Introduction

This issue of CISS Newsletter provides a snapshot of the host of activities undertaken by the Center for International Strategic Studies, Islamabad. It includes research publications, webinars and participation in discussions during the past three months. CISS team has covered all important international developments that took place during this period through its various activities.

COVID-19 outbreak changed the course of world politics. The epidemic has deeply affected the global economy and directed the attention of world towards containing the virus. Despite the constraints, posed by COVID-19 situation, CISS continued its activities and held two webinars during this period.

On June 3, 2020, CISS conducted a webinar on 'Dynamics of Nuclear South Asia: 22 Years of Nuclearisation', to commemorate the 22nd anniversary of Pakistan's nuclear tests which were carried out in response to India's.

On June 24, 2020, a second webinar was organised by the Center on 'Pakistani and Indian Nuclear Programs: Myths and Realities', to address baseless claims over Pakistan's nuclear program made in various reports including the 2020 report of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

Besides, CISS team analyzed major international events in great detail that happened during this period, by contributing articles, papers and actively participating in various events, organized by CISS as well as other think tanks. These major developments include Pak-India border tensions, web-conference of SAARC trade officials, Iranian COVID-19 situation, Afghan peace process and Sino-Indian confrontation in Ladakh area.

Editor
Maryyum Masood
Webinars/Discussions

ED CISS, Amb. Ali Sarwar Naqvi and Ms. Saima Aman Sial Participated in a Discussion on 'Current Pak-India Border Tensions' on PTV World (May 6, 2020)

Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi, Executive Director CISS, and Ms. Saima Aman Sial, Senior Researcher CISS, appeared in a program 'Views on News' on PTV World to discuss the current India-Pakistan border tensions.

For further details please visit https://ciss.org.pk/ed-ciss-and-ms-saima-sial-participated-in-discuss-on-current-pak-india-border-tensions-on-ptv-world/

Riaz A. Khokhar Spoke in a Webinar on 'COVID-19 and the Future of SAARC' with Panelists across South Asia (May 6, 2020)

Mr. Riaz A. Khokhar, Research Assistant CISS, spoke in a webinar on COVID-19 and the Future of SAARC organized by the Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Relations (AIDIA), based in Kathmandu, Nepal. The panelists were from all of the SAARC countries, except Maldives and Afghanistan.
Dr. Naeem Salik gave comments on 'Nuclearization of South Asia' on the Indus News program, Indus Special with Ejaz Haider (May 29, 2020)

Brig. Naeem Ahmed Salik (R), Senior Research Fellow CISS said that Pakistan developed Nuclear Weapons to protect itself from Indian aggression and nuclear threat and to boost security, on the Indus News program Indus Special with Ejaz Haider.

For further details please visit the link https://ciss.org.pk/dr-naeem-salik-gave-comments-on-nuclearization-of-south-asia-on-the-indus-news-program-indus-special-with-ejaz-haider/

CISS Webinar on 'Dynamics of Nuclear South Asia: 22 Years of Nuclearization' (June 3, 2020)

The Center for International Strategic Studies conducted a webinar on 'Dynamics of Nuclear South Asia: 22 Years of Nuclearization', to commemorate the 22nd anniversary of Pakistan's nuclear tests on June 3, 2020. Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi gave, in his opening remarks, a background of the deliberations leading to the nuclear testing decision. The webinar was very well-attended by foreign diplomats, retired ambassadors, senior practitioners, policy-makers, academicians and students.
The Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS) organized a second webinar during this period on 'Pakistani and Indian Nuclear Programs: Myths and Realities' on June 24th, 2020, in response to the exaggerated and baseless claims about Pakistan's nuclear program published in the 2020 report of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and subsequently carried by Indian media. The webinar witnessed an animated interactive session and the participants found it to be very worthwhile.

GLOBAL STRUCTURE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AND REVIVAL OF NUCLEAR POWER

Dr. Syed Javaid Khurshid (April 2, 2020)

Energy is important for the development of a country. Societal development is also gauged by the production of energy since it is one of the sustainable development goals for poverty alleviation. It is crucial for the energy source to be affordable, reliable and continuous, besides being without greenhouse gases to mitigate climate change. For this the scientific community is challenged to clean energy.

Complete article can be accessed at https://ciss.org.pk/PDFs/Global-Structure.pdf

AMB. ALI SARWAR NAQVI CONTRIBUTED IN 'COMBATING CORONA: VOICES FROM FRIENDS OF ISSI-V'

(April 7, 2020)

This terrible phenomenon of Corona virus has overturned the entire scope of strategic threats from the nuclear dimension of strategic risks to the biological and microbial threat to states and societies. By all available evidence, the advent of this scourge is likely to be catastrophic on both national economies and the global economic scene, which could pose a horrific danger for national as well as international security.

For further details please visit the link http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Combating_Corona-voices_from_Friends_of_ISSI-V.pdf

IRAN'S CORONA VIRUS CRISIS: A CLUSTERED ISSUE

Huma Rehman (April 10, 2020)

The clamorous political and diplomatic relationship between the United States and Iran is brooding even further in the time of this medical chaos. Since 2018, the Trump administration has imposed a policy of “maximum pressure” sanctions against Tehran after its withdrawal from the landmark nuclear agreement, JCPOA. As primary and secondary sanctions wreak havoc on the Iranians, Covid-19 makes the situation even bleaker.

Complete article can be accessed at https://www.globalvillagespace.com/irans-corona-virus-crisis-a-clustered-issue/
COVID-19 IN SOUTH ASIA'S POWER POLITICS
Riaz Khokhar (April 13, 2020)
The management of COVID-19 reveals which countries are taking the lead in geopolitics in South Asia. On March 12, 2020, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries a strategy to deal with the Coronavirus challenge through a video conference. It was a move that surprised many regional commentators and analysts.

For further details please visit the link https://www.9dashline.com/blog/covid-19-in-south-asian-power-politics

BALLISTIC MISSILES AMIDST THE HYPersonic Hype
Samran Ali (April 18, 2020)
Ever since the Russian demonstration of Avangard glide vehicle in March 2018, the world seems to be in the hype over the new weapons that are often touted as “unstoppable”. While the hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs) are innovative in many aspects, they may not be much different than the traditional intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBMs) in terms of their speed and potential impact, especially at the strategic level. ICBMs travel at hypersonic speeds and a single missile carrying a nuclear warhead can destroy a whole city.

Complete article can be accessed at https://strafasia.com/ballistic-missiles-amidst-the-hypersonic-hype/

MILITARY APPLICATIONS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN PAKISTAN AND THE IMPACT ON STRATEGIC STABILITY IN SOUTH ASIA
Saima Aman Sial (April 21, 2020)
Ms. Saima Aman Sial contributed a chapter on, 'Military Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Pakistan and its implication for South Asian Strategic Stability', as part of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI's) publication on “The impact of Artificial Intelligence on Strategic Stability and Nuclear Risk: South Asian Perspectives“.

Complete chapter can be accessed at https://ciss.org.pk/PDFs/SIPRI-Topychkanov.pdf
COVID-19 AND CYBERSECURITY
Afeera Firdous (April 22, 2020)
In just a few days, the world has completely changed from a connected network to a
distanced entity (at least in personal space terms). Most of the world's population is in self-
quarantine, which made them more dependent on the internet. This huge dependency on the
internet and online services around the world, has created vulnerabilities and more
opportunities for data-hungry criminals. In this digital era, the world is facing as much of a
threat from cybercriminals as it is facing physical danger from the pandemic.

For complete article please visit https://nation.com.pk/22-Apr-2020/covid-19-and-
cybersecurity

INDO-FRENCH ALLIANCE HURTING SOUTH ASIAN STRATEGIC
STABILITY
Saima Aman Sial (April 23, 2020)
Seeing a fighter aircraft adorned with flowers, with coconuts being put in front of its
windshield and sprinkled with Holy water from Ganga is rather an unusual sight. But
despite that, such rare scenes of lemons been put against the wheels of Rafale, the French
fighter aircraft, were witnessed in a ceremony held in France in October 2019. India's
Defence Minister Rajnath Singh performed the religious ritual on the first out of the 36
planned Rafale fighter aircraft being handed over to India on the French airbase.

Complete article can be accessed at https://www.globalvillagespace.com/indo-french-
alliance-hurting-south-asian-strategic-stability/

PREJUDICE IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC
Sajid Ali (April 26, 2020)
The COVID-19 pandemic has evoked a spectrum of responses from humankind, ranging
from display of pure moral and humanistic impulses to instances of crass tribalistic
instincts. Overworked and fatigued doctors, nurses and health workers, showing remarkable
feats of resilience, altruism and professional integrity, have shown the best of humanity in
these hard times. A few among them have even danced to the tune of cultural songs to keep
the morale and spirit of the patients high in hospitals.

For further details please visit https://strafasia.com/prejudice-in-the-ti
INDIA-NORTH KOREA ILLICIT TRADE: UNDERMINING THE UNSC RESOLUTIONS
Zawar Haider Abidi (April 28, 2020)
How misleading is the world order, or in other words, how mala fide is it? While this fact is known to most serious observers of the system, there are few who talk or write about it. Most of those who do, term it as realpolitik: and the impact of this hypocritical world order is more evident in South Asia that is seen as the epicenter of a new Cold War.

To read the complete article, please visit https://strafasia.com/india-north-korea- illicit-trade-undermining-the-unsc-resolutions/

BIOSECURITY PLANNING & PREPAREDNESS – PAKISTANI PERSPECTIVE
Dr. Syed Javaid Khurshid (April 28, 2020)
Biosecurity is a strategic and integrated approach to provide policies and practices for preventing the intentional release of biological materials or the acquisition of knowledge, tools, or techniques. As a whole, biosecurity helps identify gaps in the regulations. Biosecurity preparation, early detection and planning are essential for public health.

Complete article can be accessed at https://strafasia.com/biosecurity-planning-preparedness-pakistani-perspective/

SOUTH ASIAN VOICES (SAV) REPUBLISHED RIAZ A. KHOKHAR'S ARTICLE ON COVID-19 IN SOUTH ASIA'S POWER POLITICS ON THEIR WEBSITE.
Riaz Khokhar (May 1, 2020)
The management of COVID-19 reveals which countries are taking the lead in geopolitics in South Asia. On March 12, 2020, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries a strategy to deal with the Coronavirus challenge through a video conference. It was a move that surprised many regional commentators and analysts.

This article can be accessed at https://southasianvoices.org/covid-19-in-south-asias-power-politics/
INDIA-FRANCE MILITARY PARTNERSHIP: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH ASIAN STABILITY

Huma Rehman (May 2, 2020)

International and regional stability is ultimately the product of broader political, economic, and military dynamics among many players, in which political, technological, strategic alliances and decisions perform multiple roles as agents of change for the strategic environment. France and India have a fairly multifaceted strategic relationship, one of cooperation spanning many domains, including defense, civil nuclear energy, space and climate change arenas.

For further details kindly visit https://strafasia.com/india-france-military-partnership-implications-for-south-asian-stability/

Covid-19 and the Future of SAARC

Riaz Khokhar (May 8, 2020)

SAARC had been dysfunctional for the largest period ever since its establishment in 1985. Although the postponement and cancelation of SAARC summits have happened before, this time it took South Asian Heads of Governments nearly six years to sit together under a common platform. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi took the charge and convened a virtual SAARC conference over the COVID-19 crisis. An emergency fund was created to support each other in battling the pandemic.

Complete article can be accessed at http://aidaasia.org/research-article/covid-19-and-the-future-of-saarc

The Supplemental Low Yield SLBM Warhead – Strategic Implications

Dr. Naeem Salik (May 10, 2020)

In February 2020 the US fielded a new low yield SLBM Warhead designated as the 'Supplemental Low Yield SLBM Warhead W 76-2.' On 24 April 2020 Bureau of Arms Control Verification and Compliance of the US State Department issued a memorandum explaining the rationale for introducing the new warhead to be mounted on Trident-2 D5 submarine-launched ballistic missiles on the US Navy's Ohio class submarines. Each of these submarines carries 20 SLBMs of which 1-2 missiles would be armed with the new W-76-2 warhead with a yield of 5 kilotons.
For further details please visit the link https://strafasia.com/the-supplemental-low-yield-slbm-warhead-strategic-implications/

COVID-19 OFFERS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN
Maryyum Masood and Sabeen Malik (May 10, 2020)
Despite international calls for a ceasefire which would allow the government and the Taliban to work together to counter the pandemic as the Taliban continued to mount attacks on Afghan security forces, primarily in rural areas. Although the Taliban have rejected the idea of a ceasefire, they will stop fighting in areas where the virus has contracted the population. However, at present, the Taliban have not shown any signs of cooperation.

For complete article please visit https://www.globalvillagespace.com/covid-19-offers-unique-opportunity-for-peace-in-afghanistan/

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND PAKISTAN'S LONG TERM ENERGY OUTLOOK
Dr. Syed Javaid Khurshid (May 15, 2020)
The Coronavirus pandemic besides affecting many infrastructures worldwide, is showing its impact on the health system and frontline health workers who have to perform their essential services right away. COVID-19 constitutes an unprecedented threat to sensitive strategic infrastructure and now everyone is talking about nationalization, indigenization and self-reliance, including the power sector.

To read the complete article, kindly visit http://www.hilal.gov.pk/hilal_english/index.html

AIR LAUNCHED BALLISTIC MISSILE: A NEAR TERM HYPERSONIC OPTION FOR PAKISTAN
Samran Ali (May 21, 2020)
Pakistan's defense posture is mainly aimed at securing itself against the threats emanating from its arch-rival India. Over the years, it has made efforts to counter these threats by acquiring or developing systems to enhance its defensive capability. Resultantly, a strategic balance has existed in South Asia for over four decades. Pakistan was forced to develop nuclear weapons after the Indian nuclear tests in 1974.
PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS: A PRODUCT OF STRATEGIC NECESSITY
Samran Ali (May 28, 2020)

Pakistan's nuclear weapons program over the years has been subject to criticism, including safety and security concerns, the myth of the fastest-growing program, or the diversion of resources towards them; it faced all. However, looking at the harsh geopolitical and strategic reality, the efforts to build and maintain them are worthwhile and vindicated. They have fulfilled the objective of their development by adding to the security of Pakistan against its arch-rival, India.

For complete article please visit https://strafasia.com/pakistans-nuclear-weapons-a-product-of-strategic-necessity/

DECADES OF NUCLEAR DETERRENCE IN SOUTH ASIA
Huma Rehman (May 29, 2020)

Historically, both India and Pakistan have had hostile bilateral relations for more than fifty years. They have experienced a very deadly partition and three major wars. Since that momentous occurrence of the nuclear testing episode by both India and Pakistan, the regional strategic dynamics of South Asia changed forever.

Complete article can be accessed at https://www.globalvillagespace.com/youm-i-takbeer-pakistans-answer-to-indias-operation-shakti/

COVID-19 Crisis and Future of Sustainable Development Goals
Dr. Syed Javaid Khurshid (June 7, 2020)

COVID-19 badly damaged health systems globally and even destroyed them completely in many countries. Besides being a health crisis, it is also an economic crisis, a social crisis, and a humanitarian crisis worldwide. The long-lasting impact of this pandemic will change the world completely and it will take time to fully recover. After more than two months of a global lockdown, the economic crisis is likely to dictate the new world order.

For further details please visit the link https://strafasia.com/covid-19-crisis-and-future-of-sustainable-development-goals/
CONCLUSION

Despite the corona virus crisis, which required CISS office to be closed, normal research and other activities continued, as far as possible, during the period. CISS held two important webinars and CISS researchers contributed articles and papers to professional journals as well as the media.