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C O N T E N T S

From the Editors' Desk		1
ARTICLES		
India - France Synergies in the Vanilla Islands	<i>Kshipra Vasudeo</i>	3
Campaign Against Violent Extremism Since 9/11: The Case of the Gulf States	<i>Adil Rasheed</i>	29
ESSAY		
Regional Aspirations in Europe and Post Colonial States: Case Studies from India and the United Kingdom	<i>Kanchan Pandey</i>	55
OPINION		
Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Eurasia: A Perspective from Russia	<i>Fedor Igorevich Arzhaev</i>	65
Politics of 'Sacred' in Barelvism: The Case of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP)	<i>Mohammed Shoaib Raza</i>	74
Pakistan's Eviction of Afghan Refugees as 'Illegal Foreigners': Causing A Humanitarian Crisis	<i>Zaheena Naqvi & Mohammad Waseem Malla</i>	81
The Withdrawal of Wheat-Subsidy Opens a Pandora's Box in Gilgit Baltistan	<i>Zainab Akhter</i>	88
The Tentacles of Violence: The Baloch Militancy and its Dire Consequences for Pakistan	<i>Josh Bowes</i>	93
Lashkar-e-Taiba's Fedayeen Missions: Need to Understand the Terror Dynamic	<i>Naveen Khan</i>	99
BOOK REVIEW		
Jihadism in Pakistan: Al-Qa'ida, Islamic State and the Local Militant by Antonio Giustozzi Reviewed by	<i>Syed Eesar Mehdi</i>	104
SATIRE		
Will the Political Circus in Pakistan lead to a Positive End state?	<i>Mohammad Shehzad</i>	107

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From the Editors' Desk

The world today is witnessing a form of transformed multilateralism that has brought into play a different kind of anarchy in the world where order is predicated on pursuit of national interest by all means possible, with each country reserving unto itself the right to interpret international norms in its own way to suit its needs and requirements. Many countries cite incidents where the behaviour of one or the other is against established international norms and blame each other for breaking of international consensus on issues that endanger global peace and order.

Be it Ukraine or Gaza, the Big Brothers of the world— responsible for both laying down and enforcing the set of norms that has made civilized political and diplomatic interaction among nations possible— have failed to stand up to their commitments to protect human life across states and ensure global peace. Regimes and leaders in particular countries have not shown maturity and wisdom to stop adopting policies that have led the world to violence and protracted war. Collective effort to bring peace to troubled corners of the world is lacking in sincerity and devotion to control parties to various wars and violence, over whom, some of the countries have influence and sway. Rather than trying earnestly to stop violence, in some cases, influential countries are indirectly adding fuel to the fire. In the process, invaluable human lives are being lost to violence, which has acquired a logic and life of its own. All this must stop.

There is a clear dearth of statesmanship among leaders of the world and deficit in innovative thinking. That threat to peace and stability anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere is conveniently forgotten. Diplomacy that was hailed as the instrument that balances national interest with international peace has become a tool for ensuring national interest at the cost of international peace. Internationalism is at a clear discount. So is humanism. Strong and affective nationalism is the order of the day. Democracies affected by majoritarian ethos are focussing on soft-homogenisation which is militating against established norms endorsing cultural autonomy and separateness. It is easily forgotten

that it is the 'citizen' or 'human being' not member of any group (be it religious, regional, ethnic or linguistic) who forms the basic unit of a state and it is the responsibility of the managers of the state (be they democratic or autocratic) to ensure that all citizens irrespective of their group affiliation is entitled to a common set of rights granted to all, which are to be zealously protected by the state. Whether it is the Russians in Donbass or Palestinians in Israel/Gaza, observance of these norms would avoid conflicts and ensure peace.

India offers an example of historically and culturally accepting the minorities and allowing them autonomy in their affairs, even when it was a welter of warring kingdoms. The cultural framework that bound these kingdoms endorsed tolerance and respect for diversity. In a democratic India, such cultural reflex conditions its approach to minorities as well. If communities in a diverse society and polity live side by side with respect towards one another, forgetting historical animosities, if any, among them, they can lay the foundation of a consociational society eternally seeking peaceful readjustments in the face of possible confrontations as they look forward to a harmonious future. That is the future that beckons us humans as we scale newer heights in technology and communication. There is an opportunity in it all to transcend frontiers of states and nations and work towards the larger goal of humanism. This will guarantee us peace and reconciliation the world is seeking today.

ICPS is bringing out a combined issue of our *Journal of Peace Studies* from July to December 2023 herewith. We are encouraged by the response from younger generation of scholars to publish in our journal and the website of our Institute.

The academic environment in the country today is full of enthusiastic young scholars wanting to make their mark and focussing on issues that affect peace, security and stability in India and the world. In this issue, we have tried to even accommodate opinions of young scholars from outside on issues of importance for the region and the world. We are committed to raising issues that reduce conflicts and enable pathways to peace through our publications. ■

Note for readers and subscribers

We are happy to inform you that from January 2009 we have introduced the system of peer review of articles to ensure quality of publications and improve the scholarly value of our journal. We have a renowned group of scholars and academicians associated with our Centre and they are helping us in this process. We are grateful to them for their kind support and cooperation.

We would request our readers and subscribers to take note of these changes and we would, as ever, encourage them to send in research articles for publication to us. The manuscripts of research papers submitted for publication should be neatly typed in double space and the length of the papers should be ideally between 3,000-5000 words including the footnotes. They should contain an abstract and a short introduction of the author. The authors should use Harvard style for their references. The articles can be sent to us in an electronic format, (Ms Word 2003 or above format) also. For detailed guidelines they may send their queries to us in the following address.

Journal of Peace Studies Research Section

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