International Conference on "China - South Asia Civilization and Connectivity: History and Contemporary Issues"

Organized by: China–South Asia Center for Sociocultural Studies (CSCSS), North South University (NSU), Dhaka, Bangladesh & Yunnan University, Kunming, China

Detailed Program Schedule

Date & Time	Program	Guests
27 Dec 9:00-10:00	**Inauguration Ceremony** **Venue: AUDI - 801**	**Welcome Speech**: Professor Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, Director, SIPG, North South University **Conference Convener**: Prof. Mohammed Nuruzzaman, North South University **Special Guest**: Prof. He Ming, Yunnan University **Special Guest**: Mr. Han Kun, Deputy Country Manager Bangladesh, PowerChina International Group Limited **Special Guest**: Mr. Zhao Shibo, Vice President, Overseas Chinese Association in Bangladesh **Guest of Honor**: H.E. Mr. Yao Wen, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China, Dhaka **Chief Guest**: H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain, Adviser for Foreign Affairs, The Interim Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh **Session Chair**: Prof. Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Vice-Chancellor, North South University **Vote of Thanks**: Dr. Harisur Rahman, North South University
27 Dec 10:45-12:15	**Keynote Speeches** **Venue: AUDI - 801**	**Session Moderator:** Prof. Ataur Rahman, Dhaka University **Keynote Speakers:** 1. Prof. Mohammed Nuruzzaman, North South University, Dhaka **Topic**: China in South Asia: Philosophy, Realities and the Future 2. Prof. Mahendra P. Lama, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi **Topic**: Balancing the End Game: South Asian States, India and China 3. Masood Khalid, Former Ambassador of Pakistan **Topic**: Changing Geopolitical Dynamics in South Asia and Pakistan 4. Dr. Zhong Xiaoxin, Yunnan University **Topic:** Myanmar's Role in the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor Initiative

Date & Time	Major Themes	Papers
27 Dec 2:00-3:30	**Theme:** Socio-cultural Interactions Between China and South Asia **Session -1:** China-South Asia Civilizational and Cultural Connections <mark>Venue: Syndicate Hall (Admin Building level-5)</mark> **Session Moderator:** Dr. Zhong Xiaoxin, Yunnan University **Discussant:** Prof. Sayeed Ferdous, Pro VC, Bangladesh Open University & Professor Jahangirnagar University	1. **Title:** A Comparative Study on the Localization Paths of Islam in China and Bangladesh **Author:** Yang Xu, Minzu University of China 2. **Title:** Study on exchanges and mutual learning between Chinese and Bangladeshi civilizations on the Ancient Silk Road **Author:** Li Xingjun, Yunnan Minzu University 3. **Title:** Migration Pattern and Geopolitical Connectivity in Central Asia, China, and South Asia at the Crossroads of Civilizations **Authors:** Mushfika Hasan Stuti, Dhaka University & Kazi Md. Fazlul Haq, Dhaka University
27 Dec 2:00-3:30	**Roundtable – 1** **Moderator:** Prof. Mohammed Nuruzzaman, North South University <mark>Venue: NAC-1058 (SIPG Conference Room)</mark> **Panel Members:** 1. Dr. Shabana Fayyaz, Quaid-i-Azam University 2. Dr. Mahendra P. Lama, Jawaharlal Nehru University 3. Dr. Liu Zongyi, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), China	**Title:** China-India Rivalry in South Asia: Geopolitical Obsessions vs. the Logic of Geo-economics Short description: This panel aims to critically discuss China's and India's ever unfolding rivalry and competing approaches to South Asia relations, which underwent qualitative changes after China had formally launched its flagship global infrastructure development project – the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013 that created great appeal to all South Asian states, except India. While India mostly acts from geopolitical imperatives to resist China's BRI push in South Asia, China is applying geo-economic methods (methods of commerce, investments, technical support, project financing etc.) to wean the neighbors away from India. Will China eventually win the battle at a great expense of India? Can India reconsider participating in the BRI to create a win-win situation and thus build cooperative ties with China? Can geo-economics take precedence over geopolitics in South Asia? Panelists will initiate and delve into critical discussions on these questions and related issues.
27 Dec 2:00-3:30	**Theme:** Poverty, Economic Growth and Good Governance **Session-1:** Linking Crimes, Poverty and Economic Growth <mark>Venue: NAC-1024 (SHSS Dean's Conference Room)</mark>	1. **Title:** An analysis of Foreign Trade and Economic Growth: Empirics from Nepal **Authors:** Krishna Raj Acharya, Tribhuvan University & Shobha Aryal, Tribhuvan University 2. **Title:** How Does Economy Influence Crime? A Panel Discussion **Authors:** Asma Begum & Dr. Shahriar Kabir, Independent University, Bangladesh 3. **Title:** Linkage between Poverty, Remittance and Economic Growth: A Panel Study on South and Southeast Asia

	Session Moderator: Prof. A.K.M. Atiqur Rahman, North South University **Discussant:** Dr. Sadek Yousuf, North South University	**Authors**: Shafakat Bin Afsar & Dr. Shahriar Kabir, Independent University, Bangladesh
27 Dec 3:45-5:15	**Theme:** Socio-cultural Interactions between China and South Asia **Session -2**: Identity, Cultural Values and Nation-states in South Asia **Venue: Syndicate Hall (Admin Building level-5)** **Session Moderator**: Prof. Mahbubur Rahman, North South University **Discussant**: Prof. Mahmudul Hassan Sumon, Jahangirnagar University	1. **Title**: Daily Rituals on Ethnic Identity and Formation of Nation-state among the Lowland Sinhalese in Sri Lanka **Author**: YINGRUN YANG, Yunnan University 2. **Title**: Confucianism and administrative Culture in South and East Asia **Authors**: Sk. Tawfique M Haque, North South University & Sakif Al Ehsan Khan, SIPG
27 Dec 3:45-5:15	**Theme**: Language and Education **Session**: Connecting Economics, Cultures and Education under BRI **Venue: NAC-1058 (SIPG Conference Room)** **Session Moderator**: Dr. Samsad Mortuza, Dhaka University **Discussant:** Md. Obaidul Haque, Dhaka University	1. Title: Integrating Economies and Cultures: BRI Entrepreneurs' Perspectives on the Development of the Belt and Road Initiative **Author**: Chen Yixin, Yunnan University 2. Title: China's Educational Diplomacy in Pakistan: Analyzing the Influence of Higher Education Initiatives **Author**: Syed Basim Raza, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) 3. Title: The Objective of BRI and how far it has been achieved **Authors**: Saraf Waima; K. M. Noor-E-Zannat Nadi, North South University & Saikat Bhattacharia, New Integrated Government Institute
27 Dec 3:45-5:15	**Theme:** Poverty, Economic Growth and Good Governance **Session –2**: Economic and Climate Governance in China and South Asia **Venue: NAC-1024 (SHSS Dean's Conference Room)**	1. **Title**: Urban Governance in Heatwave Adaptation and Mitigation: Insights from Rajshahi City Corporation and Regional Practices in South Asia and China **Authors**: A.K.M. Mahmudul Haque, University of Rajshahi Imran Hossain, University of Rajshahi & Faria Rahman Nady, University of Rajshahi 2. **Title**: China's governing experience: Essential lessons for other developing countries **Author:** Mostak Ahamed Galib, Wuhan University of Technology

	Session Moderator: Dr. Mohammad Sujauddin, North South University **Discussant:** Prof. Abdur Rahman Forhad, Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology	3. **Title**: The Influence of Democratization and Economic Development on the Autonomous Civil Society Organizations: A Cross Country Analysis on Co-governance in Promoting Civic Engagement **Authors**: Yohei Kobashi, University of Tokyo, Yutaka Tsujinaka, Toyo Gakuen University & Shakil Ahmed, Jahangirnagar University
27 Dec 3:45-5:15	**Theme:** Infrastructure and Logistics **Session**: China- South Asia Cooperation for Energy Security, Sub-regionalism and Trade **Venue: NAC-640 (SBE Dean's Conference Room)** **Session Moderator**: Prof. Waresul Karim, North South University **Discussant:** Dr. Sakib Bin Amin, North South University	1. **Title**: Pakistan's energy issues and China- Pakistan energy cooperation **Author**: Xiangyang Liu, Guizhou Normal University 3. **Title**: The Impact of the Rakhine Conflict on the BCIM Corridor **Authors:** Fangliang Zhang, Yunnan University & Yuance Li, Yunnan University 4. **Title**: Strengthening Energy Security: Bangladesh-China Collaboration in Clean Energy Transition **Author:** Sakib Bin Amin, North South University
28 Dec 9:00-10:30	**Theme:** Political and Diplomatic Dynamics **Session –1**: Rohingya Crisis, Security Dilemma and Counter-terrorism **Venue: Syndicate Hall (Admin Building level-5)** **Session Moderator**: Prof. Delwar Hossain, Dhaka University **Discussant**: Dr. Bulbul Ashraf Siddiqi, North South University	1. **Title**: Rohingya Refugee Situation in Bangladesh: The Scope of China in Resolving the Problem **Author**: Md. Mahbubur Rahman, North South University 2. **Title**: Bangladesh's Security Dilemma, China's Engagement in South Asia, and the Limits of Realisms Author: Md. Rashidul Islam Rusel, Jahangirnagar University 3. **Title**: A Comprehensive Analysis of China's Counter-Terrorism Strategy in South Asia: Challenges and Opportunities **Author**: Shabana Fayyaz, Quaid-i-Azam University 4. **Title**: Analyzing Bangladesh's Foreign Policy Equilibrium: From Putnam's Two-Level Game to an Extended Political Settlement Analysis Framework **Author**: Anar Koli, Soka University
28 Dec 9:00-10:30	**Theme:** Media, Communication, and Public sentiment **Session-1**: Public Perceptions and Bilateral Relations **Venue: NAC-1058 (SIPG Conference Room)**	1. **Title**: Analyzing Indian Discourse on CPEC: Implications for China-India Cooperation in South Asia **Author:** Muhammad Ahmad Khan, India Study Centre, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad 2. **Title**: How do People in South Asia Perceive the Influence of China and India? **Authors**: Akram Hossain, North South University & Hasan Muhammad Baniamin, North South University

	Session Moderator: Dr. Harisur Rahman, North South University **Discussant**: Prof. Mofizur Rhaman, Dhaka University	3. **Title**: Emotional Perceptions of China and Potential for Strengthening Soft Power Influences in Bangladesh **Author:** Syed Shahnawaz Mohsin
28 Dec 11:00-12:30	**Theme**: Political and Diplomatic Dynamics **Session –2**: Flashpoints – The Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific <mark>**Venue: Syndicate Hall (Admin Building level-5)**</mark> **Session Moderator:** Prof. Tanzimuddin Khan, Dhaka University **Discussant**: Dr. Liu Zongyi, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), Shanghai	1. **Title**: China, India, and the Bay of Bengal: Tranquility at Bay? **Author**: Imtiaz A. Hussain, Independent University, Bangladesh 2. **Title**: Ancient Echoes in Present: China's Naval Diplomacy in Western Indian Ocean Region **Author**: Manickam Venkataraman, Jawaharlal Nehru University 3. **Title**: Adjustments in U.S. South Asia Policy under the Indo-Pacific Strategy and China's South Asia Strategy **Author**: David Jiang, Nanjing Audit University 4. **Title**: The Strategic Choices of Smaller South Asian States in the context of Geopolitical Changes **Author**: Feng Libing, Huaqiao University, China 5. **Title**: Exploring the Global Security Initiative: Implications for Bangladesh in a Multipolar World **Author**: Md. Obaidul Haque, Dhaka University
28 Dec 11:00-12:30	**Theme**: Media, Communication, and Public Sentiments **Session –2**: Opinion Makers and Influencers in and beyond South Asia <mark>**Venue: NAC-1058 (SIPG Conference Room)**</mark> **Session Moderator:** Dr. Soumik Pal, North South University **Discussant:** Quazi Tafsirul Islam, North South University	1. **Title**: Between Tradition and Modernity: A Survey of Nepali Journalists as Opinion Leaders **Authors**: Yang Mingyue, Yunnan Normal University Lu Shuangmei, Yunnan Normal University 2. **Title**: Empathy of images: International relations and the global spread of news images in Bangladesh **Author**: Lu Shuangmei, Yunnan Normal University 3. **Title**: The Politics of Closure of Private Television Channels in Bangladesh: A Political Economy Critique **Author**: Abdur Razzaque Khan, Dhaka University
28 Dec 11:00-12:30	**Roundtable –2** **Moderator**: Salman Haider, North South University <mark>**Venue: SAC-620 (SHLS Dean's Conference Room)**</mark> **Panel Members**:	**Title**: From Bilateral Strategic Partnership to a Comprehensive Strategic Co-operative Partnership: Mapping Out Bangladesh–China Agricultural Cooperation to Ensure Food Security for the Marginalized communities in Bangladesh Short description: This panel examines and explores the overall economic relations between Bangladesh and China with a special focus on bilateral agricultural cooperation. Under various cooperation initiatives from public and private sectors, both countries are engaged in in-depth agricultural cooperation and

	1. Dr. Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, PKSF 2. Dr. Ayub Hossain, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute 3. Sirajul Islam Molla, President, Sunder Jiban 4. Shahanuare Shaid Shahin, *The Daily Kaler Kantho* & Bangladesh Agricultural Journalists Forum (BAJF)	promotion, including professional knowledge sharing, seeds, pest prevention, agricultural devices and so on. Panel members look forward to highlighting the existing gaps in co-operation, identify the most possible ways to use China's technological advances to maximize food security for the marginal Bangladeshi communities, and suggest policy recommendations for the Bangladesh government.
28 Dec 01:30-3:00	**Theme:** Economic and Trade Connections **Session –1**: Incentives for Cooperation and Chinese Economic Influence in South Asia ==Venue: Syndicate Hall (Admin Building level-5)== **Session Moderator:** Prof Gour Gobinda Goswami, Uttara University **Discussant:** Dr. Ziaul Huq Adnan, North South University	1. **Title**: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Critical Appraisal **Author**: Ghulam Ali, Hong Kong Research Center for Asian Studies 2. **Title**: Economic Growth in Bangladesh: Unveiling the Effect of Chinese Capital Inflow through Time-series Analysis **Authors**: Sk. Faijan Bin Halima & Khan Mehedi Hasana, Khulna University 3. **Title**: Chinese Corporations Crossing the Bay of Bengal: The Break and Make of Work Ethics in Transnationals in South-South Cooperation **Authors**: Feng Jie, Yunnan University 4. **Title**: Bangladesh-China Relations in the Context of the BRI **Authors**: Prof. Md. Shahidul Haque, North South University & Nowshin Islam, North South University
28 Dec 01:30-03:00	**Roundtable –3** **Moderator:** Dr. Harisur Rahman, North South University ==Venue: NAC-1058 (SIPG Conference Room)== **Panel Members:** 1. Dr. Wei Ping, Yunnan University 2. Dr. Habib Mohammad Ali, ULAB 3. Ms. Maliha Tabassum,	**Title**: Strengthening Media and Intercultural Collaboration Between Bangladesh and China Short description: This panel investigates the critical role that media and intercultural communication play in the evolving relationship between these two dynamic nations. Panelists seek to present a comprehensive discussion on the historical context of media interactions between China and Bangladesh, highlighting the evolution from traditional forms of media to the current digital landscape, and compare their regulatory frameworks, media ownership structures, and the extent of media freedom, offering insights into how these factors shape public opinion and governmental policies. Finally, the panelists will identify potential opportunities for enhancing media cooperation, such as joint media productions, educational exchanges in journalism and communication, and the establishment of platforms that promote cross-cultural dialogues.

	Bangladesh University of Professionals 4. Ms. Mrittika Anan Rahman, NSU 5. Prof. Guo Jianbin, Guangzhou University	
28 Dec 03:00-4:30	**Theme:** Economic and Trade Connections **Session -2**: China's LDC Trade Strategies and De-dollarization move <mark>**Venue: Syndicate Hall (Admin Building level-5)**</mark> **Session Moderator:** Dr. Huang Yunsong, Sichuan University **Discussant:** Prof. Kazi Mahmudur Rahman, Independent University, Bangladesh	1. **Title**: A Study on the International Gem Trade Network of Jain Merchants **Author**: Jing Xu, GuiZhou Normal University 2. **Title**: Chinese's Trade Strategies with LDC Graduating Countries and Possible Implications: Lessons for Bangladesh **Authors**: Kazi Mahmudur Rahman, Independent University, Bangladesh & Anika Tasnim, Independent University, Bangladesh 3. **Title**: De-dollarization and New Strategies of RMB Internationalization – Analysis Based on Belt and Road Initiative Practice **Author**: Fang Shaoyun Tony, Nanjing Audit University
28 Dec 03:00-04:30	**Theme**: AI, Cyber Diplomacy and Security **Session**: The Role of AI, Cyber Diplomacy and Soft Power in China-South Asia Relations <mark>**Venue: NAC-1024 (SHSS Dean's Conference Room)**</mark> **Session Moderator:** Prof. Tawfique M. Haque, North South University **Discussant:** Dr. Zulkarin Jahangir, North South University	1. **Title**: AI and Cyber Diplomacy: Building Trust in China-South Asia Relations **Author**: Noureen Akhtar, Quaid-i-Azam University 2. **Title**: The Objectives and Evolution of India's Artificial Intelligence Policies and Laws and Implications for China **Authors**: Yang Jiaqi, Sun Yat-sen University & Zhang Te, Sun Yat-sen University 3. **Title**: Dynamics of China's and India's Soft Power Tussle in South Asia: A Critical Analysis **Authors**: Prof. Mohammed Nuruzzaman, North South University & Dr. Noor Mohammad Sarker, North South University 4. **Title**: Chinese soft Power Strategy in Bangladesh **Author**: Dr. Saleh Md. Shahriar, North South University
28 Dec 03:00-04:30	**Theme:** Health and Medicine **Session**: Promoting People to People Contact Through Medical Teams and Narratives <mark>**Venue: NAC-640 (SBE Dean's Conference Room)**</mark>	1. **Title**: The Breakthrough Points for People-to-People Exchanges between China and India: Enlightenment from the Indian Medical Team to China **Author**: Shuai Zhang, Research Center for the Belt and Road, Lanzhou University 2. **Title**: The Anti-Colonial Medical Narratives of Early 20th Century Colonial India: A Challenge to Colonial Medical Paradigm **Authors**: Nazim Husain Al-Jafri & Nabeela Rehman, JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA

Date & Time	Program	Guests
	Session Moderator: Dr. Nur Newaz Khan, North South University **Discussant:** Prof. Dipak Kumar Mitra, North South University	
28 Dec 04:45-05:45	**Concluding Session** **Venue: AUDI – 801** **Session Chair:** Prof. Abdur Rob Khan, Treasurer and Pro Vice-Chancellor, North South University	**Summary of the whole Conference**: Prof. Mohammed Nuruzzaman, North South University **Special Guest:** Mr. Li Shaopeng, Cultural Counsellor, The Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Dhaka **Open Discussions**

<u>**Compilation of Abstracts**</u>

International Conference

on

China – South Asia Civilization and Connectivity:
History and Contemporary Issues

(27-28 Dec 2024, North South University, Dhaka)

Theme: China South Asia Civilizational and Cultural Connections

Session -1 (Paper 1): China-South Asia Civilizational and Cultural Connections

1. Author: Yang Xu

   Institution: Minzu University of China, Beijing, China

   Email: yx19951005@gmail.com

   Title of the Paper: A Comparative Study on the Localization Paths of Islam in China and Bangladesh

Abstract:

After the introduction of Islam into China and Bangladesh, both experienced a process of Islamic localization. In particular, local Muslims use their mother tongue and local traditional culture as a cultural carrier, translate Arabic and Persian religious texts, and write religious works suitable for the understanding of local believers. For example, Chinese Muslim scholars use Chinese to translate Islamic classics and use traditional Chinese culture represented by Confucianism to interpret the teachings of Islam. At the same time, Bengali Muslim scholars translated or wrote Islamic classics and works in Bengali, integrating Hinduism, Buddhism and other native Bengali cultures to interpret Islam. This paper selects one Chinese and Bangladeshi Islamic work, namely, the Tian Fang Zheng Xue (The True Knowledge of Islam), written by the Chinese Muslim scholar Lan Xu in the mid-19th century, and the Nabi Vamsa (Lineage of the Prophet), written by the Bengal Muslim scholar Syed Sultan in the 16th century. First, introduce the basic situation of two scholars and their works. Secondly, based on the two works, the paper examines the relevant contents of the two themes of Islamic cosmology and prophetic lineage, and explores how the two scholars interpret and present Islamic cosmology and prophetic lineage by using their respective local traditional cultural frameworks. For example, Lan Xu placed the Chinese mythological figures Fuxi and Shennong in the prophet sequence of Islam, and the Sultan integrated

the Hindu concept of avatar (incarnation) into the nabi (prophet) concept of Islam. Finally, we discuss the enlightenment of the localization of Islam and the mutual learning of civilizations embodied in the two works.

Session -1 (Paper 2): China-South Asia Civilizational and Cultural Connections

2.   Author: Li Xingjun

        Institution: Yunnan Minzu University, China

        Email: 707654583@qq.com

        Title of the Paper: Study on exchanges and mutual learning between Chinese and Bangladeshi civilizations on the Ancient Silk Road

Abstract:

As a member of the ancient Silk Road, Bangladesh has a long history of friendly exchanges with China. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties, China and Bangladesh have gradually set a good example of friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation between countries in the "global South".From the Han Dynasty, China and Bangladesh established extensive contacts through the Southern Silk Road. Through the Southern Silk Road, Sichuan and Yunnan regions propagated textile, tea growing, ironware, smelting, rice cultivation and other technologies to Bangladesh, while China introduced reed, bitter melon, eggplant, sugarcane, lentil and other technologies from Bangladesh. Buddhism was also introduced to China along the Silk Road. Architectural style, astronomical calendar, historical legends, music and customs of Bangladesh With the introduction of Buddhism into China, the Chinese navigator Zheng He visited Bangladesh at least twice, and the ethnic minorities in northeast and southeast Bangladesh spread the legend of migrating from Sichuan, Yunnan, Tibet and Mongolia through the southern Silk Road.The story and experience of exchanges and mutual learning between Chinese and Bangladeshi civilizations along the ancient Silk Road is a cultural resource for the Chinese and Bangladeshi peoples to "beauty shared is beauty doubled" and "people-to-people bond". It is also a theoretical resource for China and Bangladesh to jointly build the high-quality Belt and Road Initiative and the China-Bangladesh community with a shared future.

Session -1 (Paper 3): China-South Asia Civilizational and Cultural Connections

3.   Author: Mushfika Hasan Stuti & Kazi Md. Fazlul Haq

        Institution: Department of Geography and Environment, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

        Email: mushfikahasan30@gmail.com; kazihaq.geoenv@du.ac.bd

Title of the Paper: Migration Pattern and Geopolitical Connectivity in Central Asia, China, and South Asia at the Crossroads of Civilizations

Abstract:

Spreading from the Caspian Sea in the southwest and Eastern Europe in the northwest to Western China and Mongolia in the east, and from Afghanistan and Iran in the south to Russia in the north, Central Asia (CA) is a core region of Asia. The CA has been a significant crossroads of civilizations for millennia, shaped by diverse migratory forces linked to its interactions with China and South Asia (SA). The present study investigates the place's migratory styles, focusing on the ancient events and political tendencies that have influenced population movements. The research explores the impact of nomadic pastoralism, trade routes such as the Silk Road, and empires like the Mongol Khanate on CA's demographic landscape. Special interest is given to CA, China, and SA interactions. Additionally, the study examines the post-Soviet era, analyzing how independence movements and financial disparities brought about new migration flows within and beyond the region, thereby affecting China-South Asia connectivity. Political upheavals, consisting of the Russian conquest and the Soviet period, extensively reshaped migration styles in CA. Policies, together with forced sedentarization and internal deportations, had profound consequences for population distribution and ethnic tensions. Situated on the crossroads of civilizations, CA has long served as a nexus for cultural exchange, conquest, and exchange, contributing to its specific range and dynamism. The study delves into both inward and outward migration patterns, exploring the influence of geopolitical theories like Mackinder's "Heartland" concept, which positions CA as a crucial geopolitical pivot. Through a nuanced evaluation of number one resources and scholarly research, the study examines the enduring impact of ancient events and strength dynamics on migration flows, highlighting the legacies that keep shaping cutting-edge migration policies and perceptions in CA. By tracing these ancient threads, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the complicated dynamics shaping migration in CA and its connections with China and SA. The historic context provided sheds light on cutting-edge issues including labor migration, refugee movements, and border management challenges, imparting treasured insights into the continued evolution of migration in the vicinity

Session -2 (Paper 1): Identity, Cultural Values and Nation-states in South Asia

1.   Author: YINGRUN YANG

Institution: Yunnan University, China

Email: yr592312796@163.com

Title of the Paper: Daily Rituals on Ethnic Identity and Formation of Nation-state among the Lowland Sinhalese in Sri Lanka

Abstract:

Sri Lanka, an island country located in the Indian Ocean south of the South Asian subcontinent, is a typical region with frequent ethnic issues and prevalence of nationalism in the post-colonial era. The long experience of Western colonial rule and the continued ethnic tension made it difficult to resolve ethnic issues represented by

the Sinhalese-Tamil issues in the short term, which also gave rise to the highly representative Sinhala Buddhist nationalism. After independence, Sri Lanka experienced a short period of social stability. Unfortunately, Sri Lanka not only failed to fully "decolonize", but also failed to solve the problem of ethnic equality between the majority and the minority in forming the modern nation-state. Sri Lanka has positioned itself as a Buddhist country and even placed Buddhism at the forefront in the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. However, it cannot be ignored that in multi-ethnic and multi-religious Sri Lanka, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam have long co-existed. This study will focus on the religious rituals in the daily life of the lowland Sinhalese, explore how do local member practice Buddhist teachings in their daily lives and in which way, Sinhala Buddhist Nationalism exist in Sri Lanka from the micro perspective of anthropological fieldwork and analyze the relationship between the religion and ethnic identity of the Sinhalese, the majority in Sri Lanka's formation of nation-state.

Session -2 (Paper 2): Identity, Cultural Values and Nation-states in South Asia

2. Author: Jingxuan Wang

    Institution: School of Ethnology and Sociology, Yunnan University, China

    Email: wangjx611@126.com

    Title of the Paper: Struggle for identity: A study based on the Santal community in Bangladesh Abstract：The Santhals are an ethnic minority in Bangladesh, predominantly in the north-west of the country (Rangpur and Rajshahi districts)

Abstract:

According to statistics, the number of Santhals in Bangladesh is more than 300,000 people. The Santhals of Bangladesh have long endeavoured to seek an "indigenous" identity in the hope of attaining an equal social status with the dominant Bangladeshi group, the Bengalis. The fact is, however, that the Santals' quest for an "indigenous" identity has been ignored by the Government of Bangladesh, especially due to political exclusion, economic inequality and cultural exclusion from the dominant group of Bengalis in Bangladesh, which has resulted in the Santals remaining marginalised and living in poverty in Bangladesh. In response, the Santhal people have been struggling to find their "indigenous" identity, which has resulted in drastic changes in the livelihoods, cultural traditions, religious beliefs, and social organisation of the Santhal society.

Session -2 (Paper 3): Identity, Cultural Values and Nation-states in South Asia

3.   Author: Sk Tawfique M Haque and Sakif Al Ehsan Khan

      Institution: North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

      Email: Sakif.khan17@gmail.com; tawfique.haque@northsouth.edu

      Title of the Paper: Confucianism and administrative Culture in South and East
                             Asia

Abstract:

Though the great era of Confucius is past, the teachings and thoughts of this Chinese philosopher is still prevalent in some parts of the world. The influence of Confucius is defining the culture as well as administrative culture in collaboration with other cultural traits. The core Confucian principles have made a mixture of rule of law with the rule of man. With the rapid growth of modernization and influence of traditional values, countries of East Asia and South Asia are in the situation of well acquainted with the ups and downs of bureaucracy. Though some of the East Asian countries are keeping pace with the accelerating changes happening in the world, thereby embracing different doctrines such as liberalism, pluralism and others; they are not removing the age long values of Confucianism and other local doctrines. This study examines the intricacies of reforming administrative culture in the South Asian region, contending that a linear or unilateral strategy is not successful. Religion, nationalism, and opposition to change are significant elements that influence the administrative environment, whereas globalization and neo-liberal ideas question conventional historical accounts. While Confucian principles have some significance, their usefulness within South Asian administrative systems is restricted. Furthermore, even in East Asia, Confucian values are rarely uniformly maintained and frequently merge with Western ideology. This study emphasizes the significance of cultural context in administrative procedures and proposes that a reassessment of current narratives, together with a culturally flexible integration of Western and Confucian ideas, could improve effectiveness and productivity in South Asian governance.

Theme: Infrastructure and Logistics

Session (Paper 1): China- South Asia Cooperation for Energy Security, Sub-regionalism and Trade

1. Author: Xiangyang Liu

    Institution: School of History and Politics, Guizhou Normal University
                       ，China

    Email: Liuxianyang723@126.com

    Title of the Paper: Pakistan's energy issues and China- Pakistan energy
                       cooperation

Abstract:

Energy plays a very important role in social and economic development, improvement of people's lives, and long-term social stability. In the past few years, Pakistan has faced a severe energy shortage and imbalanced energy structure. Pakistan's energy security issues have been severe due to expensive fuel sources, long-term shortages of natural gas and electricity, circular debt, and inadequate transmission and distribution systems. In order to solve Pakistan's energy problem, Pakistan has not only strengthened domestic oil and gas resource development, promoted international oil and gas pipeline planning, but also strengthened cooperation with China to develop electricity resources. With the advancement of the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, great achievements have been made in China-Pakistan energy cooperation, and the prospects for China- Pakistan energy cooperation are broad.

Session (Paper 2): China- South Asia Cooperation for Energy Security, Sub-regionalism and Trade

2. Author: Fangliang Zhang and Yuance Li

    Institution: Yunnan University, China

    Email: stellazhang0101@gmail.com

    Title of the Paper: The Impact of the Rakhine Conflict on the BCIM Corridor

Abstract:

As a crucial node in the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Corridor, the internal situation in Rakhine State significantly impacts the corridor's construction and development. Since the Burmese conquest of the Rakhine region in 1875, a large-scale exodus of Rakhine residents to Bengal and India has occurred. Since 1942, ongoing ethnic conflicts between the Rohingya and Rakhine people have resulted in a significant outflow of residents, concentrating in border areas between Bangladesh and Myanmar, Thailand and Myanmar, India and Myanmar, and China and Myanmar. This migration has deeply affected the BCIM Corridor's development. Through continuous follow-up studies and in-depth interviews with Rakhine people, Rohingya, Burmese, and other residents of Rakhine State, this paper analyzes the impact of the ethnic

conflict on the BCIM Corridor. Specifically, the geopolitical instability in Rakhine State has led to delays and interruptions in infrastructure construction; ethnic conflicts have disrupted the corridor's transportation routes; and the large-scale population movements caused by the conflict have exacerbated the social and economic burden on regions along the corridor. The paper concludes that, due to the absence of absolute power suppression, the ethnic conflict in Rakhine State is unlikely to be fully resolved in the short term. Therefore, the construction of the BCIM Corridor in the Rakhine region requires a multi-party coordination and dialogue mechanism, the promotion of peace dialogue and reconciliation through humanitarian aid, and the strengthening of infrastructure security. Future development of the BCIM Corridor must consider not only economic factors but also political, security, and social issues to achieve long-term stability and sustainable development. Keywords: Rakhine State, BCIM Corridor, ethnic conflict.

Session (Paper 3): China- South Asia Cooperation for Energy Security, Sub-regionalism and Trade

3.   Author: Sakib Amin

      Institution: North South University, Bangladesh

      Email: sakib.amin@northsouth.edu

      Title of the Paper: Strengthening Energy Security: Bangladesh-China
                             Collaboration in Clean Energy Transition

Abstract:

Developing and emerging nations of the world recognize energy as part and parcel of their development journey. As such, energy security poses itself as a critical element of Bangladesh's long-term socioeconomic development. Over the past decade, the country has significantly expanded its power generation capacity to meet the rising demand for electricity, essential for both industrialization and improving living standards. However, the continuation of quick rental power plants and interference of the few elites in the decision-making process for the LNG imports (Herman, 2024; Islam, 2022), have raised questions of sustainability in Bangladesh's energy landscape. Concerns over geopolitical dynamics, the environmental impacts of fossil fuel reliance, and the sustainability of the existing fuel mix have thus prompted a shift in energy policy, placing a transition towards cleaner energy solutions at its forefront. To align with the global objectives of carbon neutrality, as laid out in the Paris Agreement, Bangladesh is steadily adopting clean energy sources to achieve its long-term sustainability goals. The country's renewable energy policy, aiming for 40% of its electricity to come from clean energy by 2041, demonstrates a firm commitment to reducing carbon emissions and securing a green energy future (Shishir, 2024). At present, Bangladesh generates approximately 1,300 MW from renewable sources, including 716 MW from solar, wind, and hydropower. However, these efforts are still in the early stages compared to the nation's overall energy needs. China, one of the largest investors in the energy sector, plays a crucial role in facilitating this clean energy transition. Chinese companies have contributed to more than 35% of

Bangladesh's installed power capacity, amounting to an increase of over 9,000 MW across 27 projects (Xinhua, 2024). These investments, particularly under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), emphasize renewable energy development, among other areas. Bangladesh's Ministry of Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources retains an optimistic outlook on the future of energy collaboration with China, hoping for investment projects that would contribute 30 billion USD towards Bangladesh's energy infrastructure development. This capital injection will fund various renewable energy projects, enhance power generation capacity, and improve transmission networks. Bangladesh's joint ventures with China, such as the 160 MW solar power plant in Cox's Bazar and the 500 MW renewable energy initiative involving solar and waste-to-energy solutions, further emphasize the importance of China's role in the clean energy transition. The Jamalpur solar project, with a 100 MW capacity and a 20-year operational agreement, serves as another key milestone, propelling Bangladesh toward its clean energy goals. Moreover, China's decision to cease financing new coal-fired power plants abroad aligns with Bangladesh's transition away from fossil fuels (Moazzem, 2021). This shift presents an opportunity for Bangladesh to phase out its reliance on coal by 2030, particularly at plants such as Banshkhali and Barisal, and replace them with clean energy projects. This study will employ a qualitative approach, critically analyzing relevant literature and examining the existing collaboration between Bangladesh and China in the context of the clean energy transition. A comprehensive literature review will be conducted, drawing from academic papers, government reports, and international publications to explore Bangladesh's energy security challenges and China's role in the global energy landscape, particularly under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The study will further utilize a geopolitics-energy security framework to analyze the influence of global energy trends and regional dynamics on Bangladesh's energy policies. By evaluating policies such as Bangladesh's Renewable Energy Policy and China's overseas energy strategy, the research provides insights into how this collaboration impacts energy security, economic growth, and sustainable development. The study will further identify key challenges and opportunities in this collaboration and in achieving greener investments to strengthen energy cooperation between the two nations. The findings of this paper are expected to underscore the crucial role of energy security in Bangladesh's economic development, particularly as the country grapples with challenges surrounding sustainability, dependence on fossil fuels, and geopolitical influences. While Bangladesh's energy sector has expanded in capacity, concerns persist about its reliance on unsustainable sources like Quick Rentals and the vulnerability to global political dynamics. The collaboration between Bangladesh and China plays a pivotal role in strengthening Bangladesh's energy security, while supporting the country's long-term goals of transitioning to renewable energy and aligning with international agreements such as the Paris Agreement. This partnership holds strategic significance, not only in enhancing energy security but also in promoting job creation and sustainable development. By fostering innovation, enhancing power infrastructure, and driving clean energy investments, this partnership is set to play a pivotal role in securing a clean, green, and prosperous energy future for Bangladesh. Initiatives to streamline the investment toward a clean energy transition, such as a pooled fund catering to renewable energy projects, can be an effective vector toward realizing the two nations' shared goals.

Theme: Economic and Trade Connections

Session –1 (Paper 1): Incentives for Cooperation and Chinese Economic Influence in South Asia

1.   Author: Ghulam Ali

        Institution: Hong Kong Research Center for Asian Studies, Hong Kong

        Email: ghulam.ali.roy@gmail.com

        Title of the Paper: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: A Critical Appraisal

Abstract:

Since its formal inauguration in April 2015, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been surrounded by controversies, inflated claims, and speculations. Now, after a decade of its existence, it is time to reflect on this megaproject and separate myths from realities. This article critically examines the CPEC with an aim to distinguish between hype and reality. It argues that the CPEC has made little actual progress and supports this claim with data, such as the overall poor economic and trade ties, low shipments at Gwadar Ports, underutilization of the road connection (the KKH), and limited people-to-people contact (especially from Chinese to Pakistan). On top of that security situation in Pakistan remained fragile with unabated tragic attacks on Chinese workers mocking the failure of Pakistani security forces. The article explores the reasons behind this lackluster progress and suggests that the primary responsibility for these low outcomes lies with Pakistan. Until Pakistan addresses its internal issues, including severing ties between the military and militant groups, resolving political issues through dialogue, and reducing the role of military and intelligence agencies in CPEC's development, no significant progress in this megaproject can be expected.

Session –1 (Paper 2): Incentives for Cooperation and Chinese Economic Influence in South Asia

2.   Author: Sk. Faijan Bin Halima and Khan Mehedi Hasana

        Institution: Economics Discipline, Khulna University, Bangladesh

        Email: khanmehedihasan@econ.ku.ac.bd

        Title of the Paper: Economic Growth in Bangladesh: Unveiling the Effect of Chinese Capital Inflow through Time-series Analysis

Abstract:

Over the last decade, Chinese investment has substantially influenced the economic landscapes of developing countries including Bangladesh. Understanding its effect on economic growth, particularly through GDP dynamics is crucial for policy formulation

and long-term development initiatives. Objective: This study investigates the association between Chinese investment and GDP growth in Bangladesh. Study Design and Data Frame: Data are extracted from World Development Indicators (WDI) and American Enterprise Institute (AEI) database spanning from 2009 to 2023, comprising balanced and stationary variables at logarithmic level with lag specifications (lag 2). Results: The vector autoregressive model (VAR) presents that Chinese capital inflow (million US$) has a statistically significant positive effect on GDP growth, with a coefficient of 0.196 (p = 0.011) in the first lag (L1) implying higher Chinese capital inflows promote economic growth in Bangladesh. Furthermore, trade intensity (% of GDP) initially has a negative influence on GDP growth (L1: -1.170, p = 0.004), followed by a positive effect in the second lag (L2: 1.204, p = 0.007), implying changing trade dynamics. Government effectiveness (measured in percentile rank) initially impeding growth (L1: -3.808, p = 0.004) but later contributing positively (L2: 3.569, p = 0.001), bolstering the importance of governance improvements in determining economic outcome. Furthermore, Granger causality results demonstrate that Chinese capital inflow granger cause GDP growth, inferring a prediction association. Trade intensity and government effectiveness also significantly Granger-cause GDP growth, highlighting their potential role. Additionally, GDP growth Granger-causes Chinese capital inflow and trade intensity suggesting bidirectional relationship. Policy Implication: Policymakers should prioritize measures for improving governance effectiveness and attracting foreign investment.

Session –1 (Paper 3): Incentives for Cooperation and Chinese Economic Influence in South Asia

3.   Author: Feng Jie

      Institution: School of Ethnology and Sociology, Yunnan University, China

      Email: cosmofeng@live.com

      Title of the Paper: Chinese Corporations Crossing the Bay of Bengal: The Break and Make of Work Ethics in Transnationals in South-South Cooperation

Abstract:

International co-operation for the purpose of economic and socio-cultural development is one of the concerns of anthropological research. For a long time, international exchanges have been dominated by the Global North in terms of nature and quantity, but such co-operation, by the very nature of its imbalanced power structure, has instead confined Southern countries to a more serious developmental predicament (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 2006; Esteva, 2023). In the light of increasing exchanges and cooperation between China and other countries in the Global South anthropological research on international exchanges and cooperation scaffolded in such political and economic context of South-South cooperation will introduce new conceptual and research framework. China and Bangladesh enjoy a long history of communication. Under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, the BCIM Economic Corridor is being built as an important corridor for China to open up to

South Asia and Southeast Asia with Yunnan province as its base. However, the promotion of economic exchanges must be premised on the proper handling of non-economic factors, and multinational enterprises, while organising with the economic rationality of maximising efficiency, must also accommodate actors from different sociocultural and sociopolitical backgrounds. Considering the Chinese enterprises in Bangladesh as a social, cultural and economic field where diversity is intertwined, this study use anthropological participatory observation to examine how the professional rationality and work ethics of different actors in the field are shaped by their sociocultural backgrounds, to find out how their sociocultural demands are expressed through professional rationality, and to understand how different professional rationalities can be effectively integrated in order to realise the economic and social value in the business sector.

Session –1 (Paper 4): Incentives for Cooperation and Chinese Economic Influence in South Asia

4.   Authors: Prof. Md. Shahidul Haque & Nowshin Islam

Institution: North South University, Bangladesh

Title of the Paper: Bangladesh-China relations in the context of the BRI

Abstract:
Bangladesh is a strategic partner of China. It enjoys significant importance as, among other factors, being strategically located in the Bay of Bengal. During President Xi Jinping's historic visit to Bangladesh in October 2016, the two countries reached an understanding to initiate projects in Bangladesh under the umbrella of BRI. During the visit, initiatives were announced by China to invest about USD 40 billion for infrastructure projects in Bangladesh. China considers Bangladesh as a conduit to the Bay of Bengal and the larger Indian Ocean. Similarly, Bangladesh holds geo-economic importance as it made significant economic advancement and positively impacted 175 million people.

Bangladesh-China relationship is also based on China's growing prominence in the world in terms of its ability to offer an alternative development model. China is pursuing a policy to design an alternative to neoliberal order by developing its Beijing consensus based alternative governance model.

Over the years China has helped establish SCO, BRICS, CICA and by promoting initiates such as GSI, GCI and GDI. These developments have been the basis of Bangladesh-China relations that will continue to further influence the relations in future.

In the above context, the paper will attempt to:

1.   Revisit the salient features of Bangladesh-China relations focusing in the context of BRI
2.   Explore the possible ideological basics in further strengthening Bangladesh-China relation.
3.   Identity potentials and possibilities of Bangladesh moving towards pursuing the "China model" in its development journey.

4. Examine the likelihood of Bangladesh continuing to maintain a balanced approach towards all the major powers of Asia in the external relations.

Session -2 (Paper 1): China's LDC Trade Strategies and De- dollarization move

1.

Author:	Jing Xu
Institution:	GuiZhou Normal University, China
Email:	hnxtgzgy0811@163.com
Title of the Paper:	A Study on the International Gem Trade Network of Jain Merchants

Abstract:

Jain merchants are good at business, and gem trade is an important part of their trade activities. Contemporary Jain merchants have built a systematic international network of gem trade, and have professional arrangements for a series of links such as raw stone procurement, tasting, grading, cutting, polishing, and marketing. Besides India, their gem trade activities have extended to Israel, China (Hong Kong), Southeast Asia, Japan and some countries and regions in Africa, Europe and America. The preconditions of building the international network of Jain merchants'gem trade includes: Firstly, they have built a trade network based on family, caste, belief and so on, with special personnel responsible for all links of the trade network; Secondly, they have been following strictly the'five vows'of Jainism and practicing asceticism, which laid the foundation of business ethics, and they have gained good business reputation; Thirdly, they are experienced, smart and hardworking in trade. One of the outstanding features of Jain merchants's international gem trade network is its closed nature and they united closely within the network. Jain gem merchants'group has become one of the main groups of merchants in the international gem trade.

Session -2 (Paper 2): China's LDC Trade Strategies and De-dollarization move

2.

Author:	Kazi Mahmudur Rahman and Anika Tasnim
Institution:	Social Sciences and Humanities, Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) and, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Email: mahmudur.rahman@iub.edu.bd

Title of the   Chinese's Trade Strategies with LDC Graduating
Paper: Countries and Possible Implications: Lessons for
                Bangladesh

Abstract:

In recent years, China has emerged as a pivotal economic partner for Bangladesh, with bilateral relations extending across trade, investment, infrastructure development, and cultural exchanges. China is currently Bangladesh's largest bilateral trading partner and plays a crucial role in building the country's essential infrastructure. However, despite these strong ties, Bangladesh faces a significant and growing trade deficit with China. This issue has become increasingly critical as Bangladesh approaches its graduation from the Least Developed Countries (LDC) category, a transition that will result in the loss of preferential trade benefits and could potentially erode its competitive advantage in the global market. In this context, it is crucial for Bangladesh to explore and capitalize on new export opportunities within China's rapidly expanding import market. Despite being granted preferential access by China for almost all of its export items, Bangladesh has struggled to make a significant impact in the Chinese market. The trade imbalance continues to widen, highlighting the need for a more strategic approach to harnessing the potential of this crucial trading relationship. Vietnam's recent success in boosting its exports to China offers valuable lessons for Bangladesh. Over the past decade, Vietnam has strategically increased its exports to China, rising from USD 16.6 billion in 2015 to USD 57.7 billion in 2022. This achievement is particularly noteworthy given that Vietnam's GDP, at USD 408.0 billion, is lower than that of Bangladesh, yet its global exports, amounting to USD 370.9 billion, represent 90.9 percent of its GDP (CPD, 2022). Vietnam's success demonstrates the effectiveness of a focused, export-oriented industrialization strategy that Bangladesh could potentially emulate to improve its own trade performance with China. The objectives of this paper are fourfold. Firstly, it aims to assess the current state of trade relations between Bangladesh and China, providing a comprehensive overview of the existing dynamics. Secondly, the paper seeks to identify and analyze the opportunities available to Bangladesh for expanding its exports to China's growing import market. Thirdly, it will explore the necessary measures Bangladesh needs to adopt to build its supply-side capacities, enhance export facilitation, and ultimately increase its presence in the Chinese market. Lastly, the paper will examine China's policies towards LDCs and countries that have recently graduated from this category, focusing on how these policies can influence market access and trade opportunities for countries like Bangladesh. The analysis is based on secondary sources, including reports, books, newspaper articles, and quantitative data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Economic Relations Divisions, Export promotion bureau (EPB), Direction of Trade Statistics (DOTS) and Bangladesh Bank. By exploring these dimensions, the paper aims to provide strategic insights and

recommendations that could help Bangladesh navigate the challenges of LDC graduation while maximizing the benefits of its trade relationship with China, ensuring sustained economic growth and development.

Session -2 (Paper 3): China's LDC Trade Strategies and De-dollarization move

3.

Author:	Fang Shaoyun Tony
Institution:	Nanjing Agricultural University, China
Email:	tonyfang@njau.edu.cn
Title of the Paper:	De-dollarization and New Strategies of RMB Internationalization--Analysis Based on Belt and Road Initiative Practice

Abstract:

Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, Russia-Ukraine war and whatsoever events, the international situation has become more and more complex and turbulent since 2020, and the international monetary system is also facing new changes. In recent years, the internationalization of RMB has become the focus of market attention again with the direct settlement of trade between China and Brazil in local currency, the first RMB-settled imported LNG transaction, and the first RMB loan cooperation with Saudi National Bank. However, there are still many problems in RMB internationalization along the Belt and Road, such as the mismatch between the cross-border use of RMB along the Belt and Road and the demand for trade, the imbalance of the regional development of RMB internationalization along the Belt and Road and the uncoordinated development of its functions. In order to promote the internationalization of RMB along the "Belt and Road", the real demand for RMB along the "Belt and Road" should be fully explored, focusing on the role of RMB in investment and financing activities; taking commodities as a breakthrough point to promote the upgrading of RMB's valuation function; strengthening the construction of financial infrastructure, perfecting the mechanism of RMB's repatriation, and promoting the healthy interaction between the "onshore and offshore" markets. The Chinese government will also strengthen the construction of financial infrastructure, improve the mechanism of RMB repatriation, and promote the positive interaction of "onshore-offshore" market.

Theme: Political and Diplomatic Dynamics

Session –1 (Paper 1): Rohingya Crisis, Security Dilemma and Counter-terrorism

1.
Author:	Md. Mahbubur Rahman
Institution:	CSCSS, SIPG, North South University, Bangladesh
Email:	mahbub713@gmail.com
Title of the Paper:	Rohingya Refugee Situation in Bangladesh: The Scope of China in Resolving the Problem

Abstract:

Emergence of armed groups in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh is a threat to the national security of Bangladesh and the regional security. This paper will explain this case and find out the reasons and other consequences of the emergence of armed groups in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. This paper will argue that the violation of human rights in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh is one of the root causes of the emergence of the armed groups resulting to a threat to the national and regional peace and security. Assist the Government of Bangladesh in formulating a refugee policy is the main objective of this paper. Direct observation and content analysis are the two methods used in this research. On one hand, the writer of the paper has a direct observation of the case through nearly five years of work experience a protection focal point in the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. On the other hand, the content analysis method of research has been applied to this paper where the secondary data appears in the form of the review of relevant literature and policy and legal documents on Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), protection and international law.

Session –1 (Paper 2): Rohingya Crisis, Security Dilemma and Counter-terrorism

2.
Author:	Md. Rashidul Islam Rusel
Institution:	Department of International Relations, Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh
Email:	rashid1@juniv.edu
Title of the Paper:	Bangladesh's Security Dilemma, China's Engagement in South Asia, and the Limits of Realisms

Abstract:

Bangladesh's interest in China, in the context of geopolitical security, is derived often from her somewhat 'troublesome' relationship with India. Surrounded by India from three directions, Bangladesh does not afford to inculcate enmity with her. However, being subservient to India is not an option for Bangladesh either. The only option that remains is friendship, which has remained dependent largely on India as the bigger and more powerful one between the two neighbors. Unfortunately, this dependency could not build sustainable trust between them and hence, Bangladesh's search for security took the country beyond South Asia. On the other hand, as an aspiring superpower, China has been exploring new avenues of engagement in different parts of the global south, including South Asia. Besides, due to geographical proximity and a shared border with five South Asian states, namely Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bhutan, this region has been an automatic choice for China to have engagement with and influence on. Moreover, the border disputes that China has with her South Asian neighbor India are some constant sources of tension between these two Asian giants, which also reassures China's engagement policy in South Asia. It does not come as a surprise, then, to see that Bangladesh and China have been able to maintain a 'meaningful' relationship with each other. It is quite evident that both the countries are willing to take steps towards further engagement in various dimensions. It is, however, challenging for Bangladesh for obvious geopolitical issues between India and China. China's engagement with and support for Myanmar in the wake of the Rohingya refugee crisis and its impact on Bangladesh has made the issue even more complex. In this context, this paper argues that the Realist nature of Bangladesh-China relations has manifested its limitations already. Bangladesh's balancing act between India and China has been working considerably well. However, at times it causes unease in the relations between India and Bangladesh. In other words, Bangladesh has been taking considerable risks also to maintain this balance. On the south-eastern border, it is quite ironic for Bangladesh to see that both her power allies, China and India, have explicit and implicit backing to a belligerent military regime across the border in Myanmar, who has been bullying Bangladesh militarily in recent times. It is high time to take Bangladesh-China relations beyond Realisms and focus more on Yi or justice and Ren or humaneness as they are described in the Analectics of the great Confucius. The research has been conducted following an interpretivist-constructivist methodology.

Session −1 (Paper 3): Rohingya Crisis, Security Dilemma and Counter-terrorism

3.   Author: Shabana Fayyaz

Institution:	Defence and Strategic Studies Department, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan
Email:	sfayyaz@qau.edu.pk
Title of the Paper:	A Comprehensive Analysis of China's Counter-Terrorism Strategy in South Asia: Challenges and Opportunities

Abstract:

South Asia holds strategic, economic, and geopolitical significance for China. Regions' growing markets offer significant opportunities for Chinese goods and services. Stability in South Asia perceived to be critical for China's western borders. In this vain, China has maintained strong and trusted 'Strategic Partnership' with Pakistan and has registered an upward curve in interactions with the other South Asian States, balancing India's regional imprint. In this scenario, threat of terrorism has risen as one of the most critical challenge that has the tendency to roll back economic development and inflict human loss both for the region and the external actor – here, China. Terrorism is no doubt a serious security challenge faced by China in safeguarding its investments and personnel in South Asia. This research study examines China's counter-terrorism strategy in South Asia, focusing on the complex interplay of challenges and opportunities that shape its approach. This study argues that the concept of 'Integrated Security' registering the various risks and costs—human, economic, social, cultural can fully grasp the nature and response of China vis-à-vis Terrorism in South Asia. The study explores the multifaceted security threats posed by ethnic and religious extremism, regional instability, and geopolitical tensions, with particular emphasis on the implications for China's internal security and its economic interests, notably the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The analysis highlights China's strategic partnerships with South Asian countries, bilateral and regional cooperation frameworks, and its role in organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Furthermore, this research study delves into China's use of economic leverage through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), its involvement in diplomatic engagements and peace negotiations, and the application of advanced surveillance and cyber security technologies in counter-terrorism efforts. By synthesizing these elements, the research provides a comprehensive overview of how China navigates the intricate geopolitical landscape to mitigate terrorism risks and promote regional stability, while safeguarding its national and economic interests. In crux, China needs to minimize the risks and costs versus terrorism in the South Asia to through a combination of traditional and non-traditional security overtures. Clarity, Cooperation and Commitment (C3) is a way forward to counter terrorism on the proactive basis in South Asia. This is a dilemma as well as an opportunity for China to contribute towards ensuing a secure, peaceful and prosperous South Asia.

Session –1 (Paper 4): Rohingya Crisis, Security Dilemma and Counter-terrorism

4.

Author:	Anar Koli
Institution:	Soka University, Japan
Email:	anarkoli2002@yahoo.com
Title of the Paper:	Analysing Bangladesh's Foreign Policy Equilibrium: From Putnam's Two-Level Game to an Extended Political Settlement Analysis Framework

Abstract:

This paper delves into the intricate web of regional power dynamics and Bangladesh's strategic positioning in the Bay of Bengal to investigate the feasibility of maintaining a balanced foreign policy amidst global power plays. Specifically, it examines the escalating Chinese investments in Bangladesh through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and their implications for economic development, geostrategic influence, and regional security. The study proposes an analytical framework to assess the potential risks and opportunities in Bangladesh's foreign policy. The burgeoning role of Chinese investment in Bangladesh, facilitated by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has significant implications for the country's growth and regional stability. However, it also poses potential risks to the geopolitical balance and security. This paper employs a comparative analytical framework, examining Robert Putnam's Two-Level Game theory and Mustaq Khan's Political Settlement Analysis (PSA), to develop a comprehensive analytical model. The study critiques Putnam's Two-Level Game model, arguing that its reliance on formal institutional bargaining processes may not adequately capture the nuances of foreign policy decision-making in developing countries like Bangladesh. It then introduces Khan's PSA, which emphasizes the distribution of organizational power and its impact on economic and political dynamics. Recognizing the limitations of both frameworks, the study proposes an extended approach by integrating a Cultural Political Economy (CPE) perspective. The CPE perspective enriches the analysis by considering the role of social identity, ideas, and moral beliefs in shaping institutional change. This integrated framework acknowledges the interplay of material interests with cultural, ideational, and identity-based dimensions in foreign policy decision-making. It provides a more nuanced understanding of how national identity, cultural norms, historical legacies, and ideological orientations influence political behaviour and institutions. The revised PSA, incorporating a CPE perspective, offers a more robust analytical tool for assessing the risks and challenges in Bangladesh's foreign policy. By accounting for the cultural, ideational, and identity-based

factors, this approach provides a deeper insight into the complexities of foreign policy equilibrium in developing countries.

Session –2 (Paper 1): Flashpoints – The Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific

1.

Author:	Imtiaz A. Hussain
Institution:	Global Studies & Governance Department, IUB, Bangladesh
Email:	imtiaz.hussain@iub.edu.ed
Title of the Paper:	CHINA, INDIA, & THE BAY OF BENGAL: TRANQUILITY AT BAY?

Abstract:

Question of Investigation: Is the historical Himalayan conflict between China and India spilling into the sea? Empirical Setting: Although the 1962 conflict took place during the 1948-88 U.S.-Soviet Union Cold War, it was not a part nor a parcel of that conflict. Ending the Cold War reaffirmed this: the China-India tussle continued, as flare-ups in Doklam (2017), (Ladakh 2020), Arunachal Pradesh (2024) indicated. China's and India's embrace of neoliberalism from the early 1990s, then India's Look/Act East and China's Belt Road Initiative (BRI) targeting Southeast Asian economic partnerships, further downplayed military conflict. Still sub-questions arise: Why is the Bay of Bengal suddenly attracting global attention, with China and India as pivotal players? Could China opening Myanmar's Kyaukpyu Port and India likewise with Sittwe Port drag a mountaintop conflict into the sea (Bay of Bengal)? Or could their economic competition echo the larger Indo-Pacific tussles of other major powers (both militarily and economically)? In short, does the Bay of Bengal scramble seek simply economic leadership? Or is it a preview of military contestation between the first two Asian countries seeking global military leadership in the modern era? Theoretical Setting: Given two entirely different contexts (the Cold War and neoliberalism), the paper navigates between realism/neorealism (Morgenthan 1948/Waltz 1979) and interdependence/neoliberalism (Keohane & Nye 1977/Keohane 1989) to find hybrid fittings of the above. Gilpin's hegemonic leadership (1975) and Rosenau's turbulence theory (1997) also shed useful light. Methodology: Using Alexander George's structured focused method (1979), sets the stage (ancient and recent bilateral contest history), hypothesizes from neoliberal dynamics, leaving for a third section to test those hypotheses over Look/Act East and BRI dynamics over the Bay. Observations help draw conclusions before projecting both empirical and theoretical implications. Preliminary Findings: Both power-driven realist/neorealist and profit-expanding liberalism/neoliberalism demand attention, but when 'push' becomes

'shove', military power alone becomes the necessary condition of leadership, leaving economic dynamics as only a sufficient condition. Both Look/Act East and BRI frameworks confirm the Bay of Bengal as an emergent 21st Century Rubicon.

Session –2 (Paper 2): Flashpoints – The Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific

2. Author: M. Venkataraman

    Institution: Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, JNU, New Delhi, India

    Email: venkataraman@mail.jnu.ac.in

    Title of the   Ancient Echoes in Present: China's Naval
    Paper: Diplomacy in Western Indian Ocean Region

Abstract:

The profound significance of 'maritime space' for countries all over the world has never been so very competitive as it is today. This is so because the dependency on maritime space has surpassed mere trade activity of the ancient times to that of geo-political and strategic overtones as evidenced in the case of China whose ancient maritime silk route legacy connecting the ports of China to Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Arabian Peninsula as well as East Africa got revitalized in the form of the 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR) unveiled in 2013. Today, this Chinese ancient legacy is played out with even more vigor particularly in the Western Indian Ocean Region (WIOR) a large water body west of India and east of Africa connecting the Persian Gulf and Middle East to Europe via the critical choke points of the Strait of Hormuz and Bab-el-Mandeb respectively. The new MSR has resulted in significant Chinese naval presence in the Western Indian Ocean region (WIOR) thereby evoking concerns among scholars and practitioners alike. Although trade in commodities continues to hold sway even today, China has taken additional steps to secure its trading relations through its People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN as it is called) diplomatic activities such as dual use military port facilities as in Djibouti and military-diplomatic partnerships with other east African countries. The move has provoked regional and extra-regional countries like that of India to also take steps to safeguard their national interests thereby making the region strategically decisive. The article aims at understanding these dynamics as it is played out in WIOR and the repercussions thereof by describing the ancient Chinese maritime connections and the rationale for the new MSR under President Xi Jinping and thereafter analyzing the challenges posed by other actors such as India.

Session –2 (Paper 3): Flashpoints – The Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific

3. Author: David Jiang

    Institution: Nanjing Agricultural University, China

    Email: jzc@nau.edu.cn

    Title of the   Adjustments in U.S. South Asia Policy under the
    Paper: Indo-Pacific Strategy and China's South Asia
                     Strategy

Abstract:

In the context of the Indo-Pacific strategy, both the United States and China have made significant adjustments to their policies towards South Asia. The United States has intensified its cooperation with India, promoting economic and security cooperation under the "Indo-Pacific" framework, and expanding its military presence in the region. This aims to balance China's growing influence in South Asia and maintain regional stability. On the other hand, China continues to advance the Belt and Road Initiative in South Asia, strengthening economic ties through infrastructure construction and trade investments, and enhancing multifaceted cooperation with smaller South Asian countries. China seeks to transcend the exclusionary competition logic of the US-India "small circle," focusing on cooperative and win-win approaches to achieve common development. The strategic competition between the two major powers will profoundly impact the future trajectory of South Asia.

Session –2 (Paper 5): Flashpoints – The Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific

Author: Md. Obaidul Haque

Institution: Associate Professor Department of International Relations University of Dhaka

Email: obaidulhaque.ir@du.ac.bd

Title of the Paper: Exploring the Global Security Initiative: Implications for Bangladesh in a Multipolar World

Abstract:

Chinese President Xi Jinping's Global Security Ini2a2ve (GSI), launched in 2022, is a conceptual framework, which proposes an alterna2ve security paradigm. The basic premise of this alternate security paradigm is mutual respect, non-interference, and collec2ve responses to global challenges, which have for long been demands of the countries of the Global South. That is why despite its failure to get significant global trac2on, it has aroused interests in the Global South

as a poten2al counter-narra2ve to the dominant Western-led security models. This paper explores the GSI's relevance to South Asia, primarily from the point of view of Bangladesh, a country uniquely posi2oned at the crossroads of regional geopoli2cs and global connec2vity. South Asia lacks a formal regional security architecture. India-China rivalries are not conducive for any effec2ve mul2lateral security coopera2on. It is in this context, the paper argues that the GSI's emphasis on addressing non-tradi2onal security issues such as climate change, energy security, and forced migra2on presents an opportunity for countries like Bangladesh. As a na2on highly vulnerable to many of these non-tradional security risks, Bangladesh may stand to benefit from such frameworks that priori2ze inclusive and sustainable security. This paper critically examines the GSI's principles and its poten2al to address Bangladesh's security challenges without focusing too much on geopolitical tensions in the region. Drawing on high-level speeches, policy documents, and Global South perspectives, it assesses whether the GSI offers a viable avenue for enhancing Bangladesh's security thinking. While acknowledging its limitations and geopolitical sensitives, the paper argues that the GSI's focus on non-traditional security could complement Bangladesh's strategic goals, fostering regional and global cooperation in an increasingly multipolar world.

Theme: Language and Education

Session (Paper 1): Connecting Economics, Cultures and Education under BRI

1.   Author: Chen yixin

Institution: Yunnan University, China

Email: chen_yi_xin@qq.com

Title of the Paper: Integrating Economies and Cultures: BRI Entrepreneurs' Perspectives on the Development of the Belt and Road Initiative

Abstract:

This study investigates the perspectives of BRI entrepreneurs in Yiwu, focusing on the evolution of economic and cultural integration through their commercial activities. By examining the commercial relationships and investment models among BRI merchants, it highlights the socio-cultural, economic, and diplomatic impacts on China-South Asia relations. The research aims to understand how community-based language learning programs facilitate cross-cultural interactions and contribute to the broader goals of the Belt and Road Initiative. Research Interest This study aims to understand how commercial activities and business models facilitate relationships between Yiwu, China, and South Asian merchants. It highlights the socio-cultural, economic, and diplomatic interactions that emerge from these commercial engagements. Additionally, the research explores how language acquisition impacts business strategies and success. Objectives 1. To explore the experiences and perceptions of BRI entrepreneurs in Yiwu regarding economic and cultural integration. 2. To analyze the role of commercial activities in facilitating trade and cultural exchange between Chinese and SouthAsian merchants. 3. To assess the impact of BRI on socio-cultural and economic interactions in Yiwu. 4. To identify the benefits and challenges of business cooperation and how they shape the evolution of business relationships and investment models. 5. To examine how language acquisition influences business strategies and success. Methodology The study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data collection will involve: 1. Conducting interviews with South Asian merchants in Yiwu to gather insights on their language learning experiences and its impact on their businesses.These interviews will capture insights into their business practices, challenges, and adaptive strategies. 2. Surveying Chinese language schools and commercial language learning platforms to understand the demand. 3. Analyzing trade data and economic reports to correlate language proficiency with business success. Expected Outcomes The research is anticipated to reveal that BRI entrepreneurs view Yiwu as a critical gateway to enhanced market access and diversified investment opportunities. It will highlight how these entrepreneurs overcome challenges such as cultural differences and

regulatory barriers by learning Chinese and adapting their business models. The study aims to demonstrate the dynamic evolution of business relationships in Yiwu, contributing to stronger economic ties under the BRI framework.Expected Outcomes:The research is expected to reveal: 1.The critical role of language learning in enhancing trade and cultural exchange between China and SouthAsia. 2.The effectiveness of language learning in Yiwu and their contribution to the success of BRI merchants. Conclusion: This study examined the perspectives of BRI entrepreneurs in Yiwu, emphasizing the importance of commercial activities and language acquisition in fostering economic and cultural integration. The findings indicate that Yiwu is a key hub for market access and investment opportunities for South Asian merchants. Language learning emerged as crucial in overcoming cultural and regulatory challenges, enhancing business strategies and success. These interactions highlight the significant socio-cultural and economic impacts under the Belt and Road Initiative, contributing to stronger economic ties and successful integration.

Session (Paper 2): Connecting Economics, Cultures and Education under BRI

2.

Author:	Syed Basim Raza
Institution:	Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), Pakistan
Email:	basimraza@issi.org.pk
Title of the Paper:	China's Educational Diplomacy in Pakistan: Analyzing the Influence of Higher Education Initiatives

Abstract:

For the past two decades, China has been focusing on projecting its soft power, specially via educational diplomacy. South Asia, one of the regions of pivotal focus for China, hosts a significant young population opting for higher education. In this regard, China has been working with multiple South Asian states specially Pakistan to forward numerous higher education initiatives, targeted to revitalize the higher education landscape of Pakistan. Hence, China study centers in various universities and Confucius Institutes across Pakistan are established. This research paper investigates the subtleties of China's educational diplomacy in Pakistan, specifically focusing on the higher education initiatives. Educational Programs and collaborations, as a part of China's broader soft power strategy, have become significant

component of Sino-Pak relations. The objective of this study is to analyze the extent and impact of China's educational programs in Pakistan, academic exchanges, and scholarships on Pakistan's higher education landscape. The study will employ a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews of key stakeholders, analysis of education policies, and examination of academic partnership, to understand how Chinese initiatives contribute to improvement of Pakistan's higher education landscape and help project China's soft power. The findings of this study will provide the much necessary insights into the strategic role of education, promoting cordiality in bilateral ties, while also addressing the broader implications for regional development and cooperation.

Session (Paper 3): Connecting Economics, Cultures and Education under BRI

3. Authors: Saraf Wamia, K. M. Noor-E-Zannat Nadi and Saikat Bhattacharia,

Institution: North South University

Title of the paper: The Objective of BR

I and how far it has been achieved

Abstract:

The topic of the paper is - The Objective of BRI and How Far It Has Been Achieved. This conference paper talks about China's objective to create Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) and evaluate how much China's objective has been achieved. In short, we have shown that 2008 global financial crisis created excess capacity in Chinese economy which led it to create BRI and how rise of debt in State owned enterprises, Trade War & Technology War with USA have motivated China to gradually shift BRI investments from big and long gestation to relatively smaller and shorter gestation. We have divided the paper into seven sections. The first section talks about China's economic development between 1949 and 1979 and how this time period created condition for China's entry to global market. The second section deals with Chinese economic development between 1980 and 2008. The third section stresses how 2008 global financial crisis forced China to invest more in domestic infrastructure through state owned enterprises and banks. The fourth section describes how domestic excess capacity led China to go for infrastructure development globally through BRI in 2013. The fifth section tells how Made in China 2025 and Trade War and Technology War between USA and China have transformed BRI. In the sixth section we have looked into a few BRI projects with their success and failure. The seventh and the last section searches how BRI can work more effectively both from the perspective of China and other participants of BRI.

Theme: Health and Medicine

Session (Paper 1): Promoting People to People Contact Through Medical Teams and Narratives

1. Author: Zhang Shuai

    Institution: Research Center for the Belt and Road, Lanzhou University, China

    Email: 626430015@qq.com

    Title of the Paper: The Breakthrough Points for People-to-People Exchanges between China and India: Enlightenment from the Indian Medical Team to China

Abstract:

The Indian Medical Mission to China was an important part of the international aid movement to China during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, and was also a typical example of the image shaping of the Communist Party of China in Yan'an by international public opinion. The team worked in China for nearly five years and had a deep understanding of the role of the CPC as the backbone of the war of resistance. They shaped the image of the CPC in the eyes of Indians from the three dimensions of the CPC leaders, the Eighth Route Army and Yan 'an, and then constructed three core discourses on the CPC or China, namely the theory of people's conscious choice, the theory of India's learning from the example, and the theory of the revival of the two civilizations. The team has important practical enlightenment significance for the image shaping and discourse construction of the CPC, that is, focusing on the four aspects of historical materials, figures, places and media, which will help China strengthen its international communication with India and deepen its people-to-people exchanges with India today.

Session (Paper 2): Promoting People to People Contact Through Medical Teams and Narratives

2. Author: Nazim Husain Al-Jafri and Nabeela Rehman

    Institution: Department of History and Culture, Jamia Millia Islamia, NewDelhi, India

    Email: nabeela.rehman001@gmail.com

    Title of the Paper: The Anti-Colonial Medical Narratives of Early 20th Century Colonial India: A Challenge to Colonial Medical Paradigm

Abstract:

Medicine, Ancient Ayurveda, Unani Tibb, Nationalist Discourse, Print Journalism, Reform and Revival This paper begins with an analysis of the rich tapestry of the indigenous medical systems which continued to exist in India during the high noon of the British empire. Located in the early 20th century it intends to cover the resistance by indigenous medical systems like Ayurveda and Unani Tibb to the state-sponsored biomedicine. The paper will trace the challenges through the reform and revival measures proposed by practitioners of indigenous medicine. These measures aimed to establish an India-specific concept of health and hygiene in contrast to the colonial tools of governance through biomedicine. For example, starting from the late 19th century, and especially after the Mutiny of 1857, British colonists used medicine and science to portray themselves as benevolent patrons intending to aid the dark and diseased Indian colony. Biomedicine and science functioned as an effective tool of colonial governance, control and expansion. In response to the biomedical hegemony, the Indigenous medical systems rearranged their learning and practice. These modern hospitals and medical colleges thus functioned as physical sites that countered biomedical hegemony, popularised the new face of indigenous medicine and supported India's freedom struggle. Overall, it forms an anti-colonial narrative or the nationalist paradigm which focused on highlighting 'colonialism' as a disease condition Given the above anti-colonial or nationalist medical reforms led to the creation and popularisation of an India-specific notion of public health and associated indigenous public welfare schemes with nationalism.

Theme: Media, Communication, and public sentiment

Session-1 (Paper 1): Public Perceptions and Bilateral Relations

1.   Author: Muhammad Ahmad Khan

     Institution: India Study Centre, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, Pakistan

     Email: ahmedrajpoot0307@gmail.com

     Title of the Paper: Analyzing Indian Discourse on CPEC: Implications for China-India Cooperation in South Asia

Abstract:

India has been very critical of Chinese investment in South Asia especially in Pakistan, citing concerns about its sovereignty and the growing influence of China through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Indian media, in synergy with official claims, has raised concerns regarding the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as the project passes through the disputed Gilgit Baltistan region. To minimize the Chinese influence, India has consistently criticized CPEC and raised its voice at various multilateral forums. This research will critically analyze Indian discourse on BRI in general, and CPEC in particular. By examining official documents, statements by the top political leadership, press releases of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, and mainstream electronic media discourse, this research will identify major Indian concerns regarding BRI and CPEC. The research will explore how CPEC is being projected in Indian discourse. Moreover, how Indian media discourse on CPEC will impact the future of China-India cooperation in South Asia? The study presumes that Indian discourse on CPEC is politically driven, ignoring the economic aspects and ground realities across the border. This hard stance against CPEC would prevent India from being a part of China's policy in South Asia; and would further contribute to its already marred relations with Pakistan and China in the regional context.

Session-1 (Paper 2): Public Perceptions and Bilateral Relations

2.   Author: Akram Hossain and Hasan Muhammad Baniamin

     Institution: Department of Political Science and Sociology, North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

     Email: akram.hossain06@northsouth.edu; hasan.baniamin@northsouth.edu

     Title of the Paper: How do People in South Asia Perceive the Influence of China and India?

Abstract:

Fundamental differences between China and India in terms of geopolitics, diplomacy, and business complicate their relationships with and influence on the South Asian countries. The two superpowers and also the largest economies globally are currently locked in a tense rivalry. The fierce competition between the two regional powers, India and China, to strengthen their footprint has been increasing tensions over the last few decades. Moreover, India and China have had severe conflicts over the territorial issue. In recent times, China has rapidly expanded its economic activities and investment in trade and infrastructure in countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. India feels threatened by the growing presence of China in the region. The rivalries with India force China to be involved in cordial relationships with other countries like Pakistan (Garver, 1992). The governments in South Asian countries are constantly trying to make a balance in maintaining relationships with emerging superpowers like China and India, in addition to the USA. Many countries use the China card to challenge India's influence (Wagner, 2016). Heightened Chinese influence in the region and the tensions with India create mixed public opinion in many countries. People are concerned regarding sovereignty, regional security, and international business. One of the main objectives of this paper is to see how a positive or negative evaluation of India shapes public perception of China and vice-versa. We analyze survey data from four South Asian countries (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka). Initial findings indicate people acknowledge and, in many cases, they are positive about the increasing influence of India and China in their country. We also analyze the influence of China and India compared with some other countries (USA, Japan, Singapore, Russia, etc.).

Session-1 (Paper 3): Public Perceptions and Bilateral Relations

3.   Author: Syed Shahnawaz Mohsin

      Institution:

      Email:

      Title of the Paper: Emotional Perceptions of China and Potential for
                                 Strengthening Soft Power Influences in Bangladesh

Abstract:

China has been Bangladesh's largest trading partner, prompting scrutiny of their relationship, encompassing political, economic, and strategic dimensions. China is expanding its cultural influence through events and educational support but faces challenges due to cultural differences and political issues. The partnership is based on shared interests rather than debt, with infrastructure projects offering Bangladesh economic growth opportunities. This study assesses perceptions of China among students, business representatives, and media, exploring how emotions influence views using emotional theory in international relations. Eleven focus group discussions indicate that understanding emotional perceptions could strengthen collaboration and development between China and Bangladesh.

Session –2 (Paper 1): Opinion Makers and Influencers in and beyond South Asia

1. Author: Yang Mingyue, Lu Shuangmei

    Institution: Yunnan Normal University, Kunming, China

    Email: ymytina@gmail.com

    Title of the Paper: Between Tradition and Modernity: A Survey of Nepali
                           Journalists as Opinion Leaders

Abstract:

Nepal is located between the two ancient civilization centers of India and China, and is a commercial center on the ancient Silk Road Himalayan Road. The long history of internationalization has enabled Nepal to form a unique and diverse traditional culture. This study focuses on the characteristics of the concepts and attitudes of Nepalese journalists as opinion leaders under the influence of the trend of modernization. They are an important force in the construction of Nepal's modern state. The researchers conducted a field survey in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, interviewed journalists from major newspapers, television stations, and news media groups, and distributed and collected 107 valid questionnaires. The study found that: First, among Nepalese journalists, those of high caste, those with a master's degree and those who have been in the industry for more than ten years account for the highest proportion, indicating that this group is mainly composed of elites and is relatively stable. Second, the main content of major news clients is mainly political and economic news, while issues such as society, natural environment, education, and women are insignificant. At the same time, most of them believe that they have lofty journalistic ideals and that engaging in the journalism industry can realize the value of life and gain social respect. On the one hand, this shows that Nepal's political changes are closely related to a series of ideological changes among the elite class, and on the other hand, it also shows the limitations of the elite class's vision of promoting social progress. Third, in terms of whether the religious life of journalists is indispensable, they reflect polarized characteristics, which may indicate that they are wavering and entangled between tradition and modernity. Similar data also include whether news regulations are in place. Therefore, in Nepal, where traditional media is still well developed, journalists, as opinion leaders and elites in society, have a modernized view of social development that is between tradition and modernity. This may affect the value orientation of Nepal's mainstream news media for a long time. A series of issues in modernization and development that need more active attention will not occupy their attention, which is actually contrary to their journalistic ideal of promoting social progress.

Session –2 (Paper 2): Opinion Makers and Influencers in and beyond South Asia

2. Author: Lu Shuangmei

    Institution: Yunnan Normal University, China

    Email: mm_ynu@163.com

Title of the Paper: Empathy of images: International relations and the global spread of news images in Bangladesh

Abstract:

Global economic output, commodity exchange and visual information determine the position and status of the subject in the meaning structure and meaning system, replacing political factors. In July 2024, student protests in Bangladesh, sparked by dissatisfaction with the government's restoration of the "civil servant quota system", gradually evolved into nationwide violent conflicts, and the country's Internet services were interrupted. On the one hand, the connectivity of new media technology combines the mass production and dissemination of information to create a new global "social community". In the context of the global economic recession, global media audiences who are also facing employment difficulties have a strong "empathy" for the protesting students in Bangladesh. On the other hand, the Internet has changed the production and reproduction of political beliefs and political systems. The images of violent conflicts in Bangladesh by global media audiences cannot go beyond the mainstream discourse construction of the global media network. In the field of great power games, political images gradually change from unconscious "empathy" presentation to purposeful action hints, which are easy to trigger more radical social conflicts. This paper conducts a grounded theory analysis based on the global dissemination of news images of the Bangladesh protests. By studying the political image presentation of the event by the global mainstream media, the image dissemination content of the Bangladeshi mainstream media, the diverse image presentation of the public in Bangladesh's mainstream social media, and the interpretation of the event images by global Facebook users, this paper explores how images, as an extension of politics, connect individuals, media, countries and the world together to jointly participate in the construction of Bangladesh's international relations.

Session –2 (Paper 3): Opinion Makers and Influencers in and beyond South Asia

3. Author: Abdur Razzaque Khan

    Institution: Dept. of Mass Communication and Journalism, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

    Email: arkhanrizvi@du.ac.bd

    Title of the Paper: The Politics of Closure of Private Television Channels in Bangladesh: A Political Economy Critique

Abstract:

Private television channels in Bangladesh have become a tool of power practice for the ruling party since 2001. The ruling party always gives licenses to their political comrades and cronies, brushing aside all existing rules and regulations. On the other hand, the ruling party takes revenge by closing other private TV channels that broadcast different political ideologies and opinions. This dirty process of closure of private TV channels was initiated by the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) when the party formed the government after winning the 2000 national elections. The BNP and its religion-based four-party alliance of the then Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia first closed the Ekushey Television (ETV) in 2002. At the same time, the BNP-led

government issued ten private television channels from 2001 to 2006. Some of these private TV channels managed licenses in a single day. Some channel owners imported equipment for their TV channels without paying customs tariffs and fees to the Bangladesh government. Within a week, some channels received their allocated broadcasting frequency from the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC). The BNP government used private TV channels as "the pied piper of power" to remain in power by propagating their political ideology through the private TV channels of their political cronies. The tragedy is the BNP allowed ten private TV channels to air at lightning-fast speed and closed down ETV, the most popular and progressive private TV channel, as a political vendetta against Bangladesh Awami League in 2002. The then leader of the opposition in parliament, Sheikh Hasina vehemently protested against the BNP government's unethical private TV channel licensing procedure. The Awami League assured that if they could form the government, they would wipe out all the irregularities and unethical steps of private TV channel licensing procedures to create a healthy broadcasting environment. Nothing tangible has been done since Bangladesh Awami League formed the government in 2009 after the landslide victory in the general elections held on December 29, 2008. The irony is that the AL followed the same path as the BNP government in granting private TV licenses to its party comrades and cronies. Moreover, the AL government permitted 10 private TV channels to air on a single day on October 20, 2009. The AL government allowed two more channels in 2010, four TV channels in 2011, and fourteen other private TV channels in 2013 for broadcasting. The AL government of Sheikh Hasina and the fourteen parties' grand alliance follow "the pick and choose" policy to award its political and ideological comrades with private TV channel licenses. Moreover, the Caretaker and AL Government followed BNP's path in shutting down other private television channels. CSB News and STV-US were closed down by the caretaker government in 2007. AL government shut down Chahenel 1, Islamic TV, Diganta TV and Channel 16 in 2010, 2013, and 2014 respectively. The private TV channels in Bangladesh have been enveloped in the ruling party's power and political tricks since 2001. The contention of this paper is to examine how the ruling party deals with the private television channels as a power-practicing tool through the political economy of media lense.

Theme: AI, Cyber Diplomacy and Security

Session (Paper 1): The Role of AI, Cyber Diplomacy and Soft Power in China-South Asia Relations

1.   Author: Noureen Akhtar

     Institution: Islamabad Policy Research Institution (IPRI), Pakistan

     Email: akhtarnoureen26@gmail.com

     Title of the Paper: AI and Cyber Diplomacy: Building Trust in China-South Asia Relations

Abstract:

Social relatedness in the digital age has dramatically changed the ways in which people interact with each other globally thereby creating new prospects and perplexities. This change is quite profound for China and South Asia since the region has experienced the development in the technology reach and the emergence of digital economies at a very high pace. Despite, these advancement bring noteworthy improvements of daily life, they also escalated cyberspace measures and geographical affronts. Since the nations of this region have increased their level of digital activity, it becomes important to have a solid cyber diplomacy. Cyber diplomacy can therefore be mentioned as the process of managing and solving problems in cyberspace by employing diplomatic tools and approaches that affect cybersecurity coverage, cyber governance, and the impact of cyber space in international relations. Due to these features of the modern world, AI, with the help of big data processing, machine learning, and other approaches used to create precise predictive models, together with automation of decision-making, represents the opportunity to progress cyber diplomacy and, therefore, strengthen trust between nations. Due to its features that allow it to understand and analyze large amounts of data within a short time, select the most suitable options, AI seems to be a perfect tool for reconstructing cyber diplomacy. This situation is perhaps most applicable in cyber security where the rate and precision of responses directly affect the functionality of the defense systems. Real time networks can be monitored using the AI driven systems, as well as, possible threats can be identified through the help of AI and proper response can be initiated with the help of AI instead of using traditional techniques. Thus, the incorporation of AI in their strategies would be a positive step towards safeguarding the nations' digital networks from cyber threats and improving bilateral trust. This aspect of AI-based cybersecurity relates directly to one of the main sources of friction and perceived hostility in the modern digital environment and is thus an important component of cyber diplomacy. On the same note, other than celebrating the role of artificial intelligence in boosting the security of China and South Asia, it is important to note that diplomacy is founded on communication. Traditional diplomatic interaction is always characterized by such issues as delay, misunderstanding, and opacity. Language translation through NLP and applying machine learning as well as sentiments as well as the probable outcome of diplomatic negotiations can handle these problems. For instance, Translation tools enabled by Artificial Intelligence depict how diplomats can convey messages to other parties with improved precision and shortened time span, therefore less chance for misunderstandings. Likewise, sentiment analysis tools can help to get the notion of public opinion and political environments and accordingly adjust the diplomats'

methodology and tactics. Such enhancements in ways of communication enhance to some extent the openness and effectiveness of the relations that are essential for creating and strengthening trust between the involved parties. Besides, its use in conflict solving and prognosis enhances the chances of AI in cyber diplomacy. These reasons alone indicate that in the past and even today, China, and South Asian countries often are involved in conflicts and because of these tensions mind Management approaches need to be initiated and to be ready. It's therefore easier for AI algorithms to scour for past data, and therefore look for patterns, and get indicators of potential trigger points that diplomats could avoid in the first place. For instance, through artificial intelligence and machine learning, technologies are able to follow and analyze all available signals of the rising tension in the social media and other digital platforms so that possible interventions can be done in time. AI can test numerous possibilities and consequences with diplomats and help them make decisions. Applying AI in combating conflict ensures that China and South Asia can increase the level through which they can effectively manage conflicts hence promoting order in the area. As outlined above, there are various empirical possibilities associated with the identified potentials, which is why this research applies both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The key literature review will be extensive and will include the analysis of the studies concentrating on cyber diplomacy, AI applications to cybersecurity, and China-South Asia relations to explore the state of the art and gain a better understanding of the existing knowledge gap. In view of this background, therefore, the study will adopt a specific case study that considers the instances in which AI has been used in cyber diplomacy to assess the effectiveness of the measures taken. These case studies will demonstrate the success and, at the same time, the difficulties encountered by specialists implementing artificial intelligence-based methods. Moreover, surveys and interviews with policymakers, cybersecurity specialists, and diplomats from the two regions will be carried out. These primary sources of data will give more insight on application and issues with the advancement in AI in the area of cyber diplomacy. The survey and the interviews are structured to gather information that is as inclusive as possible hence the understanding of all the issues is enhanced. To these collected data, statistical tools and other AI algorithms will be employed for data analysis so as to make conclusions and have an analytical forecast of trends. It guarantees that the findings of the study are credible and don't present any significant deficiencies, which is vital to support the presented strategic frameworks and policies. The expected end product of this study is three dimensional: First, it seeks to contribute to the clarification of the concept of cyber diplomacy and its relation to AI as well as opportunities that AI offers to overcome cybersecurity threats. Understanding this is important to the policymakers and diplomat who require to work their way through the modern world's intricacies. Second, the research aims at identifying and formulating strategic guidelines and policy advices for insertion of AI in the cyber diplomacy relations with PRC and South Asian states. These recommendations shall be informed by literature review data gathering and assessment as well as real-world knowledge, giving the best strategies and ways of improving the diplomatic relations. Third and last, the study seeks to establish the strategies that can enhance trust and cooperation in the realm of cyberspace thus advancing the causes of order and cooperation in the region. AI and cyber diplomacy integration has enormous prospects for augmenting the security, the optimization of diplomatic relations, and trust between china and south Asia. As both regions incorporate humanities' benefits, they can better understand the challenges of the digital age and foster a safe and constructive atmosphere. Thus, this research is beneficial to reveal voids and develop recommendations for policymakers and diplomats to foster an open world cyberspace

that can foster sustainable development. It is evident that as connectivity defined by digital platforms defines the future of relations, AI will widen the avenues of diplomacy in cyberspace thus providing hope of peace in the global village.

Session (Paper 2): The Role of AI, Cyber Diplomacy and Soft Power in China-South Asia Relations

2. Author: Yang Jiaqi and Zhang Te

    Institution: School of International Relations, Sun Yat-sen University, Zhuhai, China

    Email: yjq1997866@163.com

    Title of the Paper: The Objectives and Evolution of India's Artificial Intelligence Policies and Laws and Implications for China

Abstract:

The rapid development of science and technology can greatly enhance a country's international competitiveness, and artificial intelligence is one of the key driving forces to promote the economic and social development of countries and regions, and it has had a transformative impact on various fields. By analyzing the background of the introduction of AI policies and laws in India, and further studying its development goals, evolution and content, we hope to provide inspiration and a mirror for the development and application of AI in China. [research method] Through literature analysis and other methods, we study the literature, reports and policy documents related to India's AI policies and laws, and explain the development changes and main contents of India's AI policies. [research conclusion] Faced with the urgent need for domestic economic and social development and the international competition in the field of artificial intelligence among major countries, India hopes to realize development and transformation in various fields by vigorously promoting the development of artificial intelligence in the country and strengthening international cooperation in artificial intelligence to take a leading position. As a result, a series of policies and laws related to AI have been introduced in the country. After the vigorous development in recent years, India's significant improvement in global AI rankings and indices shows that the country's AI policies are of reference significance. For China, the following lessons can be drawn: first, there should be a special department for the overall coordination of AI development and the establishment of a special information dissemination and communication channel; second, the establishment of data sets and data sharing must be accelerated; third, special legislation and policy support for data governance should be strengthened, and higher and basic education in AI should be strengthened; finally, international cooperation in AI and the dissemination of the Chinese standards should be strengthened, and multilateralism in AI should be advocated.

Session (Paper 3): The Role of AI, Cyber Diplomacy and Soft Power in China-South Asia Relations

Author: Prof. Mohammed Nuruzzaman, & Dr. Noor Mohammad Sarker

Institution: North South University

Email: mohammed.nuruzzaman01@northsouth.edu

Title of the Paper: Dynamics of China's and India's Soft Power Tussle in South Asia: A Critical Analysis

Abstract:

This chapter attempts to present an outline of the soft power diplomacy China and India pursue in South Asia. It maps out how the two Asian rival powers employ their soft power tools and strategies to influence and counter- influence the regional policies of the smaller South Asian states and the evolving defined or undefined soft power alliance patterns in the region. The analysis and interpretations are developed based on a number of soft power tools, including aid and grants, development assistance and cooperation, educational exchange programs and partnerships, and cultural exchanges. The chapter concludes that the soft power competition between China and India is largely an unequal competition that enables China to gradually institutionalize its soft power supremacy in the South Asian region.

Session (Paper 4): The Role of AI, Cyber Diplomacy and Soft Power in China-South Asia Relations

4.
Author: Dr. Saleh Shahriar

Institution: Department of History & Philosophy, North South University

Title of the Paper: China's Soft Power Strategy in Bangladesh

Abstract:

China's soft power in Bangladesh is a crucial component of its broader strategic engagement, aiming to build goodwill and deepen ties beyond economic transactions. Soft power is a relatively new concept coined by Harvard political scientist Joseph S. Nye. Based on the soft power literature, Nye's initial definition of soft power means the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment where he argued that culture, political values including ideology and foreign policy are the tools to measure any country's soft power. China's soft power in Bangladesh plays a significant role in shaping bilateral

relations, complementing its hard power investments in infrastructure and trade. China's way of creating an international image is different from the United States of America. China is the world's fastest economy. China is following its soft power to be the world power in international politics. Chinese President Xi Jinping has introduced a new term in international politics. He coined the 'Chinese Dream' or 'Rejuvenation of China' which reveals China's rise in a peaceful way. Under Xi Jinping the government of China is focusing new institutionalizing of China with 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in a new era' and giving priority to blue economy, information security, cultural linkages, investment policy and peaceful development. China's best soft power is reflected in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China's trade and economic policies are a useful soft power tool in Bangladesh. This paper will examine the economic, political and cultural dimensions of China's soft power in Bangladesh that include cultural diplomacy, people-to-people exchange, economic diplomacy, infrastructural projects, and development assistance program. Based on the secondary sources, the paper will analyze the prospects and constraints of China's soft power arising out of the return of the US president Donald Trump, Sino-Indian rivalry, great power competition, and evolving geopolitical configurations in South Asia, especially in Bangladesh since the downfall of Sheikh Hasina through a student-led mass movement.

Theme: Poverty, Economic Growth and Good Governance

Session-1 (Paper 1) : Linking Crimes, Poverty and Economic Growth

1. Author: Krishna Raj and Acharya1 Shobha Aryal

    Institution: Tribhuvan University, Nepal

    Email: krishna.acharya@rrlc.tu.edu.np

Title of the Paper: An analysis of Foreign Trade and Economic Growth: Empirics from Nepal

Abstract:

Foreign trade is taken as a engine of growth in the age of globalization. It was started with the specialization and difference in cost in the world. Basically surplus production is prerequisite for foreign trade. In foreign trade, there are two components- export and import. If monetary value of net export is positive, it has contribution to economic growth via increase in capital accumulation. Both macro variables are very poor since they never move in double digit in 50 years. In the beginning, volume of trade was small and growth rate was the same. However in these ten years, paradigm had shifted since consumer move from utilitarian approach to consumerism approach. In this context, we have no our product and compel to purchase goods and services produced in rest of world. Now, production and employment are creating in those nations, ultimately we are paying our national income in term of key currencies. Now the condition is worsening since one fifth of our total budget should allocate to pay for debt servicing. Key words: Trade, growth, employment, debt trap, export, consumer.

Session-1 (Paper 2) : Linking Crimes, Poverty and Economic Growth

Author: Asma Begum and Shahriar Kabir

Institution: Department of Economics, Independent University (IUB), Dhaka, Bangladesh

Email: skabir@iub.edu.bd

Title of the Paper: How Does Economy Influence Crime: A Study on Bangladesh

Abstract:

Like many other countries, crime is a major and growing obstacle to peaceful life in Bangladesh. Understanding the underlying factors that would influence crime is important for policymakers. Objective: This study aims to explore if and how the key economic factors, such as inflation, unemployment, GDP growth, real interest rates, remittances, and exchange rates, may affect crime rates in Bangladesh. Methodology and Findings: Secondary data on 16 different types of crimes in Bangladesh over a 10 year period is analysed using the panel regression models, considering both random and fixed effects. The results show that unemployment, GDP growth, real interest rates and remittances have a significant impact on crime rates in Bangladesh. Higher unemployment is linked to increased crime, likely due to financial hardship. In contrast, higher GDP growth and real interest rates are associated with lower crime

rates, suggesting that economic stability and higher borrowing costs help to reduce crime. Inflation and exchange rates, while initially appearing less important, become significant when more accurate methods are applied, highlighting the role of economic stress in driving crime rates. Recommendations: The study suggests that job creation and promoting economic growth are two key tools to control crime. Efforts to control inflation and maintain economic stability could help reduce financial stress, which often leads to crime. Policies that support the flow and effective use of remittances and keep exchange rates stable could also be useful in controlling crime.

Session-1 (Paper 3): Linking Crimes, Poverty and Economic Growth

3   Author: Shafakat Bin Afsar and Shahriar Kabir

     Institution: Department of Economics, Independent University (IUB),
                          Dhaka, Bangladesh

     Email: skabir@iub.edu.bd

     Title of the Paper: Linkage between Poverty, Remittance and Economic
                          Growth: A Panel Study on South and Southeast Asia

Abstract:

Many developing countries in South and Southeast Asia face various economic challenges in dealing with poverty alleviation and economic instability. According to literature, remittance has been a crucial tool to fight against poverty and to improve economic growth. Aim and objective: This study attempts to explore the relationship between poverty, remittance and economic growth six selected South and Southeast Asian countries. In particular, the study aims to determine the underlying relation of economic growth and inward remittances on poverty, as well as the relation between inward remittances and economic growth. Methodology and findings: This research studies six South and Southeast Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines with the data set of 25 years from 1998 to 2022. For the research, the fixed-effect panel regression model is used to investigate how remittances and economic growth impact poverty reduction and how inward remittance impacts the economic growth. The results suggest that there is a significant impact of both inward remittances and the economic growth on poverty alleviation. In addition, a strong significant relationship is observed between the inward remittance and economic growth. Recommendation: The study delivers valid insights on how impactful inward remittance can be to promote economic growth as well as reducing poverty. Promoting an increase in inward remittance can make a major impact on the overall economy's well-being for these developing countries. Proper education and training design can build the workforce to generate more inward remittance and strengthen the economy.

Session –2 (Paper 1): Economic and Climate Governance in China and South Asia

Author: A.K.M. Mahmudul Haque, Imran Hossain and Faria Rahman Nady

Institution: Department of Political Science, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi-6205, Bangladesh

Email: fariarahman.ru@gmail.com;   akmmahmudul@ru.ac.bd; imranbd.ru@gmail.com

Title of the Paper: Urban Governance in Heatwave Adaptation and Mitigation: Insights from Rajshahi City Corporation and Regional Practices in South Asia and China

Abstract:

This study assesses the role of urban governance in heatwave adaptation and mitigation strategies within Rajshahi City Corporation, contextualizing its findings within broader practices across South Asia and China. Employing a mixed-method approach, the research integrates quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving local residents and authorities. The study reveals significant inconsistencies in the adoption of heatwave adaptive measures among residents, with socio-economic factors prominently influencing these practices. Common adaptive behaviors such as increased fluid consumption and the use of fans are prevalent, while critical strategies like adjusting daily routines and avoiding physical activity are less consistently adopted. These inconsistencies underscore the need for enhanced public education and targeted interventions to promote comprehensive heatwave management practices. The findings indicate substantial gaps in urban governance, including low awareness of heatwave management policies and significant dissatisfaction with current governance practices. The limited involvement of NGOs and perceived lack of coordination among government agencies and NGOs further undermine the effectiveness of existing strategies. Drawing parallels with regional approaches, the study highlights how China and other South Asian countries have implemented systemic approaches to heatwave management, including the integration of urban planning initiatives, the expansion of green infrastructure, and the establishment of cooling centers. Positive perceptions of green infrastructure in Rajshahi emphasize the potential benefits of such initiatives, despite current inadequacies in infrastructure and inequitable access to cooling resources. The study underscores the need for systemic approaches in Rajshahi, including urban planning initiatives aimed at enhancing the resilience of the built environment, increasing green spaces, improving building designs, and establishing cooling centers. These measures, coupled with equitable access to cooling resources and robust public health campaigns are critical for effective heatwave adaptation and mitigation. By linking these findings to broader regional practices, the study offers valuable insights for improving heatwave management in urban areas across South Asia and China.

Session –2 (Paper 2): Economic and Climate Governance in China and South Asia

Author: Mostak Ahamed Galib

Institution: Wuhan University of Technology, China

Email: dr.ahmed.galib@gmail.com

Title of the Paper: China's governing experience: Essential lessons for other developing countries

Abstract:

The governing system of China" is deeply rooted in China's history and reality, highlighting the advantages and efficiency of the socialism with Chinese characteristics. Its primary goals are the well-being of the Chinese people, national rejuvenation, and global unity. China's development has focused on addressing modernization challenges faced by developing countries worldwide, integrating strengths from various modernization models. China's good governing practice provides insights for other developing countries, emphasizing a "people-centered" approach to reform, openness, and innovation. It focuses on addressing practical issues related to the nation while tailoring development strategies to each nation's unique conditions thus advancing in line with the broader path of human civilization. This paper will therefore describe China's successful experience, connect China with other developing countries, and then analyze effectiveness of replicating China's successful governing experience in other developing countries.

Session –2 (Paper 3): Economic and Climate Governance in China and South Asia

Author: Yohei Kobashi, Yutaka Tsujinaka and Shakil Ahmed

Institution: Soka University, Japan and Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh

Email: yohei.kobashi@gmail.com;   yutaka.tsujinaka@tyg.jp; shakil.ahmed@juniv.edu

Title of the Paper: The Influence of Democratization and Economic Development on the Autonomous Civil Society Organizations: A Cross Country Analysis on Co-governance in Promoting Civic Engagement

Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to examine the influence of democratization and economic development on the creation of autonomous civil society organizations. Methodologically, this paper employs a quantitative approach, using data from the Japanese Interest Group Survey (JIGS), which compares civil society organizations across eleven countries, including China, Japan, and Bangladesh. Kooiman et al. (2008) identifies institutional relationships between government and civil society as one of the conditions for realizing co-governance. However, Tsujinaka et al. (2013) found regional differences in the correlation between institutionalization and co-

governance. To clarify whether these differences are due to democratization or economic development, this study applies a multilevel analysis using a hierarchical Bayesian model. The results show that democratization has a significant positive impact on the correlation, while no significant relationship is found with economic development. These findings suggest that democratization plays a crucial role in fostering co-governance, while economic development alone is not sufficient to promote such institutional connections.

Roundtable – 1

1.   Author: Mohammed Nuruzzaman

      Institution: Department of Political Science and Sociology, North South
                          University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

      Email: mohammed.nuruzzaman01@northsouth.edu

      Title of the Paper: China-India Rivalry in South Asia: Geopolitical Obsessions
                          vs. the Logic of Geo economics

Abstract:

This panel aims to critically discuss China's and India's ever unfolding rivalry and competing approaches to South Asia relations. China-India relations underwent a new chapter of tough competitions after 2013, the year China formally launched its flagship global infrastructure development project – the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that created great appeal to all South Asian states, absent India. While India mostly acts from geopolitical considerations to resist China's growing involvements in South Asia and thus maintain its traditional sphere of influence in the region, China is applying geo-economic methods (methods of commerce, investments, technical support, project financing etc.) to wean the neighbors away from India and thus penetrate deeper into South Asia. India's smaller neighbors feel more comfortable to cultivate effective business ties with China at a great disappointment of India. Will China eventually win the battle at the cost of India? Can India reconsider participating in the BRI to create a win-win situation and thus avoid a possible defeat to China? Can geo-economics take precedence over geopolitics in South Asia? This panel will initiate and delve into critical discussions on these questions and related issues.

Roundtable –2

1. Author: Salman Haider

    Institution: North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

    Email: salman.haider@northsouth.edu

    Title of the Paper: From Bilateral Strategic Partnership to a Comprehensive
                         Strategic Co-operative Partnership: Mapping Out
                         Bangladesh–China Agricultural Cooperation to Ensure Food
                         Security for the Marginalized communities in Bangladesh

Abstract:

The panel aims to examine and explore the overall economic relations between Bangladesh and China with a special focus on bilateral agricultural cooperation. Under various cooperation initiatives from public and private sectors, both countries are engaged in in-depth agricultural cooperation and promotion including professional knowledge sharing, seeds, pest prevention, agricultural devices and so on. Taking rice as an example, farmers in northern Bangladesh are widely cultivating high-yielding rice varieties, specially using seeds from China. Both countries agreed to harness the China-Bangladesh Joint Agriculture Committee to further explore cooperation in hybrid rice and wheat breeding, plating techniques and transfer of agricultural technologies. This panel looks forward to highlight the existing gaps in co-operation, identify the most possible ways to use China's technological advances to maximize food security for the marginal Bangladeshi communities, and suggest policy recommendations for the Bangladesh government.

Roundtable –3

1. Author: Harisur Rahman

   Institution: North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

   Email: harisur.rahman@northsouth.edu

   Title of the Paper: Strengthening Media and Intercultural Collaboration
   Between China and Bangladesh

Abstract:

The panel titled "Strengthening Media and Intercultural Collaboration Between China and Bangladesh" will delve into the critical role that media and intercultural communication play in the evolving relationship between these two dynamic nations. Over the past few decades, China and Bangladesh have seen significant growth in bilateral ties, particularly in areas such as trade, infrastructure development, and cultural exchanges. However, as these nations deepen their cooperation, the role of media becomes increasingly vital in shaping public perceptions, facilitating cross-cultural understanding, and supporting diplomatic efforts. This panel will provide a comprehensive examination of the historical context of media interactions between China and Bangladesh, highlighting the evolution from traditional forms of media to the current digital landscape. The discussion will explore how these media channels have historically influenced and continue to influence the narrative around bilateral relations. By analyzing the current media landscapes of both countries, the panel will compare their regulatory frameworks, media ownership structures, and the extent of media freedom, offering insights into how these factors shape public opinion and governmental policies. The panel will also tackle the challenges that hinder media and intercultural collaboration, such as language barriers, differing political systems, and the impact of censorship. These obstacles are compounded by the rapid proliferation of digital and social media, which can both foster and hinder communication. Through this exploration, the panelists will identify potential opportunities for enhancing media cooperation, such as joint media productions, educational exchanges in journalism and communication, and the establishment of platforms that promote cross-cultural dialogue.