

# IPS NEWS

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## Quarter in Focus

IPS organized and co-organized a range of dialogues, discussions and deliberations during the quarter, gathering valuable insights and providing policy inputs and recommendations on a variety of critical national and international issues.

The highlight of the quarter was the international seminar on the role of religions in fostering peace, harmony, and justice, which brought together scholars and intellectuals from six different faiths on one platform in a bid to explore religion's role in promoting global peace and harmony. Prior to this, an insightful session on reshaping cultural connections in the globalized world was held as a precursor to the international seminar.

Several activities were conducted under the theme of Pakistan Affairs, including comprehensive discussions on the 26<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution, national unity and ethnic pluralism, poverty alleviation, food security, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in Pakistan.

The country's energy concerns also received due attention, with deliberations addressing current challenges and opportunities for the future, focusing on energy priorities, the solar surge, and issues in the contracts of Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

A lecture series titled 'Pakistan: A Natural Geopolitical State' was organized with Owais Ahmed Ghani, former governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, with two sessions being held at the Quaid-i-Azam University and Bahria University in Islamabad.

A discussion with Ambassador (r) Afrasiab Hashmi deliberated on the diplomatic and strategic realities of Pak-India relations, while a separate session analyzed Israel's atrocities in Palestine and the role and response of the international community.

IPS organized three book launches during the quarter, in addition to collaborating with the Quaid-i-Azam University's School of Economics to produce the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Islamic Economics Conference.

The Institute's Chairman spoke at China's Sanya Public Security Forum, urging reforms in global governance, apart from presenting IPS's study 'Politics and Governance in Pakistan' at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute. The Vice Chairman also spoke on cultural diversity and unity in a dialogue organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad. Furthermore, IPS signed an MoU with the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) to collaborate in the areas of mutual interest.

Under IPS LEAD, the Institute hosted a delegation of students from Jamiat Al-Kauthar and organized a creative writing workshop for aspiring students and young professionals. A session of IPS' oral history project, 'The Living Scripts,' was also held with Ifkhar Gilani, a renowned Kashmiri journalist.

On the research side, the IPS' study *Landscaping IPPs across Pakistan* garnered appreciation from various quarters, while its briefs on the trajectory of Pak-Afghan relations and the Mubarak Sani case were also well received.

At the publication's front, two book titles—*Geopolitics: Frameworks and Dynamics in a Multipolar World* and *Dominance on the Digital Battlefield*—were published by IPS Press during the period.



## 'The Role of Religions in Fostering Peace, Harmony, and Justice'

There is an inseparable link between the role of religions and peace and development, as no society can flourish without the foundations of harmony, justice, and mutual respect. This connection has global significance, with particular relevancy for Pakistan, as collective efforts are essential to bridge divides, foster inclusivity, and pave the way for sustainable development and equitable growth.

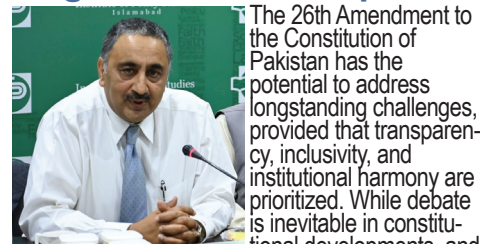
These views were shared by Ahsan Iqbal, federal minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, while speaking

as chief guest at the inaugural session of an international seminar, 'The Role of Religions in Fostering Peace, Harmony, and Justice', held at IPS on December 4, 2024, in collaboration with Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad, University of Management & Technology (UMT), Lahore, Gift University, Gujranwala, The Islamic Foundation (IF), UK, and Markfield Institute of Higher Education, UK.

The seminar's inaugural session was

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## 'The 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution of Pakistan: Significance and Impact'



Ahmer Bilal Soofi

The 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan has the potential to address longstanding challenges, provided that transparency, inclusivity, and institutional harmony are prioritized. While debate is inevitable in constitutional developments, and there is a critical balance

between judicial independence and parliamentary oversight, it is essential that the amendment be critically

evaluated to ensure the development of law, constitutional principles, and effective justice delivery.

Legal practitioners and scholars noted this during a roundtable titled 'The 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution of Pakistan: Significance and Impact' held at IPS on November 27, 2024.

The session, chaired by Ahmer Bilal Soofi, advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan, was addressed by Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Jam Muhammad Aslam, Ministry of Law and Justice, Syed Ahmad Hassan Shah, advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan, Hafiz Ahmed Waqas, Shariah Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad, and Dr Shahzad Iqbal Sham, senior

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## 'Israeli Aggression: Perspectives, Policies, and Emerging Scenario'

Israel, driven by messianic ideological motives, has become *hostis humani generis*, an "enemy of mankind," as it continues to impose collective punishment and apartheid in the Palestinian territories. The reality of these actions has emerged, despite the widespread disinformation in the Western media, leading to overwhelming international support for Palestinian resistance. In this context, supporting Israel or maintaining neutrality is equivalent to complicity in these crimes.

This was observed during a seminar on 'Israeli Aggression: Perspectives, Policies, and Emerging Scenario' held at IPS on October 18, 2024. The session featured distinguished



Dr Khurram Iqbal

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## ‘National Unity and Ethnic Pluralism’

Addressing Pakistan’s ethnic and regional challenges requires a thorough understanding of grievances rooted in governance issues rather than viewing them through an identity-based lens. Constructive and lasting solutions depend on a commitment to equity, empowerment, and transparent governance that extends across all regions and communities.

By focusing on socioeconomic and political fairness, Pakistan can foster greater unity and stability, bridging divides and ensuring that all citizens feel represented and valued in the nation’s progress. Only through a genuine dedication to inclusive, transparent policymaking can these longstanding grievances be effectively resolved, paving the way for sustained national cohesion.



This was observed during a consultative session on ‘National Unity and Ethnic Pluralism’ held at IPS on October 25, 2024. The session aimed to discuss challenges, grievances, and pathways to strengthen societal cohesion across diverse communities, with a particular focus on issues facing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and former FATA regions.

The session was addressed by Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Professor Dr Qibla Ayaz, ad-hoc member of the Shariat Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court, Farhatullah Babar, PPP leader and former senator, Prof Dr Fakhir-ul-Islam, former director, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Ambassador (r) Ayaz Wazir, Dr Lutfur Rehman, an expert on FATA affairs, Dr Khurram Iqbal, associate professor, National Defense University (NDU), Islamabad, Dr Ashraf Ali, former director FATA Research Center, Salman Javed, director, Pak Afghan Youth Forum, and other distinguished academics, former officials, and policy experts.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/national-unity-and-ethnic-pluralism/](http://www.ips.org.pk/national-unity-and-ethnic-pluralism/)

## Continued from Page - 01 The 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment...

research fellow at IPS.

Presenting an overview of the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Jam Aslam emphasized that due deliberations preceded the passing of the 26th Amendment to introduce changes in the legislative scheme. Key provisions included the establishment of special constitutional benches in the Supreme Court and high courts and restructuring of the chief justice’s appointment process. Furthermore, the amendment introduced performance evaluations for high court judges, reduced the age limit for high court judges’ appointments, and allowed Federal Shariat Court judges to ascend to the Supreme Court.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/the-26th-amendment-of-the-constitution-of-pakistan-significance-and-impact/](http://www.ips.org.pk/the-26th-amendment-of-the-constitution-of-pakistan-significance-and-impact/)

## ‘Pakistan-India Interaction: Ancient and Contemporary Perspective’

The enduring and distinct cultural identities and traditions of Pakistan and India continue to shape their political realities even decades after partition. These historical identities remain influential in their diplomatic discourse and strategic interests in South Asia.

This was discussed with Ambassador (r) Afrasiab Mehdi Hashmi Qureshi, who has also served as additional foreign secretary, during his guest lecture on ‘Pakistan-India Interaction: Ancient and Contemporary Perspective’, held at IPS on October 9, 2024. The event drew a diverse audience, including students from various universities, who gathered to gain deeper insights into Pakistan and India’s complex history and evolving dynamics.

Ambassador Afrasiab, who has served as Pakistan’s high commissioner to Bangladesh and New Zealand and held key diplomatic positions in Washington DC, New Delhi, Beijing, and Vienna, emphasized that the roots



of Pakistan-India interaction extend far beyond the partition of 1947, going back thousands of years. He pointed out that while the regions of present-day Pakistan and India have been geographically interconnected, they have always maintained distinct cultural, religious, and philosophical identities. These differences have not diminished with the establishment of political boundaries and continue to impact the relationship, which is often characterized by tension and cautious cooperation.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/pakistan-india-interaction-ancient-and-contemporary-perspective/](http://www.ips.org.pk/pakistan-india-interaction-ancient-and-contemporary-perspective/)

## ‘Food Security and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in Pakistan’

With scientific findings on GM crop safety still inconclusive, a strategic evaluation before introducing GMOs in Pakistan is essential and should be guided by a robust regulatory system. This mechanism, grounded in indigenous research, mobilization of local resources, and tailored safety standards, must account for Pakistan’s unique agricultural and environmental conditions. Moreover, addressing ethical, health, and environmental concerns is equally paramount. As Pakistan explores this path, a framework that prioritizes national interests, public health, and ecological balance remains crucial.

This was discussed during a roundtable on ‘Food Security and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in Pakistan’ held at IPS on October 29, 2024. The panel included Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Dr Anwar ul Hassan Gilani, former vice-chancellor, The University of Haripur, Dr Shaukat Ali, director National Institute of Genomics and Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB), and Dr Zahid Akram, professor, PMAS Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi. The session was also attended by academia, experts, government officials, researchers, and representatives of farmers.

The discussion noted that while genetic



modification has become integral to advancing agricultural technology, there remain valid concerns over its long-term impacts on human health and environmental stability. This highlights the need for a strategic evaluation and robust regulatory framework, that is efficient in both content and implementation and prioritizes long-term gains of food security, public health, and environmental sustainability.

The speakers noted that research, highlighting the potential of GM crops to meet the demands of a growing population by focusing on their high-yield capacities and resilience to pests, weeds, and adverse weather conditions, is mostly donor-initiated. However, these donor initiatives may overlook local agricultural realities and the priorities of primary stakeholders, such as farmers and consumers.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/food-security-and-genetically-modified-organisms-gmos-in-pakistan/](http://www.ips.org.pk/food-security-and-genetically-modified-organisms-gmos-in-pakistan/)

## 'Pakistan is a Natural Geopolitical State' – Owais Ahmed Ghani's Lecture Series



Owais Ahmed Ghani, former governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, and member of the IPS' National Advisory Council (NAC), delivered lectures on 'Pakistan: A Natural Geopolitical State', held at School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Bahria University, Islamabad Campus (BUIC), and National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University (NIPS-QAU), Islamabad, in collaboration with IPS, on October 17 and 30, 2024 respectively.

The lecture at Bahria University was joined by Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman IPS, Dr Shoaib Suddle, director and senior fellow, Global Think Tank Network, National University of Science and Technology (NUST), and Syeda Sughra Imam, former senator, whereas the lecture at the Quaid-i-Azam University was joined by Khalid

Rahman, chairman IPS, Dr Muhammad Hanif Khalil, associate professor and acting director NIPS, and Dr Saeed Amed Rid, assistant professor, NIPS.

In his lectures, Owais Ghani presented a comprehensive historical analysis that positioned Pakistan, centered in the Indus River region, as a distinct political entity throughout history. He highlighted that the region's unique geopolitical and cultural identity has consistently set it apart from the rest of the subcontinent. Drawing on 2,600 years of history, Ghani demonstrated that for the majority of this period, the Indus River region has functioned independently of the Ganga-Jumna region, with a distinct social, cultural, and political character.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/pakistan-is-a-natural-geopolitical-state-owais-ahmed-ghanis-lecture-series/](http://www.ips.org.pk/pakistan-is-a-natural-geopolitical-state-owais-ahmed-ghanis-lecture-series/)

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## The Role of Religions...

addressed as keynote speaker by Dr Tamara Sonn, professor emerita, Georgetown University, Washington D.C. Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman also spoke on the occasion, whereas messages from Prof Khurshid Ahmad, founder and patron-in-chief of IPS, and Khurshid Ahmad Nadeem, chairman National Rahmatul-Lil-Aalameen Wa Khatamun Nabiyyin Authority, were also read out.

The next two sessions of the event brought together voices from Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Judaism to explore how shared ethical values and consciously practiced faith can bridge divides, counter misconceptions, and create a foundation for global unity, highlighting the potential of dialogue among followers of different faiths to address contemporary challenges and promote inclusive narratives rooted in mutual respect and understanding.



The second session, chaired by Justice Dr Qibla Ayaz, member, Shariat Appellate Bench, Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP), was addressed by Rev Fr Prof Sarfraz Simon, diocesan director of Catholic Church, Dr Neelima Shukla-Bhatt of Wellesley College, USA, Dr Kalyan Singh Kalyan of GC University, Lahore, Dr Samantha Ilangakoon of University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, Dr Ophira Gamliel of University of Glasgow, and Dr Hafiz Waqas Khan of Riphah International University (RIU), Islamabad.

This was followed by a panel discussion chaired by Dr Khalid Masud, member judge, Shariat Appellate Bench, SCP, and Dr Zahid Parvez, rector, Markfield Institute of Higher Education, UK, featuring Dr Mary Hunter, post-doctoral researcher, St Leonard's associate of the University of St Andrews, Scotland, Dr Taimia Sabiha, assistant professor, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Dr Seema Farzad, social activist, and Manzoor Masih, member National Commission for Human Rights.

The seminar's concluding session was addressed by Justice Dr Syed Muhammed Anwer, judge, Federal Shariat Court, alongside Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman, IPS' Vice Chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, and Prof Dr Mohyuddin Hashmi, dean, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/the-role-of-religions-in-fostering-peace-harmony-and-justice/](http://www.ips.org.pk/the-role-of-religions-in-fostering-peace-harmony-and-justice/)

## 'Reshaping Cultural Connections in a Globalized World'



The individual and collective identity defines the nature and characteristics of a person and a society. Identity is shaped by relationships, histories, and evolving contexts and is vital for mental peace and civilizational development. In a globalized world where societies are increasingly multicultural, adopting a relational and decolonized approach to identity can bridge divides, foster inclusivity, and reshape cultural connections. This perspective not only promotes a more equitable and interconnected future but also resists the exploitation of values, focusing instead on the shared humanity that unites us all.

This was noted by Dr Debbie Bargallie, associate professor and principal research fellow at Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural

Research and Griffith Institute for Educational Research, Griffith University, Australia. She was delivering a talk during a seminar 'Reshaping Cultural Connections in a Globalized World' at IPS on November 19, 2024. The session was chaired by Dr Khalid Masud, member, Shariat Appellate Bench, Supreme Court of Pakistan, and joined by Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS.

The event served as a precursor to the international seminar titled 'The Role of Religions in Fostering Peace, Harmony, and Justice', which IPS was set to hold on December 4.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/reshaping-cultural-connections-in-a-globalized-world/](http://www.ips.org.pk/reshaping-cultural-connections-in-a-globalized-world/)

## 'Poverty Alleviation in Pakistan: Examining the Concept and Performance of BISP'



Pakistan must adopt a strategic shift in social protection policies to tackle poverty and unemployment, with a sustained and responsive 8% economic growth rate over 8-10 years identified as essential to generating sufficient job opportunities.

Achieving this requires a growth-oriented, inclusive, and data-driven approach, alongside comprehensive structural reforms. Key measures include decentralizing program management and prioritizing human capital development to transform social safety efforts into sustainable economic progress.

This was discussed during an interactive session on 'Poverty Alleviation in Pakistan: Examining the Concept and Performance of BISP' held at IPS on October 22, 2024. The event, chaired by Dr Ghulam Muhammad Arif, former dean, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), featured insights

from Dr Shujaat Farooq, chief of research, PIDE, Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, and other experts.

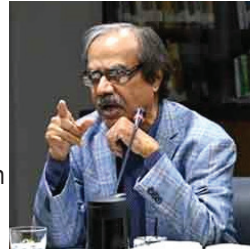
The session critically examined the current state of poverty alleviation efforts in Pakistan, with a focus on the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), its effectiveness, and the broader structural challenges facing the country's social protection programs.

Dr Shujaat Farooq explained that BISP, despite being a significant social safety net, has become heavily donor-driven, with conditions from international organizations like the IMF. This has made it challenging for the government to modify or discontinue the program, despite its limitations, as it has not had a positive impact on poverty alleviation even after 16 years.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/poverty-alleviation-in-pakistan-examining-the-concept-and-performance-of-bisp/](http://www.ips.org.pk/poverty-alleviation-in-pakistan-examining-the-concept-and-performance-of-bisp/)

## 'Unpacking the Issues in IPP Contracts: Insight from Experience and Emerging Scenarios'

Targeted solutions for power generation issues, based on case-by-case evaluations and audits of independent power producers (IPPs), along with strategic efforts to optimize the use of the country's installed generation capacity and stimulate electricity demand through special economic zones (SEZs), can lead to more equitable and efficient outcomes for both producers and consumers.



To achieve targeted solutions, a more transparent and tailored approach is essential. A case-by-case evaluation of IPPs is crucial, as each operates under distinct financial and operational conditions.

This was discussed during a consultative meeting on 'Unpacking the Issues in IPP Contracts: Insight from Experience and Emerging Scenarios', held at IPS on October 8, 2024. The insights were shared by Naveed Siddique, a consulting Engineer with diversified experience in various subsector of power sector of Pakistan, including Ministry, regulatory authority, vertically integrated utility, and IPPs, Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Mirza Hamid Hassan, former federal secretary, Water and Power, and Asad Mahmood, a renewable energy expert.

Earlier, IPS Research Officer Muhammad Wali Farooqi presented a comprehensive study on mapping Pakistan's IPPs, supported by detailed infographics.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/unpacking-the-issues-in-ipp-contracts-insight-from-experience-and-emerging-scenarios/](http://www.ips.org.pk/unpacking-the-issues-in-ipp-contracts-insight-from-experience-and-emerging-scenarios/)

## 'Navigating the Solar Surge: Ensuring Equitable Energy Access in Pakistan's Power Sector'



The rapid growth of rooftop solar systems is transforming Pakistan's energy landscape but also creating disparities for lower-income electricity consumers who remain dependent on the traditional grid. To address this, ensuring equitable energy access for all consumers is crucial.

This concern was the focal point of a session titled 'Navigating the Solar Surge: Ensuring Equitable Energy Access in Pakistan's Power Sector', hosted by IPS on October 23, 2024.

The session featured insights from Khalid Rahman, Chairman IPS, Ameena Sohail, senior IPS associate and energy advocate, Abubakar Ismail, head of energy & sustainability, Amreli Steels, Muhammad Musaddiq, CEO of Siddique Renewable Energy, Asad Mahmood, renewable energy expert, and Mirza Hamid Hassan, former federal secretary for Water & Power.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/navigating-the-solar-surge-ensuring-equitable-energy-access-in-pakistan's-power-sector/](http://www.ips.org.pk/navigating-the-solar-surge-ensuring-equitable-energy-access-in-pakistan's-power-sector/)

## 'Energy Priorities in Crisis: Navigating Gas Supply Cuts to Captive Power Plants in Pakistan'

Aiming to analyze and discuss Pakistan's concurrent pressing energy challenges, IPS hosted a webinar titled 'Energy Priorities in Crisis: Navigating Gas Supply Cuts to Captive Power Plants in Pakistan' on December 3, 2024. The event brought together prominent experts and practitioners from Pakistan's power sector.

The session commenced with the welcome remarks of Ameena Sohail, Senior IPS Associate and a renowned energy lawyer, was addressed by Bilal A. Shaikh, director of Energy Business at an EU-based energy technology solutions provider, Abubakar Ismail, Head of Energy at Amreli Steels, and Asad Mahmood, a renewable energy expert, whereas Asim Riaz, an energy expert, Rehan Jawed, a seasoned industrialist, and Muhammad Wali Farooqi, a researcher from IPS' Energy, also shared their perspectives.

Talking to the webinar, Bilal A. Shaikh challenged the prevailing perception regarding gas utilization efficiency in captive power plants.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/energy-priorities-in-crisis-navigating-gas-supply-cuts-to-captive-power-plants-in-pakistan/](http://www.ips.org.pk/energy-priorities-in-crisis-navigating-gas-supply-cuts-to-captive-power-plants-in-pakistan/)

## IPS, Quaid-i-Azam University hold 2<sup>nd</sup> International Islamic Economics conference on 'Islamic Social Finance'

The School of Economics at Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), in collaboration with the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Islamic Economics Conference with the theme of 'Islamic Social Finance and Economic Development'.

Held within the University's premises on December 17, 2024, the conference brought together distinguished scholars, practitioners, policymakers and academicians from various institutions across Pakistan as well as abroad, discussing the pivotal role of Islamic finance in fostering sustainable economic growth.



The inaugural session of the conference featured prominent speakers including Dr Humayun Dar from the Cambridge Institute of Islamic Finance, Justice Dr Syed Muhammed Anwer, judge, Federal Shariat Court (FSC) and member IPS' National Advisory Council (NAC), and former senator Hafiz Hamdullah. The event was also enriched by the participation of Dr Muhammad Tariq Majeed, director of the School of Economics, and former Dean Dr M Idrees.

Dr Humayun Dar emphasized the relevance of Islamic Economics and Finance in modern times, pointing out that the conventional economic models are losing credibility due to their inherent weaknesses in the face of emerging global challenges. On the other hand, the focus is shifting fast towards sustainable and responsible consumption, which are the principles rooted deeply in Islamic teachings.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/ips-quaid-i-azam-university-hold-2nd-international-islamic-economics-conference-on-islamic-social-finance/](http://www.ips.org.pk/ips-quaid-i-azam-university-hold-2nd-international-islamic-economics-conference-on-islamic-social-finance/)

## Continued from Page - 01 Israeli Aggression...

panelists, including Syed Muhammad Ali, policy analyst and strategist, Oves Anwar, director, Research Society of International Law, Dr Khurram Iqbal, associate professor, National Defense University, Islamabad, Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, and Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman, IPS.

The speakers noted that Israel's atrocities are not new and traced the origins of the Israel-Palestine conflict to early 20<sup>th</sup> century events including the Balfour Declaration and the 1948 Palestinian displacement.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/israeli-aggression-perspectives-policies-and-emerging-scenario/](http://www.ips.org.pk/israeli-aggression-perspectives-policies-and-emerging-scenario/)

## Book Launches

### 'Bridging Horizons: Unraveling the Enigma of Connectivity between Pakistan and Central Asia'

In an age where regional integration hinges on effective connectivity, Pakistan's strategic geographical position offers a vital gateway to landlocked Central Asian states, a cost-effective and strategically advantageous trading partner for Pakistan. Realizing the trade potential between these regions, however, requires overcoming policy, technical, and regional challenges through collaboration and visionary strategies.

This was the central theme at the launch event for *Bridging Horizons: Unraveling the Enigma of Connectivity between Pakistan and Central Asia*, a book authored by Dr Faisal Javaid, Dr Uzma Siraj, and Prof Dr Arkadiusz Zukowski. Published by IPS Press – the publishing arm of the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad, the book explores the historical, economic, and policy-driven dimensions of Pakistan-Central Asia relations, offering actionable insights into challenges and opportunities for fostering stronger ties.

The launch ceremony, hosted at Federal Urdu



University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUUAST), Islamabad on December 11, 2024, was addressed as chief guest by Ambassador (r) Riaz Hussain Bukhari, Pakistan's former envoy to Uzbekistan, Prof Dr Ijaz Shafi Gilani, chairman Gallup Pakistan, Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman IPS, Dr Ihtsham Ul Haq, associate professor, FUUAST, Islamabad, and Dr Uzma Siraj, head IR Department, FUUAST.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/book-launch-bridging-horizons-unraveling-the-enigma-of-connectivity-between-pakistan-and-central-asia/](http://www.ips.org.pk/book-launch-bridging-horizons-unraveling-the-enigma-of-connectivity-between-pakistan-and-central-asia/)

### 'Ikkeeswi Sadi ka Bharat aur Musalman: Siyasat aur Samaaj kay Aeenay Mai'

A deeper and more systematic understanding of India's sociopolitical and cultural landscape, "Hindustan Sanashi", is a prerequisite for shaping effective policies for minorities, as well as advocacy efforts for marginalized communities like Muslims in India and Indian Occupied Kashmir.

This was observed during the launching event of renowned journalist Iftikhar Gilani's latest book *Ikkeeswi Sadi ka Bharat aur Musalman: Siyasat aur Samaaj kay Aeenay Mai* - published by IPS Press - on October 24, 2024.

Chaired by Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, former foreign secretary and high commissioner to India, and director general, Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI), the event featured remarks from Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, and Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman IPS. The reviews of Prof



Khurshid Ahmad, eminent scholar and patron-in-chief IPS, Raja Muhammad Zafar-ul-Haq, former senator and secretary-general Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami, and Pakistan's former high commissioner to India Ambassador (r) Abdul Basit were also presented on the occasion.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/book-launch-ikkeeswi-sadi-ka-bharat-aur-musalman-siyasat-aur-samaaj-kay-aeenay-mai/](http://www.ips.org.pk/book-launch-ikkeeswi-sadi-ka-bharat-aur-musalman-siyasat-aur-samaaj-kay-aeenay-mai/)

### 'Al Muhallab - Khitta-e-Pakistan Main Islam ka Pehla Alambardar'

Pakistan's Islamic roots can be traced back to the arrival of Al-Muhallab in 664 AD, nearly five decades before Muhammad bin Qasim landed in 711 AD. Al-Muhallab not only expanded the Islamic frontier but also played a pivotal role in shaping the cultural and religious landscape of present-day Pakistan.

This was noted by Dr Syed Mohammad Anwer, aalim judge, Federal Shariat Court, at the launch of his latest book, *Al Muhallab - Khita e Pakistan Main Islam Ka Pehla Alambardar*, held at IPS on October 10, 2024.

The ceremony was addressed by Dr Ijaz Shafi Gilani, founder of Gallup Pakistan, Prof Jalil

Aali, prominent writer, intellectual, and poet, Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman IPS, Syed Abu Ahmed Akif, former federal secretary, and Dr Shahzad Iqbal Sham, senior research fellow at IPS.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/book-launch-al-muhallab-khitta-e-pakistan-main-islam-ka-pehla-alambardar/](http://www.ips.org.pk/book-launch-al-muhallab-khitta-e-pakistan-main-islam-ka-pehla-alambardar/)



## 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.

### Chairman IPS at 2024 Sanya Forum | Global Governance Reforms for International Security and Sustainable Development urged

Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman was invited to speak at the 2024 Sanya Public Security Forum, held by China Golden Eagle Peace Development Foundation in Sanya, Hainan, China on December 21, 2024, under the theme of 'Development and International Security'.



Speaking online on the occasion, Rahman emphasized the vital, inevitable, and symbiotic relationship between security and development, stressing that the traditional approach of focusing primarily on military strategies is no longer effective in the modern world. He argued that for sustainable development, new and innovative ways must be identified to prevent conflicts, ensure safety, and build lasting peace. A secure environment fosters investment, innovation, and growth, while instability hampers economic, educational, and social progress, he said.

The speaker also highlighted the need for security measures at both local and global levels, addressing internal stability in China, regional security concerns like the South China Sea, and the growing risks associated with global initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Speaking of BRI, Rahman said that the project highlights the importance of a community with a shared future for mankind, pays more attention to the sustainability of public security, and the principles of inclusiveness and joint consultation and construction. At the same time, the initiative integrates multiple dimensions of global governance such as economy, society, ecology, and security, and promotes the construction of a new governance model.

He concluded by advocating for comprehensive reforms in global governance to better address emerging security threats, as well as to ensure sustainable development in an increasingly interconnected world.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/chairman-ips-at-2024-sanya-forum-global-governance-reforms-for-intl-security-sustainable-development-urged/](https://www.ips.org.pk/chairman-ips-at-2024-sanya-forum-global-governance-reforms-for-intl-security-sustainable-development-urged/)

### IPS, ISSI sign MoU to strengthen collaboration in the areas of mutual interests

IPS signed an MoU with the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), on November 29, 2024, with a view to advance mutual cooperation in the areas of research, policy analysis and national discourse. Signed by Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman and Director General of ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, this strategic collaboration aimed at contributing to Pakistan's policy landscape through insightful research and meaningful dialogue.

In his address at the signing ceremony, Rahman highlighted the long-standing collaboration between IPS and ISSI, which spans over four decades. He emphasized the importance of their



joint efforts on key geopolitical issues, such as Afghanistan, India, and China, and proposed that both institutions continue to work together under the broader theme of paradigm shifts.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/ips-issi-sign-mou-to-strengthen-collaboration-in-the-areas-of-mutual-interests/](https://www.ips.org.pk/ips-issi-sign-mou-to-strengthen-collaboration-in-the-areas-of-mutual-interests/)

### 'Politics and Governance in Pakistan' – Chairman IPS outlines IPS' report at IPRI's Grand National Dialogue

Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman was invited by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on December 3, 2024 to participate in a seminar titled 'Grand National Dialogue', an event also featuring the launch of a book with the similar title, encapsulating insights, analysis and expert recommendations over key issues facing Pakistan.

The event also included presentations of reports contributed to the publication by partnering institutions, including IPS.

Sharing insights from the IPS' report titled 'Politics and Governance in Pakistan' on the occasion, Khalid Rahman apprised that the report proposes adopting an electoral system of proportional representation, as the existing 'First-Past-The-Post' system has not proved efficient and does not offer necessary representation to all segments of society.

On the other hand, the system of proportional representation, different models of which are already in use in over 90 countries, offers a



much more just and inclusive model. In the context of Pakistan, the administrative divisions may be designated as constituencies for the National Assembly, and the candidates aspiring to represent the people would be selected on party basis. Candidates will receive votes on the back of party's program and announced agenda. The eventual representation, as a result, would be proportional to the percentage of the votes received.

For further details, visit:  
<https://www.ips.org.pk/political-and-governance-systems-chairman-ips-outlines-ips-report-at-ipris-grand-national-dialogue/>

### Ambassador Abrar highlights the significance of unity amidst cultural diversity

IPS' Vice Chairman Ambassador Abrar Hussain participated in a dialogue titled 'Leveraging Pakistan's Cultural Diversity to Foster Peace Within and Without', organized by Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) on December 16, 2024.

The event was attended by diplomats, academicians, politicians, and representatives of various faiths.

Ambassador Hussain spoke about unity in diversity, and shared values of peace and justice in different religions and ethnicities. He emphasized the importance of highlighting such values through curriculum and promoting tolerance and



harmony in society.

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/ambassador-abrar-calls-for-fostering-peace-harmony-through-unity/](https://www.ips.org.pk/ambassador-abrar-calls-for-fostering-peace-harmony-through-unity/)

## 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.

### Students of Jamia Al-Kauthar encouraged to become proactive contributors to the society

To cultivate critical thinking and encourage students to become proactive, responsible contributors to society, it is important to expose them to diverse perspectives, real-world challenges, and hands-on experiences that connect their academic learning to societal needs. This approach prepares students to address complex issues and make meaningful impact in their communities.

This was highlighted during a session held with a delegation of the students of Al Kauthar Islamic University, an Islamic institute providing a mixture of religious and contemporary education, led by Dr Muntazir Mehdi, head of the Department of English, IPS on October 31, 2024.

The session, designed to provide an enriching exposure opportunity for young scholars to



engage with experts in policy research and development, was addressed by Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, Dr Muntazir Mehdi from Jamiatu Al Kauthar, and Tauqeer Hussain, senior research officer at IPS.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/delegation-of-students-from-jamiatu-al-kauthar-visit-ips/](http://www.ips.org.pk/delegation-of-students-from-jamiatu-al-kauthar-visit-ips/)

### Teachers training workshop on 'Successful Life'



As part of IPS LEAD's Teachers Training Program, Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman addressed school teachers on the topic of 'Successful Life' in the workshops held at The Concept School in Barakahu, Islamabad, on November 30, 2024, and The Creative School's D-12 Campus on December 7, 2024, providing in-depth insights on the concepts of life, its purpose and the real meanings of success.

### 'Significance of Ideology in Modern Times'

Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman was invited as a guest of honor at the Youth Leadership Convention, organized by Youth Association of Pakistan' on October 27, 2024.

During his address on the topic of 'Significance of Ideology in Modern Times', Rahman raised many thought-provoking questions. He asked if the universe was created and being run by someone, or was everything being done in the auto-mode? He questioned if any one had come into this world with the features or in the environment or circumstances of his or her choice? or if anyone knew how long he or she was going to live?

If the answer to these questions are in the negative, then there has to be someone who is managing all of this, as well as everything else happening in the world, or in the universe, since ever, and for ever. And this is where an ideology comes into play, Rahman explained.

### Creative Writing Workshop | 'Youth Voices: Shaping Tomorrow Through Words'

Aiming to provide young voices with an opportunity to develop their skills and express their perspectives in a meaningful way, IPS LEAD (The Learning, Excellence and Development program of IPS) organized a workshop on creative writing skills, titled 'Youth Voices: Shaping Tomorrow Through Words', on October 29, 2024.

The event was led by Syed Abu Ahmed Akif, an accomplished author, former federal secretary and member, IPS' National Advisory Council (NAC), while Faizan Rasool, CEO Indigo Video Games, and Zoha Khokhar, language trainer and freelance editor, facilitated the practical sessions of the workshop.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/creative-writing-workshop-youth-voices-shaping-tomorrow-through-words-2/](http://www.ips.org.pk/creative-writing-workshop-youth-voices-shaping-tomorrow-through-words-2/)



### Resilience is about finding purpose, strength in the face of challenges: Sa'diyya Nesar

Youth have the power to advocate for a society where everyone is valued for his or her individuality, said Sa'diyya Nesar, a poet, author, disability rights advocate and a TEDx speaker, who has muscular myopathy - a condition that affects her muscles - during an interactive session with youth held at IPS, in collaboration with the Youth Association of Pakistan, on November 01, 2024.



### IPS' team development session on professionalism, constructive organizational culture

Maintaining professional standards, accountability, and effective communication is essential for fostering a productive, supportive, and collaborative organizational culture. These factors play a pivotal role in driving the overall success and sustainability of the organization.

This was reflected during a team development session organized by IPS LEAD - the Learning, Excellence And Development program of IPS, on October 3, 2024.

Facilitated by trainer and IPS' associate Sardar Khalid Mehmood, the session was centered on enhancing professionalism and reinforcing ethical standards within the workplace.

For further details, visit: [www.ips.org.pk/ips-team-development-session-on-professionalism-and-constructive-organizational-culture/](http://www.ips.org.pk/ips-team-development-session-on-professionalism-and-constructive-organizational-culture/)



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

### The Living Scripts | Iftikhar Gilani

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 a 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 was the second and concluding one with renowned journalist Iftikhar Gilani on October 28, 2024.

**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.

**Policy Perspectives (Volume 21 | Number 2 | 2024)**



The latest issue of *Policy Perspectives* presents research, analyses and commentary on various topics concerning national and international issues from policy experts, academics and practitioners.

- **Democracy and Liberal Cosmopolitanism: Who is the Sovereign?**  
*Aneela Shahzad*
- **Analyzing the**

**Economic Effects of Investor-State Dispute Settlements (ISDS) on Foreign Direct Invest-**

**ment (FDI) Flows**

*Frans Lavdari and Xhulio Lavdari*

► **The Revival of Islam: The Central Role of Islamic Educational System**

*Asad Zaman*

► **Israeli Aggression: Perspectives, Policies, and Projected Scenarios**

*Malik Waleed*

► **Religion and Religiosity in Contemporary Global Environment**

*Tamara Sonn*

► **The Role of Religions in Fostering Peace, Harmony, and Justice**

*A Report*

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/policy-perspectives/](http://www.ips.org.pk/policy-perspectives/)

**RESEARCH**

**Mapping IPPs across Pakistan**

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/mapping-ips-across-pakistan/](http://www.ips.org.pk/mapping-ips-across-pakistan/)

**Mubarak Sani Case mai Supreme Court ka Faisla: Haqiq aur Tajaweez**

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/mubarak-sani-case-mai-supreme-court-ka-faisla-haqiq-aur-tajaweez/](http://www.ips.org.pk/mubarak-sani-case-mai-supreme-court-ka-faisla-haqiq-aur-tajaweez/)

**Trajectory of Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations: Post-August 2021**

For further details, visit:  
[www.ips.org.pk/trajectory-of-pakistan-afghanistan-relations-post-august-2021-2/](http://www.ips.org.pk/trajectory-of-pakistan-afghanistan-relations-post-august-2021-2/)

**PERSPECTIVES**

**Kashmir ki Tareekh ka Siah Tareen Din**

By Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain

**Probability of Israel engaging in a long and drawn-out conflict in Mideast**

By Dr Muhammad Khurshid Khan

**US and Russia: A Tale of Loyal Enemies**

By Natasha Matloob

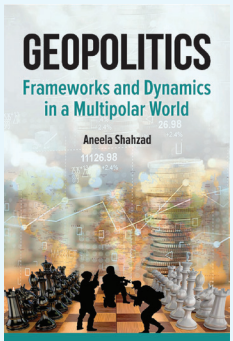
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[www.youtube.com/ipstv](http://www.youtube.com/ipstv)

- "What do I like the most about Pakistan?" – Dignitaries from Pakistan unveil
- Highlights of International Seminar 'The Role of Religions in Fostering Peace, Harmony and Justice'
- Pakistan is the only country in the world having reflection of minorities in its flag | Justice Dr Syed Mohammad Anwer
- The contributions of many religions is not taught in the curriculums | Dr Zahid Pervez (UK)
- Religions ethics set the standard of what is, and isn't acceptable | Rev Fr Prof Sarfraz Simon
- Understanding India's sociopolitical landscape is vital for advocacy of Kashmir | Amb Sohail Mahmood

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**Geopolitics: Frameworks and Dynamics in a Multipolar World**



Author: Aneela Shahzad  
Binding: Paperback  
Pages: 403  
Language: English  
ISBN: 978-969-448-845-5

**About the Book**

The relatively modern subject of geopolitics requires a non-Western perspective. The non-West has not only

suffered under the political and economic domination of former colonizers and the victors of the two world wars, but it has also faced a lack of self-expression, forcing states to conform to and propagate a politically correct narrative that originates from the West and secures its interests at the expense of others. The need is to offer

geopolitics as a subject in universities, so that scarcity of valuable research, leading to a superficial narrative often misaligned with the history and ideology of nations, is avoided. Such misalignment often disconnects countries from the regional and global perspectives at the level of an inside-out approach. This book aims to address this gap by building on historical and contemporary global politics, creating a foundation for critiquing and revising the narratives used by powerful states to control and oppress weaker ones. The work seeks to challenge the prescribed geopolitical narrative from the institutionalized West, offering a framework for the East to envision its future. It is a radical but essential work that will set readers on a journey of discovery and awe similar to the one experienced by the author.

The amazon paperback and kindle editions of the book can be acquired from:

[www.amazon.com/dp/B0DQ8ZBLPV](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DQ8ZBLPV)

**Dominance on the Digital Battlefield**



Author: Lars Hilse  
Binding: Paperback  
Pages: 167  
Language: English  
ISBN: 978-969-448-847-9

**About the Book**

*Dominance on the Digital Battlefield Or: Why Cyber Weapons Are Cooler Than Nukes* presents a thought-provoking

exploration of modern cyber warfare and its far-reaching impact on global security and military strategy. Over 50% of the book is dedicated to recommendations on how national security can be strengthened against exponentially increasing cyber risks. These include the development of advanced cyber defenses, the integration of cyber capabilities into military strategy, and the necessity of international cooperation to mitigate the risks posed by cyberattacks.

The amazon paperback and kindle editions of the book can be acquired from:

[www.amazon.com/dp/B0DPVVZS2D](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DPVVZS2D)



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