



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■



South Asia Centre
Annual Report
2018/19



Our logo is a leaf from the *Ficus religiosa* (Sacred Fig), a tree found across the countries of South Asia. It symbolises social, cultural, religious and ecological benevolence, embodying a shared geography. This intrinsic commonality, cutting across political boundaries and identitarian constructions, provokes intriguing curiosity about the ties that bind this complex region. In amplifying this, our logo ties the Centre to LSE's motto: *Rerum cognoscere causas*, 'to know the causes of things'.

The height and breadth of the *Ficus*, along with its dry season-deciduous nature, gives it its innate popularity in South Asia – as provider of shade from the scorching sun in the summers, and warm, filtered sunshine in its cold winters. Its density and strength make it a nesting paradise for several kinds of birds, and its leaves provide fodder for two of South Asia's most important pack animals, the camel and the elephant.

The bark, leaves and figs of the *Ficus* have several medicinal attributes, and are used in Ayurvedic, Yunani and other alternative medical knowledge-systems, helping to treat open wounds, inflammations, ulcers, asthma, and digestive and heart ailments.

Its popular names include *arani*, *ashvattha*, *bo*, *bodhi*, *bodhidruma*, *beepul*, *esathu*, *pimpal*, *pipal*, *ragi*, and *shuchidruma*, amongst many others.

The logo has been designed by Oroon Das.

INTRODUCTION

Dr Mukulika Banerjee, *Director*



The South Asia Centre has now completed 4 years, and 2018-19 has been a year of new ventures and consolidations as we try and build a research centre that genuinely reflects the interface between academic research and public engagement.

We have had exciting new developments both in the South Asian region and in the UK. Located within the London School of Economics and Political Science, the Centre has much to offer in terms of expertise and has so far prioritised giving ongoing research in the School a wider platform for engagement with a variety of sectors, rather than embarking on an altogether new research agenda of its own. We are not short of academic work within the university, but we do need to find inventive ways of having it read and discussed more in a wider public.



This year we are proud to announce a brand-new portal on our website, 'The States of South Asia' – an interactive map that allows the user instant access to a wide range of fine-grained political and demographic information and academic research. A pilot map, focusing on India, was prepared in record time, and launched at the Live Indian Election Results event held at the Old Theatre, LSE on 23 May 2019. This initiative was led by our Blog Editor and Communications & Events Officer, and involved a sizeable team of talented Indian students studying at LSE. It was generously funded by HEIF; our aim is to raise further funding for creating similar portals for all the South Asian countries. We hope to make the most of the increased digital traffic to our website and this portal will provide a valuable way to attract new visitors.

In the UK, the range of institutions with whom we collaborate continues to grow, including BACSA (British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia) with whom we hosted six well-attended lectures by prominent authors writing on the Indian subcontinent in colonial times. We also continued to work with the British Film Institute to host a screening of a film on the Bengal famine during the Bagri London Indian Film Festival, which was followed by a discussion of LSE academics with Professor Amartya Sen. Later in the year, we held a live interaction, in association with Baithak UK, with film director Nandita Das on her new film 'Manto' on the most searing chronicler of the partition of the Indian sub-continent. We also worked with English PEN and Reporters without Borders to host a discussion on Media Freedom in South Asia and worked with the organisers of the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for the announcement of their short list of titles for the 2019 Award, for the fourth year in a row. Of particular personal significance to me was our collaboration with Bloomsbury Pakistan and Ziauddin Yousafzai (Chairperson, Malala Fund) to host the annual Bacha Khan Lecture, as my doctoral research was conducted on the non-violent anti-colonial Khudai Khidmatgar movement led by Bacha Khan, also known as Frontier Gandhi in India. To celebrate his legacy at LSE made for a very meaningful experience.

We also had occasion to mark a special Remembrance Sunday in 2018, where alongside the traditional red poppy, special 'khadi' poppies were issued this year to mark the contribution of soldiers from all over the Indian sub-continent to the war effort. A meaningful panel discussion considering the nature of their roles was hosted by the Centre with historians and soldiers, presided by the inimitable Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, making it a truly unique event in the UK.

We were also fortunate to have the Deputy Mayor of London (Business) Mr Rajesh Agrawal speak at a public event at our invitation. I was personally struck by his down-to-earth manner despite his immense business success, and even more by his positivity in the face of his immense responsibilities in keeping London open for business in the face of an impending Brexit.

From the coming year the South Asia Centre will also be hosting two Charles Wallace Fellows from Bangladesh and Pakistan. This will allow an exchange of ideas and academic research ongoing in these countries, and give the Fellows an exposure to current debates and discussions in the UK and beyond. The Centre continues to collaborate and build links with a wide range of institutions across the UK and South Asia, most prominently, the UNDP in Sri Lanka with whom we have now hosted three 'Colombo Development Dialogues'. This year we also increased our attention to engaging with issues in Afghanistan: we carried an interview

 The Centre continues to collaborate and build links with a wide range of institutions across the UK and South Asia. 

with the First Secretary in our blog 'South Asia @ LSE', alongside other posts on Afghanistan, and hosted experts on the country for academic discussions at LSE. We also carried seven posts on Myanmar, ranging from its role in the Indian Ocean, to its forthcoming elections, to the Rohingya question. Also, the second of the three-part LSE-UC Berkeley Bangladesh Summit 2, jointly hosted between the Centre and the Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies, UC Berkeley was held this year in California, thanks to the untiring efforts of the Deputy Director Dr Nilanjan Sarkar. The third summit will be held in Bangladesh in 2021.

So, in all, 2018-19 has been a rich and interesting year at the South Asia Centre. Student engagement with our activities has been particularly vibrant this year, and key to the success of the many challenges we have taken on.

The team at the South Asia Centre continues to punch way above its weight and we look forward to doing the same next year.

YEAR IN REVIEW



46
Events



30
Public
discussions



9
Seminars and
workshops



4
International
events



1
Prize
announcement



2
Film
screenings



2
Visiting
fellowships



1,742
Email
subscribers



6
Working
papers



5
Members
of staff



2
Visiting
fellows



7,608
Twitter
followers



274,000
Youtube
Views



4,473
Facebook
followers

SOUTH ASIA

Since our launch in 2015, the South Asia Centre has led LSE's long-term engagement with South Asia, now aligned with LSE's Vision 2030. Throughout 2018/19, we continued to harness LSE's research and expertise on the region as a world leader in the social sciences. South Asia – the region as a whole, as well as individual countries – has taken centre stage in a variety of multi-disciplinary events that have reaffirmed our standing in London as the leading academic hub on the region.

In 2018/19, the Centre organised many well-attended, animated events that cut across disciplines and perspectives to bring together academics and others with expertise and interest in South Asia. While the following pages highlight our country-focused activities, here we underline the importance of events that cut across modern national boundaries to amplify shared issues and concerns, that tie the region together in mutual interest and appreciation.

On 12 October 2018, we hosted Writer and Director Nandita Das for a discussion held in collaboration with the LSESU South Asia Society, and Baithak UK, on her biopic on **Manto** (2018). The Indian Director was joined by Sangeeta Datta (Director, Baithak UK) for a discussion chaired by Mukulika Banerjee (LSE) on the controversial life of Writer Saadat Hasan Manto and his final years in Bombay before moving to Pakistan in 1948.

In November 2018, we hosted two very different events, both with a distinct regional resonance. On 9 November, we were honoured to commemorate the role of more than 1.3 million soldiers from undivided India who served in World War 1. A discussion in the centennial year of the end of the Great War included Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, Lord Jitesh Gadhia, Major Sartaj Singh Gogna and the author Shrabani Basu, and marked the launch of the **Red 'Khadi' Poppy** made with *khadi* (handspun Indian cotton). As part of the Royal British

Legion's 'Thank You' campaign, the deeply moving memorial – completed with a minute's silence – was held in the School's Old Theatre, where Gandhi addressed LSE students exactly 80 years ago to the day.

On 14 November 2018, London's literary eyes turned to the Centre as we announced the shortlist of the **DSC Prize for South Asian Literature**, an event we are proud to host every year. The prize – a cash award of US\$25,000 – went to Jayant Kaikini's *No Presents Please* (translated by Tejaswini Niranjana), which was announced in Kolkata on 25 January 2019. Our event also featured a special panel discussion on the Importance of Literary Prizes moderated by Claire Armitstead (*The Guardian*) with Alexandra Pringle (Bloomsbury Publishing) and the author Sathnam Sanghera.

An audience of foreign policy experts working and studying in London came to the Centre in June 2019 for a discussion on the **Afghanistan, Pakistan and India Triangle**. With an expert on each country, the lively discussion with Avinash Paliwal (SOAS), Sarah Ashraf (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London) and Elisabeth Leake (Leeds) focused on the geo-political and economic motivations for an increasing Indian role in Afghanistan, the effect, if any, of this on Pakistan's foreign policy towards Afghanistan, and whether the triangle is a reason for continued instability in the region. A recording of the event is available online.



L-R: FIELD MARSHAL SIR JOHN CHAPPLE GCB, CBE, SHRABANI BASU, LORD GADHIA, MUKULIKA BANERJEE AND MAJOR SARTAJ SINGH GOGNA SPEAKING AT 'THE RED "KHADI" POPPY AND THE INDIAN STORY' COMMEMORATION EVENT, 9 NOVEMBER 2018.

In recent years, members of the South Asia diaspora have become increasingly prominent in British public life, especially so in British politics. We were therefore delighted to host **Deputy Mayor of London (Business) Rajesh Agrawal** on 30 April 2019 to discuss his journey from South Asia to British business and politics. Held in collaboration with the LSESU South Asia Society, the Deputy Mayor answered questions



RAJESH AGRAWAL IN CONVERSATION WITH MUKULIKA BANERJEE, 30 APRIL 2019.

on the contribution of the South Asian diaspora to the political life of London, and the role of the diaspora in the UK.

How has the term '**South Asia**' become such a popular category of analysis in academia? How do we understand and deploy the term in our thinking, research and writing? On 28 March 2019, academics, researchers and practitioners from different perspectives convened at the Centre to discuss these questions. Participants explained how this term, which started off as a geographical reference (associated with 'Area Studies'), has slowly and surely become a geopolitical academic reference, and much else. Co-chaired by Taylor C. Sherman (LSE) and Magnus Marsden (Sussex), participants included David Arnold (Warwick), Sarah Ashraf (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London), Michael Hutt (SOAS), Moska Najib (Photographer), Avinash Paliwal (SOAS), Naufel Vilcassim (LSE) and Mukulika Banerjee (LSE).



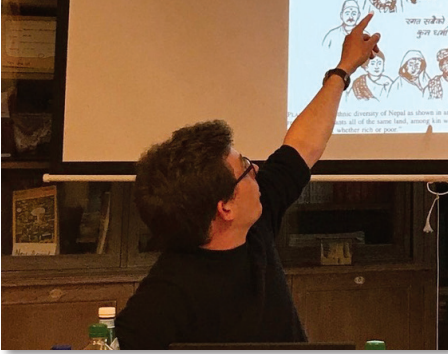
DAVID ARNOLD AT 'SOUTH ASIA: A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION', 28 MARCH 2019.

The Centre was delighted to collaborate this year with the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia (BACSA) for a series of lectures titled **'The Raj Re-Examined'**. It hosted some recent writers on many highly controversial moments of imperial-colonial British rule of the Indian subcontinent. Such was the success of the lecture series that BACSA has renewed its collaboration with the Centre for the next academic year. Some of the 2018/19 lectures included:

- *'Scotland's Empire: The Scots in British India'* by Sir Tom Devine (Edinburgh)
- *"Dark Hero: Nicholson of Delhi"* by Stuart Flinders (Author)
- *"Claude Martin: An Enlightenment Figure in 18th-Century India"* by Rosie Llewellyn-Jones (Author)

- *'Empress: Queen Victoria and India'* by Miles Taylor (Professor, University of York)
- *"The British in India: Three Centuries of Ambition and Experience"* by Sir David Gilmour (Historian)

In 2018/19, the Centre also started LSE's first **South Asia Seminar Network** series, an initiative that responded to requests from LSE students across disciplines who felt that there was no academic forum for them to meet and discuss their ongoing research work. Nicholas Evans, LSE Fellow (Anthropology), took on the mantle of organising the first series, where doctoral and post-doctoral students from across the School meet and discussed their work. The platform, which is open to South Asia-interested researchers from other London institutions as well, has been a great success, and will continue in 2019/20. A complete list of presentations by research scholars on this forum is listed at the end of this Report.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: IVAN DESCHENEUX PRESENTING HIS RESEARCH ON NEPAL AT LSE SOUTH ASIA NETWORK, 29 MARCH 2019; NICHOLAS EVANS AT LSE SOUTH ASIA NETWORK, 8 MAY 2019; RANA AYYUB AND MUKULIKA BANERJEE AT 'SOCIAL MEDIA, JOURNALISM AND FREE SPEECH', 2 JULY 2018; ROSIE LLEWELLYN-JONES SPEAKING ON 'CLAUDE MARTIN: AN ENLIGHTENMENT FIGURE IN 18TH-CENTURY INDIA', 3 DECEMBER 2018; ALEX VON TUNZELMANN SPEAKING ON THE INTERPLAY OF PERSONALITIES AND POLITICS IN THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO BRITAIN'S EXIT FROM INDIA, 11 MARCH 2019.

AFGHANISTAN AND NEPAL

The South Asia Centre has continued to curate public events with leading scholars on issues of contemporary interest in Afghanistan and Nepal.

Both countries have also been the focus of exclusive content for the Centre's blog 'South Asia @ LSE', and we have built on existing relations with their embassies here in London.

AFGHANISTAN

An event on Afghanistan proved to be one of the Centre's liveliest debates of the year. The **Afghanistan, Pakistan and India Triangle** with Avinash Paliwal (SOAS), Sarah Ashraf (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London) and Elisabeth Leake (Leeds) examined the complexities of how the neighbourhood politics and policies affect the country. Using ideas from international relations, counter-insurgency strategies and the modern history of Afghanistan, the panel explored the politico-economic motivations of India and Pakistan towards Afghanistan.

Afghanistan also featured prominently in the Centre's blog. We began the year by publishing an exclusive interview with **Ahmad Naveed Noormal** (First Secretary at the Embassy of Afghanistan, London) in which he discussed the Parliamentary Elections of 2018, and the crucial period of political and economic transformation the country is set to experience over the coming years. Several accessible posts focusing on the latest academic research on Afghanistan have proved extremely popular online.

A photo essay exploring the connections of identity, memory and belonging of Afghan migrants in South Asia, accompanied by an interview with Afghan photographer Moska Najib, was published in November 2018. The photographic project **'Kabuliwala: From Kabul**

to Kolkata' was inspired by Rabindranath Tagore's short story 'Kabuliwala' (1892), and in an exclusive interview for the blog, the photographer explained how generations of Afghan migrants to India have preserved their Pashtun identities in their new homeland. The post was accompanied by an interview with Professor Shah Mahmoud Hanifi (Historian, James Madison University) on the migratory history of the region and Afghanistans place within it.

NEPAL

The Centre has maintained its focus on the study of Nepal this year with a public event, and publication of online content that examined the opportunities and challenges of the country's forward-thinking political structures.

On 13 February 2019, Surya P. Subedi, QC (Hon.), OBE (Leeds), delivered a lecture on **'Human Rights and Constitutionalism in Nepal'**. Following its experiments with liberalism and communism, Nepal adopted an ambitious constitution designed to usher the country from a Monarchy to a Republic, and from a unitary system to a federal structure. To a packed audience, Subedi examined if this constitution does indeed fulfil its promise of ensuring the human rights of its citizens.

Later in the year, the Centre maintained its critical focus on Nepal's political structures by publishing online **'Nepal's Federalist Ambiguities'**, an essay by Thaneshwar Bhusal, which examined how the political, financial and administrative ambiguities of the constitution are giving rise to potential intergovernmental conflicts.

On 3 May 2019, the Centre was honoured to welcome the Hon'ble Ambassador of Nepal to the United Kingdom, **H.E. Durga Bahadur Subedi** to discuss different ways the Centre and Embassy can work together to further our engagement with Nepal.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: DURGA BAHADUR SUBEDI WITH NILANJAN SARKAR DURING A VISIT TO THE LSE SOUTH ASIA CENTRE, 3 MAY 2019; PANELISTS (L-R) AVINASH PALIWAL, SARAH ASHRAF, NILANJAN SARKAR AND ELISABETH LEAKE AT 'FRIENDS, ENEMIES OR JUST NEIGHBOURS? THE AFGHANISTAN, PAKISTAN AND INDIA TRIANGLE', 5 JUNE 2019; SURYA P. SUBEDI DISCUSSING 'HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONALISM IN NEPAL', 13 FEBRUARY 2019.

BANGLADESH

The South Asia Centre's sustained academic focus on Bangladesh continued in 2018/19 with the second LSE-UC Berkeley Bangladesh Summit, and the announcement of the first-ever fully-funded Charles Wallace Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellowship at LSE.

Both these academic partnerships ensure that the Centre will continue to intensify its focus on Bangladesh in the coming years. An online series of blogposts on the Rohingyas (on the Bangladesh-Myanmar border) also ensured the Centre provided engaging and accessible content on one of the most pressing issues facing the country.

On 22 February 2019, the South Asia Centre in collaboration with the Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies at the University of California-Berkeley, held the second **LSE Bangladesh Summit** at UC Berkeley.

A total of 17 speakers addressed a large audience over three panel discussions; a Keynote Address was delivered by David Lewis (LSE) on 'Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society Revisited'. A pre-conference event focused on Arif Anwar's novel *The Storm* (2018) with the author, a rare historical fiction of a little-discussed storm that ravaged Bangladesh in 1970, a year before its birth.

The academic panels were on:

- *Negotiating Uncertainty: Health, Politics and Environment in Bangladesh* – with Juli Huang (Edinburgh), Shameran Abed (BRAC), Lamia Karim (Oregon), and David Lewis (LSE) as Moderator.

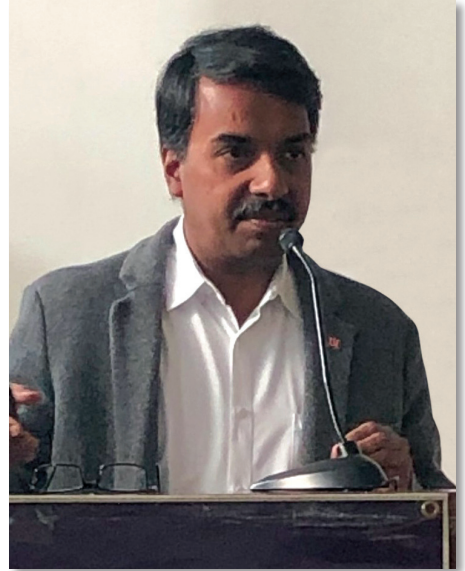


LOTTE HOEK SPEAKING AT THE SECOND LSE BANGLADESH SUMMIT AT UC BERKELEY, 22 FEBRUARY 2019.

- *The Entrepreneurship Model and Women's Empowerment* – with Sabina Rashid (BRAC, via skype), Jade Benjamin-Chung (UC Berkeley), Adnan Hossain (Amsterdam), and Lawrence Cohen (UC Berkeley) as Moderator.
- *Forms of Sovereignty: Art, Cinema and Popular Culture* – with Madhuja Mukherjee (Jadavpur), Nusrat Sabina Chowdhury (Amherst), Lotte Hoek (Edinburgh), and Sugata Ray (UC Berkeley) as Moderator.

The Summit was attended and closed by the Centre's Deputy Director Nilanjan Sarkar. Recordings of each panel and a range of blogs by several participants are available online; the Working Papers will be available on our website in Autumn 2019.

The Centre, in collaboration with the Charles Wallace Bangladesh Trust and the British Council in Dhaka, was delighted to invite applications for the first-ever **Charles Wallace Bangladesh Trust Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellow** at the Centre for 2019/20. The Fellowship, which includes a monthly stipend and a contribution towards other costs paid by the Charles Wallace Bangladesh Trust, will be available in each academic year between 15 September-10 June and will provide Bangladeshi citizens to further their research at LSE.



NILANJAN SARKAR CLOSING THE SECOND LSE BANGLADESH SUMMIT AT UC BERKELEY, 22 FEBRUARY 2019.



PANELISTS (L-R) LAMIA KARIM, JULI HUANG, SHAMERAN ABED, DAVID LEWIS (MODERATOR) SPEAKING AT 'NEGOTIATING UNCERTAINTY: HEALTH, POLITICS AND ENVIRONMENT IN BANGLADESH', 22 FEBRUARY 2019.

INDIA

2019 was the year of the national elections in India, the largest electoral experiment anywhere in the world, this time with more than 900 million eligible voters. The Centre hosted several events on India in 2018/19, examining some of the most urgent issues confronting the country as it geared up for the 17th Lok Sabha elections, and Indian-experts congregated at LSE to participate in the School's first-ever all-day real-time analysis of the elections on 23 May 2019.

The Centre began the year with a flurry of public events with leading thinkers, intellectuals and political figures of India. Highlights from the Summer and Michaelmas terms included:

- ***Why I am a Hindu*** – a conversation between author Shashi Tharoor and Mukulika Banerjee (LSE).
- ***'The Urgency of Secularism'*** – a discussion between Amartya Sen (Harvard) and Yogendra Yadav (Swaraj India) on the importance and fragility of secularism in India.
- ***'Social Media, Journalism and Free Speech'*** – a discussion with Salil Tripathi and Rana Ayyub (Journalists), chaired by Mukulika Banerjee (LSE). The event was held in association with English PEN and Reporters Without Borders.
- ***'A Public Discussion with Rahul Gandhi'*** (Leader, Indian National Congress) and Mukulika Banerjee (LSE), with a Q&A from an audience of 400 people. This event was held in collaboration with National Indian Students and Alumni Union (UK).
- ***India Moving: A History of Migration*** – a book discussion on author and alumnus Chinmay Tumbe's book with Sunil Kumar (LSE) and Tirthankar Roy (LSE).

- ***'Bengal Shadows'*** – a film screening and discussion on the Bengal Famine of 1943 between Amartya Sen (Harvard) and Tirthankar Roy (LSE), chaired by Mukulika Banerjee (LSE). This event was held in association with Bagri Foundation London Indian Film Festival 2018.

#LSEINDIA2019

In 2018/19 the Centre helped cement LSE's place as the leading university for election-related events in the UK by hosting #LSEIndia2019, a series of events focused on analysis and commentary of the Indian elections. Highlights included:

- ***'Inclusive Development Transformation in India: A Critique and a Proposal?'*** – a panel discussion with Rathin Roy (NIPFP, Delhi) and Maitreesh Ghatak (LSE), chaired by Mukulika Banerjee (LSE).
- ***'The Saffron Republic'*** – a film screening of 'The Saffron Republic' followed by a discussion on religion and politics in India with Co-Directors Surya Elango and Saloni Saraf and Researcher Adrija Dey with Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE) as Chair.



- **Threats to the Constitution in India Today** – Prashant Bhushan (Swaraj Abhiyan) and Rishi Gulati (LSE), with Nilanjana Sarkar (LSE) as Chair.
- **Majoritarian State: How Hindu Nationalism is Changing India** – with the Editor of the volume Christophe Jaffrelot (CNRS, Paris), and Edward Anderson (Cambridge), Shakuntala Banaji (LSE), James Manor (ICS, London), and Champa Patel (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London), with Mukulika Banerjee (LSE) as Chair.



As part of the series of events leading up to the Elections, the Centre facilitated two workshops on Indian politics with students playing a central role. On 30 November 2018, LSESU South Asia Society hosted an **Elections Workshop** with S.Y. Quraishi (Former Chief Elections Commissioner of India), and on 13 December 2018 current LSE students spoke at a workshop on the **State Assembly Elections 2018**, alongside academics and policy experts with presentations on voting results of different states; a report of the discussions can be read online.

TOP: JAMES MANOR AND SHAKUNTALA BANAJI DISCUSSING *THE MAJORITARIAN STATE*, 10 MAY 2019.
 BOTTOM: S.Y. QURAISHI SPEAKING AT AN LSESU SOUTH ASIA SOCIETY ELECTIONS WORKSHOP, 13 DECEMBER 2018.

INDIA ELECTIONS 2019 LIVE @ LSE

For the first time in LSE history, the Centre hosted leading academics, journalists, policy-makers and political analysts to comment on India's national elections in real-time on 23 May 2019, the day when the results were being announced. The event, which was reported in the UK and Indian media, ensured that LSE was one of the first universities to provide academic analysis of the election results.

- **The Great March of India's Democracy** – a book discussion with the Editor of the volume S.Y. Quraishi (Former Chief Election Commissioner of India), Taylor Sherman (LSE) and Karamjit Singh (Former Member of the Electoral Commission, UK). The event was chaired by Mukulika Banerjee (LSE) and held in collaboration with Bridge India, National Indian Students and Alumni Union UK, Indian Journalists' Association and Indian Young Professionals Network.

Three panels on the day included:

- *The 2019 Election Campaign: Taking Stock* – Edward Anderson (Cambridge), Mukulika Banerjee (LSE), James Chiriyankandath (SAS), Christophe Jaffrelot (CNRS, Paris), Shivani Mangal (LSE Student), S.Y. Quraishi (Former Chief Elections Commissioner of India; via Skype), Saskia Wilven (FCO), moderated by Maitreesh Ghatak (LSE);
- *Uttar Pradesh and Beyond* – Christophe Jaffrelot (CNRS, Paris), Kapil Komireddi (Journalist and Author), Prabal Muttoo (LSE Student), Sumer Singh (LSE Student), Gilles Verniers (Ashoka; via Skype), and moderated by Mukulika Banerjee (LSE);
- *2019 Results: First Thoughts* – Lord Karan Bilimoria (House of Lords), James Chiriyankandath (SAS), Maitreesh Ghatak (LSE), Pranav Gupta (Berkeley; via Skype), Christophe Jaffrelot (CNRS, Paris), Minisha Priyam (CFAR; via Skype), Michael Vidler (FCO), Ashutosh Varshney (Brown; via Skype), moderated by Rahul Roy-Chowdhury (IISS).

A video and audio recording of each panel are available online.

The Centre's Director, Mukulika Banerjee, represented the Centre during India's showcase foreign policy event, **The Raisina Dialogues**, now in its fourth year. While in India, the Director filmed '**View from the Ground**', a landmark series of video interviews with voters across India on how the forthcoming elections mattered to them.

On 10 December 2018, the Centre held its second '**Artha Vivaad**', in collaboration with the Institute for New Economic Thinking, New York, in Mumbai. Speakers included William Janeway (INET, New York), Srinath Sridharan (Wadhawan Global Capital), and Ashok Wadhwa (Ambit Capital), and was moderated by Nasser Munjee (LSE alumnus, and Chair of the Centre's Senior Advisory Board).



L-R: SRINATH SRIDHARAN, WILLIAM JANEWAY, NASSER MUNJEE AND ASHOK WADHWA SPEAKING AT 'ARTHA VIVAAD: INNOVATION ECONOMY AND THE STATE' ON 10 DECEMBER 2018.

PAKISTAN

The Centre's close engagement with Pakistan continued in 2018/19, building on our earlier landmark events. This year the Centre curated events marking the passing of prominent intellectuals in Pakistan while also building for future academic exchange with the announcement of LSE's first-ever, fully-funded Charles Wallace Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellowship for a Pakistani scholar at the Centre.

The year 2018/19 saw the passing of two prominent women whose lives were committed to the betterment of Pakistan's society and peoples in very different ways. The Centre was honoured to look back at these notable Pakistanis, while also working to consolidate our engagement with contemporary Pakistan.

In June 2018 Amartya Sen (Harvard) and Ibn Abdur Rehman (Lawyer and Human Rights advocate) came together for a remembrance and celebration of lawyer and social activist **Asma Jahangir**. Moderated by Amber Darr (UCL), **Remembering Asma Jahangir (1952-2018)** focused on the work of the former Chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. At the event Jahangir's daughters, Munizae and

Sulema, formally launched the 'Asma Jahangir Foundation', which is committed to taking forward their mother's work. The event was held in collaboration with Bloomsbury Pakistan; a podcast of the discussion is available online.

Following the death of women's rights activist, actor, playwright and director Madeeha Gauhar, the Centre hosted a panel discussion titled **Ajoka: The Protest of Drama, Remembering Madeeha Gauhar (1956-2018)** on 20 July 2018. Speakers included Adnan Khan (LSE), Sanjoy Roy (Teamwork Arts), Elizabeth Lynch (Arts Catalyst; via Skype) and Shahid Mahmood Nadeem (Ajoka Theatre; via Skype), all of whom personally knew, or had worked with, Madeeha, to celebrate and commemorate her life and work.



L-R: SANJOY ROY, NILANJAN SARKAR AND ADNAN KHAN DISCUSSING THE LEGACY OF MADEEHA GAUHAR AT LSE SOUTH ASIA CENTRE, 20 JULY 2018.



L-R: KHADIM HUSSAIN, RAHMAT SHAH SAYEL, MUKULIKA BANERJEE AND ZIAUDDIN YOUSAFZAI AT LSE SOUTH ASIA CENTRE FOR THE ANNUAL BACHA KHAN LECTURE, 9 MARCH 2019.

On 9 March 2019, the Centre hosted the annual **Bacha Khan Lecture** delivered by Khadim Hussain (Baacha Khan Trust Educational Foundation). Co-chaired by Ziauddin Yousafzai (UN Special Advisor on Global Education) and Mukulika Banerjee (LSE), the lecture, which critically engaged with the development of Pakistan's education system, was also a celebration of Pashtun literature and poetry with readings by prominent poets and writers including Rahmat Shah Sayel. A video and recording of the event is available online.

The Centre, in collaboration with the Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust and the British Council in Islamabad, was delighted to announce the launch of a **Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellow** at the Centre in 2019/20. The Fellowship, which includes a monthly stipend and a contribution towards

other costs paid by the Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust, will be between 15 September-10 June and will provide a Pakistani citizen to further their research in the social sciences at LSE. More information and the application form are available on the Centre's website.

The Centre also supported LSESU Pakistan Society's idea to start a debating series amongst students from different UK universities to discuss topics of critical importance to Pakistan today. LSE Students Unions hosted 3 events focusing on Pakistan, one each by the LSESU Pakistan Development Society and the LSESU Pakistan Society, and a workshop with former Senator Marvi Memon on **Legislative Development in Pakistan**, attended by students from across the United Kingdom.

SRI LANKA

In 2018/19 the Centre advanced its role as a convener of high-profile, critical, public discussions between government, the NGO sector and policy experts in Sri Lanka in the second and third Dialogue of its collaborative initiative with the UNDP.

The two '**Colombo Development Dialogues**' explored how the biggest global issues – 'Water and Climate Variability' and the 'Refugee Crisis' – are affecting Sri Lanka, and what specific policy responses are available to the government and others to address them.

The second **Colombo Development Dialogue** was held on 31 August 2018 in Colombo, and focused on '**Water Security and Climate Variability**'. During the panel discussion speakers, with inputs from the audience, explored the question of water security in Sri Lanka through its specific problems within the framework of climate variability, but also in comparison to other countries in South Asia.

The Dialogue addressed how water security in Sri Lanka should be considered by the government while planning its developmental, economic and social policies and programs. Panelists included Tony Allan (King's College London; via skype), Timotheues Gaasbeek (formerly WASH Advisor), Giriraj Amarnath (IWMI, Colombo), P. B. Dharmasena (Department of Agriculture, Sri Lanka), and Soumya Balasubramanya (IWMI, Colombo). Invited discussants included Sydney Gajanayake (Ministry of Irrigation), Dilrukshi Handunnett (Daily/Weekend Express), Shiranee Yasaratne (Biodiversity, Sri Lanka), Tharuka Dissanaika (UNDP, Sri Lanka), and Jude Kasturi Arachchi



L-R: TIMOTHEUES GAASBEEK, GIRIRAJ AMARNATH, NILANJAN SARKAR (MODERATOR), SOUMYA BALASUBRAMANYA AND P. B. DHARMASENA, AT THE SECOND COLOMBO DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUES ON 'WATER SECURITY AND CLIMATE VARIABILITY', 31 AUGUST 2018.

(Jetwing Hotels). The Dialogue was moderated by Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE). A Working Paper of the Dialogue, as well as the video recording of the event, is available on the Centre's website.

The third **Colombo Development Dialogue** on **'Refugees, Asylum-seekers and the 2030 Agenda'** was held on 5 April 2019 in Colombo, and explored the condition of refugees coming to Sri Lanka, stimulating a discussion between stakeholders on how they can work together to ensure basic standards of living, education and work while adhering to international commitments and balancing the challenges refugee situations can introduce.

Panelists included Menique Amarasinghe (UNHCR, Sri Lanka), Ravinatha Aryasinha (Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Susan Bird (UNHCR, Head of South Asia), and Christopher Smith (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London). Invited discussants included Chandrika Karunaratna (UNDP, Sri Lanka), Asan Saleem (Muslim Aid), Prasad De Silva (Employers' Federation of Ceylon), Tony Seniwiratne (ZOA Sri Lanka) and Namini Wijedasa (*The Sunday Times*). The Dialogue was chaired by Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE) and a Working Paper of the Dialogue, as well as the video recording are available on the Centre website.

One of the hallmarks of the Colombo Development Dialogues has been to conduct a **Masterclass** at the University of Colombo, ahead of each Dialogue. The Centre successfully conducted two Masterclasses to an invited group of students and early career professionals interested in the subject, with international experts Timotheues Gaasbeek (on Climate Variability), and Christopher Smith (on Refugees).



FROM TOP: JORN SORENSEN, MENIQUE AMARASINGHE AND RAVINATHA ARYASINHA SPEAKING AT THE THIRD COLOMBO DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUES, 5 APRIL 2019; AND CHRISTOPHER SMITH AT THE MASTERCLASS AT UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO, 4 APRIL 2019.

SAC IN LSE

LSE faculty and students are central to any event or initiative at the Centre and 2018/19 has been no different from earlier years, in which we collaborated closely and often with colleagues and students from across the School, allowing us to produce stimulating events and engaging material.

We have been delighted to launch the LSE South Asia Network series, continue to support LSESU societies, provide opportunities at the Centre to help students develop their skills, as well as collaborate with LSE alumni.

WORKING WITH LSE STUDENTS

The Centre supports student-led activities which are mostly organised via their various student unions, but also at an individual level, and with more informally organised groups. Our current students are our most important collaborators in the School, since one of our principal missions is to engage with the future generations of thought-leaders of the region.

As in earlier years, this year too the Centre hosted a Welcome Drinks reception for PhD and Post-Doctoral researchers and Fellows working on South Asia across the School's several departments on 31 October 2018. Following conversations at the meeting, the department started the first-ever **LSE South Asia Network** series of seminars, convened by Nicholas Evans (LSE Fellow in Anthropology). A total of six 'Work-in-Progress' papers were presented to colleagues, and uniquely, this platform is open to South Asianists outside LSE as well. We were therefore delighted to find researchers from other London institutions in the audience. A complete list of presentations in this series appears at the end of this Report.

In 2018/19, we were particularly lucky to be able to involve a cross-section of our students in organising and participating in several of our activities, especially surrounding the elections in India in April-May 2019. Several LSE students played a crucial role in collating data for the Centre's flagship digital project, **'The States of South Asia'**, which was launched on 23 May (the day the results of the Indian elections were declared). The portal was launched with a pilot focusing on India, and includes 4,000+ pieces of data. The students played a crucial and critical role in making this happen, and it provided thirteen of them an opportunity to develop their research skills during this project as they were formally employed to find reliable and accessible data to populate the site.

The Centre's day-long, multi-panel event on the analysis of **India's election results** in real time also gave an opportunity to several students to participate in organising as well as curating different elements of the programme. Amongst all this, two significant things were a short film by Alisha Morales (MSc Media and Communications), which recorded students' thoughts on the India of the future as they wanted it to be on the day the election results were being declared, and the opportunity for Shivani Mangal (MSc International Social and Public Policy), Pabal Muttoo (MSc Politics and Communications) and Sumer Singh (BSc Philosophy, Politics and Economics) to participate as speakers on panels alongside experts. Earlier, in December 2018, several students were at the heart of a workshop on the analysis of the **India State Assembly Elections** results.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: KARAN BILIMORIA SPEAKING AT 'INDIA ELECTIONS 2019 LIVE @ LSE', 23 MAY 2019; MASCHA SCHULZ SPEAKING AT SOUTH ASIA NETWORK SEMINAR, 6 FEBRUARY 2019; NANDITA DAS WITH LSESU SOUTH ASIA SOCIETY STUDENTS, 12 OCTOBER 2018; MARTIN BAYLY SPEAKING AT SOUTH ASIA NETWORK SEMINAR, 8 MAY 2019.

Finally, several LSE students have written for the Centre's blog, and their participation in conversations on platforms like Twitter and Facebook have been of enormous support to the Centre's activities.

LSESU SOUTH ASIA SOCIETY

The LSESU South Asia Society, which was founded on an idea fostered by the South Asia Centre – namely, to focus on the region as a whole in comparative perspective, overlooking national boundaries – entered its fourth year, and a new cohort of students took over the reins of the Society. The Centre has continued to support their event and offer advice on their activities.

On 12 October 2018, the Centre – in collaboration with the Society, and Baithak UK – organised a public discussion with Director Nandita Das on her new film **'Manto'**. The Director was joined by Sangeeta Datta (Director, Baithak UK) for a discussion, chaired by Mukulika Banerjee (LSE).

On 15 October 2018, the Society, with the support of the Centre, and in association with National Indian Students and Alumni Union UK (NISAU), hosted a discussion titled **'Rethinking Gender Equality Law in India'**. The well-attended event was a stimulating discussion on gender equality in India in the context of the Indian legal framework. Speakers included Salman Khurshid (Former External Affairs Minister, India), Harish Salve (Former Solicitor General, India), Mohan Parasaran (Former Solicitor General, India), Mahesh Jethmalani (Senior Advocate, Supreme Court, India), Meenakshi Arora (Senior Advocate, Supreme Court, India), Rajiv Luthra (Luthra Law Offices), and Tanvi Dubey (Advocate, Supreme Court, India). The discussion was chaired by Jo Murkens (LSE).

On 3 December 2018, the Society held a lively debate on the **#MeToo Movement in South Asia**, chaired by LSE Fellow Luke Heslop. A video of the debate can be accessed on the Society's Facebook page.

LSESU PAKISTAN DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

The LSESU Pakistan Development Society curated their annual **'Future of Pakistan Conference'** on 3 November 2018; the Centre, as Academic Advisor, ensured that a free and fair discussion was held in what turned out to be an engaging programme with eminent speakers. As in earlier years, the conference once again gathered some of the most influential leaders in business, politics and law to connect students, academics and policy-makers on a single platform for a discussion on the future of Pakistan. The day-long event consisted of the following three panels:

- *'The Way Forward: The Civilian-Military Nexus'* – with Hina Rabbani Khar (Former Foreign Minister, Pakistan), General Naeem Lodhi (Former Defence Secretary, Pakistan) and Talat Hussain (Journalist), and Hassan Miraj as Moderator;
- *'Pakistan International: Investment, Development and CPEC'* – with Ishrat Hussain (former Governor, State Bank of Pakistan), Sahibzada Jahangir (Advisor to Imran Khan), Junaid Iqbal (Careem), Ahmed Chinoy (Arch Sons), Zeeshan Shah (One Investments), and Muzaffar Khan as Moderator;
- *'Combating Terrorism: Legal Challenges and the Moral Dimension'* – Hon'ble Justice Qazi Faez Isa (Supreme Court, Pakistan) in conversation with Amber Darr (UCL).



HON'BLE JUSTICE QAZI FAEZ ISA IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBER DARR AT LSESU 'FUTURE OF PAKISTAN CONFERENCE', 3 NOVEMBER 2018.

The conference also heard from LSE student and entrepreneur Bilal Bin Saqib on his charity 'Tayyaba'. Set up in 2015 to help introduce the '**H2O Wheel**' in the arid Tharparkar region of Pakistan, and ensure some of the poorest in Pakistan have safe and reliable access to water, Bilal, now based in London, continues to use the knowledge he acquired in social entrepreneurship at LSE to grow his charity. A blog post about the organisation written by Bilal was published on the Centre's blog.

Finally, on 23 March 2019, the Society organised a day-long '**Legislative Development Workshop**' with Marvi Memon, an LSE alumnus and member of the National Assembly of Pakistan, chaired by Sarah Ashraf, also an LSE alumnus.

LSESU PAKISTAN SOCIETY

In a radical and creative break from the usual, this year the LSESU Pakistan Society hosted a highly animated series of **student debates** on some of the biggest questions concerning Pakistan. The Debates were conducted by office-bearers Hussain Abbas (BSc Economics) and Momen Sethi

(BSc Politics and Economics) with remarkable maturity and professionalism, who succeeded in establishing the inaugural series with aplomb. Nilanjan Sarkar (South Asia Centre) and Taylor Sherman (History) acted as Observers to ensure procedural compliance. Participant-speakers came from different universities in the United Kingdom, and the motions were:

- **This House believes that without Islam there is no Pakistan identity.**
- **This House believes the 1947 partition of India was inevitable.**
- **This House believes Pakistan is doing enough to fight terrorism.**

WORKING WITH FACULTY AND FELLOWS

The interdisciplinary nature of the Centre's engagements ensures that we are able to work with LSE faculty from across the School; 2018/19 has been no exception to this. Several of our events include LSE faculty, enabling us to both draw on the world-class expertise at the School, and to help faculty members disseminate their research and comment on current debates to an audience beyond academia. We are delighted that since the establishment of the Centre in 2015, faculty support and participation in our events has increased steadily. In 2018/19, we were able to involve: Shakuntala Banaji (Media and Communications), Martin Bayly (International Relations), Nicholas Evans (Anthropology), Adnan Khan (International Growth Centre), Sunil Kumar (Social Policy), Maitreesh Ghatak (Economics), David Graeber (Anthropology), Rishi Gulati (Law), Taylor Sherman (International History), and Naufel Vilcassim (Marketing).

On 31 May 2018, the Centre held a debate on LSE economist Tirthankar Roy's new book *A Business History of India: Enterprise and the Emergence of Capitalism from 1700* (2018). Invited discussants included Michael Aldous (Belfast; also LSE alumnus), Bishnupriya Gupta (Warwick), Sanchari Roy (KCL). On 22 February 2019, David Lewis (Social Policy) delivered the Keynote Address on 'Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society Revisited' at the LSE Bangladesh Summit at UC Berkeley. A complete list of events which LSE faculty have participated in appears at the end of this Report.

LSE faculty also play an instrumental role in the direction of the Centre through their membership of the **Faculty Advisory Group**; in 2018/19, Naufel Vilcassim, Romola Sanyal and Alnoor Bhimani joined the Group, and we thanked Maitreesh Ghatak for his participation in the first few years as he stepped down. The participation of LSE faculty reaffirms the Centre as a collective venture of everyone interested in South Asia, irrespective of discipline, as we gradually develop a multi-faceted profile. The members of the Faculty Advisory Group are on page 31.

WORKING WITH ALUMNI

The LSE is proud to have a wide network of alumni across South Asia and the Centre in 2018/19 has been active in strengthening this network. Many speakers from the Centre's events have been **LSE alumni**. These have included James Crabtree (BSc Government), Chinmay Tumbe (MsSc Economics) and Sarah Ashraf (PhD International Relations). When in India we have made visits to Alumni chapters across the country.

The '**Colombo Development Dialogues**', our first major in-country initiative in Sri Lanka happened because of the enterprise of alumnus

Fadhil Bakeer Marker (MSc Social Policy and Development, 2010) who contacted us with the idea of starting this series, and has worked relentlessly to make it happen. It was an added delight that as we moved forward with this idea – which is now well underway from April 2018 – Fadhil's team at UNDP was joined by others who are also LSE alumni, especially Ayushka Nugaliyadda (MSc Development Studies, 2014). The Dialogue is sponsored by Dilmah Tea whose CEO is Dilhan Fernando (BSc Geography, 1989), also an alumnus.



TOP: RATHIN ROY AND MAITREESH GHATAK IN CONVERSATION ON DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA, 8 MARCH 2019; BELOW: MUKULIKA BANERJEE WITH MEMBERS OF LSE ALUMNI, KOLKATA, 11 APRIL 2019.

VISITING FELLOWS AND RESEARCHERS

Throughout 2018/19, the Centre provided early career fellows and researchers with an inter- and multi-disciplinary environment in which they are able to engage with their research.

Such visitors have quickly become integrated with the Centre's activities and the School's academic environment, helping to enrich our research culture and build bridges between LSE and institutions across the world. The participation of our Fellows in our events and activities has been an especial benefit for the Centre. As we draw this year's activities to a close, the Centre is delighted to announce the establishment of LSE's first-ever Charles Wallace Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellowships from Bangladesh and Pakistan, whom we will welcome to the Centre in 2019/20.

Dr Hanako Nagata

Dr Nagata holds a PhD in the Social Sciences from the Ochanomizu University, Japan with a focus on South Asian economics and gender studies, and a specialism in the ready-made garment industry and related gender issues in Bangladesh. Since 2014, she is Associate Professor at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ibaraki University, Japan. During her year-long Visitorship at the Centre (April 2018 – March 2019), Dr Nagata conducted research on the increasing 'feminisation' of the Labour Force, focusing on the women workers in the ready-made garment industry in Dhaka and Kolkata, especially concentrating on the

theoretical paradigms surrounding this theme, and present her work to a wider audience in the United Kingdom.

Ms Frauke Mennes

Ms Mennes' research investigates how local democratic politics shape everyday life in a village in Rayalaseema, India. Located in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, the region is marked by a violent history of what is locally termed 'factionism', where different higher caste groups violently vied for village supremacy in earlier times. Using ethnographic fieldwork, she attempts to understand how former factionist violence informs everyday present sociality in the village, as well as how factionist networks have shaped and continue to modalities of state presence and wider political processes. Frauke is registered for a doctoral program in the Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, and spent time at the Centre particularly because of the overlap in her research with that of several of our activities this year, in and around the elections in India in the summer of 2019. She benefitted particularly from interacting with several experts who visited the Centre and participated in our several events surrounding the elections.





CHARLES WALLACE FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIPS

The Centre was delighted to announce the establishment of two fully-funded Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellowships. The fellowships, supported by the prestigious Charles Wallace Trust, will help deepen the Centre's focus on Bangladesh and Pakistan while continuing to build academic links for LSE across South Asia.

Charles William Wallace (1855-1916) was an Anglo-Indian entrepreneur whose businesses flourished in British India and beyond, most famously through Shaw Wallace & Company Ltd (headquartered in Calcutta), which he co-founded with Robert Gordon Shaw in 1886. In Wallace's will, he had said that 'All possessions great and small, being acquired through the people, as mine were, should return to the people.' It was accordingly decided that a part of his Legacy would be used to provide educational and professional development in the United Kingdom to citizens from the 4 countries in South Asia where he had business interests.

The Centre, in collaboration with the **Charles Wallace Bangladesh Trust** and the **Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust**, have invited applications for these Fellowships from scholars based in the 2 countries, to spend up to 12 weeks as a Post-Doctoral Visiting Fellow at the Centre in 2019/20. The Fellowship, which includes a monthly stipend and a contribution towards other costs, is available in each academic year.



TOP: VISITING FELLOW DR HANAKO NAGATA; BOTTOM: VISITING RESEARCHER MS FRAUKE MENNENS.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

2018/19 was another year of digital innovation and rapid growth of our online platforms, multimedia content and 'South Asia @ LSE' blog.

The arrival of a new Editor for our 'South Asia @ LSE' blog with the additional charge of developing the Centre's wider strategy for social media communication has led to a continuing expansion of social media audiences, with new video content (including an increasing number of events being live-streamed) significantly increasing engagement on the Centre's Facebook and YouTube accounts. The dramatic increase in our digital footprint has also benefitted from a newly designed monthly e-newsletter, which acts as a gentle reminder to our subscribers of our activities and resource outputs. The creation of '**The States South Asia**', a free interactive online portal of data has been the latest addition to a digital strategy that disseminates LSE's expertise on the region while underlining the Centre's position as an online hub for discussion, debate and analysis on the political, social, economic and cultural issues facing South Asia today.

SOUTH ASIA @ LSE

- From May 2018 to June 2019, the average number of unique visitors per month reached 15,713, an increase of 42 per cent.
- In the first two Quarters of 2019, the blog's average daily audience doubled in comparison to the same period in 2018.
- 'South Asia @ LSE' continues to post a diverse range of commentary and analysis on all countries of the region, and has expanded its range of content by introducing a weekly 'Long Read'.

The South Asia Centre blog (funded by HEIF) has continued to be a popular online forum for accessible and in-depth articles on the latest research on South Asia from LSE and beyond. When not publishing posts related to new research, the blog has produced rigorous analysis on current affairs across the region. With a special focus on Elections, most crucially in Myanmar and India in 2019, the blog continues to be one of only a few reputable online resources for scholarly and accessible analysis on South Asia.

New and innovative content for the blog, such as a weekly '**Long Read**' article, has helped attract a wider audience. 'India online: How social media will impact the 2019 Indian General Election' posted during the last Quarter attracted some of the blog's highest monthly hits on record.

The blog's increased readership has been partly due to its content being relevant and contemporary, running a variety of blog series linked to the news cycle, for instance on International Woman's Day (focusing on countries less covered such as Bhutan), the Myanmar 2020 elections, Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, dispatches and interviews from major literary events across South Asia, and the 2019 general elections in India.

A strong Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy has allowed the blog's archive to remain relevant and accessible to researchers. The blog continues to cross-post articles from other outlets including prestigious media partners, such as *The Wire* and *South Asia Monitor*. The blog also regularly shares content from other LSE blogs, including the 'LSE Review of Books' and the 'LSE International Inequalities Institute'.



813,929
Total reads



Publish 5
times a week



15,713
Average monthly audience

An increase in the number of articles with a distinctly South Asian perspective on key themes cutting across the region – such as security, trade and poverty – have proved extremely popular in each Quarter. The blog continues to be engaged with LSE Fellows, PhD and Masters students, and now has a daily audience of 300 subscribers who receive each blog in their inbox as soon as it is posted.

'South Asia @ LSE' also continues to play a central role in disseminating the South Asia Centre's ongoing public engagement programmes, publishing articles relevant to major events like the summits on South Asia and Bangladesh, producing event reports, and publicising our Working Papers.

SOCIAL MEDIA

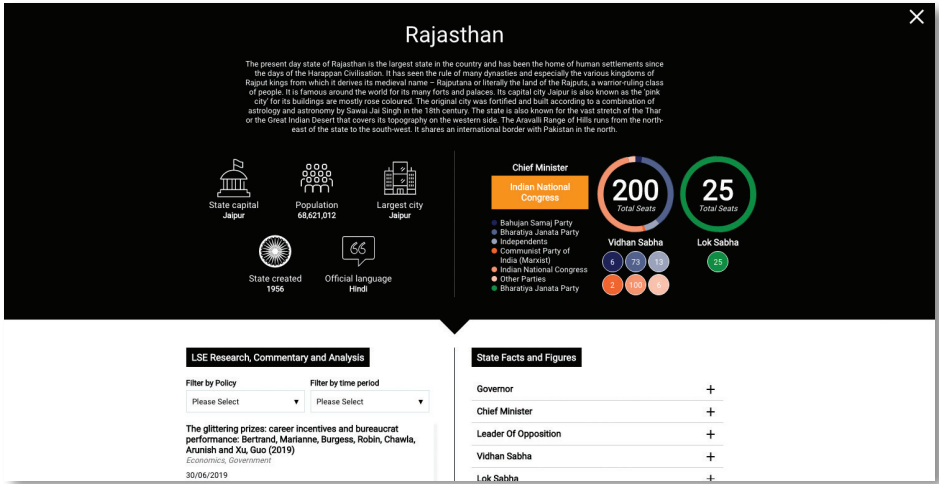
The Centre's Facebook page continues to grow, now reaching 4,473 Followers and 4,258 Likes. The page's videos have registered a Centre-record of 10,100 views – an increase of 369 per cent. And our Twitter account '@SAsiaLSE' has continued to grow at a fast pace, reaching over 7,608 followers – matching last year's rapid growth of around 30 per cent.

The number of subscribers to the Centre's YouTube account has increased to 3,335 – a jump of 166 per cent. During the Indian elections, one YouTube video went viral. A conversation between Jignesh Mevani (MLA, Gujarat) and Kanhaiya Kumar (Former President of JNU Students' Union) registered an incredible 273,000 views – an LSE record! The Centre's Instagram account's audience has more than doubled over the last year following the introduction of new photography equipment.

The Centre's substantial growth on YouTube and spike in the number of views for its videos posted on Facebook has come from a diversification in video content. Two video series filmed during the 2019 India elections, **The View from the Ground** and **LSE Perspectives**, helped grow the Centre's video audience substantially. Numbers have also grown thanks to video content being published on all digital platforms, as well as every event being live-streamed and recorded.

A redesigned monthly e-newsletter which offers a brief summary of South Asia Centre news, events and blogposts, and is sent out to 1,472 subscribers.

Finally, Twitter has witnessed another year of significant growth. The Centre's account is now the fourth highest of any LSE Centre Twitter account. The number of followers continues to grow daily. Audience engagement is holding steady with a 1.12% average daily engagement rate compared to 1.13% during 2017/18. All events are assigned their own hashtags provided at the beginning, and audience members are encouraged to tweet. By providing comprehensive event coverage via Twitter, the Centre is able to reach a much larger and wider global audience, attract more media attention, and bring our events to those who are unable to attend them.



LSE SOUTH ASIA CENTRE'S FREE INTERACTIVE ONLINE PORTAL THAT COMPILES POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, DEMOGRAPHIC, POLICY AND GEOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH ASIA, BEGINNING WITH A PILOT OF INDIA.

THE STATES OF SOUTH ASIA

In May 2019, the South Asia Centre launched **'The States of South Asia'** – a free interactive online portal that compiles political, economic, social, demographic, policy and geographic data on the countries of South Asia. The project started with a pilot of India, in time for the 17th Lok Sabha elections that were held between April-May 2019 in different states of India. Its unique feature is the consolidation of LSE's own expertise alongside rigorously accumulated data from a variety of sources, not found available anywhere on a single portal like this one.

- Using information from the *Census of India*, Election Commission of India, charities, think tanks and various government departments, the map visualises over 4,000 pieces of data.
- States of South Asia (funded by LSE's KEI initiative) is a novel addition to the Centre's digital infrastructure, and aims to engage

audiences beyond academia with LSE's research and expertise on South Asia, as well as the Centre's engagements with the region.

- The portal, when populated fully, will be an indispensable tool, being the only resource of its kind available on India and South Asia, and will serve as an invaluable and reliable resource for researchers, policy advisors and governments across the world.

The site also offers a unique pathway for attracting non-academic partners, alumni and stakeholders to engage with the research and activities of the South Asia Centre, and LSE more generally. It enhances the School's reputation as a leading hub for research and analysis of South Asia, and will dramatically broaden outreach and impact, allowing a wide range of academic and lay audiences a route to learning more about democracy in South Asia, alongside LSE research and expertise.

SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD

Nasser M MUNJEE (Chair, Advisory Board) (LSE BSc Econ 1971-74; MSc Econ 1974-75) is Chairman of Development Credit Bank, and Tata Motor Finance Ltd., both in India. Nasser is also on the Board of several public companies, and is involved with many others as Chairman, Member of the Board or Trustee including ABB Ltd, HDFC Ltd, Britannia Industries, Jaguar Land Rover plc, several Tata companies, and the City of London.

Kaushik BASU (PhD Economics 1976) is Professor of Economics and the C. Marks Professor of International Studies at Cornell University. Basu has served as the Senior Vice-President and Chief Economist of the World Bank and as Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India (2009-2012). He has taught at the Delhi School of Economics and has been visiting professor at various universities.

Craig J CALHOUN is University Professor of Social Sciences at Arizona State University. Prior to this, he was President of the Berggruen Institute in Los Angeles (2016-19); Director and President of LSE (2012-16) where he remains Centennial Professor. He has also been President of the Social Science Research Council in New York (1999-2012), and University Professor at NYU (2004-12).

A Mushtaque R CHOWDHURY (LSE MSc Demography 1978-79) is Vice Chairperson of BRAC, Dhaka where he started his career more than 40 years ago. He was the founding Director of BRAC's Research and Evaluation Division, was previously its Executive Director, alongside serving in several international organisations.

M Ali JAMEEL (LSE BSc Accounting and Finance 1991) is CEO, TPL Trakkers Pvt Ltd in Karachi. He has previously served as Chief Executive of Jahangir Siddiqui Executive Bank (1999-2001) Ali has also held several advisory posts in the Pakistani IT and telecom sectors, and serves as

Director, Executive Director and Non-Executive Director of several companies. He is an Associate Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Lata KRISHNAN (LSE BSc Economics 1981) is Chief Financial Officer for Shah Capital Partners. Krishnan has co-founded SMART Modular Technologies (WWH) Inc. in 1989 and also held corporate accounting and finance positions at Montgomery Securities, Arthur Andersen & Company LLP, and Hill Vellacott & Company in London, England. She has also held Director and Advisor posts to several boards in the Finance and Accounting sector.

Mehli K MISTRY is Director of M Pallonji Group of Companies with interests in shipping, logistics, leasing, insurance, investment and finance, based out of several cities across the world. Mehli works out of Dubai, London and Mumbai.

Fayeeza NAQVI (LSE BSc Econ 1982) is a Trustee of the British Asian Trust, and Aman Foundation UK; in 2015, she was awarded the BNP Paribas Grand Prix award in recognition of her humanitarian work. Fayeeza was previously founding Director of Saharay Welfare which oversaw the disbursement of funds to deserving NGOs in Pakistan.

Ratan N TATA is a businessman, philanthropist, investor and Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, the holding company of the Tata Group, the Mumbai-based global business conglomerate. He has been awarded the Padma Bhushan (2000) and Padma Vibhushan (2008) by the Government of India, and The Honorary Knight Cross of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (2014) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for his lifelong services to business and community.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MUNIZAE JAHANGIR AND IBN ABDUR REHMAN AT 'EVENTUALLY THINGS WILL HAVE TO GET BETTER'; REMEMBERING ASMA JAHANGIR (1952-2018); 21 JUNE 2018; SARAH ASHRAF SPEAKING AT 'AFGHANISTAN, PAKISTAN AND INDIA TRIANGLE', 5 JUNE 2019; MUKULIKA BANERJEE SPEAKING AT DRINKS RECEPTION FOR SOUTH ASIA RESEARCHERS AND FACULTY, 31 OCTOBER 2018; RUCHIR SHARMA SPEAKING ON *DEMOCRACY ON THE ROAD* AT LSE, 18 FEBRUARY 2019; TAYLOR SHERMAN AND MAGNUS MARSDEN AT 'SOUTH ASIA: A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION', 28 MARCH 2019.

FACULTY ADVISORY GROUP

The Faculty Advisory Group are current faculty members at LSE. They serve as everyday Advisors to the Centre, meet twice a year, and advise on important issues confronting the Centre. They have also been actively involved in several of the Centre's events.

Alnoor BHIMANI (LSE PhD in Accounting and Finance 1992; Professor of Management Accounting) is interested in financial controls in the digital economy, management accounting, and strategic finance. He has conducted historical investigations on the emergence of accounting mechanisms indicative of the dependencies between structural accounting controls and cultural shifts over time.

David LEWIS (Professor of Social Policy and Development) focuses on Bangladesh's politics and society, particularly on how the country has been impacted by four decades of international development policies. He has worked extensively on the roles of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society actors in South Asia – mainly in Bangladesh but also in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Tirthankar ROY (Professor of Economic History) launched his latest book *A Business History of India: Enterprise and the Emergence of Capitalism from 1700* (2018), with the South Asia Centre on 31 May 2018. He is currently working on a sequel to his co-authored book *Law and Economy in Colonial India* (2016) dealing with post-Independence India.

Romola SANYAL (Assistant Professor of Urban Geography) is interested in architecture, urban geopolitics, urban theory, housing and citizenship rights. She has written on the politics of space in refugee settlements in the global South with a particular focus on Lebanon and India.

Mahvish SHAMI (LSE PhD in International Development 2011; Programme Co-Director of Development Management) focuses on patron-

client relationships established between peasants and their landlords in Pakistan. Mahvish is currently exploring the types of collective action projects peasants undertake in villages with varying levels of connectivity.

Siva THAMBISETTY (Associate Professor of Law) has research interests in the intellectual property protection of biotechnological inventions, bioethics, and comparative patent law. Siva has written on the implications for India's pharmaceutical industry of the Supreme Court decision to uphold the grant of the first compulsory license on a patented drug; India's death penalty and criminal justice system; and accessibility legislation in India

Rajesh VENUGOPAL (Assistant Professor in International Development) researches the political sociology of development and violent conflict. He has researched and written on post-conflict reconstruction, nationalism, development aid, private sector development, and liberal peacebuilding. His recent publication *Nationalism, Development and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka* (2019) explores the politics of market reform during conflict, post-conflict economics, and military fiscalism.

Naufel VILCASSIM (Professor of Marketing, Department of Management) is an expert on the use of economic theory and econometric techniques to analyse substantive marketing problems. His research has focused on problems in the areas of the marketing mix, competitive interactions and market structure. Vilcassim is also involved in a research project in India on evaluating the efficacy of mobile video training of health care workers assisting patients of Tuberculosis.

EVENTS

6th June 2018

Public Discussion

'The Urgency of Secularism'

Speakers: Amartya Sen (Harvard) and Yogendra Yadav (Swaraj India)
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

7th June 2018

Book Discussion

Why I am a Hindu

Author Shashi Tharoor in conversation with Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

21st June 2018

Public Lecture

with Bloomsbury Pakistan
'Eventually things will have to get better.'
Remembering Asma Jahangir (1952-2018)
Speakers: Amartya Sen (Harvard) and Ibn Abdur Rehman (Human Rights Advocate)
Moderator: Ambar Darr (University College London)
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

22nd June 2018

Film Screening

with Bagri Foundation London Indian Film Festival 2018
'Bengal Shadows':
A Documentary Screening on the Bengal Famine of 1943
Discussants: Amartya Sen (Harvard) and Tirthankar Roy (LSE)
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

2nd July 2018

Public Discussion

with English PEN and Reporters Without Borders
'Social Media, Journalism and Free Speech'
Speakers: Salil Tripathi and Rana Ayyub (Journalists)
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

20th July 2018

Public Lecture

'Ajoka: The Protest of Drama – Remembering Madeeha Gauhar (1956-2018)'
Speakers: Adnan Khan (LSE), Sanjoy Roy (Teamwork Arts, Delhi), Elizabeth Lynch (Arts Catalyst; via Skype) and Shahid Mahmood Nadeem (Ajoka Theatre)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

24th August 2018

Public Discussion

with National Indian Students and Alumni Union (UK)
Rahul Gandhi
(Leader, Indian National Congress) in conversation with Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

31st August 2018

Colombo Development Dialogues 2

with United Nations Development Programme, Sri Lanka
'Water Security and Climate Variability'
Panelists: Tony Allan (King's College London; via Skype), Timotheues Gaasbeek (WASH Advisor), Giriraj Amarnath (IWMI, Colombo), P B Dharmasena (Department of Agriculture, Sri Lanka), Soumya Balasubramanya (IWMI, Colombo)
Moderator: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

25th September 2018

Public Discussion

'Gandhi – The Years that Changed the World 1915-1948'
Speaker: Ramachandra Guha (Independent Historian)
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

12th October 2018**Public Discussion**

with LSESU South Asia Society and Baithak UK
 'Manto: A Conversation with Nandita Das'
 Nandita Das (Director) in conversation with
 Sangeeta Datta (Director, Baithak UK)
 Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

31st October 2018**Drinks Reception for South Asia researchers and faculty****5th November 2018****Lecture**

with British Association for Cemeteries in
 South Asia
 'The British in India: Three Centuries of Ambition
 and Experience'
 Speaker: David Gilmour (Historian)
 Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

9th November 2018**Panel Discussion**

with The Royal British Legion
 'The Red "Khadi" Poppy and the Indian Story'
 Speakers: Shrabani Basu (Author), Field Marshal
 Sir John Chapple, Lord Jitesh Gadhia, and Major S
 S Gogna (British Armed Forces Sikh Association)
 Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

13th November 2018**Book Discussion**

*The Billionaire Raj: Growth and Inequality in an
 Era of Rich Crazy Indians*
 Speakers: David Graeber (LSE), James Crabtree
 (Author), Lord Meghnad Desai and Seema
 Malhotra (Member of Parliament, House of
 Commons)
 Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

14th November 2018**Book Discussion**

India Moving: A History of Migration
 Speakers: Sunil Kumar (LSE), Tirthankar Roy
 (LSE) and Chinmay Tumbe (Author)
 Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

14th November 2018**Prize Announcement**

with The DSC Prize for South Asian Literature
 Speakers: Claire Armitstead (*The Guardian*),
 Kate Mosse (Author), Alexandra Pringle
 (Bloomsbury Publishing) and Sathnam
 Sanghera (Author)

30th November 2018**Roundtable**

with LSE Students
 'Workshop on Indian Elections'
 Speaker: S Y Quraishi (Former Chief Elections
 Commissioner of India)

3rd December 2018**Lecture**

with British Association for Cemeteries in South
 Asia 'Claude Martin: An Enlightenment Figure in
 18th-Century India'
 Speaker: Rosie Llewellyn-Jones (Historian)
 Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

4th December 2018**South Asia PhD Network Meeting**

and launch of 'South Asia Network'
 seminar series.

10th December 2018**Public Discussion**

with Institute of New Economic Thinking, New York
'ARTHA VIVAAD: Innovation Economy and the State'

Speakers: William Janeway (Institute of New Economic Thinking), Srinath Sridharan (Wadhawan Global Capital), Ashok Wadhwa (Ambit Capital), Nasser Munjee (LSE)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

13th December 2018**Workshop**

'India Elections – State Assembly'
LSE Students opened the workshop with presentations showing data for each of the States, followed by guest speakers.
Speakers: James Manor (ICS, London), James Chiriyankandath (ICS, London) and Gilles Vernier (Ashoka University, India)
Google Hangout Participants: Milan Vaishnav (Carnegie, Washington DC) and S Y Quraishi (Former Chief Election Commissioner of India)
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

14 January 2019**Lecture**

with British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia
'Empress: Queen Victoria and India'
Speaker: Miles Taylor (University of York)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

23rd January 2019**South Asia Network Seminar 1**

'The Failures of Lending Regulations in Rural Madras 1930-60'
Speaker: Maanik Nath
Chair: Nicholas Evans (LSE)

1st February 2019**Panel Discussion**

with Bridge India, National Indian Students and Alumni Union UK, Indian Journalists' Association and Indian Young Professionals Network
'The Great March of India's Democracy'
Speakers: Taylor Sherman (LSE), Karamjit Singh (Former Member of the Electoral Commission, UK) and S Y Quraishi (Former Chief Elections Commissioner of India)
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

6th February 2019**South Asia Network Seminar 2**

'Ideological Commitment and Party Politics in Bangladesh'
Speaker: Mascha Schulz
Chair: Nicholas Evans (LSE)

11th February 2019**Lecture**

with British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia
'Dark Hero: Nicholson of Delhi'
Speaker: Stuart Flinders (Journalist and Author)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

13th February 2019**Public Discussion**

'Human Rights and Constitutionalism in Nepal'
Speaker: Surya P. Subedi (University of Leeds)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

18th February 2019**Book Discussion**

Democracy on the Road
Author Ruchir Sharma in conversation with Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

22nd February 2019

LSE-UC Berkeley Bangladesh Summit 2

with The Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies, UC Berkeley

Participants: David Lewis (LSE), Adnan Hossain (VU Amsterdam), Allan de Souza (UC Berkeley), Isha Ray (UC Berkeley), Jade Benjamin-Chung (UC Berkeley), Juli Huang (University of Edinburgh), Lamia Karim (Oregon), Lawrence Cohen (UC Berkeley), Lotte Hoek (University of Edinburgh), Madhuja Mukherjee (Jadavpur, Kolkata), Munis Faruqui (UC Berkeley), Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE), Nusrat Sabina Chowdhury (Amherst), Raka Ray (UC Berkeley), Sabina Rashid (BRAC, Dhaka), Sanchita Saxena (UC Berkeley) and Shameran Abed (BRAC, Dhaka).

6th March 2019

South Asia Network Seminar 3

'Institutional Response to Violence in Asia – How local rebellions shaped state structures in Mughal India'

Speaker: Safya Morshed (LSE)

Chair: Nicholas Evans (LSE)

8th March 2019

Panel Discussion

'Inclusive Development Transformation in India: A Critique and a Proposal?'

Speaker: Rathin Roy (NIPFP, Delhi)

Discussant: Maitreesh Ghatak (LSE)

Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

9th March 2019

Lecture

with Bloomsbury Pakistan

'Annual Bacha Khan Lecture'

Participants: Khadim Hussain (Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan) and Rahmat Shah Sayel (Poet)

Moderator: Ziauddin Yousafzai (Chairperson, Malala Fund)

Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

11th March 2019

Lecture

with British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia

'End of Empire'

Speaker: Alex von Tunzelmann (Historian)

Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

20th March 2019

South Asia Network Seminar 4

'Casteing for Justice Legal Narratives, Dalit Voices and Everyday Atrocities in Rajasthan'

Speaker: Sandhya Fuchs (LSE)

Chair: Nicholas Evans (LSE)

28th March 2019

Roundtable Discussion

'South Asia: A Roundtable Discussion'

Participants: David Arnold (Warwick), Sarah Ashraf (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London), Mukulika Banerjee (LSE), Michael J Hutt (SOAS), Moska Najib (Freelance Photographer), Avinash Paliwal (SOAS) and Naufel Vilcassim (LSE)
Co-Chairs: Taylor Sherman (LSE) and Magnus Marsden (Sussex).

5th April 2019

Colombo Development Dialogues 3 'Refugees,

Asylum-seekers and the 2030 Agenda' with the United National Development Programme, Sri Lanka

Panelists: Menique Amarasinghe (UNHCR Sri Lanka), Ravinatha Aryasinha (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Susan Bird (UNHCR), Christopher Smith (ICS, London)

Moderator: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

8th April 2019

Lecture

with British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia
'Scotland's Empire: The Scots in British India'
Speaker: Thomas Martin Devine (University of Edinburgh)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

30th April 2019

Public Discussion

with LSE South Asia Society
'British Politics and the South Asia Diaspora'
Rajesh Agrawal (Deputy Mayor of London) in conversation with Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

8th May 2019

South Asia Network Meeting 5

'Hierarchy and Imperialism in Late-Colonial Indian – International Thought'
Speaker: Martin Bayly (LSE)
Chair: Nicholas Evans (LSE)

10th May 2019

Book Discussion

Majoritarian State: How Hindu Nationalism is Changing India
Speaker: Edward Anderson (Cambridge), Shakuntala Banaji (LSE), Christophe Jaffrelot (CNRS, Paris), James Manor (ICS, London) Champa Patel (The Royal Institute of International Affairs).
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

15th May 2019

Public Discussion

'Threats to the Constitution in India Today'
Speaker: Prashant Bhushan (Supreme Court of India)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

15th May 2019

Film Screening

'The Saffron Republic'
Directors: Surya Elango and Saloni Saraf

23rd May 2019

India Elections 2019 Live @ LSE

Leading academics, journalists and political analysts discuss what's at stake in India's 17th Lok Sabha elections and what the results could mean for the future.

28th May 2019

Book Discussion

Gun Island
Author Amitav Ghosh in conversation with Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

29th May 2019

South Asia Network Seminar 6

'No culture of our own': Some Consequences of Nepal's Ethnic Politics for Dalits
Speaker: Ivan Descheneaux (LSE)
Chair: Nicholas Evans (LSE)

5th June 2019

Panel Discussion

'Friends, Enemies or just Neighbours? The Afghanistan, Pakistan and India Triangle'
Speakers: Sarah Ashraf (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, London), Elisabeth Leake (University of Leeds) and Avinash Paliwal (SOAS)
Chair: Nilanjan Sarkar (LSE)

THE TEAM



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Director



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Deputy Director and
Development Manager



Christopher Finnigan

Editor, South Asia @ LSE
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Huma Yusuf

Pakistan Advisor

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OF ECONOMICS AND
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