prayaas: Kashmir Calling

23 February 2018

New Delhi



WISCOMP facilitated a three-hour interactive workshop with 15 college students and young professionals from Baramulla and Bandipora districts of Kashmiri in New Delhi on February 23, 2018. The participants were brought together through a collaboration between Pravah and Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS), and were visiting New Delhi for a three-day Exposure Trip to build cross-cultural understanding through dialogue with youth and civil society organizations, capacity building workshops and heritage walks. The WISCOMP workshop provided a context for the participants to collectively reflect on the role of youth in processes of peacebuilding.

Annual Meeting of the International Nuclear Security Education Network (INSEN) held at the International Atomic Energy Agency

9-13 July 2018

Vienna, Austria



NTS Centre Head Assoc Prof Mely Anthony and Mr Julius Cesar Trajano participated in the Annual Meeting of the International Nuclear Security Education Network (INSEN) held at the International Atomic

Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria from 9 to 13 July 2018. During the regional group session, Mr Trajano was chosen to chair the INSEN-Asia Group for 2018-19.

International Workshop on "Japan and Southeast Asia: Current Foreign Policy Issues in the Era of Global Change and Challenges"

29 June 2018

Kyoto University



NTS Head Assoc Prof Mely Caballero Anthony speaking on migration challenges in Southeast Asia at the International Workshop on "Japan and Southeast Asia: Current Foreign Policy Issues in the Era of Global Change and Challenges" held at the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University on 29 June 2018. The workshop was jointly organised by CSEAS and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

RSIS Roundtable on Humanitarian Technology and Innovation: Critical Questions and Implications for Southeast Asia

11 June 2018

Singapore

The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme of RSIS's Non-Traditional Security Centre hosted a roundtable on 11th June. It discussed the critical questions that have arisen since humanitarian technology and innovation became a dedicated focus of the aid sector approximately ten years ago.

The first panel – comprising speakers from academia and the aid sector – raised three challenges stemming from the rapid adoption of new technologies in humanitarianism. These were first the legacy impact on local government/society relations of outside responders using new technologies to enable dialogue with those they are assisting, in pursuit of accountability to beneficiaries. The second was the particular challenge of privacy when collecting data in conflict or disaster settings, both of which can render data acutely sensitive in ways that do not apply



in ordinary contexts. The third challenge noted how new technologies are being deployed by civil society disaster response actors in China in a way that challenges government monopolies on emergency action. This introduces a novel, technology-based tension into the relationship between aid and politics.

The second panel – consisting of NGO and private sector practitioners – discussed specific experiences of innovating in East and Southeast Asian humanitarian response, and the lessons learned. These covered some of the pitfalls NGOs and private sector actors can face when collaborating with

each other on innovative projects. Those challenges were particularly stark for smaller firms and aid organisations. Finally, there was discussion of "solutionism" – of focusing excessively on particular answers instead of properly understanding the questions being presented to innovators – and how it can lead to innovations that at best do not respond to particular needs, and at worst undermine the effectiveness of aid operations. Paraphrasing one presenter, 90 per cent of time spent innovating should be dedicated to understanding the problem, and 10 per cent on proposing solutions.

59th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA)

4-7 April 2018

San Francisco, California

Staff of the NTS Centre participated in the 59th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA) from 4th to 7th April 2018 in San Francisco, California. Associate Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of NTS Centre, chaired the panel on international politics of disasters and presented her paper on regional organization and disaster management. She was also on the panel honouring Amitav Acharya, International Organization Distinguished Scholar, and discussed another on global disaster governance. Dr Alistair Cook, Research



Fellow and Coordinator of the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Programme, presented papers on reforming the global humanitarian system and climate change and refugees. He also discussed papers on foreign aid and security. Dr

Lina Gong, Research Fellow, delivered a presentation on China's participation in international security governance through UN peacekeeping.



NTS-Asia Consortium Conference on Resilience in the Face of Disruptions

27 - 28 March 2018

Singapore

The RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies convened the annual conference of the NTS-Asia Consortium in Singapore on 27-28 March 2018. The conference brought together around 50 participants from 31 member-institutions of the Consortium and its non-member partners. The theme for this year's conference was "Resilience in the Face of Disruptions." The conference provided an enabling platform for Consortium members to discuss multidisciplinary approaches to building and strengthening resilience in the face of complex challenges brought about by disruptions.

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, kicked off the conference with his keynote address on disruptions and resilience amidst climate

change, environmental degradation, and the advent of new forms of technology. Ambassador Ong argued that while 'disruption' is not a new phenomenon, innovative and collaborative approaches are still needed to manage its implications. He emphasised that multilateralism and multi-stakeholder cooperation are crucial for finding sustainable solutions to transnational problems arising from disruptions.

During the panel sessions, Consortium members deliberated on disruptions and resilience-building in five key areas, namely environment and climate change, agriculture and food security, humanitarian crisis and forced displacement, cyber technology, and democracy. They jointly examined the drivers of disruptions in these areas and their implications for states and societies from an NTS perspective. They likewise put forward recommendations that can help cultivate resilience among state and non-state stakeholders amidst complex

challenges from disruptions.

In her closing remarks, Assoc Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the NTS Centre at RSIS and Secretary-General of NTS-Asia Consortium, highlighted the need to further understand the implications of emerging disruptions using an NTS lens and assess if there are sufficient governance mechanisms, institutions and norms to cope with the challenges. She thanked the members of the Consortium for their active participation and valuable contributions that made this year's conference successful. at RSIS and Secretary-General of NTS-Asia Consortium, highlighted the need to further understand the implications of emerging disruptions using an NTS lens and assess if there are sufficient governance mechanisms, institutions and norms to cope with the challenges. She thanked the members of the Consortium for their active participation and valuable contributions that made this year's conference successful.