

International Webinar Series

Covid-19 Pandemic and Issues of Security

13 – 24 August 2020

Organised by

Department of Political Science,

University College for Women

Koti, Hyderabad

Report

13 August, 2020. The international webinar series started with the inaugural session, the Guest Of Honour Prof Channa Basavaiha, speakers and participants were welcomed and significance of the topic was explained by the convener Dr. V. Srilatha, Head, Dept of Political Science, UCW. The Chief Patron, Prof.A. Roja Rani, Principal, UCW and Patron Dr. M. Kavitha, Vice- principal, UCW, inaugurated the National Webinar Series by welcoming all the participants and the eminent speakers of the Webinar. The Guest of Honour Prof Channa Basavaiah, Head, Dept of Political Science, Osmania University addressed the audience on the importance of the topic in the Pandemic era

Introduction

As the COVID-19 pandemic sweeps the world, most countries have been caught unprepared for an emergency which is of a global scale. COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the entire gamut of economic, social and political aspects of most countries. Lacking appropriate strategies and vital capacities, many countries were slow to react and thus failed to curb the virus. The ravaged the people, that spread like wild fire due to highly interconnected world and mass migration both within countries and outside the countries and regions.

This Pandemic has brought to the forefront to new debates as to whether present concepts of security are adequate for the kind of problems the world is likely to face in the 21st century. A host of issues from climate change to power shifts will continue to pose a variety of challenges in the coming years. Thus, the concept of security, which has witnessed a radical change since the end of the cold war, might require a revisit once again. Whereas during Cold War, the idea of security broadly revolved around concerns about national security either domestic instability and/or external military threats.

Post cold war, new concepts like "human security" as extolled by the 1994 United Nations Human Development Report brought the issue of human being under the spotlight as the pivotal aspect of security. Human security, which includes elements such as economic security, health security, food security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security (political freedom), need to be provided for as a foremost priority. In recent years, the discourse is

increasingly dominated by issues such as human development and sustainable development that are also focus areas of the global multilateral agencies like the UN.

Thus Keeping in view the above, the five webinars are planned to understand the changing concept of security through different perspectives. One round is dedicated to India-China relations in the context of not just due to recent events but also because they are major rising powers and the nature of their relations will have a big impact on the shape of the Indo-Pacific security architecture.

Date: 13 August 2020

Webinar – I Rethinking Paradigms of Development and Human Security in the Context of COVID-19

Speakers

1. Prof A. Srinivasulu Senior Fellow , ICSSR,& Professor , Dept of Pol Science ,Osmania University
- 2 Dr.Mohit Nayal , Research Fellow , National Maritime Foundation , New Delhi

According to the first speaker Present Pandemic has made a revisiting and re-conceptualizing of relationship between development and security imperative. In the concept of Neo-liberal Globalization development has assumed the status of "TALISMAN" in everyday life, every measure, every policy of government and private initiatives are sought to be judged and justified in the name of development. Development implies multiple images such as development for wealth, prosperity, happiness, employment etc are myriad images centered on the notion of development. In a significant sense COVID-19 crisis has shattered the dominant established worldview.

The Second Speaker has spoken on Balancing between Development and Human Security. The worlds has a history of pandemics, Ebola in 2014, Swine Flu, Hongkong and various other Asian flues and many more but what makes a difference with the current pandemic has two issues. Firstly, the level of information which rapidly went around the world was greater and secondly the pandemic although devastating has given reasonable clue to us that in years ahead we need to change. In future technology will be of huge assistance to humankind.

Date:17 August 2020

Webinar II Topic Covid 19, Media and The Global Environment

1. Prof Anantha Sudhaker Babbili, Communication & Media Texas A&M University , Corpus Christi , USA.
2. Prof. K. Purushotham Reddy, an Eminent Environmentalist

The first Speaker spoke that One of the primary impacts of COVID-19, especially related to Environment, is the complete seizure of air travel. The negative impact of COVID-19 is Migration Policy, migration of both the people and goods and services between countries and within the country. The true spirit of independent journalism

is weakening everyday and more opinionated, biased journalism has become the habit in the USA. Some of the highest paid journalists are supporting one political party or other and the policies passed by a particular party are supported by one amongst them and this is a problem in democracy. If media takes the biased perspective then they'll lose the pursuit of truth and to inform and educate the people and here lays the problem of COVID-19 and its consequences on Environment. Hence there should be Eco-literacy and the importance of ecology and ecological ethics from the young age itself

The second speaker spoke about the importance of environments , its origins of discourse , role of the UN and the role of the State . Thus when we look at sustainable development goals, goal 16 talks about peace and justice, level playing ground and rule of law, equality of law etc., for all these the political scientists should come forward and take the initiative. There was an upsurge in the concept of environment from 1972 till 1983. The second part talks about role of government in trying to understand the rising aspirations of the millions and supports sustainable development. The action plan of UN was named as Agenda 21; it was intended from June 1992 to 2000. It is enabling the nations of the world to enter 21st Century in an Eco-friendly manner. From 2000 to 2015 UN gave a more concrete action plan and is known as the MILLANUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS and this focuses on 8 major problems.

Date: 19 August 2020

Webinar III Responsive Governance and the Indian Economy During the Pandemic

Speakers

1. Prof Rajendra P. Mamgain , S.R. Sankaran Chair (Rural Labour) at National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad.
2. Prof A. Nakula Reddy, Department of Economics ,Osmania University

The first speaker spoke that like many other countries, the Indian government is trying to balance the control of COVID-19 and avoid economic disaster. Between the months of March and April, unemployment in the nation rose from 6.7% to 26%. An estimated 140 million citizens have lost their employment status during the heavy lockdown that India was . Out of the USD 2.8 trillion economy being run in the nation, less than 25% of the entire system was barely functional and registering any sort of movement in the markets. Supply chains are under distress due to the initial lack of clarity between essentials and non-essentials. The most risked group of people in the economy are informal sector and daily wage workers, and the Farmers who have been heavily investing in perishable foods India. The role of the youth and especially rural youth is alarming as many are unemployed and not studying . Hence the responsibility of the state is to identify them and encourage skill based education and employment.

The Second speaker has spoken in depth about the economic conditions of India before the pandemic and after the pandemic . the various policies initiated by the Govt for different sectors for the smooth functioning of the economy . The role and contribution of the migrant worker and the pandemic highlighting the importance of having a proper policy

to integrate the value of the migrant contribution in the Indian economy. Speakers enlightened on the phase between live or die and the way forward to secure the livelihoods.

Date: 21 August 2020

Webinar IV Topic India-China Relations: Pendulum of Conflicts and Compromises

Speakers

1. Prof P.V Rao, National Fellow ICSSR, Emeritus Professor, Dept of Pol Science
2. Prof GVC Naidu, Former Chairman, Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, Delhi

Sixty years ago, there was no such thing as a border conflict between India and China, because Tibet was a buffer zone between the two giant Asian countries. Three years after China completely occupied Tibet in 1959, the first-ever India-China war, over a border, occurred in 1962. In 1967, the second Indo-China war was over the Nathu La and Cho La border regions, then over the Sumdorong Valley in Arunachal Pradesh in 1987 and the other at Daulat Beg Oldi in the Ladakh region in 2013. In 2017, an Indo-China tussle broke over the Doklam border. The first speaker has spoken in depth about India-China relations from the beginning, the role of the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Speakers spoke in depth about the international politics shaping the India-China relation, the importance of the LAC and the sanctity of LAC in International Relations, the impact of Covid on the economic relations of both the countries. Both the speakers agreed that economic relations would not be impacted by the ongoing tussle at the border and both the countries would see that the issues do not escalate into conflict. The role of technology and military superiority of the countries has been dealt by the speakers.

Date: 24 August 2020

Webinar V: Topic Rethinking Security in the Covid Era

Speakers

1. Prof Harsh V Pant, Professor of International Relations, King's College, London, UK
2. Prof M. Channa Basavaiah, Head, Dept of Political Science, Osmania University [OU]
3. Prof G. Ram Reddy, Dept of Political Science OU & Vice President, Indian Political Science Association

For the last session the Guest of Honour was Prof R. Limbadri, Vice Chairman, Telangana State Council of Higher Education. He spoke that Covid-19 is adversely affecting the entire globe socially, economically and politically. Security mainly has two dimensions: territorial and human. The role of state and human security has become very important. It is also a constitutional responsibility and obligation of the government to protect their citizens in all the security aspects.

The first speaker spoke that there is always a longstanding debate about security as to its meaning, its dimensions, and various other aspects. Firstly, it is very important to know the

context we are talking about security. We need to look at security as a holistic concept. Covid-19 has shown us that academically security is defined easily but when in reality the consequences and the impact of the pandemic have shaped the world in multiple dimensions. For an individual, at a personal level they feel pressured thinking about a lot of issues from personal security, economic security to that of national security.

Post-Covid one of the major impacts will be that the countries will become more inward looking and develop self-reliance. As the resources get constrained there will be more challenges before countries. When a country develops a vaccine there is a debate of who gets it first. This in turn is giving rise to Nationalism. These all can be fundamental drivers of how the future of political organisations are shaped.

The second speaker focused that the State's main components are its people. When we discuss about state security it is securing the territory. Indian constitution starts with "We the people". It is necessary to discuss where this term stands in the context of Covid-19. If we look at international politics, it will remind us the saying by Stalin 'one death is a tragedy and million deaths is a strategy. Unfortunately, to some of the people statistics have become more important than policies. Hence, now it is high time for states to focus much upon Non-traditional security. Because health insecurity leads to all other insecurities as we can see that the present health crisis has led to economic crisis. Security should be taken as a composite factor at level of public policy.

The third speaker spoke that Ecological security here is broader than Human security as it not only looks at human populations at global level, but also micro and macro natural environments. The Covid-19 teaches us that the hierarchy of global security is changing rapidly, where we are dealing with radically new enemies and that calls for a fundamental change in our security priorities. Now we see clearly that many of the old instruments we inherited for ensuring Security are merely consuming resources. National security should no longer be defined by a country's military security. There is a need to emphasize on Health security.

Thus the series concludes that The global COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear that governments must rethink security calculus .