



NEWSLETTER

REGIONAL CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

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December 2008

*The Executive Director and Members of RCSS wish you a Joyful Holiday Season,
Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year!*

Meeting of the International Research Committee of RCSS

RCSS convened a meeting of its International Research Committee (IRC) that guides the centre's research and core activities on August 6, 2008 in Colombo. *Dr. Shaheen Afroze* and *Prof. Ataur Rahman* from Bangladesh, *Prof. Aparajita Biswas* and *Dr. P. Sahadevan* from India, *Prof. Shen Dingli* from China, *Dr. Saba Gul Khattak* from Pakistan, and *Prof. Neluka Silva* and *Prof. Nira Wickremesinghe* from Sri Lanka were members of the IRC who were present at this meeting. ED RCSS *Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain*, Ambassador *Geetha de Silva*, Associate Director and *Prof. R.A. Ariyaratne*, Member, Board of Directors of RCSS were also present.

One of the key decisions taken at the meeting was the setting up of two committees – a fundraising committee and programme committee which were formed to assist and guide the centre with regard to its future activities. *Prof. Ataur Rahman* was appointed as the Convenor of the Fundraising Committee while *Dr. P. Sahadevan* was appointed the Convenor of the Programme Committee.

Later, the Members of the IRC joined in to bid farewell to the Executive Director *Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain* who completed his tenure of three years at RCSS.



RNSSC Working Group Meetings in Colombo

RCSS participated in the Working Group Meetings of the Regional Network of Strategic Studies Centers (RNSSC) of the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Washington D.C. held in Colombo on 12-15 October 2008. The two working groups focused on Non-Traditional Security Issues (NTSI) and Weapons of

Mass Destruction (WMD)/ Border Security respectively. Experts from the Middle East and South Asia together with Senior Officers from NESA gathered in Colombo to attend this meeting. The leading participants from NESA were *Dr. Robert Boggs* and *Col. (Retd.) Daniel E. Curfiss*.

(contd. on page 2)

RNSSC Working Group Meetings in Colombo...

Pursuant to the decision made in the RNSSC Plenary Meeting in Istanbul, the NTSI Working Group discussed issues related to Small Arms and Light Weapons and Disaster Management to be presented at the next RNSSC Plenary Meeting in Doha. At the WMD/Border Security Working Group each participating country shared with the group a situation report, the main discussion points being, Border Baseline, Current Border Security Challenges, Current Border Doctrine or policies on Immigration, Customs and Frontier Borders, Border Management Organizational Structure and the status of UNSCR 1540 in each country. Based on the country reports the Border Security Challenges and WMD challenges were prioritized. This supported the refining of the group's goals, definitions and topics and paved the way to develop a way for future action. Ms. Gayathri Nanayakkara, Programme Officer and Ms. Nilakshi Gunatillake, Regional Liaison Officer GPPAC represented the RCSS at the two respective meetings.

Amb. Geetha de Silva participated in RNSSC's Meeting of Heads of Strategic Studies Centers of the South Asia and Middle East regions held in Geneva in September 2008. During the visit to Geneva, she also participated in the Global Strategic Review of the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) to mark its 50th Anniversary.

RCSS also participated at the RNSSC Plenary Meetings in Istanbul in May and Doha in November. During the session of the Working Group on Counter-terrorism in Doha,

the Group proposed to convene a Conference on "Counter Terrorism Strategy and Policy Recommendations from the Middle East and South Asia" in July 2009 in Washington D.C. Interim Executive Director, Amb. Geetha de Silva was nominated as the Project Coordinator of the Conference.



Participants at Istanbul plenary



Participants at Doha plenary

Farewell Note from Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain

As I prepare to leave the RCSS, I would like to express my deep gratitude to RCSS's Board of Directors and members of International Research Committee for extending me their full support and cooperation during my tenure in office. I am also grateful to the RCSS staff especially Ambassador Geetha De Silva, the Associate Director, for their solid support and help without which I would not have been able to perform my duties adequately. During my three years stay at RCSS, I tried my best to ensure that RCSS not only remains a vibrant organization for the cause of peace and development in the region but also transforms itself into a regional hub of research activity. I draw some satisfaction from the fact that while continuing its signature events such as

the Summer Workshop, RCSS has expanded the scope of its research activities to include such areas as climate change, coastal defense, conflict prevention and security sector reform. I am pleased to say that RCSS has been able to preserve its core role as a leading regional think tank. I would like to take this opportunity to make an appeal to all the friends of RCSS especially its alumni to help out with our ongoing efforts to further enhance the role that RCSS is playing as a regional think-tank.



RCSS participates in the Second NTS-Asia Annual Convention in Beijing



Ambassador Geetha de Silva participated in the 2nd Annual Convention of the Non Traditional Security (NTS) Asia Consortium held in Beijing from 10 to 11 November 2008, representing the RCSS which is a member of the network of research institutions and think-tanks in Asia that forms the NTS-Asia Consortium. The Convention organized by the NTS-Asia Secretariat, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, NTU, Singapore was jointly hosted by the Institute of Asia Pacific Studies (IAPS) and Academic Division of International Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

In his welcome address Dr Zhang Yuyan, Director of IAPS, noted the increasing dominance of NTS issues, such as the natural catastrophes experienced by China in recent years and the need take collective action to mitigate the adverse effects of such disasters.

Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Secretary-General of NTS-Asia, gave a brief introduction of the Consortium's background and objectives. She noted the adverse global consequences of the financial crisis in the US, threatening the stability and security of many countries worldwide. She expressed hope that the changes in the USA through the election of Barack Obama as the President would bring changes in the approaches towards international

security concerns. It was important therefore to conduct exchanges on NTS challenges with the West to formulate collective policies in meeting the emerging global security challenges.

During the keynote address delivered by Prof. Zhang Yunling, Director of CASS' Academic Division of International Studies, emphasis was made on the increasing shift in China's perspective on security, from traditional security to non-traditional security. Prof. Zhang called for decisive and future oriented action to carry forward the agenda of the NTS Asia .

In addition to taking stock of the Consortium's activities for the year, members of the NTS-Asia Network discussed a range of timely NTS issues such as Food Security, Energy Security, Disaster Diplomacy and Transnational Crime.

Later Ambassador Geetha de Silva visited Shanghai on the invitation of Professor Zhang Guihong of the Institute of International Studies of Fudan University to deliver a lecture on "Sri Lanka-China Relations" at the South Asia Studies Department of the University. Professor Shen Dingli, Dean of the Institute chaired the event and delivered the welcome address.

GPPAC International Steering Group Meets

The International Steering Group (ISG) of GPPAC, which consists of representatives of GPPAC's fifteen Regional Secretariats as well as representatives of a number of INGOs, convened in Soesterberg, the Netherlands from 22 to 24 October 2008.

Important decisions concerning the GPPAC strategy, its structure and governance were taken by the ISG at the meeting. The Group developed plans at both the regional and global levels for 2009. The meeting also brought together the Regional Liaison Officers,



who are responsible for the day-to-day activities of GPPAC in the respective regions.

The ISG took a decision at the Soesterberg meeting to convene the next ISG meeting in the Phillipines, hosted by Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID).

Ambassador Geetha de Silva, Interim Executive Director, RCSS participated in the ISG meeting while Ms. Nilakshi Goonatilake, Regional Liaison Officer participated in several subject-specific meetings.

RCSS Co-hosts Trilateral Dialogue on Nuclear Issues in Colombo

Together with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS) in New Delhi, RCSS hosted an India-Pakistan-China Trilateral Dialogue on nuclear issues on 6-7 December 2008, at Hotel Galadari, Colombo.

The activity was conducted in the context of the growing global demand for the elimination of nuclear weapons, with leading international personalities getting involved in the process.

Three main initiatives in this respect that the event focused on were, the Nuclear Threat Initiative's project on Nuclear Weapons Elimination led by the Quartet

of Henry Kissinger, James Schultz, Sam Nunn and Bill Perry; Australia-Japan initiative on an international commission for eliminating nuclear weapons; and the International consortium on "Global Zero" to be launched in Paris in early December.

The programme included trilateral discussions among India, Pakistan and China and a one day's bilateral simulation exercise between India and Pakistan. The participants included experts from the three countries including former diplomats and former military officials.

RCSS Organizes Events for UN International Day of Peace

The Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Colombo, as Regional Initiator for the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict – South Asia (GPPAC-SA), collaborated with partner organizations around South Asia to observe the UN International Day of Peace on September 21, 2008. The occasion was the first that RCSS developed a campaign to mark the International Peace Day across the region.

Recognizing the impact that the media can create on the public to change opinions on conflict related issues, to make drastic changes in society, RCSS ventured into the area of Conflict Sensitive Journalism. Working through its partners in the region RCSS conducted Workshops on this subject, the focus being to bring about a shift in the opinion of the media on responsible reporting of conflict. The Workshops emphasized that it is a re-iteration of the principles of professional reporting that creates space for many to voice their opinions and give a voice to the voiceless.



Bangladesh Institute for International and Strategic Studies (BIIS) organized a seminar on the Role of Media in Culture of Peace and Tolerance on 18 September 2008, in Dhaka, Bangladesh



DidiBahini, in collaboration with the Department of Journalism and Mass communication at Tribhuvan University held a Conflict Sensitive Journalism Workshop on 7 September, 2008 in Kathmandu, Nepal



Centre for Culture, Media & Governance (CCMG), Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi in collaboration with Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (MNCPCR), organized a Workshop on “Communicating Peace” on 4 September, 2008, in New Delhi India

RCSS Organizes Events...



Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), organized a workshop on Conflict Sensitive Journalism in Islamabad, Pakistan, on September 01st, 2008, in Pakistan.



Young Asia Television (YATV) produced and launched a music video to commemorate the Day on the 21st of September 2008, in Sri Lanka.

A Further Step in the Institutional Partnership between RCSS and the Henry L. Stimson Center

The Stimson Center entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for RCSS to conduct research studies on several individual areas commissioned by the Stimson Center. The scope of the work is to carry out research in areas vital to the Regional Voices project of the Stimson Center and provide a South Asia perspective on the areas of Maritime Issues in South Asia; Overview of South Asian Migration Issues and Internal Migration Patterns with a case study of Sri Lanka; and South Asian Perspectives on Global Climate Change. A Regional Conference on Climate Change Issues will be held in Sri Lanka in March 2009, co-hosted by RCSS and the Henry L. Stimson Center according to the MoU.

Multi Ethnic Youth Camp in Kantale, Sri Lanka

Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) as Regional Initiator for Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) in South Asia, together with the Eastern Voluntary Social Development Organization for Women (VSDOW) recently organized a youth camp for a group of youth of multiethnic background in Seruwila. The event held on the 26th and 27th of September, 2008 at the Sarvodaya Centre, Kantale coincided with the celebration of United Nations International Day of Peace.

The occasion was graced by the presence of Brigadier Piyal Abeysekera, Director-Operations at the Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process (SCOPP), as Chief Guest. During his key note speech, Brigadier Abeysekera commended the youth for readily assembling in a single forum. He stressed that such activities would be the stepping stone towards a sustainable peace in this country.

The event drew 32 youth of mixed ethnicities. They came from Thoppoor, Kiliveddy, Lingapuram, Dehiwatte and Serunuwara areas. All activities were simultaneously translated into Sinhala and Tamil to facilitate better understanding of the contents. Community Building Skills and Leadership Skills were focused on during the camp and training was imparted through very interactive and pragmatic methodology.



As a follow up to the event, four similar camps are to be held in the Eastern Province in December, 2008.

RCSS Participation in International Workshops and Conferences

Ms Gayathri Nanayakkara, Programme Officer of RCSS participated in the 8th International Workshop on Resource Mobilisation (IWRM) organized by the Resource Alliance UK. The Workshop was held in Malaysia from 22-25 May 2008. The Resource Alliance is an international organisation dedicated to providing professional and ethical fundraising education throughout the world with an emphasis on the developing world.

Mrs. Kamani Perera, Librarian of RCSS participated in the 15th Triennial Conference on International Council of Museums – Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) under the theme of Diversity in Heritage Conservation: Tradition, Innovation and Participation, 22-27 September 2008, New Delhi India



Bursary winners at the IWRM

Visitors to RCSS

Amit Pandya of the Henry L. Stimson Center visits RCSS

Mr. Amit C. Pandya, Senior Associate and Director of the Regional Voices: Transnational Challenges Project of the Henry L. Stimson Center, Washington D.C. visited the RCSS on 14th July 2008. Mr. Pandya discussed with the Executive Director Dr. Rifaat Hussain further areas of cooperation with the RCSS which is already in an institutional collaboration with the Stimson Center. Issues discussed included conducting research with a South Asian perspective for the Regional Voices Project culminating in a regional conference to be held in Sri Lanka early next year.



sociated with the activities of RCSS over a long period of time visited the Centre on 9 December and met with the Board of Directors and the Interim Executive Director to discuss future activities of RCSS.

Prof. Stephen P. Cohen of Brookings Institution visits RCSS

Prof. Stephen P. Cohen, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, Washington D.C. and Member of the International Research Committee of the RCSS was on a visit to Sri Lanka from 17-19 December. He held wide-ranging discussions with the Interim Executive Director and officials at RCSS. He also met with experts on South Asia as well as with the Ministry of Defence in Sri Lanka.



Visit of 'Friends of RCSS'

Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Dipankar Banerjee, Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain and Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema who have been as-

RCSS Congratulates Prof. Neluka Silva

Prof. Neluka Silva who is Professor in English and Head of the English Department at the University of Colombo and Member of the International Research Committee of RCSS has been announced as one of the highly commended winners in this year's Commonwealth Short Story Competition. This competition sponsored by the Commonwealth Association and administered by the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) selects 25 winning stories each year from thousands of submissions by authors throughout the Commonwealth. Her story, *Our Neighbours*, set during the ethnic riots of 1983, depicts a situation of rivalry and reconciliation narrated through the eyes of a child in the year that marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the July 1983 ethnic riots. RCSS congratulates Prof. Neluka Silva on this occasion.

Recent publications

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Conflict Transformation from Ethnic Movement to Terrorist Movement: Case Study of Tamils in Sri Lanka and Mohajirs in Pakistan

Arshi Saleem Hashmi

Not always do the conflicts transform into a peace system. History tells us that most of the time they are transformed into violent conflicts and even terrorist movements. Ruling regimes often tend to ignore that certain administrative decisions as short-term political goals to ensure smooth running of their governments may lead to building up of grievances. The irony is that ruling regimes do not realize it, or if they do, often it is too late to prevent it from becoming a political agenda which escalates into full conflict, leading to its transformation into a terrorist/violent movement. The book deals with this problem focusing on the problem of *Mohajirs* (Urdu speaking migrants from India) in Pakistan and the Tamil ethnic movement in Sri Lanka. While the Tamil ethnic movement under LTTE is a declared terrorist movement, *Mohajir* politics under the MQM can still be prevented from developing into a full-fledged terrorist movement through policy of accommodation and cooperation. This book addresses the above.

Ms Arshi Saleem Hashmi is working as a Research Analyst at the Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad and Adjunct Faculty at the Department of Defense and Strategic studie, Quaid-e-Azam University.



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Beyond the Security Impasse: State, Development and People

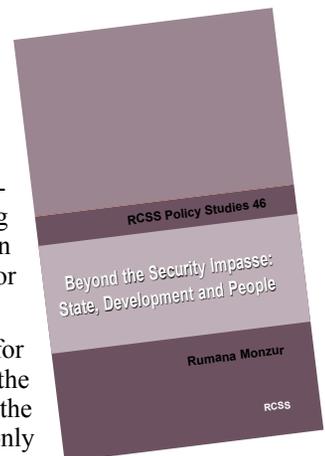
Rumana Monzur

Nation-states are the aspirations of the people. It is the people who make nation-states work. This reality is often forgotten and the common people become the major target of discriminatory state policies in the form of development policies. In this process, the communities having less access to resources and power become more vulnerable. The *Adivashi* communities in Bangladesh residing in different parts are such communities who often end up as the major victims of the development projects implemented by the state.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the non-territorial conceptions of political identity, for example ethnic identities and critically examine the impact of the development projects on the marginalized communities especially on the *Adivashi* communities of Bangladesh and how the structural inequalities of state structures and policies become a source of insecurity for not only the *Adivashi* communities but for the state as well.

This study seeks to provide a new dimension to national development strategies and their impact on state-citizens for whom states adopt these strategies. It also discusses implications of taking the *Adivashis* seriously as citizens for radically rethinking security.

Ms Rumana Monzur is a Lecturer at the Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka.



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