

**A South Asia Conference
Justice, Security and Vulnerable
Populations of South Asia
11-12 October 2025**

Hotel Himalaya, Lalitpur



Calcutta Research Group

**Conference: Justice, Security, and Vulnerable Populations of South
Asia**

11-12 October 2025

A Report

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Acknowledgements

The Calcutta Research Group (CRG) is thankful to FGHR and the Nepal Institute of Peace (NIP), Kathmandu for the support and collaboration in organising the South Asian Conference on Justice, Security, and Vulnerable Populations of South Asia. Organising the Conference would not have been possible without the constant support of the partner institutes. Senior members and distinguished scholars of CRG have not only ceaselessly been part of framing and guiding the organisation of the Conference but have also motivated and initiated dialogues and discussions through which the Conference came to be conceptualised—CRG is grateful for their encouragement and participation. CRG expresses gratitude and is indebted to all valued resource persons and guests for their significant contributions during the deliberations and discussions in the sessions of the Conference.

Background Note

Throughout South Asia economies have been deregulated, and everywhere the middle class has been a big winner from this. On the other hand, working people, the rural poor, lower ranks of the workers making up the bulk of the unorganised informal working class, which include migrants, refugees, and irregular immigrants, have been the losers. The rise of the corporate class has as its companion a resurgent new middle class, which fuels a strident form of nationalism, religious orthodoxy, a securitized idea of the nation, an unbound spirit of get rich now or never, and an intolerant attitude towards the migrants, refugees, unorganised workers, women, and other weaker sections of populations. Consequently, there is a marked absence of policies for care and protection of the weaker population groups, and an overall securitisation of the polity, leading in turn, to the vulnerability of these groups. This situation reigns over the entire region of South and South East Asia. Law and the justice system, many a times, are found inadequate to cope with the new demands of justice. The ideology of a “new model of development” spurred by a projected rapid economic growth overwhelms the imperatives of justice. Securitisation and social justice stand opposite to one another. These developments are accompanied by a growing judicialisation of administration, which means a strong preference for governance by decree, executive fiat or by judicial decisions instead of democratic, participatory, deliberative and legislative decision-making. The state and the new middle class look up more and more to the judiciary for remedy of any “aberration” in the administration, while access to judiciary for the urban and rural poor remains extremely expensive, and, thus, only nominally egalitarian.

As the farmers’ movement in 2020-21 showed, businesses have acquired a strong role in formulating legislation and all these while new forms of digital surveillance and policing of citizens multiply. The cost is in terms of an erosion of basic rights for minorities, country’s multiple histories and multiple geographies, and basic security of the lives of the lower classes, which become even more vulnerable. In the context of inter-Asian population, commodity, and knowledge flows, there is an ever greater need to emphasise the connections and flows that contribute to our experiences of governance and justice. Making overall security of life of the vulnerable sections of society caught in the vortex of insecurity, precarious living, and conflict-torn condition is the central question in the entire programme of adopting peace and justice as the fulcrum of a new approach to the security conundrum.

CRG's research programme on "Justice, Security and Vulnerable Populations of South Asia" has been exploring for more than a year now, the conundrum of security and justice by way of addressing a few of the question given below:

(i) The paradox of macro-security of the country and micro-insecurities of vulnerable population groups: how can we understand the intersections between civilian and military spheres, and in what ways does it produce inequalities and impact rights, entitlements, welfare benefits, and citizenship pathways?

(ii) The promise of the Global Compacts for "protection of refugees" and "safe, orderly, and secure migration" and the reality of the criminalisation of migration including trafficking in sex and labour; insecurity of migrant labour in South and South East Asia, and the near ineffectiveness of multilateral institutions like the ILO in providing social security of migrant labour; South Asian neighbours, foreign policy concerns, international gaze and issues of security.

(iii) Non-traditional forms of security in South Asia, such as food security, climate security, energy security, gender security, social security, and work security;

(iv) The need to focus on the biopolitical practices from below, such as practices of care and protection;

(v) How do ethnicity, race, class, caste, and gender shape roles, trajectories, and experiences of and within

the legal architecture of people's security? In what ways does popular sense or common sense relate to legal sensibilities? How are the lives in spaces of exceptional dwelling such as camps, borderlands, constitutive

of our understanding of security institutions?

(vi) In the context of ethnic conflicts, resource conflicts, how do we amplify and popularise the principles and practices of dialogic justice;

(viii) Digital security and centralisation of information; social security and digital democracy. This South Asian Conference to be held in Kathmandu, Nepal aims at exploring how interlinked issues of land, housing, water, food and other resources shape vulnerability, identity, and resistance in the South Asian countries of India, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The conference has been designed with the aim of engaging in discourse on people's struggles to claim their rights to land, shelter, water, food; encounters of caste, gender, urban refugees and vulnerable communities with violence, peace, ownership, and rehabilitation through policy advocacy, functions of grassroots organisations, and local governance. This South Asian conference organised by Calcutta Research Group (CRG) in collaboration with the Fund for Global Human

Rights (FGHR) as part of the research programme “Justice, Security and Vulnerable Populations of South Asia,” brings together experts who have been working in areas affected by developmental initiatives, policy gaps, humanitarian crises, and the multifaceted offshoots of hazard mitigation. Role of the state and civil society in addressing justice and security challenges, holds a significant position in understanding the notions of security and insecurity, and thus, emerge as an important theme of discussion. Given the history of armed conflict, internal displacement, and uneven development in various parts of India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, addressing these questions become urgent. By linking everyday needs with structural inequalities, to the broader regional conversations on how social and economic justice can be grounded in the lived experiences of vulnerable populations, this South Asian Conference attempts to bring into focus the purposes, objectives and success and limitations, of humanitarian agencies, legal framework and civil organisations, working at grassroots level, in tailoring seamless threads of security, peace and justice for vulnerable communities and society at large. Drawing from the intersecting dynamics of climate change, disaster, and structural inequality in South Asia, the conference will draw on both rapid-onset disasters and slow-onset climate changes, to explore how justice frameworks can be integrated into climate and disaster responses. The conference attempts to underscore social justice and the need for enhanced human security, through prioritisation of protection of the rights of nation’s vulnerable populations, in the wake of an evolving climate crisis.

RESOURCES, RIGHTS, CLIMATE DISASTERS AND VULNERABLE POPULATION IN NEPAL

Land, Housing, Water, and Food

The issue of housing rights for people living in informal settlements in Kathmandu, Nepal, and other areas is a clear example of widespread injustice and insecurity for vulnerable communities. Rapid urbanisation and rural-urban migration have fuelled the growth of informal settlements, where low-income groups struggle to afford adequate housing, leading to precarious living conditions (Day and Dangol, 2018). These settlements, often located on public lands or in hazardous floodplains, render their inhabitants highly vulnerable to natural disasters, with the constant fear of forced eviction (Day and Dangol, 2018). Amnesty International highlights that the Nepali government's failure to establish a robust regulatory framework for the Right to Housing Act, coupled with local authorities' disregard for due processes, has resulted in forced evictions that disproportionately impact marginalized communities, including Dalits and Indigenous Peoples (Amnesty International, 2025). Such evictions not only strip people of their homes, but also deny them access to food, water, and livelihoods, creating profound human insecurity and a clear violation of their right to live with dignity (Amnesty International, 2025). Achieving justice in this context requires secure tenure, inclusive urban planning that recognizes the rights of informal settlers, and policies that prevent arbitrary evictions while ensuring adequate alternative housing and compensation.

The recent water crisis in Madhesh further underscores the fragility of security for vulnerable populations in Nepal, particularly in the face of environmental degradation and climate change. Madhesh Province, often considered Nepal's breadbasket, has been experiencing prolonged, severe drought, leading to acute shortage of drinking water, significantly disrupting agricultural productivity, especially paddy cultivation (Kathmandu Post, 2025). This crisis is a direct consequence of both erratic rainfall patterns linked to climate change and widespread environmental destruction, particularly the overexploitation of the Chure hills which are vital for groundwater recharge (Kathmandu Post, 2025). The most vulnerable, including children and girls from Dalit and marginalised communities, bear the heaviest burden, often walking long distances to fetch water, which impacts their health, education, and dignity, thereby, eroding their personal and community security (Plan International Nepal, 2025). The lack of coordinated policy and expert opinion in addressing this crisis exposes a significant governance

gap, perpetuating injustice and insecurity for those dependent on these vital resources. Ensuring water security for these populations is a matter of environmental justice and a critical component of human security.

The right to food in Nepal, though guaranteed by the Constitution, and backed by the “Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act of 2018”, are still out of reach for many—especially, the vulnerable ones. Widespread food insecurity, high rates of malnutrition among children and pregnant women, and persistent poverty, disproportionately affect marginalised groups like the Dalit community (Welthungerhilfe, 2023; Rijal and Sharma, 2025). The agri-food sector’s vulnerability to climate change, soil degradation, and poor infrastructure, compounded by labour shortages due to emigration, further worsens food insecurity and reduces food sovereignty for these populations (Rijal and Sharma, 2025). The repeated cases of forced evictions of landless settlers and street vendors, without offering appropriate alternatives, directly undermine the right to food and create livelihood crises for thousands of low-income families, highlighting a systemic failure of justice (Welthungerhilfe, 2023). Ensuring the right to food means more than just passing laws and policies. It also needs fair sharing of resources, farming methods that can handle climate change, and serious efforts to protect vulnerable people from losing access to basic needs. This helps improve their overall safety and well-being, ensuring the right to food means more than just passing laws and policies. It also needs fair sharing of resources, farming methods that can handle climate change, and serious efforts to protect vulnerable people from losing access to basic needs, thus, helping improve overall safety and well-being.

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Climate Change and Disasters

Climate change and disaster in Nepal is fundamentally intertwined with the broader theme of justice and security for vulnerable population groups. Nepal often faces natural threats like floods, landslides, and earthquakes. These events don't just slow down progress, they also make existing problems worse and put people's safety at risk, especially for those already struggling the most. The recent flood in Rasuwa (July 2025) and its linkages with climate change serves as a stark and tragic example of how climate change directly impacts the security of vulnerable populations and highlights issues of global climate justice. On July 8, 2025, a destructive glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) originating from the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China caused fatalities, swept away critical infrastructure like the Nepal-China Miteri Bridge, and severely damaged hydropower projects and a dry port in northern Rasuwa (BorderLens, 2025; AP News, 2025). This GLOF was directly linked to the rapid melting of Himalayan glaciers due to rising global temperatures, a phenomenon to which Nepal contributes minimally in terms of emissions, but disproportionately suffers the consequences (BorderLens, 2025). This situation underscores a profound injustice: vulnerable nations like Nepal bear the brunt of a crisis largely caused by industrialised countries, leading to immense human and economic insecurities (Rising Nepal, 2025). The trans-boundary nature of such disasters further complicates the security landscape, demanding regional cooperation and equitable burden-sharing in monitoring and early warning systems to protect downstream populations. Nepal's disaster and response mechanisms are crucial for safeguarding the security of its citizens, especially the vulnerable, but face significant challenges. While legal frameworks like the Natural Calamity (Relief) Act 1982 and the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2017 provide a foundation, their effective implementation is critical for ensuring justice and security post-disaster (IFRC, 2013; UN Nepal, 2013).

The Ministry of Home Affairs coordinates rescue and relief efforts, and national strategies aim to build resilience (DPNet, 2018). However, the vulnerability of human settlements, often due to poor urban planning and encroachment on floodplains, means that disasters disproportionately affect the poor and marginalised, who possess limited capacity to cope or recover (DPNet, 2018). The immediate humanitarian response must prioritise the protection of vulnerable groups, including children under five, pregnant and lactating women, and ensure their security through provisions for nutrition, shelter, and medical aid (UN Nepal, 2013). The ongoing need for more robust, climate-resilient infrastructure and effective early warning

systems, particularly in remote areas, is not just a technical requirement but a matter of ensuring basic human security and justice for all citizens, preventing further loss of life and livelihoods.

For Dalit communities in Nepal, climate change doesn't just bring weather problems, it makes social injustice worse and increases the risks they face every day. Dalits, a historically marginalised group facing caste-based socio-economic disparities, are disproportionately affected by climate change due to their precarious living conditions, reliance on natural resources, and limited adaptive capacity (World Bank, 2023; GSDRC, 2011). Climate-induced events like droughts, floods, and erratic weather patterns directly threaten their land rights, water access, food security, and occupational safety (Bishwakarma and Roongtawanreongsri, 2025). A critical analysis of Nepal's climate change adaptation policies reveals a significant policy exclusion: Dalits often remain largely invisible in policy framing and implementation, with their unique needs overlooked (Bishwakarma and Roongtawanreongsri, 2025). This continues a cycle of injustice, as policies fail to address the root causes of their vulnerability. Achieving climate justice for Dalits requires explicit recognition of their disproportionate vulnerability, mandatory consultation in policy formulation, and targeted funding and representation in decision-making bodies to ensure that adaptation efforts genuinely enhance their security and resilience.

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Programme Schedule

**Justice, Security and Vulnerable Populations of South Asia: A Conference
11-12 October 2025**

**Organised by Calcutta Research Group (CRG)
In Collaboration with Fund for Global Human Rights (FGHR)
And Nepal Institute of Peace (NIP)**

Venue: Hotel Himalaya, Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Nepal

Day 1: 11 October 2025

10 AM-10:30 AM: Registration

10:30 AM-11:00 AM: Session 1: Introductory Session

Chair: Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury (Professor, Rabindra Bharati University, & CRG, India)

10:30 AM-10:45 AM: Welcome Address: Ajit Acharya (Secretary, Nepal Institute of Peace, Nepal)

10:45 AM-11:00 AM: Introductory Comments: *Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury*

11:00 AM-11:30 AM: Tea Break

11:30 AM-12:30 PM: Session 2: Refugees, Camps and Neighbourhood Policies

Chair: Jeevan Thiagarajah (Chairman, Centre for Humanitarian Affairs, Sri Lanka)

Speakers: i) Niloy Ranjan Biswas (Professor, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh)

‘Agency’ of Stateless Persons in the South Asian Protection Mechanism

ii) Sucharita Sengupta (Postdoc Research Fellow, O. P. Jindal Global University, & CRG, India)

Rethinking the Notion of Security in “Refugee Camps”

12:30 PM-1:30 PM: Lunch Break

1:30 PM-3:30 PM: Session 3: Climate Disasters and Vulnerable Communities

Chair: Hari Sharma (Political Analyst, Nepal)

Speakers: i) Arjun Dhakal (Consultant, Green Growth and Sustainable Development, Nepal)

Transboundary Floods of Tibet’s Lhende River flood— Climate Change Linkages and Impacts on Vulnerable Communities and Economy of Nepal

ii) Ajit Acharya (Researcher, Nepal Institute of Peace, Nepal)

Climate Disasters and Vulnerable Communities

iii) Renu Sijapati (General Secretary, FEDO Nepal)

Climate Change and its Impact on Dalits Communities

iv) Shatabdi Das (Assistant Director, CRG, India)

Climate Disasters, Displacement and Vulnerability in India

3:30 PM-4:00 PM: Tea Break

4:00 PM-5:30 PM: Session 4: Discussion on “Security, Peace and Human Rights”

Moderator: Niloy Ranjan Biswas In Conversation Jeevan Thiagarajah and Bharat Bhushan (Eminent Journalist, & CRG, India)

Day 2: 12 October 2025

9:00 AM-9:30 AM: Registration

9:30 AM-11:00 AM: Session 5: Session Digital Security, Protection and Legal Framework

Chair: Ajit Acharya

Speakers: i) Ritam Sengupta (Assistant Professor, O. P. Jindal Global University, India)

Digital Insecurity

ii) Sahana Basavapatna (Lawyer, High Court, Bangalore, & CRG, India)

The Devadasis of Karnataka: Examining their Access to Rights, Digital Technology and Justice

iii) Ishita Dey (Assistant Professor, South Asian University, & CRG, India)

Gender and Security: Female Participation in Labour Force and Debates on “Night Shift”

11:00 AM–11:30 AM: Tea Break

11:30 AM-1:30 PM: Session 6: Land, Water, Climate Risks and Food Security

Chair: Pitambar Bhandari (Department Head and Faculty, Central Department of Conflict, Peace & Development, Tribhuvan University, Nepal)

Speakers: i) Bhagavati Adhikari (Executive Director, Nepal Mahila Ekta Samaj, Nepal)

Informal Settlements and Housing Rights in Nepal

ii) Sujit Kumar Saksena (Researcher, Nepal Institute of Peace, Nepal)

Water Crisis in Madhesh

iii) Purushotam Aryal (MPhil/PhD Candidate, Tribhuvan University, Nepal)

Ensuring the Right to Food in Nepal: Challenges and Pathways to Equity

iv) Devi Datta Acharya (President, National Federation of the Disabled -Nepal)

Disability and Right to Food

v) Debashree Chakraborty (Researcher, CRG, India)

Environmental Concerns and Security Challenges

1:30 PM–2:30 PM: Lunch Break

2:30 PM-4:00 PM: Session 7: Concluding Session

Chair: Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury

2:30 PM-3:40 PM: *Valedictory Lecture: Non-Traditional Security in South Asia*

Speaker: Lok Raj Baral (Professor of Political Science and Former Ambassador of Nepal to India)

3:40 PM-3:50 PM: Concluding Remarks: Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury

3:50 PM-4:00 PM: Vote of Thanks: Debashree Chakraborty, and

Som Niroula (Researcher, Nepal Institute of Peace, Nepal)

Rapporteurs

Sucharita Sengupta [Sessions 1 & 2]

Ishita Dey [Session 4]

Debashree Chakraborty [Sessions 5 & 7]

Shatabdi Das [Sessions 3 & 6]

*****This schedule is tentative and subject to last minute changes.***

Conference Sessions

Session 1: Introductory Session

The two-day conference began on 11 October 2025, with **Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury** chairing the introductory session and offering a few introductory comments. **Ajit Acharya** gave the welcome address of the conference. Acharya gave an overview of the key nodes of the discussion in the two-day conference and the issues that are currently plaguing South Asia as a whole. Acharya began his address by highlighting Nepal's current situation following the Gen Z protests in September. The works of CRG and NIP bring forth experiences of areas affected by the militarian crisis, development initiatives, and policy gaps. The role of civil society, justice, and security challenges were to be the important themes of discussion in this conference along side humanitarian challenges faced by grassroots organisations in South Asia. Climate change and inequality are core themes of the conference for discussion in South Asia. A key question on climate change for reflection was how a justice framework can be integrated into climate and disaster responses. The conference attempted to understand, as Acharya continued, the aspects of protection necessitated by vulnerable communities facing inequality and injustice on multifarious levels in governance and areas like climate insecurity, refugeehood, and so on and so forth. South Asia is a region that houses a sizable marginalised population. It is also a region most susceptible to climatic hazards, floods, and landslides. He gave instances from Nepal's annual disaster cycle. Acharya also spoke of South Asia as one of the most populous regions of the World with diversity in caste, class, gender, and religion among the population. There is thus a lot of socio-economic disparities, hierarchy, and injustices within communities. Resource and land conflict also become inevitable in the process. These produce structural inequity. That apart, Achary also remarked upon the boons of living in a digital era. Disinformation further leads to insecurity. Therefore, discussion on digital security was also a part of the conference. Marginalised people without access are at the receiving end of digital insecurity. With these introductory comments, Acharya also highlighted NIP's goals in addressing the issues mentioned above in Nepal and their commitment towards vulnerable populations in not only Nepal but also overall South Asia. Towards this objective, NIP has partnered with several important organisations in South Asia, including the CRG, with whom they have had many successful collaborative events like workshops, dialogues, and conferences. The current exercise is an extension of that collaboration.

Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury spoke about CRG’s commitment to working on areas of forced displacement, autonomy, democracy, justice. He also gave the context of the said research programme, “*Justice, Security, and Vulnerable Populations in South Asia*” as part of which this particular conference has also been arranged. Basu Ray Chaudhury underscored the importance of the question of security—be it national, human or traditional security, etc. Security can barely be understood without understanding the concept of insecurity. There are different kinds of insecurities existing in a society, and South Asia, having a difficult geography, has produced multiple levels of insecurities. He argued that history has been producing geography and contemporary South Asia is marked by several paradoxes, which reflect the growing securitisation of states, while the security of marginalised groups is largely ignored. The politics of the entire region is also governed by “insiders-outsiders” or “citizens-alien”. The history is important simply because in this region decolonisation happened due to the demarcation or redrawing of borders, and that became instrumental in shaping the current discourses around citizenship and so on. As a consequence, the politics and geography of the region have been permanently fractured. Migration got criminalised as a result, exacerbating racial, ethnic, and caste divides, leading to growing micro-insecurities in South Asia. New liberal economies in contemporary South Asia have further propelled and resulted in producing everyday insecurities. These insecurities call for recognising the paramount need for justice. The aim of the conference has been precisely this—to not only discuss all these facets but also to ponder upon the role of states in mitigating insecurities and protecting marginalised communities in South Asia. The principle of care and protection towards providing security to vulnerable populations was an important node of discussion at the conference.



Session II: Refugees, Camps and Neighbourhood Policies

Niloy Ranjan Biswas spoke about the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh in the light of the resilience of Rohingya refugees. He highlighted how the Rohingya refugees pose critical challenges to both host states and the global refugee protection regime in Bangladesh, and in this connection, he spoke about the statelessness of the Rohingya refugees and how fragmented the regional response is. He also spoke about the precarity of statelessness in South Asia in this respect and of protection deficiency. Agency empowers resilience and vice versa. He also referred to a few international policy frameworks in this regard, like the Global Compacts, but even then, structural injustice remains for the Rohingya, and they continue to live as stateless people. Drawing from empirical instances mostly from Bangladesh, he spoke about how Rohingya refugees negotiate livelihood opportunities, survive in camps, and how they mobilise transnational advocacy networks despite many lacks, like lack of education, in demonstrating agency. By this, he also questioned the whole resiliency–agency branding of Western humanitarian organisations in talking about agency of stateless persons like the Rohingyas. He reasoned, while resilience programs often aim to strengthen agency through skills training, they often result in instrumentalising the Rohingyas as “resilient subjects”, sidelining important issues like structural injustices and statelessness as unaddressed. Thus, he argued, state-centric humanitarian discourse may obscure demands for legal recognition and political rights. By framing resilience not as a substitute for rights but as a product of agency, he called for a reimagining of protection strategies- anchored in justice, informed by local agency, and accountable to the long-term security of vulnerable populations. Finally, his talk challenged security frameworks that reduce the Rohingyas to risks or burdens instead advocating for their recognition as political subjects with rights and agency.

Sucharita Sengupta also presented on the Rohingya refugees based on her empirical instances from the Rohingya camps of Bangladesh. Her talk was on “Camp Security”. She began by saying Camp security almost sounds like an oxymoron, as what kind of security is being talked about, or to reframe the question slightly, whose security is prioritised in a camp set up? The dominant perspective frames refugee camps as spaces of threat, criminalisation, confrontation, and violence—rarely shifting the perspective from “Refugees as threat or risk” to “Refugees as victims of violence, threat, or risk.” She argued, within this statist paradigm, refugee camps have traditionally been viewed as sites requiring containment, surveillance, and control—spaces that exist outside the normative architecture of citizenship and legal protection. However, in the context of rising protracted displacements, especially exemplified by the

Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh, such a framing proves not only inadequate but ethically and analytically insufficient. Instead, she proposed, drawing on non-traditional security studies, which foreground threats to individuals and communities rather than states, that security in camps must be understood in relational, lived, and multi-scalar terms. However, these forms of insecurity are rarely addressed within dominant policy frameworks. While justified by the host government on the grounds of national security and social cohesion, these practices have denied Rohingyas access to legal protections, sustainable livelihoods, and long-term education, particularly for children and youth who now constitute the majority of the camp population. Ultimately, she argued, the case of Rohingya camps in Bangladesh reveals the double-bind of refugee security: while their physical safety is safeguarded from persecution, their existential, legal, and socio-political security remains suspended. At the same time, this paper resists the temptation to frame Rohingyas purely as passive victims of securitisation. From youth-led learning centres to underground economies and transnational digital activism, Rohingyas actively contest the imposed hierarchies and surveillance that define camp life. These acts of resistance are often subtle and every day, but they reflect an emancipatory politics of presence that non-traditional security studies must account for.

The session concluded with important reflections from the chair of the panel, **Jeevan Thiagarajah**. He spoke about some of his lifelong experiences of working on issues of security and justice in Sri Lanka and generally South Asia. He also called for the need for a South Asia-specific regional polica framework and highlighted the importance of a Regional Compact in the style of the Global Compacts.



Session 3: Climate Disasters and Vulnerable Communities

Arjun Dhakal in his presentation on ‘Transboundary Floods of Tibet’s Lhende River flood—Climate Change Linkages and Impacts on Vulnerable Communities and Economy of Nepal’, discussed about the sudden flood that swept Timure Bazaar and Rasuwagadhi on July 8, 2025. This event, triggered by a supraglacial lake outburst upstream in the Tibet Autonomous Region exposed Nepal’s deep vulnerabilities as a downstream country in the Himalayan system. Dhakal emphasised on assessments that linked the disaster to a glacial lake breach that released a torrent of water and debris, inundating the Lhende and Bhotekoshi river corridors, destroying the Rasuwagadhi trade bridge, and damaging Trishuli River hydropower plants. Search-and-rescue and evacuations saved many lives, yet fatalities, missing persons, and severe infrastructure losses—especially among transport workers, construction labourers, and security staff—were recorded. His analysis looked into lives and assets, that the flood crippled including a key trade artery and reduced electricity generation, disrupting four major hydropower plants. Border trade and logistics collapsed as roads, bridges, and depots were destroyed, and as a result of the disaster massive reconstruction costs, and risks were encountered diverting scarce funds from development and social services. Arjun Dhakal brought to light how this disaster is a stark warning in terms of glacier retreat and warming-driven hydrological instability that are intensifying the risk of GLOFs and sudden high-magnitude floods in the Greater Himalaya. Numerous glacial lakes in Nepal and Tibet remain high-risk, threatening hydropower plants, settlements, and major public and private investments downstream, making advancements essential for community early-warning systems, and mobilising climate finance for relocation and adaptive infrastructure. Equally vital are cross- border scientific cooperation and joint contingency plans with upstream neighbours.

Ajit Acharya spoke about ‘Climate Disasters and Vulnerable Communities’, and threw light on the topography and weather cycle of the Monsoon rainfall in Nepal, that triggers multiple disasters every year throughout the country. Acharya’s presentation was based on a retrospective study of the impacts of flood in October 2024, especially on informal settlers on the banks of riverside in Kathmandu. This study, he elaborated, conducted by Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj, Kathmandu, revealed the heightened vulnerability of informal settlements that caused significant financial and social devastation for thousands of families. The research identified widespread damage to homes and essential belongings, extensive loss of

employment opportunities, and severe health and mental issues among the affected population. During field survey, respondents pointed out the local government entities was largely inconsistent, slow and perceived as insufficient. A majority of residents received no prior warning about the impending flood, and formal alert systems were largely absent or ineffective. Rescue efforts were predominantly undertaken by the communities themselves, with official assistance often arriving several hours after the flooding had already occurred. The government and administrative authorities need to look into patterns of discrimination, including caste discrimination, and inequity in aid distribution that dwellers in these informal settlements along river bank face. The reliance on property ownership or tax payment for relief further marginalise the already vulnerable groups, further compounded by long-standing systemic issues related to policy implementation and broader structural barriers. Informal settlers frequently lack official recognition and secure land tenure, which systematically excludes them from formal urban planning processes, access to essential services like reliable drainage and sanitation and comprehensive disaster preparedness frameworks. The absence of legal standing also inherently discourages critical long-term investments in resilient housing and vital infrastructure. What stood out as remarkable in the presentation was that, despite pervasive systemic obstacles, informal settlement communities demonstrate remarkable self-organisation and resilience during disaster management, and this should help strengthen community capacity and cohesive disaster response strategy in the city.

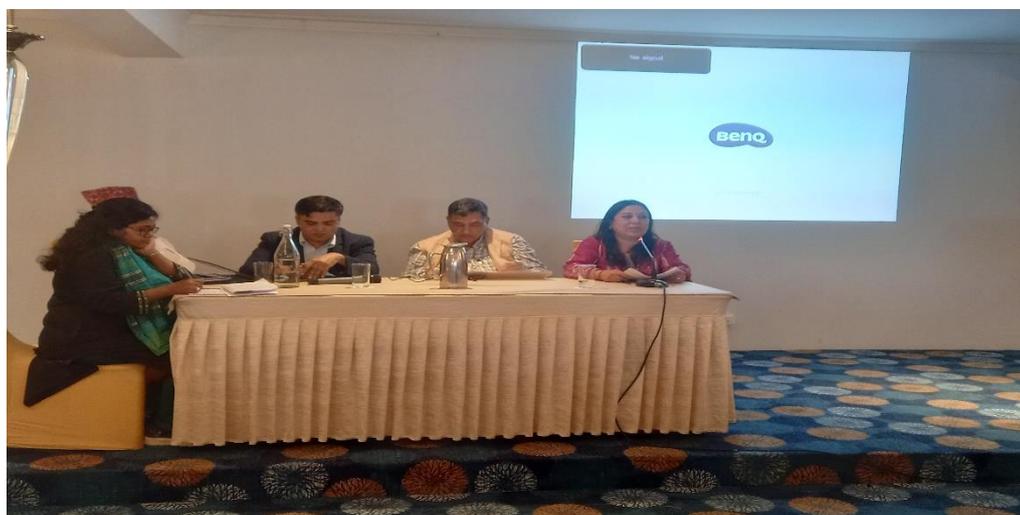
Renu Sijapati while discussing ‘Climate Change and its Impact on Dalits Communities’, foregrounded the ways in which Nepal’s Dalit communities face compounded vulnerabilities due to caste-based discrimination and social exclusion. Rising temperatures, floods, droughts, and extreme weather conditions further aggravate and disproportionately affect Dalits, particularly Dalit women, who are among the most marginalised. Sijapati also underscored that Dalit families often reside in climate-vulnerable areas like floodplains, drought-prone regions, or urban slums and depend on agriculture and manual labour for survival which pushes them towards even more precarious conditions. Prolonged droughts, crop failures, and floods lead to livelihood losses, forced migration, and deepen poverty. Water scarcity further exacerbates inequality, as caste-based restrictions limit Dalits’ access to safe water, increasing the burden on women and children. In phases of disasters, Dalit households are often the last to receive warnings or relief, with reports of segregation and denial in relief camps. Caste and gender-based discriminations are also conspicuous as Dalit women face shoulder disproportionate care burdens, and are exposed to numerous forms of violence during chores, collection of livelihood

resources or migration, and are excluded from decision-making on climate adaptation and disaster response. Sijapati presented a few recommendations that could be considered in disaster management and policy planning for vulnerable groups: a) ensuring representation by including Dalits explicitly in disaster risk reduction policies and planning; b) ensuring accessible early warning systems and disaster information in local languages; c) relocating Dalit houses built in the high-risk areas without charges; d) institutionalising the participation of Dalit representatives in disaster management and decision-making bodies, by building their capacity through targeted training and resources; e) providing equitable relief, climate-resilient livelihood support, and collection of caste-disaggregated data for facilitating planning; f) caste must be integrated into vulnerability assessments, and Dalit-led grassroots initiatives must be supported with funding, training, and technology for sustainable livelihoods. She concluded by stressing on the fact that climate justice must also mean caste justice, essential for protection of vulnerable lives and for securing an equitable future; and to this end Dalit voices must be centred in global, national, and local climate actions.

Shatabdi Das analysed ‘Climate Disasters, Displacement and Vulnerability in India’ and focused on spiraling environmental degradation that have not only raised the number of displacements but have also placed India among the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world (with nine of its states among the top 50 most vulnerable regions globally). Shatabdi went on to explain how the geographical expanse of India stretches across multiple climatic zones, particularly making its population vulnerable to the worst impacts of climate disasters; India, due to its geographical expanse is vulnerable to differential impacts induced due to climate change ranging from land degradation, coastal floods, to desertification. Drawing from reports of Climate Action Network South Asia (2021), Water Research Institute (2024) and The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW, 2021), the speaker highlighted how 67% of India’s 1.4 billion population living in rural areas are dependent on climate sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry for their livelihoods, whereas Indian cities too are struggling at the forefront of the climate crisis with more than 80% of urban population living in hazard-prone districts. Drawing attention to the country's cities the discussion elaborated about recurrent droughts, extreme weather events including heat-waves, floods, cyclones, and rising sea-levels, coupled with increased incidences of landslides, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF), dam reservoir breaches due to excessive, prolonged hours of rain and ecological damages triggered by uncontrolled construction and infrastructural projects, that have destroyed land and led to a surge in migration from climate-impacted hinterlands to urban

centers of India, over the last two decades. This can include temporary and permanent, seasonal and singular as well as voluntary and forced movement. Further, countries like India, Bangladesh, along with other countries of South Asia will also be impacted by the rising sea levels; while 17% of Bangladesh is predicted to be threatened by submergence due to the rising sea levels which will potentially displace a vast population by 2050, in India, up to 45 million people will be forced to migrate due to the consequences of climate change by 2050 as projected by the Indian Council of World Affairs in 2024. The presentation looked into major incidences of climate disasters and their impacts, and the approaches aimed at addressing climate vulnerability in India.

The chairperson for the panel **Hari Sharma** asserted that climate data monitoring has been changing over the years, and uncertainty and predictability outside the normal trends have become critical. Sharma reflected on the constraints that voiceless Dalits face while responding or speaking out at times of sudden uncertainties, and what would be the ways or responses when not in a person's control or not of their making? He talked about the stubble burning season and its impacts on Nepal and also emphasised on the coordination between India and China in terms of trans-river basin management. Climate impacts are transboundary-intra-state and inter-state as well as across international boundaries, whereby migrants and refugee communities in Nepal are the worst affected. It is important to learn from the local population's adaptation mechanisms and approaches in an in-situ environment, at times when extreme climate events like flood, storms, or geomorphic processes like landslides and earthquakes strike. This gives rise to case-specific considerations when studying disasters.



Session 4: Discussion on “Security, Peace and Human Rights”

The session was a discussion between Jeevan Thiagarajah and Bharat Bhushan. The session was moderated by Niloy Biswas.

Bharat Bhushan set out an agenda of defining security threats by noting that it is almost always the palpable threats to security like terrorism and violence that inform the definitions of security rather than the more impalpable and latent threats like climate related events, food scarcity, etc. Bhushan spoke of the relationship between security and peace. Human insecurity gives rise to structural violence. Poverty, hunger and displacement are forms of violence. People lacking basic human rights gives rise to resentment and unrest. Human security issues like land dispute, caste prejudices, etc., lead to conflicts and resulting insecurity in society. Peace is not the absence of war. Rather, peace is attained through establishment of social justice. Without securing human security measures like right to life and livelihood, education, etc., peace will remain elusive. Human security is linked to human rights and these are mostly results of lacks in policy framing. Securing the rights of people results in restorative justice and establishes peace in the society. Bhushan spoke of the farmer suicide belts in India and noted how climate resilient policy interventions like community-based insurance for farmers, climate resilient agriculture practices could have helped India’s farmers avoid high losses they often incur in the face of climate induced failed crop cycles. Framing climate change as a human security threat could be another way of securing farmers’ rights in the country. Speaking of the policy lapses during the Covid-19 pandemic, Bhushan further noted how human security measures could be embedded in the peace and security frameworks to set out a new dimension of security regime in South Asia. Cultural security, protection of language, culture and livelihood can go miles in securing internal peace and security.

Building on the arguments of Bharat Bhushan, **Niloy Biswas**, the moderator, focused on the need of putting forth a new language of peace and security by considering internal threats that plague the South Asian region. Biswas spoke of caste and class-based insecurities that are still prevalent in the region and how ideological thought processes have largely been incapable of taking care of such insecurities over centuries. He noted that these lacunae should be enough to rethink the existing paradigms of security. Further, the surge of populist politics in the west, governments becoming more controlling about the private space of citizens, the rise pro-surveillance states are issues that inform conversations around South Asia.

Jeevan Thiagarajah spoke on the need to build trust amongst communities. Surge of populist politics in the west, are governments becoming more controlling about the private space of citizens, pro-surveillance states. The development agenda of countries and governments across the region must come together. Thiagarajah spoke of thinking about a South Asian Compact, in the vein of the Global Compact for ensuring the rights of migrants and refugees. Thiagarajah opined that South Asian states must work in tandem to ensure that a common agenda for peace and security is met throughout without the need to compromise on the internal security and integrity. Building trust among communities in South Asia is going to be the base of ensuring peace and security in South Asia. This should be prioritized particularly because the postcolonial history of South Asia is also a history of breach of trust between and among communities. Thiagarajah stressed on the importance of South Asian Constitutions and the safeguards all these documents promote. He noted that the gap in theory of the Constitutions and the praxis of these create much of the indifferences that exists today. Thiagarajah further noted that the rise of Gen Zs across the world is a byproduct of the intolerance towards policies of governments and their authoritarian regimes. This indicates a positive participation of youth in democracy.

Biswas asked both the speakers about the global decline of liberal ideas and the western double standards on liberalism by taking as an example the discussions that happened at the Munich Security Conference in 2025. To this, Thiagarajah responded that multilateralism is the most viable alternative to ensuring peace and security across the South Asian states. Bhushan noted how technology could become an actor in exacerbating the decline of liberal of ideas and proliferation of both authoritarian regimes and the dissent around such regimes. The session ended with a few questions from the audience.



Session 5: Session Digital Security, Protection and Legal Framework

Ritam Sengupta spoke about the insecurity that digital frameworks push people into. Zeroing in on the techno-feudalistic and patriarchal aspects of digital governance, Sengupta noted how women and people of gendered minorities often lag behind or are deprived of government benefits. In understanding this problem of digital insecurity, Sengupta spoke beyond the various safety nets given by governments through digital channels and highlighted the drawbacks of such digitised practices thereby highlighting the compounding insecurities that loom large at the background. Sengupta also spoke of the ever-expanding terrain of digital capitalism in India and the subsequent insecurities that follow. Sengupta noted that the warning calls about digital scams made by banks serve their purpose only within a certain section of the society as a huge section of the population who avail the facilities are unable to understand the nuances of digital space. Data is another crucial aspect of digital security. Personal data is hardly safe in this digital world and data breaches, particularly about the ones that people could not even be aware of. Sengupta noted that with the proliferation of digital capitalism, the boundaries between the private, personal and the public are getting increasingly blurry and it remains to be seen how digital regimes change common perceptions of security and insecurity. Sengupta's presentation highlighted all these crucial aspects of security.

Sahana Basavapatna spoke about the Devadasis of Karnataka. Devadasis are women dedicated to deities to serve in temples through music and dance. But, over time, this evolved into a system where these women are often pushed into sex work. Basavapatna spoke of the position of the Devadasis in the digital world by accessing how their historical past often becomes a barrier to their accessing of digital resources through which they can avail the benefits provided by government. The Devadasi community in Karnataka has lived in the literal and metaphorical margins of a relatively democratic and rich state. Although Karnataka is known worldwide for technological innovation and the software services industry, this community has historically found it impossible to access social, economic and political rights. The Karnataka Devadasi (Prevention, Prohibition, Relief and Rehabilitation) Act, 2025 passed by the Karnataka Legislative Assembly in September, 2025 aims to change this status quo. Basavapatna analysed this Act and explored possibilities of whether this Act could accord necessary protection to Devadasis. The 2025 Act aims to abolish the Devdasi system and ensure right to dignified living of the women. Another important aspect that Basavapatna discussed

was the right to live. Livelihood and dignity of the children of Devadasis who are most often not even recognised by their biological fathers and as such it becomes difficult for these children to enter into organised professional sectors.

Ishita Dey spoke on the feminisation of workspaces across South Asia. The increase in female participation in the labor force across South Asian states is tied to how neoliberalism, globalisation and a search for a disciplined workforce translated into women's increasing role in garment sector, and feminisation of care economy (domestic and transnational). Dey noted that gender security begins with politics of recognition of difference and she proposed that there should be meaningful conversations around gendered participation of labour in night shifts across South Asia. Toilets and washrooms become entry points of this conversation. Lack of access to public transportation. Liberalisation enabled middle classes to withdraw from public sphere but at the same time, it has made it increasingly difficult for the urban poor to mark their foot print in the urban public spheres. This postulate becomes narrower when gendered minorities are weighed in to the scenario. As care work becomes racially and ethnically profiled, the question of security becomes even more crucial. The increasing presence of women has led to a gendering of security discourses specially as an outcome of mobilisation of women's groups on safe work places, gender safety audits in urban neighborhoods. Dey highlighted how neoliberalisation of economy paved the path of women's participation in workforce but did not really create safe spaces for their participation. This lack of safety becomes more pronounced when the labour of women working at the grassroots is taken into consideration and this aspect more or less remains unchanged across South Asia.



Session 6: Land, Water, Climate Risks and Food Security

Bhagavati Adhikari discussed about ‘Informal Settlements and Housing Rights in Nepal’ and threw light on the current status of informal settlements on the banks of river Bagmati in Kathmandu. She spoke about a landless woman, who had to migrate to the city from her place of origin due to Maoist conflict. The discussion traced the difficulties of construction labourers and their struggles of building homes after forceful eviction. There are more than 10 million whose houses have been demolished, in addition to their suffering due to river floods, with no alternative way of living or earning. Land right and housing right is the issue of right to living because demolishing the house means impact on their right to live. Adhikari also mentioned the structure of land commission system in Nepal, well written on paper; however, due to political instability and different level of disagreements, the laws and policies have not been implemented for the landless. Despite rights, there is a situation where people are being forcefully evicted from the settlements, even when living for the past 50 years. With suppressed and unheard voices, every year in the development plan of the government, there are talks about landless and informal settlement management, but there is no special task for management. Multiple times there has been eviction cases where forcefully bulldozers in settlement raze houses to the ground, and in the light of climate change people are fighting against this structure for protection in vulnerable situations.

Sujit Kumar Saxena in his study on ‘Water Crisis in Madhesh’ analysed the case of severe water crisis in 2025. The Madhesh region of Nepal, located in the southern plains, faced an unprecedented condition of water scarcity in July 2025. The scarcity of drinking water had been a daily struggle, as hand pumps and tube wells dried up, forcing communities to rely on temporary measures such as water tankers. The most significant disruptions were in household water consumption, acutely felt by marginalised communities, particularly women, who bore the primary responsibility of managing household water needs. The absence of rainfall during monsoon season delayed paddy transplantation, leaving fields dry and cracked, signalling a sharp decline in agricultural productivity. While short term relief efforts such as deep boring systems and emergency water distribution were implemented, experts warned that these measures were unsustainable and risked exacerbating the crisis by further depleting ground water levels. Saxena stressed on the fact that the crisis in Madhesh could not be viewed singularly nor merely as a natural scarcity, rather, as a result of the complex interplay of multiple factors including over extraction of groundwater, erratic rainfall patterns, inadequate infrastructure, climate variability and poor management of water resources. Simultaneously,

uncontrolled deforestation and unsustainable resource extraction in the upstream Chure hills also severely depleted groundwater reserves. Rapid urbanisation, unregulated sand and gravel mining, and lack of investment in modern irrigation and drinking water system have further deepened vulnerabilities across the region. It was underlined that addressing the water crisis in Madhesh requires immediate attention and prevention of the destruction of the Chure region's vegetation cover along with a renewed focus on green cover conservation through afforestation and waterbody restoration. Integrated water resource management, the development of new irrigation projects and the adoption of water smart technologies are essential to reduce dependency on ground water. Calling upon the urgency for collaborative efforts between provincial and federal governments, as well as coordination with neighbouring Indian states, the speaker mentioned the vitality of managing transboundary aquifers and facilitating data sharing.

Purushotam Aryal in his talk on 'Ensuring the Right to Food in Nepal: Challenges and Pathways to Equity' began by mentioning the importance of right to food in Nepal's Constitution, but also stated that deep inequalities persisting across geography, caste, and ethnicity, often limit the realisation of rights. Indigenous and Dalit communities face a triple burden of poverty, food insecurity, and malnutrition. Gaps in accessibility to food stem from unequal land ownership, limited irrigation and credit, and social exclusion. Land and water are central to food sovereignty; over two-thirds of Nepalis depend on agriculture, yet many marginalised households lack secure tenure and irrigation. Rain-fed systems are highly vulnerable to changing climate patterns. Aryal expanded on the scenario of underutilisation of indigenous crops like millets, pulses, tubers, and forest foods that are nutrient-rich yet unvalued, but valued by communities living in hill and mountain areas. He suggested that a multi-sectoral response in case of securitisation of land and water rights, climate-resilient agriculture, investments in irrigation and water governance, and integration of indigenous food systems into markets and nutrition programmes are essential, through the review of Nepal's policy framework, shared community experiences and nutrition-friendly local governance lessons, while highlighting practical opportunities to realise the right to food equitably, also broadening the context to South Asia, where land, water, and climate justice are essential for food security.

Devi Datta Acharya and **Manoj Kumar Gohiwar** while speaking on 'Disability and Right to Food' focused on a survey study in four municipalities of Lumbini Province on the "Situation of Access to the Right to Food of Persons with Disabilities," that DEC Nepal in association

with Purak ASIA conducted. The study explored barriers experienced by persons with different types of impairments in accessing food, and reviewed Nepal's national and international commitments to disability rights and the right to food. Sharing selected case stories of men and women with diverse disabilities, the presentation illustrated their lived experiences of accessing food, as well as summarised the commitments made by the Government of Nepal through policy provisions. The discussion highlighted the barriers—physical, informational, attitudinal, and institutional—that restricted equal access, and also charted recommendations for right-to-food for stakeholders and organisations of persons with disabilities to strengthen mainstreaming of the right to food for persons with disabilities in Nepal.

Debashree Chakraborty during her talk on 'Environmental Concerns and Security Challenges' asserted that disruptions in environmental profiles lead to massive disruptions in the lives and livelihoods of people, as in today's world, environment and security are increasingly becoming coterminous. She explained how such disruptions not only affect the natural surroundings but also impact conflict and peace dynamics of the society. While environmental disruptions are largely considered signifiers of meteorological or geophysical changes, these have deep rooted social and cultural impacts. Chakraborty elaborated on security becoming a key concern while dealing with environmental disruptions. Environmental security encompasses an array of issues pertaining to health crisis triggered as a result of air, water or land pollution, civic flare ups bordering on regional, ethnic or even religious concerns, lack or absence of social security measures in the face of environmental calamities, etc. Through her presentation she focused on environment-related security challenges that may arise in the face of disasters, climate risks and related disruptions, with examples from incidents that happened during the 2022 Silchar floods in Assam, India.

Pitambar Bhandari in his comments as chair for the session mentioned that the State as the largest stakeholder for land, water, climate, food, in many ways governs the relations between the State and people, though this relation remains challenged, as resources are also provided by other agencies. New classes have emerged through technological innovations and these give rise to larger questions of how would society, especially vulnerable groups of people and fragile ecological realms cope in terms of restoration of environmental balances. Participants also added that people living and working on the streets like street hawkers and vendors, small shops, find it challenging with the rapidly growing smart cities coming up, as livelihood losses loom large, and initiatives need to be taken up for converting such losses into opportunities of work; more so, in times of climate crisis, due to the difficulties of drawing the line between

environmental disasters that are climate-induced or natural and those that are man-made. Misinformation and its propagation, especially on social media also further complicate efforts taken for rehabilitation.



Session 7: Valedictory Lecture: Non-Traditional Security in South Asia

Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury introduced the speaker, **Prof. Lokraj Baral**, who spoke on ‘Non-traditional Security in South Asia’. Baral began by noting that state means combination of four elements: government, sovereignty, territory and population. Justice forms a big part of this combination. But this justice part is located more within the territorial aspects of the state than in the boundaries of it. As long as the territorial part of a state are governed well by the ruling governments, the boundary part of security more or less remains safeguarded unless there is no external threat. Quoting the landslides and floods that happened in the Ilam district of Nepal and considering how rights were violated following the disaster, Baral noted that national security, civic rights etc, cannot be separated from national security which involves military vigilance. As such, he stressed, the differences between traditional and non-traditional security are mostly blurry. Baral insisted that in order to ensure that territorial aspects of

security are well taken care of, it is important that the stakeholder remain vigilant of their rights. Democracy, in such cases, become of utmost importance as it ensures equal rights for all.

Baral gave an overview of the changing notions about performing democracy by quoting the example of the Gen Z protests in Nepal. He noted that even though the present generation thrives on the internet and patronises it, their idea of democracy is nonetheless solid. The Gen Z protests stand as testimony of how democracy still stands strong and can withstand the exigencies of powers that want to overthrow it by means of corruption, plans to establish monarchy etc. He also cited the example of Peru where the elected President has been overthrown by people's protests. He stressed on the power of plurality by citing how a diverse population of people in a country serve to save and protect democratic rights. He cited examples of LGBTQ+ movements, disability rights movements, minority right rights activists and movements and noted how all these democratic movements have eventually ensured that human security is upheld in the face of challenges. Migration is a big aspect of internal or non-traditional security alongside the safeguarding of minority populations. Population management is another aspect of civil security highlighted by Baral. He insisted that the management of all these aspects of internal security measures will automatically ensure that the rights and security of people are upheld.

Baral noted that in order to ensure that rights and security remain safeguarded, a functional democracy is of utmost importance as in the end, it is the state that will act as cynosure of rights and hence, the state cannot be in a state of rot. Multiparty systems in politics is a way of safeguarding democracy. This system helps to put pressure on ruling party and pushes them to engage in welfare activities thus safeguarding the democratic fabric of a country. As long as the internal aspects, which are mostly non-traditional so to speak, are taken care of, it is unlikely that the traditional aspects of security will be compromised in any way.

Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury noted that the most important take away from the lecture was the critique of the binary between traditional and non-traditional security. The state, being the only legitimate institution with the power to use force, is already a securitised entity. In the end, it befalls on the state to ensure that the aspects of non-traditional security, alternatively, human security, are executed well enough for the stakeholders to get the requisite benefits. Citizens can only claim security from the state and it is the state's responsibility to ensure that citizens' rights are met and taken care of. In that regard, there exists an organic relationship between the state and the population that resides in it. It is important to acknowledge that there

has been a complacency on part of the state and its leadership across South Asia, in meeting the requirements of the citizens thereby giving rise to insecurities among the populace. Democracy, as an idea, therefore continues to be threatened in South Asia further exacerbating the existing insecurities. In that way, security breaches, in every way, has become akin to Sisyphus' problem. In addition to that, Basu Ray Chaudhury also highlighted that the shift from being welfare states to becoming capitalist states and the lack of trust between the governments and the population are other reasons human security continues to be threatened in South Asia.

Concluding Remarks

Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury also gave the concluding remarks wherein he summed up the important points that emerged from the discussions happening across the two days of the Conference. Following is a list of issues which Basu Ray Chaudhury contended to be important and that should be taken up for future deliberations:

- i. Agency and resilience for everyday negotiation
- ii. Education as empowerment
- iii. Justice as an outcome of forging partnership with refugees and migrants
- iv. A South Asian Compact on refugees and migrants
- v. Legal, gender, food and water insecurity and the role of AI
- vi. Techno patrimonial system and the safeguarding in rights

Basu Ray Chaudhury noted that forging solidarities and negotiating pluralities should be the way forward in understanding and defining the modes of security going forward.

The Conference ended with a formal vote of thanks delivered by representatives of the Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata and the Nepal Institute of Peace, Kathmandu.



List of Participants

1. **Ajit Acharya, *Nepal***
2. **Arjun Dhakal, *Nepal***
3. **Bhagavati Adhikari, *India***
4. **Bharat Bhushan, *India***
5. **Debashree Chakraborty, *India***
6. **Devi Datta Acharya, *India***
7. **Hari Sharma, *Nepal***
8. **Ishita Dey, *India***
9. **Jeevan Thiagarajah, *Sri Lanka***
10. **Lok Raj Baral, *Nepal***
11. **Manoj Kumar Gohiwar, *Nepal***
12. **Niloy Ranjan Biswas, *Bangladesh***
13. **Pitambar Bhandari, *Nepal***
14. **Purushotam Aryal, *Nepal***
15. **Renu Sijapati, *Nepal***
16. **Ritam Sengupta, *India***
17. **Rupal Joshi, *India***
18. **Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, *India***
19. **Sahana Basavapatna, *India***
20. **Shatabdi Das, *India***
21. **Som Niroula, *India***
22. **Sucharita Sengupta, *India***



