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Quarter in Focus

The regional geopolitical situation in the wake of the US withdrawal from Kabul and Pakistan's response to its challenges occupied most of IPS' attention during the last quarter. It is also at this time of the year when the annual meeting of the Institute's National Academic Council (NAC) takes place, reviewing its progress in the preceding year and suggesting issues to take up moving ahead.

The much-hyped issue of 'forced conversion' in Pakistan remained another critical topic under discussion as the Institute hosted a gathering of concerned academics and civil society activists who refuted the existence of any such claims. The issue also generated two more debates – one within the Institute and the other at the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) - attempting to validate the merits of these claims, especially in light of the findings of recent IPS' study on the same topic.

It was a very engaging period for IPS Energy program as well which apart from highlighting in an int'l webinar Pakistan's effort to improve environment degradation through renewable energy transition, also joined hands with AEDB and GIZ to foster a study on grid-tied solar photovoltaic systems in Pakistan.

Other significant events held in the quarter including a hybrid seminar on 63 years of Gwadar's retrocession to Pakistan; a review meeting on the proposed domestic violence bill; roundtable of the Working Group on Kashmir; a talk by the Portuguese ambassador - who advised Pakistan to benefit from the country's experience in Africa; and a well-attended reception in the honor of Dr Amjad Saqib, Akhuwat Foundation, who recently received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award.

IPS' joining hands with Inovation-Asia (Private) Limited – a sister concern of int'l technology firm Inovation Inc. – was another highlight of the quarter, whereas another MoU with the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Peshawar was also signed within the period.

IPS LEAD – the Learning, Excellence and Development program of IPS – hosted five speakers for its ongoing oral history project 'The Living Scripts'; held a brainstorming session with the M.Phil. students of UMT Lahore's IR department to discuss their research proposals on Africa, and imparted lectures on effective governance, trends in higher education research and career development in separate sessions and exposure visits.

The quarter's research endeavors yielded four insightful briefs on the issues of 'forced' conversion, regional connectivity and Pakistan's power sector transition, whereas IPS Press – the Institute's publishing arm – brought forth three publications as part of a series titled *Armughan-e-Khurshid* comprising Professor Khurshid's essays and speeches.



Annual meeting of IPS-National Academic Council 2021

The annual meeting of IPS-National Academic Council (NAC) was held on September 18, 2021 with its mandatory objective to review the work done by the Institute's team in the preceding year as well as to discuss and advise its academic endeavors going forward presently and being planned for future.

The meeting was attended on location by Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, IPS' vice chairman, Prof Dr Anis Ahmad, vice chancellor, Riphah Internation-

al University (RIU), Dr Waqar Masood Khan, former federal secretary finance, Syed Abu Ahmad Akif, former federal cabinet secretary, Prof Dr Anwar-ul-Hassan Gilani, vice chancellor, University of Haripur, Dr Fateh Muhammad Burfat, former vice chancellor, University of Sindh, Dr Syed M Junaid Zaidi, executive director, COMSATS University, Dr Abdul Rauf Rafiqi, director, Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai Chair, University of Balochistan and Dr Nazir Ahmed Vaid from Akhuwat Foundation, whereas the members attending the session online

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Speakers term Gwadar's retrocession to Pakistan a foreign policy success story, highlight geo-economic potential

The historic retrocession of Gwadar to Pakistan, especially in view of its geo-economic and geostrategic positioning, and the will of its people, underscores the commendable vision and efficiency of Pakistan's foreign policy actors in its early years. However, the continued failure to benefit from the dividends and poor condition of the inhabitants of Gwadar speaks volumes of the governance crisis the country is faced with.

This was the crux of a webinar '63 Years of Gwadar's Retrocession to Pakistan: Achieve-

ments, Prospects and Challenges', on September 8, 2021.

Senator Kahuda Babar, the legislator from Gwadar who was also the session's guest of honor, praised



V/Adm Iftikhar A. Rao (retd)

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Pakistan can benefit from our experience in Africa: Portuguese ambassador



H.E. Paulo Neves Pocinho

exploration age. Portugal's rich maritime

Portugal's seafaring expertise and maritime strategies combining naval power, trade, and religious and cultural aspects were its key foreign policy instruments during the

legacy, the history of former Portuguese colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and their role in world affairs today is an arena less explored by Pakistani academia and think tanks.

The message emanated from an exclusive talk by H.E. Paulo Neves Pocinho, Ambassador of the Portuguese Republic, in his address titled 'Navigating the Portuguese History and its Impact in the Indian Ocean Region with Special Reference to Afro-Eurasian Maritime Trade' at IPS on September 13, 2021.

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Reception hosted in the honor of Dr M. Amjad Saqib, Akhuwat's founder



IPS hosted a reception in the honor of Dr Muhammad Amjad Saqib, founder & executive director, Akhuwat Foundation, who has recently received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award (also known as Asia's 'Nobel Prize'). Akhuwat's interest- and collateral-free Islamic microfinance program worth more than Rs155bn has so far catalyzed more than 4.8mn poor

households in Pakistan. The event held on September 16, 2021 was also addressed by Khalid Rahman, Chairman IPS, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, IPS' Vice Chairman, Dr Nazir Ahmed Vaid from Akhuwat Foundation and Aman Ullah Khan, member, IPS' board of governors and former president, Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI).

Speaking to a large gathering at the reception, Dr Amjad Saqib termed his selection for the Ramon Magsaysay Award a success of Pakistan and its people, maintaining that Akhuwat's endeavors would not have been successful had the people of the country not been supportive in giving and returning loans.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/reception-in-the-honor-of-dr-amjad-saqib-akhuwat-foundation/>

'Forced conversion' a baseless hoax fabricated to malign Pakistani state and society



"Forced conversion is a hoax that has no proven factual basis at all but is used to damage the image of Pakistan, its society, and the state."

This was the view of a group of academics, activists, and civil society members who had gathered in Islamabad on September 12, 2021 to question the nature of religious conversions in Pakistan, and more particularly in Sindh.

Mian Abdul Haq alias Mian Mitho of Bharchundi Sharif (Ghotki) was also present and had to respond to several striking questions on his role

in such conversions and the allegations leveled against him of forcibly converting scores of individuals to Islam.

Vehemently denying these allegations, Mitho said that people have been coming for over two centuries to Bharchundi Sharif. Even the famous Muslim scholar Ubaidullah Sindhi had converted to Islam here. During colonial times, the British rulers had investigated the phenomenon and got convinced of the genuineness of the conversions in places like these, and they had developed a framework to streamline and record the conversions. "You would not find a single case at our monastery where force is used to convert someone; I request you to visit the place yourself and investigate the facts to vindicate the allegation against Pakistan", he insisted.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/forced-conversion-a-baseless-hoax-fabricated-to-malign-the-state-and-society/>

India using every tactic to change demography of IOK

Tactics to change demographics of the occupied valley which have been a linchpin of the BJP's Hindu-supremacist agenda in post-August 5 Indian Occupied Kashmir were denounced by speakers at the 15th meeting of IPS-Working Group on Kashmir on August 3, 2021.

The agenda of the meeting was to discuss Indian attempts to change the demography of Kashmir during the last two years. Among the speakers were Syed Abrar Hussain, former ambassador and vice chairman IPS, Iftikhar Gillani, a senior Kashmiri journalist, Farzana Yaqoob, former AJ&K minister and General Secretary IPS-WGK, Ambassador (r) Tajammul



Farzana Yaqoob

(LFOVK), and Naufil Shahrukh, GM Operations at IPS. The session was chaired by IPS Chairman Khalid Rahman.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/ips-wgk/>

Altaf, senior research associate at IPS, Advocate Nasir Qadri, an international law expert from Legal Forum for Oppressed Voices of Kashmir

'Status and Statistics of Sustainable Development Goals in Pakistan: Policy Way Forward'



Dr Kanwar M Javed Iqbal and Zafar-ul-Hassan Almas

A research proposal titled 'Status and Statistics of Sustainable Development Goals in Pakistan: Policy Way Forward' by Khawar Hassan, a Ph.D. scholar under the supervision of Dr Abdul Saboor, IPS' Non-resident Research Fellow, and dean, Pir Meher Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, was reviewed in a session on September 3, 2021. Zafar-ul-Hassan Almas, chief macroeconomics, Planning Commission of Pakistan, and Dr Kanwar M Javed Iqbal, senior research fellow, National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) shared their views on Hassan's work.

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Speakers term Gwadar's....

recent development initiatives under the Southern Balochistan package of the federal govt., allocating huge amount of funds for the southern districts of Balochistan, especially Gwadar's development. V/Adm Iftikhar A. Rao (retd) in his keynote speech informed, his forthcoming book *Gwadar Bay to Sir Creek* explains his archival research how Pakistan began negotiations over the transfer of Gwadar from Oman right after its independence in 1947.

He also revealed that Gwadar Development Plan was already in place even before the retrocession took place in 1958. Despite this, Gwadar has not received due attention of policy makers in the country over the decades, he told.

Highlighting various development projects underway in the Rs600bn Southern Balochistan Package recently announced by the federal government, Cdr Jawad Akhtar Khokhar, adviser, maritime affairs, Planning Commission gave a detailed presentation in the webinar.

Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman termed the retrocession of Gwadar as a foreign policy success story of Pakistan that needs to be highlighted time and again.

Zaigham M. Rizvi, chairman, PM's Housing Task Force, IPS' Vice Chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, Ambassador (r) Naghmana A. Hashmi, former Pakistan ambassador to China, Cdre (r) Dr Anjum Sarfraz from NIMA also participated in the webinar.

For complete report, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/63-years-of-gwadars-retrocession-to-pakistan-achievements-prospects-and-challenges/>

Afghanistan Affairs

Ending fear, uncertainty, biggest challenges for IEA



In the wake of complete US withdrawal, brain drain from Afghanistan is posing a serious threat to a return to normalcy as skilled and educated people, facing an uncertain future, are leaving their country in desperation. This warrants some immediate action by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to ensure predictability in governance so that the prevailing chaos engulfing the lives of millions of common Afghans can come to an end.

This sentiment resonated at a roundtable titled 'Afghanistan: Post-US Withdrawal – Present and Future Challenges' which was organized by IPS on September 2, 2021.

The roundtable was attended by an Afghan delegation visiting Pakistan on the invitation of Pak-Afghan Youth Forum (PAYF), comprising Maulvi Ataa-ur-Rehman Saleem, deputy chairman of National Peace Council, Ahmadullah Alizai, former governor of Kabul, Husani Mubarak Azizi, minister of transport, and Jamaluddin Badr, former governor of Nuristan province.

Khalid Rahman, IPS chairman, Amb (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman, Afghan affairs experts Brig (r) Said Nazir, Juma Khan Babar, journalist, Dr Tughral Yamin, dean, CIPS-NUST, Dr M Iqbal Khalil, chairman, Institute of Regional Studies, Peshawar, and Dr Haroon Khatibi, director, Centre for Strategic & Regional Studies, Kabul participated in the session.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/afghanistan-post-us-withdrawal-present-and-future-challenges/>

Afghanistan's long-term peace possible

Efforts for the formation of an inclusive government and announcement of general amnesty in Afghanistan on the model of the conquest of Makkah will guarantee peace and stability which are much needed in the war-ravaged country following the Taliban's ascendance to power in Kabul. This will also pave the way for recognition of the Taliban-led government, once formed, by regional countries including Pakistan.

This was noted at a session titled 'Emerging Scenario in Afghanistan: Implications & Policy Options for Pakistan' which was organized by IPS on August 17, 2021 to shed light on the fall of Kabul to the Taliban and its implications for Pakistan and the region.

IPS' Vice Chairman Amb (r) Syed Abrar Hussain moderated the session while Chairman Khalid Rahman summed it up.

Among the discussants were Brigadier (r) Said Nazir, defence and security analyst, Ambassador (r) Ayaz Wazir, Afghan affairs expert, Air Commodore (r) Khalid Iqbal, former Assistant Chief of Air Staff, PAF, Dr Tughral Yamin, Dean Center of International Peace and Stability, (CIPS), NUST, senior journalist Faizullah Khan, and Tajammul Altaf, former ambassador and senior research associate at IPS.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/emerging-scenario-in-afghanistan-implications-policy-options-for-pakistan/>

Afghan situation warrants proactive role from Pakistan

Instead of waiting for events to turn worse, Pakistan should be proactive to help the new Afghan government post-US withdrawal.

This was the crux of a discussion 'Developments in Afghanistan: Implications for Pakistan and the Region' which was organized on July 15, 2021.

Among the speakers were Ambassador (r) Ayaz Wazir, Pak-Afghan affairs expert, Dr Sadia Sulaiman Bukhari, in-charge Area Study Center, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and Islamuddin Sajid, regional chief correspondent at Anadolu Agency for Asia-pacific. Former ambassador and VC-IPS Syed Abrar Hussain chaired and moderated the session, whereas Khalid Rahman, Chairman IPS delivered the closing remarks.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/developments-in-afghanistan-implications-for-pakistan-and-the-region/>

Educated, skilled, enterprising Afghan refugees in Pakistan can fill the void back home" – Dr Ghulam Farouq Azam



In an interactive session held on September 14, 2021, Dr Ghulam Farouq Azam, a veteran Afghan leader and academician, has termed the incumbent rule of Islamic Emirates of

Afghanistan (IEA) as the only hope for the people of the country as the previous government had left it in the lurch creating an administrative void that needs to be filled.

Regarding the collapse of the US-backed Afghan government machinery against the onslaught of the Taliban, the speaker said, "the Taliban did not trigger the fall of the system as it collapsed on its own."

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/educated-skilled-enterprising-afghan-refugees-in-pakistan-can-fill-the-void-back-home/>

Decolonization needs narratives that are not constructed by the West

Islam is as liberal to discuss and debate differences objectively as secularism claims to be, and questioning secularism as the only way to inclusiveness, peaceful coexistence and tolerance means the decolonization of thoughts and society.

This was the spirit of a discussion at a webinar titled 'Decolonial Muslim Studies & Defending Muhammad (PBUH) in Modernity', organized by IPS in collaboration with the international network of scholars 'Decolonial Dialogue' on August 12, 2021.

The webinar was part of a joint effort by the two organizations in bringing international scholarly debates to Pakistani academia.

Dr SherAli K Tareen, an assistant professor at Franklin and Marshall College, USA, put forth the key themes of his book *Defending Muhammad in Modernity*.



Dr SherAli Tareen

Dr Humeira Iqtidar

The discussants included Dr Humeira Iqtidar of King's College London, Dr Nauman Faizi of LUMS, Dr Anis Ahmed, vice-chancellor, Riphah International University (RIU), Islamabad, Nazeer Mahar from The Research Initiative (TRI) and Zaigham Sarfaraz from Royal Holloway University London.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/decolonial-muslim-studies-defending-muhammad-pbuh-in-modernity/>

Draft bill on domestic violence discussed



Led by IPS' Senior Researcher Syed Nadeem Farhat and chaired by Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman, the discussion was attended by lawyers, members of civil society, academics and human rights activists hailing from different parts of Pakistan.

While emphasizing the need for a law that could create deterrence as well as punish perpetrators, it was felt during the discussion that the current scheme of interventions in such situation could be replaced with the one that is more indigenous in nature. The approach of such a law should be family-oriented while safeguarding the rights of the individuals alongside, the panelists stressed.

Farhat pointed out that the Family Court Act as well as the Punjab law were already offering such mechanisms. He stressed that while these already-in-place family laws offer ways to punish for domestic violence incidents, there still remains a room to refine these laws to avoid such instances in the future positively.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/domestic-violence-bill-reviewed/>

Domestic violence is a global menace, but a recent rise in such instances within Pakistan is raising quite a few concerns. With laws against domestic violence already in place in all the four provinces, the impunity with which such offences are being committed is gradually becoming very alarming.

This was the context in which a roundtable discussion was held at IPS on July 14, 2021, deliberating upon the Domestic Violence Bill draft as well as the points of concern being raised from various quarters.

Experts review first 30 months of incumbent government's foreign policy conduct

Evaluating the performance of incumbent government on global and regional fronts in its first thirty months in power, IPS' senior research associate and former ambassador Tajammul Altaf gave an overview of their foreign policy so far at a session titled 'Pakistan's foreign policy conduct in past 30 months' which was held at IPS on July 13, 2021.

The session was also addressed by IPS Chairman Khalid Rahman and IPS Vice Chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain.

Highlighting the tools required for execution of foreign policy, the former ambassador was of the view that there were thousands of personnel involved in the process, and there were only 87 embassies and 27 consulates of Pakistan



operating around the globe. Out of these 87 embassies, he maintained, 59 embassies had only one to three officials of grade 17 to 22 at their disposal, underscoring the dearth of embassies affecting foreign policy decisions.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/experts-review-first-thirty-months-of-incumbent-governments-foreign-policy/>

'Islamization of Laws and Economy'

A session was held at IPS on August 26, 2021 in which Rafiq Shinwari, a PhD candidate at International Islamic University Islamabad, presented his research proposal on how law and economy have been attempted to be Islamized in Pakistan post 1990s. The researcher shed light on his research approach using IPS' publication *Islamization of Laws and Economy: Case Study of Pakistan* by Charles Kennedy as basic reference for his research, Shinwari explained the limitations of Kennedy's work as it has discussed developments of Islamization till 1992 whereas the developments taking place thereafter, especially in post 9/11 socio-political developments, require to be examined further.

Comparative analysis of recruitment strategies of Taliban and IS



In the wake of the Taliban's ascension to power in Afghanistan and the rising threat of the Islamic State (IS) emanating from Afghanistan, Najeeb Ullah, an intern at IPS and Peace & Conflict

Studies' scholar from NDU, delivered a presentation titled 'Recruitment and Psychological Operational Strategies of Taliban and Islamic State in Afghanistan: A Comparative Analysis' in a session on August 13, 2021.

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Annual meeting of IPS-NAC...

included Sardar Masood Khan, former president, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K), Prof Dr Qibla Ayaz, chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), Dr Syed Tahir Hijazi, vice chancellor, Muslim Youth University, Prof Dr Noreen Saher, chairperson, Department of Anthropology, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Mirza Hamid Hasan, former federal secretary, Water and Power and Air Cdre (r) Khalid Iqbal.

The participants appreciated the progress made by the Institute even in the testing times of pandemic, taking up issues of national, regional and global importance consistently and meeting most of its project targets in time.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/annual-meeting-of-ips-national-academic-council-2021/>

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Pakistan can benefit

The interactive discussion that followed the ambassador's talk was participated by Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman, Vice Chairman IPS Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain and IPS Associates Ambassador (r) Tajammul Altaf, Dr Tughrul Yamin, associate dean, Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), NUST, Naufil Shahrukh, GM Operations, IPS, and Farzana Yaqoob, IPS' associate and founder, Centre for Asian-African

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/navigating-the-portuguese-history-and-its-impact-in-the-indian-ocean-region-with-special-reference-to-afro-eurasian-maritime-trade/>

'The Rhetoric and Reality of Forced Conversion in Pakistan'



In the backdrop of ongoing debate about the phenomenon of forced conversion in Pakistan, its nature, its scale and socio-cultural implications, IPS held a briefing titled 'The rhetoric and reality of forced conversion in Pakistan' on September 28, 2021.

The session was addressed as keynote speaker by Sufi Ghulam Hussain, research officer at IPS, and attended by GM-IPS Naufil Shahrukh, Ambassador (r) Tajammul Altaf, Sr research associate at IPS, Dr Tughrul Yamin, associate dean, Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), NUST and non-resident fellow at IPS, Syed Nadeem Farhat, IPS' senior research officer and Samina Qureshi, assistant professor, Department of Mass Communication, Karachi University, among others.

Sharing Insights IPS encourages interaction with different national and international organizations and scholars to share their studies and exchange views on the subjects of mutual interest. A glimpse of such interactions in the last quarter is being presented here.

Afghanistan Affairs



tions. He anticipated that Taliban would be faced with several stern political, security and economic challenges, and the newly formed Afghanistan government would need a lot of support from the international community, especially regional neighbors, to regain peace and stability in the country.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/vc-ips-addresses-a-webinar-on-post-us-withdrawal-afghanistan/>

'A Post US-Withdrawal Afghanistan Security, Political and Socio-Economic Implications'

Vice Chairman IPS Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain represented IPS in a webinar titled 'A Post US-Withdrawal Afghanistan: Security, Political and Socio-Economic Implications', which was organized by The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy (BIPP) at Netsol (Lahore) on August 30, 2021.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador (r) Abrar considered former Afghan government somewhat responsible for such unexpected and sudden fall of Kabul as well as for the subsequent implica-

'Afghanistan: Past, Present and Future'

IPS was represented by its vice chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain in a webinar titled 'Afghanistan: Past, Present and Future', which was organized by Margalla Book Club on September 8, 2021.

The webinar, which was moderated by Ambassador (r) Ghalib Iqbal and attended alongside VC-IPS by Ambassador (r) Asif Durrani and Ihsan Ghani Khan (PSP retired), aimed at discussing the developing scenario in Afghanistan and potential challenges and opportunities lying ahead in the wake of the Taliban's rise to power.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/vc-ips-discusses-evolving-scenario-and-potential-challenges-for-afghanistan/>

Existing mistrust between Afghanistan and Pakistan fueled only by misunderstandings: VC-IPS

IPS' Vice Chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain was invited by Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Peshawar on July 10, 2021 to deliver a talk on 'Pak-Afghan Relations'.

The former ambassador of Pakistan to Afghanistan spoke at length on the occasion over developing situation in Afghanistan following the US withdrawal while shedding light on Pakistan's role and efforts to bring about peace in the region.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/existing-mistrust-between-afghanistan-and-pakistan-fueled-only-by-misunderstandings-vc-ips-amb-r-abrar-hussain/>

'Trends in Afghanistan - Where do we go from Here?'

Chairman IPS, Khalid Rahman delivered a presentation on 'Trends in Afghanistan - Where do we go from Here?' during a three-day online conference titled 'Reimagining the World: Reflections on the Future of World Order', which was organized by Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement (NIICE) on August 27-29, 2021.

IPS facilitates discussion on proposed 'Anti-Forced Conversion Bill' at CII



Chairman CII, Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, Dr Ikram ul Haq, secretary, CII, and Dr Mohammad Mushtaq Ahmed, legal expert and former director, Shari'ah Academy, among others. The delegation from IPS comprised Syed Nadeem Farhat, senior research officer, and Sufi Ghulam Hussain, the researcher and author of IPS' study 'Forced Conversions: Rhetoric

and Reality'. Expediting its efforts to genuinely probe the phenomenon of alleged forced conversion in Pakistan, IPS facilitated a meeting on September 17, 2021 between the officials of the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) and Pir Abdul Haque alias Mian Mithu of Bharchundi Sharif (Ghotki), who is alleged for forcibly converting scores of individuals to Islam.

The participants of the discussion included Senator Mushtaq Ahmed Khan, Dr Qibla Ayaz,

and Reality'. The objective behind the meeting was to discuss the phenomenon of forced conversions in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh, and the implications of the proposed anti-forced conversion bill, which has already been tabled before the parliament's committee on minorities.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/ips-facilitates-discussion-on-proposed-anti-forced-conversion-bill-at-cii/>

'SCO Forum on Governance and Leadership'

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman was invited by China National Academy of Governance and the SCO Secretariat to participate online in the 'SCO Forum on Governance and Leadership', which was held with the theme of 'SCO in Two Decades: National Development and Governance', on July 27-28, 2021.

The forum was attended by government officials, experts and scholars from think tanks, research institutions and universities of SCO member states, observer states and dialogue partners.

Rahman presented a paper on the occasion titled 'Regional cooperation, SCO and Global Governance'



For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/sco-forum-on-governance-and-leadership/>

Sharing Insights

IPS encourages interaction with different national and international organizations and scholars to share their studies and exchange views on the subjects of mutual interest. A glimpse of such interactions in the last quarter is being presented here.

IPS' Energy Desk

IPS, AEDB, GIZ to join hands for a study on grid-tied solar PV systems in Pakistan



IPS is joining hands with Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB)-Ministry of Energy (Power Division) and GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)-Pakistan to conduct a research study on quality baseline assessment of grid-tied solar PV systems in Pakistan, aiming to streamline PV systems quality in the country.

The introductory meeting for the purpose was held at AEDB on August 3, 2021 in which the activity plan and implications were discussed in detail. The issues associated with the grid integration were analyzed and potential recommendations were discussed aiming to snub quality non-compliance of PV systems. The meeting was attended by Sheeraz Anwar Khan, director Wind/Distributed Generation,

Syed Aqeel Hussain Jafri, director Policy & International Compliance, and Muhammad Yaseen, deputy director-Solar Thermal from AEDB, while GIZ-Pakistan was represented by Technical Advisor Asif Fareed. The team from IPS comprised GM-IPS Naufil Shahrukh, Dr Hassan Abdullah Khalid, technical Lead & PV Expert, and the Institute's Energy program team Mohammad Wali Farooqi and Hamza Naeem.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/ips-aedb-giz-to-join-hands-for-a-study-on-grid-tied-solar-pv-systems-in-pakistan/>

IPS highlights Pakistan's efforts to improve environmental indexes through forestation, Renewable Energy transition



IPS participated as a sole think tank from Pakistan in the INETT (International Network of Energy Transition Think-Tank)'s online meeting, which was otherwise participated by energy transition think tanks from across the globe.

The meeting held on September 1, 2021 was chaired by Andrew Rakestraw, the US Presiden-

tial Envoy on Climate Change, ahead of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) being held by joint persuasion of the United Kingdom and Italy, with a view to discuss and demonstrate that more responsibility has to be given to developed nations for cutting their carbon emissions.

The case of Pakistan on the occasion was presented by Hamza Naeem from the Energy, Water and Climate Change desk of IPS, who urged the international community to consider climate change mitigation as a global interest.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/ips-highlights-pakistans-efforts-to-improve-environmental-indexes-through-forestation-re-transition/>

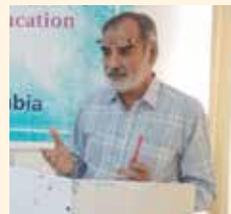
SNC discussed with Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education



An IPS delegation led by its chairman Khalid Rahman had a meeting on Sept 13, 2021 with Wajiha Qamar, parliamentary secretary, Federal Ministry of Education & Professional Training on issues related to Single National Curriculum policy.

'Setting trends in higher education and research'

Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman delivered a presentation as chief guest at the 6th NCHE (National Conference on Higher Education) organized by Tanzeem-e-Asatza under the theme of 'Research Paradigms in Higher Education' from August 13-15, 2021 at Khanspur, Ayubia.



The presentation of Chairman IPS, which was delivered on August 15th, was titled 'Setting trends in higher education and research'.

MoUs

MoU signed for promoting indigenous ICT resources



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between IPS and Inovation-Asia (Private) Limited – a sister concern of international technology firm Inovation Inc. with offices in Canada, UK, USA and Egypt, which was founded by renowned scientist and innovator Dr Hatim Zaghloul – on August 20, 2021.

The MoU aims to foster cooperation between the two organizations to carry out joint capacity-building programs, disseminate research and analysis, foster dialogue among scholars, experts, scientists, and policymakers, and develop indigenous, state-of-the-art ICT (Information and Communication Technology) resources and solutions in Pakistan.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/ips-inovation-asia-sign-mou/>

MoU with IRS, Peshawar



IPS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Peshawar on July 10, 2021 to facilitate cooperation in research, publishing and capacity building activities especially within the areas of international relations & regional studies.

Signed by IPS Vice Chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain and IRS Chairman Dr Mohammad Iqbal Khalil for an initial renewable period of three years, the scope of the agreement covered activities like carrying out joint research and publishing endeavors, disseminating research and analysis to concerned stakeholders, co-organizing seminars, workshops and trainings, fostering dialogue among scholars, experts and policymakers, and sharing of intellectual resources, knowledge and expertise with each other.

For further details, visit: <https://www.ips.org.pk/mou-between-ips-and-irs/>

Human Development

The Institute's human development activities are carried out under 'IPS LEAD' (Learning, Excellence and Development Program) that aims at promoting knowledge economy for individual, organizational and societal excellence.

The Living Scripts | An oral history project to record life and times of veteran civil servants



Amb (r) Tasawar Khan



Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi



Tariq Zaheer Farooqi



Khwaja Saleem Bismil

Aimed at acquiring tacit knowledge from experienced practitioners of the public sector and imparting it to the audience as food for thought, IPS LEAD – the learning, excellence and development program of IPS – is organizing series of sessions titled 'The Living Scripts'. The idea behind the initiative is to pursue accomplished personalities and eminent individuals of national stature, providing them a window to share invaluable experiences and knowledge from their personal and professional lives.

The sitting held within this quarter featured Ambassador (r) Tasawar Khan, Pakistan's former ambassador to United Mexican States, on July 9, 16 and 17, 2021, Former Federal Secretary Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi on July 2 and 30, 2021, Tariq Zaheer Farooqi, former federal secretary, Ministry of Industries, on August 27, 2021 and Former Secretary AJ&K Khwaja M. Saleem Bismil on September 24, 2021.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/ips-lead/the-living-scripts/>

Lectures on effective governance at AHK-NCRD



On the invitation of Akhtar Hameed Khan-National Centre for Rural Development (AHK-NRCD), Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman delivered lectures on the topics of 'Challenges to incorporate citizen participation in governance process' and 'Socio-political bottlenecks in the way of impactful local governance' on August 3 and August 13, 2021.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/challenges-for-citizen-participation-in-governance-processes-a-lecture-by-chairman-ips/>

'Brainstorming Research Ideas' on Africa with UMT students



Dr Tughral Yamin

As part of IPS' Understanding Africa project, a session of 'Brainstorming Research Ideas' was held with the M.Phil. students of the Department of International Relations, University of Management and Technology (UMT), Lahore, on August 25, 2021. The session was facilitated by IPS LEAD

– the Learning, Excellence and Development program of IPS, under its 'Indigenizing Policy Research in Pakistan' initiative.

The students partaking the session discussed their research papers on Africa – assigned to them by their faculties – with IPS' panel comprising Amb (r) Tajammul Altaf, senior research associate at IPS, Dr Tughral Yamin, IPS' non-resident research fellow and associate dean, CIPS-NUST, Naufil Shahrukh, GM Operations, and Kulsoom Belal, research officer at IPS.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/brainstorming-research-ideas-on-africa-with-umt-students/>

Informed decision making vital for career development: Chairman IPS



IPS LEAD (the Learning, Excellence and Development program of IPS) facilitated and hosted AIESEC-NUST in holding a two-day career development workshop for the University students on September 25-26, 2021.

The workshop, which was addressed by career counsellors, mentors and professionals, apprised and capacitated participants on the skills like public speaking, job interviews, etc. while also giving them insights into the professional world, the current job market and concurrent employer expectations. The workshop concluded with the lecture of Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman, who highlighted before the students the importance of prompt and informed decision making in career development, while also stressing on the role of one's ambitions and values in choosing and pursuing a professional career.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/prompt-and-informed-decision-making-vital-part-of-career-development-chairman-ips/>

Peshawar University's summer school participants visit IPS

A delegation of research students from different universities of Pakistan and Afghanistan visiting IPS on September 27, 2021 were apprised by Khalid Rahman, the Institute's chairman, on the immense opportunities enhanced regional connectivity can bring in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asian Republics in the wake of the US withdrawal from Kabul.

The delegation comprising 21 members was part of the 8th International Summer School at the Bara Gali campus of the University of Peshawar.

The discussion in the sitting revolved around the importance of regional connectivity and post US-withdrawal Pak-Afghan relations with a

focus on bilateral trade and people-to-people contact.



For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/new-regime-in-afghanistan-a-reality-chairman-ips/>

Publications

IPS Press is the publishing, bookselling and distributing arm of Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad. Along with the Institute's own research, it also publishes the scholarly work of individual authors and institutions independently.

Armughan-e-Khurshid Series launched

IPS Press has launched a book series titled *Armughan-e-Khurshid*, based on the compilation of articles and speeches of Professor Khurshid Ahmad - the founding chairman and now the patron-in-chief of the Institute of Policy Studies.

Professor Khurshid Ahmad has written/edited/translated more than 100 books in English and Urdu, many of which have been translated in other European and oriental languages. He has also contributed profoundly through innumerable articles, seminar papers and lectures. His in-depth comparative study of the oriental as well as occidental philosophies in

religion, academics, economics, constitutional matters and his commitment to the cause of humanity has led him to be entrusted with key positions in the national as well as international organizations on these socioeconomic and other multidimensional disciplines. He has also been awarded with three honorary degrees of PhD in education, literature and Islamic economics by universities of Malaysia and Loughborough, UK. He has also served as Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Statistics in the Government of Pakistan and has remained a member of the Senate of Pakistan for almost 22 years.



The following books in this series have been published in the last quarter:

- *Pakistan ki Nazariati Asaas: Nifaz-e-Shariat aur Madina ki Islami Riasat*
- *Aaeen-e-Pakistan: Inharafat aur Bahali ki Jiddojehed*
- *Islam aur Maghrib ki Tehzeebi aur Siasi Kashmakash*

Policy Perspectives (Volume 18, Issue 1)



The latest issue of IPS' flagship journal *Policy Perspectives*, co-published with Pluto Journals, UK, is now available worldwide via JSTOR. The issue features the following articles:

- Religious Conversions in Pakistan: Empirical Evidence from Sindh**
- Ghulam Hussain
- Abraham Accords, Indo-Pacific Accord and the US-Led Nexus of Curtailment: Threat to Regional Security, and Joint Counter Strategy**
- Shabana Syed and Zainab Ahmed
- The US in China's Nuclear Threat Perception**
- Khusrow Akkas Abbasi and Zahida Khalid
- Utilizing Militia Forces in Modern Warfare: Role and Challenges**
- Muhammad Nasrullah Mirza and Naveed Mushtaq
- The Conduct of Pakistan's Foreign Policy: Structure, Strengths, and Issues (2018-2020)**
- Tajammul Altaf
- Locust Attack in Pakistan: Assessing and Dealing with the Threat**
- Bukhtawer Pervaz

Research Briefs

'Transition Towards Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Markets in Power Sector of Pakistan'

From vertically integrated and centralized structure of Pakistan's power sector, now the transformation is being made towards competitive trading model of the electric markets. This issue brief demonstrates the roadway towards the transition and importance of the new model in catering the long-associated issues with the power sector of Pakistan.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/transition-towards-competitive-trading-bilateral-contract-market-in-pakistan/>

'Mazhab ki Tabdeeli Mein Jabr: Fasana Aur Haqeeqat'

The IPS' baseline study looks into the issue of forced conversions to understand its dynamics. This study helps understand how the fabrication of facts is taking place and how certain daily life events are portrayed as organized crimes and propagated out of proportion. It recommends that no policy decision should be based merely on the basis of fabricated reports prepared by certain organizations and interest groups in order to safeguard the rights and dignity of everyone.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/mazhab-ki-tabdeeli-mai-jabr-fasana-aur-haqeeqat/>

'Geo-economic and Geopolitical Significance of QTTA in the Context of Regional Connectivity'

Pakistan's unique geographical position presents another important alternate route through China, as long before CPEC, Pakistan, China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan signed Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (QTTA) in 1995 to create a regional trade corridor between Pakistan and Central Asia through Chinese territory. This study is an effort to underscore the importance of this route.

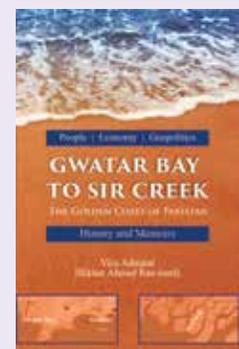
For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/geo-economic-and-geo-political-significance-of-qttta-in-the-context-of-regional-connectivity/>

'Pakistan and Central Asia: A Comprehensive Analysis of Regional Connectivity Drive, Challenges and Policy Options'

This policy brief highlights the hurdles in materializing the regional connectivity projects. In addition, it aims to highlight the neglected areas of potential economic activity and policy options that might enhance the regional connections as well as the economic wellbeing of both regions.

For further details, visit:
<https://www.ips.org.pk/pakistan-and-central-asia-a-comprehensive-analysis-of-regional-connectivity-drive-challenges-and-policy-options/>

Forthcoming



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