THE UNIVERSITY OF LAHORE

LIRA
LAHORE INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

International Symposium
21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES
FUTURE OF SOUTH ASIA

21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES
FUTURE OF SOUTH ASIA

APRIL 17-18, 2025

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

13 CLIMATE ACTION

Theme

21ˢᵗ Century Challenges: Future of South Asia

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21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES
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21st Century Challenges: Future of South Asia

South Asia is at a crucial turning point in the 21st century, facing a range of complex challenges that require innovative solutions and collective action. The International Symposium organized by the Lahore Institute for Research and Analysis, The University of Lahore aims to bring together renowned national and international scholars, experts, and policymakers to engage in meaningful discussions on the future of the region. By addressing critical issues and fostering collaboration, this symposium provides a platform to generate fresh insights and strategic approaches for the challenges ahead.

With the theme "21st Century Challenges: Future of South Asia," this symposium will focus on three key areas shaping the region's progress. The first session, **Climate Change and Renewable Energy**, will explore the growing environmental crisis and the need for sustainable energy solutions. Experts will discuss policy frameworks, innovative technologies, and strategies for mitigating climate change while ensuring economic growth and energy security.

The second session, **Youth Empowerment**, will highlight the potential of South Asia's young population and the role of education, entrepreneurship, and leadership in driving socio-economic transformation. With one of the largest youth populations in the world, the region has immense opportunities to harness this demographic dividend for a brighter and more prosperous future.

The final session, **Emerging Trends in Communications**, will delve into the rapid advancements in digital technology and the evolving landscape of media and information exchange. As communication plays a vital role in shaping public discourse and regional connectivity, this session will explore how digital platforms, artificial intelligence, and media innovations are transforming the way societies interact and progress.

Through these discussions, the symposium seeks to inspire action-oriented solutions and foster regional cooperation. It is a call to scholars, professionals, and policymakers to work together in shaping a future that is sustainable, inclusive, and technologically advanced.

We extend a warm welcome to all distinguished speakers and participants, and we look forward to engaging conversations that will contribute to the future development of South Asia.

Welcome Note

It is with great honor and immense pleasure that Lahore Institute for Research and Analysis (LIRA), The University of Lahore extend a warm welcome to all our distinguished international and national speakers at the International Symposium. Your presence at this esteemed gathering reflects a shared commitment to addressing the critical challenges shaping the future of South Asia in the 21st century.

The theme of our symposium, "21st Century Challenges: Future of South Asia," is both timely and significant. South Asia, home to over a quarter of the world's population, is at the crossroads of rapid change, facing complex challenges in climate change, energy sustainability, youth empowerment, and digital transformation. These pressing issues require collective wisdom, informed dialogue, and innovative solutions, precisely what this symposium aims to foster.

LIRA, as a research organization, is dedicated to advancing research-driven discussions and policy-oriented solutions for the betterment of the region. Through engaging sessions on Climate Change and Renewable Energy, Youth Empowerment, and Emerging Trends in Communication, this symposium provides a dynamic platform for thought leaders, scholars, and professionals to exchange ideas, collaborate, and inspire action.

We are grateful for your participation and invaluable contributions to this important discourse. Your expertise and insights will play a crucial role in shaping the discussions and outcomes of this symposium. We look forward to a thought-provoking and fruitful exchange of ideas that will pave the way for a more sustainable, empowered, and interconnected South Asia.

Thank you.

Chief Guest

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Mr. Javed Jabbar
Former Senator and Federal Minister of Pakistan.

Javed Jabbar has distinctive achievements in diverse fields. His award-winning work includes writing, film-making, media, voluntary service, education, environment, national and global affairs. He has received several national and international honours, including the high State award of Hilal-i-Imtiaz for Literature.

In his voluntary work, as founder or Chairman of several leading development and welfare organizations, he oversees work across rural and urban areas on vital issues including the need for balanced population growth, empowerment of grass-roots communities, women and religious minorities, care and education of orphans, reform of primary and higher education. He is also associated with public diplomacy in South Asia for over 40 years including Pakistan-India Track II dialogues .and media cooperation. He was elected to the Senate of Pakistan for 6 years. He has served in 3 Federal Cabinets. His portfolios included Information and Broadcasting, Science and Technology, Petroleum and Natural Resources and National Affairs. He introduced several major policy reforms in each sector. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has appointed him mediator to resolve conflicts and invited him to provide specialist advice. In 2021-22, two successive Federal Governments appointed him to serve as (voluntary) Chairman of the Steering Committee to re-record the National Anthem of Pakistan for the first time in 68 years and launch the new recording with a new video on the 75th anniversary of Pakistan's Independence, both of which have been widely appreciated.

Mr. Durmuş Baştug
Turkish Council General in Lahore

Consul General Mr. Durmus Bastug is a distinguished diplomat who began his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998. He has served in various departments at the Ministry's headquarters in Türkiye and held key positions at Turkish diplomatic and consular missions in Burgas, Jeddah, Rome, and Washington, D.C. Since September 1, 2023, he has been serving as the Consul General of Türkiye in Lahore. He holds a degree in Public Administration from Middle East Technical University (1993).

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Daisy William
CEO and Program Director at Excelsia University College, Australia.

Dr. Saiful Bahri
Professor at the Faculty of Innovative Design and Technology, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia.

Dr. Aunn Abbas
Professor – FAST-NUCES Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Amjad A Awan
Former Senior Government Functionary in Pakistan (MP-1)

Prof. Dr. MD. Aminal Islam (Bangladesh)
Prof Dr. MD. Aminal Islam is a Full Research Professor at College of Business Administration and Dean of Research Development in Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

Prof. Dr. Abida Ashraf
Professor, Human Rights Chair; Chairperson, Department of Public Relations and Advertising, School of Communication Studies University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan
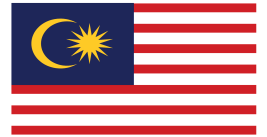
International Speakers

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Dr. Khurram Joya
Associate Professor, International Islamic University of Madinah, Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Mohd Sadad Mahmud
Associate Professor at Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), Malaysia.

Dr. Daisy Williams
CEO and Program Director at Excelsia University College, Australia.

Dr. Syaza Shukri
Head of the Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences and Associate Professor, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).
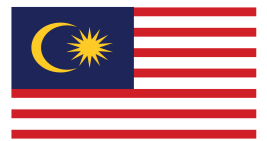
Dr. Muhammad Sobri
Dr. Mohamad Sobri bin Hamid (Design Technology) Academic Industry Coordinator, Faculy of Innovative, Design and Technology (FRIT), Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), Malaysia.
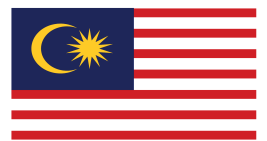
Muhammad Siraj ul Huda Khan
Faculty in the College of Sciences & Human Studies (CSHS), Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University, Saudi Arabia.

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Indira Aslanova (Kyrgyzstan)
Indira Aslanova is an Assistant Professor at Kyrgyz Slavic University. She is part of UNESCO Department of World Culture and Religions, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.
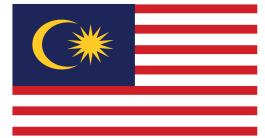
Aslan Sydykov (Kyrgyzstan)
Aslan Sydykov is an Editor of Political News AKI Press News Agency, Kyrgyzstan.

Dr. Saiful Bahri
Professor at the Faculty of Innovative Design and Technology, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia.

Prof. Dr. MD. Aminal Islam (Bangladesh)
Prof Dr. MD. Aminal Islam is a Full Research Professor at College of Business Administration and Dean of Research Development in Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University.

Mr. Tauseef A. Mushtaq
Mr. Tauseef is a highly skilled and competent professional, with over 25 years of experience in Governance, Assurance, Internal Audit, risk management, Compliance and controls.

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National Speakers

Prof. Dr Naveed Arshad

Professor and Director of National Center in Big Data and Cloud Computing, and Energy Institute at LUMS, Pakistan.

Prof. Dr Saman Shahid

Director Research Lab-Environment & Health Data Science (EH-DS), National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences (NUCES) FAST, Lahore campus, Punjab, Pakistan.
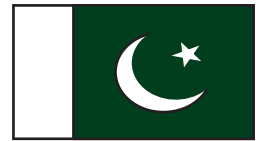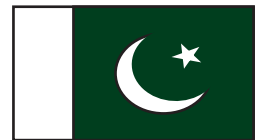
Prof. Dr Anjum Zia

Dean-School of Media and Communication Studies, University of Management and Technology Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.
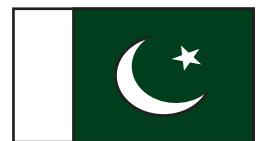
Prof. Dr. Sikander Ahmed Shah

Dr. Sikander Ahmed Shah is a founding member of the Shaikh Ahmad Hassan School of Law (SAHSOL) at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS).
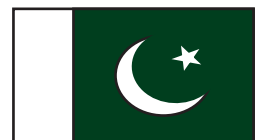
Prof. Dr Rana Ejaz Ahmad

Dr. Rana Eijaz Ahmad is a Chairman and a TTS professor in the Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab New Campus Lahore

Prof. Dr Savera Mujib Shami

Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Digital Media at the School of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

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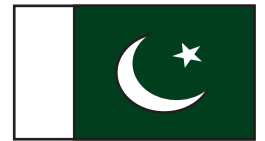LAHORE INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Dr. Ayesha Ashfaq
Chairperson and Associate Professor at the Department of Media & Development Communication, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.
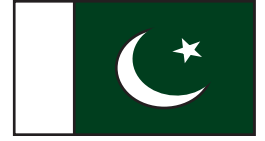
Dr. Fauzia Hadi Ali
Associate Professor, Hailey College of Commerce, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Dr. Rafi Khan
Assistant Professor, School of International Relations, Minhaj University Lahore, Punjab, Pakikstan.
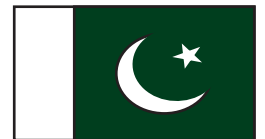
Mr. Assad Ullah
Director Finance NTDC, Former Director at (CPPA-G), Ministry of Energy Govt. of Pakistan. Sr. Consultant at Power Factor Consulting (Pvt.) Ltd.

Dr. Maria Husnain
Associate Professor and Head of the Biotechnology Department, New Aligarh Degree College, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.
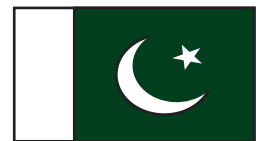
Dr. Salma Amber
Chairperson and Associate Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan.

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Dr. Moneeba Iftikhar
Associate Professor, Lahore College for Women University (LCWU), Punjab, Pakistan.
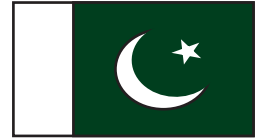
Dr. Huda Garib: Huda currently serves as the founder and CEO of E-Magine.

Ms Lubna Bhayat
Founder-She Means Work (SMW) | Convenor Banking and Finance Committee FPCCI | Ex President-Women Chambers of Commerce | Ex Corporate Banker| Board member& Head Audit & Finance Committee Punjab Skill Development Authority

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About the Host City

Lahore: A Hub of Literature and Culture

Lahore, the cultural and literary heart of Pakistan, has long been a center of intellectual and artistic activity. As the host city for international scholars at the International Symposium at the University of Lahore, it offers a rich historical and cultural experience. Known as the "City of Literature," Lahore has played a crucial role in shaping South Asian thought, literature, and artistic traditions.

Historically, Lahore has been home to great poets, writers, and philosophers. From the Mughal era to the modern age, it has inspired renowned literary figures such as Allama Iqbal, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and Saadat Hasan Manto. The city's literary institutions, including the Punjab University and Government College University, have nurtured generations of scholars and writers. Its vibrant literary scene is further enriched by events such as the Lahore Literary Festival, which attracts intellectuals from around the world.

Culturally, Lahore is a melting pot of traditions, where ancient heritage meets contemporary art and expression. The city's architectural marvels, such as the Lahore Fort, Badshahi Mosque, and Shalimar Gardens, reflect its historical significance. The bustling streets of the Walled City, famous for their traditional food and crafts, offer a glimpse into the soul of Lahore's culture. In addition, the city is home to thriving music, theater, and film industries, making it a dynamic cultural hub.

For international scholars attending the symposium, Lahore provides not just an academic environment but also a profound cultural and literary experience. The city's libraries, bookstores, and historical landmarks offer a deep insight into South Asian intellectual heritage. As a city that celebrates knowledge, diversity, and creativity, Lahore remains a fitting host for international discourse and scholarly engagement.

About the Host University
The University of Lahore

The University of Lahore (UOL) is one of Pakistan's leading private educational institutions, known for its academic excellence, research contributions, and diverse programs. Established in 1999, UOL has grown into a prestigious university with multiple campuses across Pakistan, offering programs in engineering, business, medicine, law, social sciences, and humanities.

UOL is recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan and is accredited by various professional bodies. It fosters an environment of innovation and critical thinking, providing students with modern facilities, research centers, and international collaborations. The university also hosts academic conferences, symposiums, and cultural events, attracting scholars and researchers from around the world.

With a commitment to quality education and global engagement, the University of Lahore continues to play a significant role in shaping future leaders and contributing to academic and professional advancements in Pakistan.

About
Lahore Institute for Research and Analysis (LIRA)

The Lahore Institute for Research and Analysis (LIRA) is a non-profit, non-partisan research organization dedicated to quality research meeting international standards based on empirical investigation and systematic inquiry. Committed to openness, fairness, and impartiality, we aim at generating high-calibre, high-value and actionable research-oriented solutions matching the requirements of stake holders across various disciplines. Our areas of focus include Economy, Governance, Climate Change, Education, Health and Gender. Connecting people from across the globe, we aspire creating a 'LIRA Community' linked through ideas, innovation and research. Established since 2022, LIRA is patronized by University of Lahore (UOL).

Schedule of International Symposium

Day 1 (17 April 2025)		
09:00 - 09:30 am 09:30 - 09:35 am 09:35 - 09:45 am	Registration and Reception Recitation of Holy Quran National Anthem	
Inaugural Session		
09:45 - 09:55 09:55 - 10:05 10:05 - 10:15 10:15 - 10:25 10:25 - 10:35 10:35 - 10:45 10:45 - 11:00 11:00 - 11:15	Dr. Syed Raghab Ali Dr. Saiful Bahri (Malaysia) Dr. Amjad Awan Dr. Daisy William (Australia) Prof. Dr. Aminul Islam (Bangladesh) Prof. Dr. Abida Ashraf Prof. Dr. Aunn Abbas Honorable Chief Guest, **Mr. Javed Jabbar**	• Welcome address Keynote Speaker 1 Keynote Speaker 2 Keynote Speaker 3 Keynote Speaker 4 Keynote Speaker 5 Keynote Speaker 6 Address by Chief Guest
Group Photo		
11:30 – 12:00	**Tea break**	
Session 1 (12:00- 1:30) **Climate Change and Re-Newable Energy: Future of South Asia**		
12:00 - 12:10 12:10 - 12:20 12:20 - 12:30 12:30 - 12:40 12:40 - 12:50 12:50 – 01:00 01:00 – 01:10	Prof. Dr. Sikandar Ahmad Dr. Khurram Joya (Saudi Arabia) Dr. Mohd Sadad (Malaysia) Mr. Tauseef A. Mushtaq (UAE) Prof. Dr. Naveed Arshad Prof. Dr. Saman Shahid Mr. Assad Ullah Dr. Maria Husnain Closing Remarks by Moderator	• Moderator International Speaker International Speaker International Speaker National Speaker National Speaker National Speaker National Speaker
Souvenirs and Group Photo		
Lunch (1:30-2:30)		

Day 2 (18 April 2025)		
Inaugural Session		
09:30 - 09:40 09:40 - 09:45 09:45 -10:00	Reception/National Anthem Recitation of Holy Quran Address by Honorable Chief Guest, **Mr. Durmus Baştuğ**	
Session 2(10:00- 11:10) **Youth Empowerment: Future of South Asia**		
10:00 - 10:10 10:10 - 10:20 10:20 – 10:30 10:30 – 10:40 10:40 – 10:50 10:50 – 11:00 11:10 – 11: 10	Prof. Dr. Rana Ijaz Dr. Daisy William (Australia) Dr. Syaza Shukri (Malaysia) Dr. Indira Aslanova (Kyrgyzstan) Dr. Fauzia Hadi Ali Ms Lubna Bhayat Dr. Huda Garib Dr. Rafi Khan Closing Remarks by Moderator	• Moderator International Speaker International Speaker International Speaker National Speaker National Speaker National Speaker National Speaker
Souvenirs and Group Photo		
11:10 – 11:40	**Tea Break**	
Session 3 (11:40- 2:30) **Emerging Trends in Communications: Future of South Asia**		
11:40 - 11:50 11:50 - 12:00 12:00 - 12:10 12:10 - 12:20 **12:20 - 02:00** 02:00 - 02:10 02:10 - 02:20 02:20 – 02:30	Prof. Dr. Savera Mujib Dr. Mohamad Sobri (Malaysia) Mr. Muhammad Siraj (Saudi Arabia) Prof. Dr Anjum Zia Dr. Ayesha Ashfaq **Jumma Break** Aslan Sydykov (Kyrgyzstan) Dr. Salma Amber Dr. Moneeba Iftikhar Closing Remarks by Moderator	• Moderator International Speaker International Speaker National Speaker National Speaker **Jumma Break** International Speaker National Speaker National Speaker
Souvenirs and Group Photo		
Concluding Remarks		
Lunch (02:45-03:30)		

Day 3 (19 April 2025) A Day of History, Culture & Fine Dining	
City Tour (Walled City Lahore)	
Dinner	Havelli Restaurant Anarkali

Abstracts

Dr. Khurram Joya
Renewable Energy and Climate Resilience: A Way Forward to the Sustainable Future
Abstract

Environmental impact of increasing greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere as spurred by climate change has triggered a debate of searching new policies and technologies for clean energy. Carbon-free innovative renewable energy sources and alternative chemical fuels may pave the way for a cleaner and greener future. With the advent on innovative science, chemical research and technology, nanoscale materials can be engineered and programmed to perform specified function for renewable energy technologies, solar energy conversion and climate resilience. These systems can be implemented as surface immobilization along with thin-films for catalytic processes, sensing applications and for energy conversion schemes. We have invented, discovered and developed specialized methods, and exploited various thin-film nanoscale materials for catalytic water splitting, CO_2 reduction, and recently for electrochemical sensing, biomass catalysis and solar energy conversion. Now we implement and developing new methods for making advanced electro functional nanomaterials and nanoclusters derived from thin-films molecular assemblies, inorganic nanomaterials and metal-oxides displaying great potential to be used in high performance water splitting catalysis and for chemical energy conversion and storage schemes. In this discussion we also highlight the challenges in chemical energy conversion and the possible way forward.

Dr. Syaza Shukri
Empowering the Future: Youth Optimism in Southeast Asia
Abstract

This presentation examines distinct trends among Southeast Asian youth concerning their optimism and satisfaction with political systems and law enforcement, their attitudes toward democracy, and their economic perspectives. Youth optimism is important for the sustainability of political, social and economic systems. Our analysis reveals that there are different perspectives across national lines, shaped by contextual and governance factors. Firstly, youth optimism and satisfaction with political systems differ among countries, highlighting the impact of national context on political trust. Singaporean and Vietnamese youths emerge as the most optimistic about their countries' political conditions, while Indonesian youths appear more pessimistic. Secondly, satisfaction with law enforcement varies, reflecting the degree of trust in government authority and justice systems. Critical issues such as transparency, corruption, and accountability influence these perceptions. Thirdly, the study explores attitudes toward democracy, with findings indicating a general endorsement of democratic values across the region. However, there is a notable openness to alternative governance systems under certain conditions, particularly among Singaporean and Thai youths, demonstrating flexibility in political ideals. Finally, the economic perspectives reveal an intricate blend of optimism and concern influenced by each country's economic performance and outlook. Generally, Singaporean and Vietnamese youths remain optimistic about their countries' economic conditions, while skepticism is more pronounced among Indonesian and Filipino youths. Our analysis emphasizes the importance of understanding the diverse perspectives and expectations of Southeast Asian youth. Our findings aim to inform policymakers and encourage strategies that accommodate the aspirations and challenges faced by the next generation.

Dr. Muhammad Sobri
AI-Integrated Halal Slaughtering Equipment: Enhancing Compliance, Efficiency, and Ethical Meat Processing
Abstract

The global halal meat industry faces challenges in ensuring ethical compliance, efficiency, and scalability while maintaining adherence to syariah principles. Traditional slaughtering methods often involve inefficiencies, high labor dependency, and inconsistencies in meeting halal certification requirements. To address these issues, this study focuses on designing an AI-integrated slaughtering system that enhances process automation while ensuring strict adherence to halal guidelines. The research adopts a design thinking approach to develop an AI-driven slaughtering prototype, prioritizing a user-centric design for ease of operation and compliance. Additionally, finite element analysis (FEA) is applied to evaluate the structural integrity and safety of the equipment under operational loads. The proposed system integrates computer vision and machine learning algorithms to monitor and verify the slaughtering process in real time, ensuring compliance with halal standards. Results indicate that the AI-enhanced system significantly improves slaughtering precision, efficiency, and compliance validation, while reducing human intervention and ethical concerns associated with improper slaughtering practices. The study concludes that AI-assisted halal slaughtering equipment offers a viable solution for large-scale, ethical meat processing while aligning with religious, economic, and technological advancements. Further discussion emphasizes the potential for blockchain-based traceability, IoT connectivity, and global standardization to enhance transparency and consumer trust. This research contributes to Malaysia's aspiration to become a global leader in halal meat production by leveraging advanced manufacturing and AI-driven automation. Future studies will explore the scalability and commercialization potential of this system to meet rising global demand for halal-certified meat products.

Indira Aslanova (Kyrgyzstan)
Youth, Identity, and Extremism: Rethinking Educational Approaches to Counter Violent Extremism in Central Asia
Abstract

Across Central and South Asia, young people are increasingly exposed to polarized narratives and identity-based tensions shaped by political, social, and digital transformations. While security threats and socio-political systems vary across the region, the underlying issues — including marginalization, a lack of critical engagement with religious ideas, and limited civic space — create fertile ground for radical ideologies to take root. This presentation draws on the Kyrgyzstani context to explore how educational approaches can contribute to more sustainable strategies for countering violent extremism (CVE) and fostering inclusive civic identities.

The discussion will highlight examples of civil society-led initiatives, such as youth dialogue platforms and thematic summer schools, which create safe spaces for interfaith exchange, values-based learning, and constructive identity formation. One such initiative, the "Unity in Diversity" summer school, offers insights into how pluralism and freedom of belief can be explored through experiential education. The presentation will reference recent research on CVE and youth radicalization in Central Asia (e.g. Radicalization online, 2021), situating the Kyrgyzstani case within broader debates on the role of education in building resilience against extremism across the region.

Mr. Muhammad Siraj Ul Huda Khan

Evolving Communication Trends in South Asia and Saudi Arabia: Innovations, Challenges, and Future Prospects

Abstract

Saudi Arabia has emerged as a regional leader in communication advancements, setting a benchmark for South Asian states in digital transformation, media innovation, and policy reforms. With its Vision 2030 initiative, the Kingdom has made substantial investments in digital infrastructure, 5G technology, and artificial intelligence-driven communication platforms. These advancements have not only revolutionized the media landscape but also fostered global connectivity, influencing South Asian nations striving to modernize their communication networks. The adoption of cutting-edge technologies, regulatory frameworks, and state-led initiatives in Saudi Arabia serves as a model for countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, where digital transformation remains a work in progress. By analyzing Saudi Arabia's strategic approach, South Asian states can develop policies that enhance media freedom, digital literacy, and cybersecurity while ensuring sustainable growth in their communication sectors.

Despite significant progress, both Saudi Arabia and South Asia face challenges in navigating the evolving communication landscape. Issues such as misinformation, digital divides, and regulatory concerns continue to shape the region's media discourse. Saudi Arabia's structured approach to tackling these challenges—through government-led reforms, technological investments, and public-private partnerships—offers valuable insights for South Asian countries seeking to strengthen their communication ecosystems. Moreover, as Saudi Arabia positions itself as a global hub for digital media and telecommunications, it provides opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange with South Asian states. By leveraging Saudi Arabia's experience, South Asian countries can overcome existing communication barriers, adopt innovative solutions, and pave the way for a more interconnected and technologically advanced future.

Dr. Daisy William

Empowering South Asian Students in Australia

Abstract

Empowering South Asian Students in Australia is a cohort study conducted at Excelsia University College. This research investigates the academic progress of students who completed an ELICOS course before transitioning to their degree program, compared to those who entered higher education through alternative pathways, such as meeting the required English language proficiency levels. The study is undertaken as part of governance and compliance requirements to ensure that the assessment outcomes of direct-entry ELICOS students are comparable to those of students admitted through other means. The research employs three lines of inquiry: a comparative analysis of grades, a student survey, and in-depth interviews. Conducted during the inaugural year of the program, the study considers four student intakes. The findings reveal that over 70% of ELICOS graduates achieved grades higher than the overall average in 50% or more units/subjects

Dr. Mohd Sadad bin Mahmud
Climate Change and Renewable Energy in Halal Slaughtering: Future of Asia
Abstract

Climate change is a growing global concern, and the halal slaughtering industry in Asia must adapt to environmentally friendly practices to remain sustainable. This paper examines the intersection of climate change, renewable energy, and halal slaughtering in Asia. It highlights the environmental impact of traditional halal meat production, the role of renewable energy in reducing carbon footprints, and the future of sustainable practices in the industry. Data from various studies show that Asia, as a major halal meat producer, must implement green technologies such as solar-powered slaughterhouses, biogas utilization, and water recycling to align with global sustainability goals.
Keywords: Climate change, renewable energy, halal slaughtering, slaughterhouses, halal meat production, green technologies, Asia, global sustainability goals.

Aslan Sydykov
Why South Asia Matters for Central Asia?
Abstract

South Asia and Central Asia, historically interconnected through trade, cultural exchanges, and the Great Silk Road, have undergone significant geopolitical and economic transformations over the centuries. The decline of the overland Silk Road, especially after the Portuguese opened the maritime route to India in 1498, and the subsequent colonial rivalry between Russia and Britain in the 19th century reshaped the region. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 led to the emergence of five independent Central Asian republics, which faced internal challenges but also gained geopolitical importance due to their energy resources. Over time, Central Asia became the focal point of geopolitical competition, with Russia asserting influence through the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), while the United States and China also sought to strengthen ties.
The lack of direct access to the world's oceans has been a persistent issue for Central Asia, limiting its competitiveness and creating dependency on transit countries. Concepts like "Greater Central Asia," proposed by Frederick Starr, aimed to reconnect the region to South Asia, enhancing trade and transport networks. China's "Belt and Road Initiative" further emphasized the importance of Central Asia by providing new trade routes and investments. The geopolitical landscape shifted with Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, prompting Central Asia to recalibrate its foreign policy and seek alternative trade routes to reduce dependence on traditional transit paths. Economic growth in the region has spurred infrastructure projects, such as new railways linking Central Asia to South Asia, marking a pivotal moment in the region's development and positioning on the global stage.

Prof. Dr. Saman Shahid
Need of IoT Technology to Mitigate Climate Change in South-Asia
Abstract

Addressing climate change and increasing the reliance on renewable energy in South Asia is essential for sustainable development. Collaborative efforts on a regional scale, along with international support and investment, can help mitigate the effects of climate change while promoting economic growth through clean energy solutions. Climate change is a pressing issue in South Asia, impacting various aspects of life, including agriculture, water resources, and health. The region is particularly vulnerable due to its high population density, reliance on agriculture, and exposure to extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts. IoT-based environmental monitoring is the consistent collection of measurements and data from our physical environment, using sensors and connected devices. The trend toward green technology — supported by these environmental monitoring and remediation systems — is also a driving factor. Applications ranging from energy systems to agricultural use cases to water and wastewater management, oil and gas operations, and environmental remediation projects can gain better insights into their remote operations and improve processes to lower their impact and prevent disasters. Sensors embedded in irrigation systems, pipelines, tanks, weather stations, oceanic applications, and industrial equipment — anywhere on the planet — can detect temperature, moisture, water levels, leaks, and other physical properties. Intelligent, connected devices with embedded communications modules can then process that information using edge computing technology, and rapidly send critical data to the cloud or a data center for further action or analysis. Using data gathered from across an entire industrial deployment, it's possible to investigate water treatment readings, air quality measurements, water and fuel flows, and other data in real time. Users typically utilize an analysis dashboard that aggregates that data, shows trends, spikes, and abnormalities, which in many cases eliminates the need to schedule costly truck rolls, which also burn fuel, out to every remote installation. The data-driven approach provides the critical insights needed for predictive and preventative maintenance and resource management.

Mr. Assad Ullah
Renewable Energy: Transforming Business Models for a Sustainable Future
Abstract

1. Overview of Pakistan's Energy Market: Understanding the structure, key players, and challenges.
2. Dynamics of the Power Sector: Exploring generation, transmission, distribution, and market operations.
3. Financial and Regulatory Landscape: Examining policies, tariffs, and investment frameworks.
4. Historical Evolution and Reforms: A review of past reforms and their impact on the sector.
5. Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM) Regime: The transition towards a competitive power market.
6. Renewable Energy as a Catalyst for Business Model Transformation: How renewables are reshaping traditional energy economics.
7. Opportunities and Challenges for Businesses and Young Professionals: Identifying growth areas and potential risks.
8. Future Outlook and Strategic Roadmap: Key policy directions and market evolution.
9. Conclusion: Summarizing insights and actionable recommendations.

Dr. Maria Husnain
Renewable Energy and Carbon Credits: A Sustainable Path for the Environment
Abstract

Climate change remains one of the most critical global challenges with rising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions leading to severe environmental and socio-economic consequences. Consequently, carbon credits have emerged as an innovative and market-driven solution to mitigate climate change by assigning a financial value to carbon emissions and incentivizing businesses and individuals to reduce their carbon footprints. Carbon credits mechanism operates through two primary systems: cap-and-trade programs, where industries must stay within emission limits or trade allowances, and carbon offsetting, which allows investments in emission reduction projects such as reforestation and renewable energy. This presentation explores the effectiveness of carbon credits in promoting sustainability, supporting renewable energy, and fostering economic growth while highlighting their role in climate change mitigation. Additionally, it examines emerging biological carbon sequestration solutions, such as algae, halophytes, bacteria, and fungi, which offer promising avenues for enhancing carbon offset projects. This discussion also underscores the role of carbon credits as a sustainable pathway for environmental protection, emphasizing the need for responsible implementation and stronger policies to ensure their effectiveness in the global fight against climate change.

Dr. Fouzia Hadi Ali
Future-Ready Youth: Unlocking Potential, Seizing Opportunities
Abstract

In today's fast-changing world, employability is not just about securing a job. Rather, it is about developing the skills, mindset, and adaptability to thrive in any career path. The youth, especially Generation Z, hold immense potential to shape industries, disrupt norms, and redefine success, but empowerment comes from preparation. Employers seek more than just degrees; they seek problem-solvers, critical thinkers, and individuals who bring passion and innovation to the workplace. By embracing lifelong learning, enhancing technical and soft skills, and stepping out of their comfort zones, young professionals can unlock doors of endless opportunities.

True empowerment lies in taking ownership of one's future. It means not waiting for opportunities but creating them through networking, continuous improvement, and an entrepreneurial mindset. The ability to communicate effectively, lead with confidence, and navigate challenges with resilience sets exceptional candidates apart. Every obstacle is a lesson, and every setback is a stepping stone to success. The world is not looking for passive job seekers—it is looking for leaders, visionaries, and game-changers. The time to build, grow, and conquer is now.

Dr. Muhammad Rafi Khan
Harnessing Youth for Cultural Diplomacy: A Roadmap for South Asian Nations
Abstract

South Asia is home to over 1.8 billion people, with many young individuals under 30. This youth population has the potential to shape the region's global image and influence through cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy, a key aspect of soft power, helps build connections between nations through shared traditions, arts, and media. This paper explores how South Asian youth can contribute to cultural diplomacy and strengthen the region's influence worldwide. Young people in South Asia are already engaging in cultural diplomacy through music, films, sports, and digital content. Bollywood and Pakistani dramas are popular across borders, creating a shared cultural experience. Esports and online gaming bring young people together beyond national divisions. Social media influencers, writers, and artists are using digital platforms to promote their cultures globally. These activities help shape positive narratives about South Asia and foster mutual understanding. However, several challenges limit youth participation in cultural diplomacy. Political tensions, censorship, and a lack of government support often restrict cross-border cultural exchanges. Without proper policies and platforms, young voices remain underutilized. This paper suggests a roadmap for South Asian governments and cultural organizations to support youth-driven diplomacy. It recommends creating more youth exchange programs, supporting digital content creators, and using social media for diplomatic engagement. Encouraging artistic collaborations and sports diplomacy can also strengthen ties between South Asian nations. By investing in its youth and promoting cultural exchanges, South Asia can enhance its soft power and improve regional cooperation. This paper highlights the potential of young people to act as cultural ambassadors and contribute to a more connected and peaceful future.

Prof. Dr. Anjum Zia
Digital Disruptions and Media Evolution in South Asia
Abstract

South Asia's communication landscape is rapidly evolving due to digitalization, technological advancements, and shifting socio-political dynamics. The rise of artificial intelligence, data-driven journalism, and social media has transformed information production and public discourse. While these innovations enhance connectivity and democratize media, they also bring challenges like misinformation, digital divides, and regulatory concerns.

Artificial intelligence is reshaping journalism, automating content, and influencing audience engagement, yet concerns over algorithmic bias and ethical journalism persist. Social media platforms are becoming central to political mobilization, challenging traditional media structures and raising debates on free speech and media governance. Meanwhile, governments across South Asia are adopting varied regulatory approaches, impacting press freedom and digital rights.

As media operates in an environment of political polarization and state surveillance, disparities in digital literacy limit equitable access to information. The future of communication in South Asia depends on strategic policy interventions, ethical media practices, and a balance between technological advancements and democratic values. Addressing these challenges will be key to fostering an inclusive and responsible media ecosystem in the region.

Dr. Ayesha Ashfaq
Digital Resilience: Combatting Strategies for Polarisation, Authoritarianism, and Fake News in Pakistan
Abstract

In the digital age where social media platforms facilitate rapid free flow of information, Pakistan has witnessed a significant surge in digital polarisation and the dissemination of fake news. Consequently, social media users, journalists and activists face government-led content removals, social media account suspensions, legal threats, and online harassment in Pakistan. This digital authoritarianism threatens democratic processes, deepen ideological divides and undermines social cohesion and freedom of expression. Therefore, this talk explores the multi-faceted dimensions of digital polarisation and the fake news within the political dynamics of Pakistan.

Drawing from case studies and available data, this aims at highlighting the challenges posed by the unregulated nature of digital media platforms, the influence of political narratives, and the rapid exposure to misinformation. Moreover, this also examines combatting strategies, including media literacy campaigns, fact-checking initiatives, algorithmic interventions, and policy frameworks tailored to Pakistan's political, social and cultural landscape. By addressing these crucial issues, this talk contributes to the ongoing political and digital discourse to foster a well informed and resilient digital ecosystem in Pakistan.

Dr. Salma Shahid
Emerging Communication Trends in South Asia: Bridging the Digital Divide and Fostering Development
Abstract

The communication landscape in South Asia is undergoing rapid transformation, driven by advancements in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their integration into various socio-economic sectors. This symposium aims to explore emerging communication trends in the region, focusing on the role of digital technologies in bridging the digital divide, enhancing human development, and fostering economic growth. Although ICTs have created new opportunities for connectivity, employment, and market efficiency, their adoption remains uneven due to infrastructural deficits, barriers to digital literacy, and socio-economic disparities. The digital divide within South Asia reflects broader structural inequalities, where access to information and communication technologies is disproportionately concentrated among urban elites, leaving rural and marginalised communities at a disadvantage. Furthermore, the policy emphasis on export-driven IT industries has limited the domestic utilisation of ICTs for broader socio-economic development. This symposium will critically examine the challenges and opportunities associated with ICT diffusion in South Asia, drawing on comparative insights from successful models in East Asia and beyond. By addressing governance issues, regulatory frameworks, and the potential of ICTs for inclusive growth, the discussions will contribute to a deeper understanding of how South Asia can leverage emerging communication technologies for sustainable development.

Dr. Moneeba Iftikhar
Digital Media: A Gateway to Female Gig Workers and Entrepreneurship in Pakistan
Abstract

In today's digital age, media has evolved into a powerful tool, enabling businesses and individuals to connect with global audiences. In Pakistan, digital media is not just transforming industries but also creating unprecedented opportunities for female gig workers who face mobility constraints due to cultural or social norms. Women with skills in content creation, graphic design, digital marketing, and e-commerce can now build their own businesses or work as freelancers from home. Platforms like Fiverr, Upwork, and social media marketplaces allow them to showcase their talent, secure clients, and achieve financial independence. This rise of female gig workers is not only contributing to Pakistan's economy but also challenging traditional gender roles by integrating women into the workforce in innovative ways. With increasing internet accessibility and digital literacy, more women are expected to join the gig economy, paving the way for a more inclusive and empowered society.

Lubna Bhayat
Youth Employment, Gender disparity and Technological Disruption, its impact and challenges in Pakistan
Abstract

Youth employment and gender parity in Pakistan are interlinked challenges that significantly impact the nation's socioeconomic landscape. With approximately 60% of the population under the age of 30, the youth demographic represents a vast potential workforce. However, high unemployment rates among young people, particularly women, reveal systemic barriers such as cultural norms, limited access to education, and inadequate job opportunities. Gender disparities are pronounced, with women facing additional obstacles, including societal expectations and discrimination in hiring practices. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive policy reforms aimed at promoting inclusive economic growth and ensuring equitable access to employment for all genders. Technological disruption is posing a significant challenge as rapid advancement in automation and digital technologies are forcing traditional job markets to evolve leaving our youth unprepared. Many young people lack the necessary skill to compete in a technology driven economy. It is essential for the government and educational institutions to invest in skill development programs that equip the youth, particularly women, with the tools needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving job market.

Dr. Huda Gharib
Empowering the Next Generation: Equipping Millennials and Gen Z for the Future
Abstract

In increasingly dynamic and competitive economies, with the world navigating its way through rapid technological advancements, economic uncertainties, and evolving societal structures, it is fairly clear that the 21st century presents both unprecedented opportunities and formidable challenges —particularly for its youth. As nations gradually become more globalized, knowledge-driven, and / or volatile, the ability to adapt and innovate has never been more critical. In countries like Pakistan and the South Asian region in general, where Millennials and Gen Zs constitute a substantial proportion of the overall population; a number of factors have resulted in preventing these nations from maximizing their potential for growth. A lack of investment in the core pillars of any modern-day progressive and sustainable community which include essential skill development, financial literacy, civic awareness, cognitive adaptability, and digital proficiency — combined with traditional education systems that fail to equip students with real-world expertise, has contributed to only further widening the gaps in employability, leadership, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement. Therefore, in order to effectively address these challenges and to truly empower the youth, these essential competencies must be systematically integrated into education and professional trainings - both on an individual, as well as, on a macro level. For, by fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and lifelong learning, young people can transition from passive recipients of knowledge to active contributors in shaping economic and social progress. Whether it be through modernized curricula, public-private partnerships, or digital learning platforms; there exists immense potential to harness the strengths of this generation. Economies that successfully leverage technology, policy innovation, and interdisciplinary collaboration create environments where young individuals do not serve as mere participants; but instead serve as catalysts of meaningful transformation— several examples of which have already emerged at the micro level within this region; wherein strategic investments in generational empowerment have yielded a variety of results. So, join us for an insightful and interactive discussion, offering actionable strategies for educators, policymakers, and industry leaders on how Pakistan and South Asia can harness the potential of their youth — ensuring they are not only workforce-ready but also equipped to lead, innovate, and drive sustainable progress in an increasingly complex and inter-connected world.

Prof. Dr. Naveed Arshad
The Missing Link in the Renewable Energy Proliferation in Pakistan
Abstract

Renewable energy like solar and wind are sustainable and getting affordable with each passing day. However, these sources are variable and intermittent, which reduces their despatchability. However, new innovations in battery tech and energy informatics is bringing 24-hour renewable energy availability one step closer to reality. In this talk, we will look at some of these advances and will explore how these innovations are changing the grid fundamentals.
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