

Title of the Panel: Migration and Refugee Issues in and around Central Asia: A Socio-Cultural Perspective

Panel Note:

The region surrounding Central Asian Republics (CARs) has been witness to many internal problems (social, economic and political) and external crises (war, conflicts, non-traditional security issues since last three decades. Issues related to migration (in and out migration, labour migration, irregular migration, return migration, climate migration etc.) and refugee crises have led to endless difficulties and serious challenges affecting human rights, dignity, health and moral values of the people. In this context, it is important to highlight the main objectives of the panel titled “Migration and Refugee Issues in and around Central Asia: A Socio-Cultural Perspective,” which consists valued papers by more than half a dozen scholars and academicians. This panel dilates upon how migration along the fabled Silk Road that passes through Central Asia and adjacent regions has been a recurrent phenomenon. For example, the migration of Uyghurs from Xinjiang to Central Asia and other parts of the world and Tibetans from Tibet to India has been attributed to decade long anti-minority policy of China. Similarly, there has been regular labour migration from Central Asian Republics, especially Tajikistan, to Russia and European countries. What added to the migration woes of the region have been the climate hazards, which has jeopardised health, agricultural and food security of the region. The man-made disaster of Aral Sea crisis is a key driver of forced climate migration in Karakalpakstan and Central Asian region. The most interesting facet of the panel is the narration of a number of films through which the message about migration problem and its deleterious effects on the people of the region is conveyed. Further, the refugee problem in the war-torn Afghanistan has further aggravated the situation in and around the region, which will be discussed in detail in the panel.