**PCS-431 Conflicts and Cooperation in South Asian Region 03 Credit Hours**

The South Asian region is home to almost a quarter of the world’s population. The region has witnessed a spike of intrastate conflicts and interstate tensions in recent times. It is therefore important to explore various dimensions of conflicts taking place in the region which primarily includes Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

 This course provides a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted dynamics of conflicts and cooperation in the South Asian region. Students will explore historical, political, social, and cultural factors shaping conflicts, as well as strategies for fostering cooperation and peacebuilding. Through case studies, analyses, and discussions, students will gain insights into the complexities of South Asian conflicts and the potential pathways to sustainable peace and development.

 **Learning Objectives**

1. To develop the student’s ability to understand and analyse contemporary conflicts across the south Asian region.

2. To gain an ability to analyse south Asian conflicts intra-state and interstate from different perspectives.

3. To Develop a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of conflicts and cooperation in the South Asian region,

4. To equipp learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to peacebuilding efforts in the region and beyond.

 **Course Contents**

1. Introduction to South Asian Region

· Overview of South Asian countries and their geopolitical significance

· Historical context: Colonial legacies and post-independence challenges

· Diversity in cultures, religions, and languages

· Key actors and institutions in the region

2. Understanding Conflict in South Asia

· Types of conflicts: Ethnic, religious, territorial, and internal

· Root causes of conflicts: Historical grievances, identity politics, and socioeconomic disparities

· Case study: Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan

· Case study: Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka

3. Political Dynamics and Conflict Resolution

· Role of state actors: Governments, military, and political parties

· Diplomatic efforts and peace negotiations

· Mediation and conflict resolution mechanisms

· Case study: India-Pakistan peace process

4. Socioeconomic Dimensions of Conflict

· Impact of conflicts on development and human security

· Refugee crises and internally displaced persons (IDPs)

· Economic interdependence and cooperation opportunities

· Case study: Poverty and conflict in Afghanistan

5. Cultural and Religious Factors

· Religion and identity politics

· Communal tensions and interfaith dialogue

· Role of cultural heritage in peacebuilding

· Case study: Communal riots in India

6. Regional Cooperation and Peacebuilding

· Role of regional organizations: SAARC, ASEAN, and SCO

· Economic cooperation and trade relations

· Cross-border initiatives and confidence-building measures

· Case study: Bangladesh-India water sharing agreement

7. Gender Perspectives in Peace and Conflict

· Gendered impacts of conflicts: Women, peace, and security agenda

· Women's role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding

· Gender mainstreaming in peace processes

· Case study: Women-led peace movements in Nepal

8. Future Prospects and Challenges

· Emerging security threats: Terrorism, extremism, and climate change

· Youth engagement and civil society initiatives

· Prospects for regional integration and cooperation

· Case study: Opportunities for peace in Afghanistan post-conflict

 **Suggested Readings**

· Amir Rana, “Taliban Insurgency in Pakistan: A Counterinsurgency Perspective,” PIPS, Islamabad. 2009.

· Robert D Kaplan, *South Asia’s Geography of Conflict*, Center for a new American security, Washington DC. 2010.

· Shiva Hari Dahal, Haris Gazdar, S.I. Keethaponcalan and Padmaja Murthy, *Internal Conflict and Regional Security in South Asia: approaches, perspectives and policies,* United Nations publication. 2003

· Gould William, Religion and Conflict in Modern South Asia, Cambridge University Press. 2011

· Saez, L. (2012). The South Asian association for regional cooperation (SAARC): An emerging collaboration architecture. Routledge.

· Ganguly, S. (2008). Nuclear Stability in South Asia. International Security, 33(2), 45-70.

· Ganguly, S. (2019). The origins of war in South Asia: Indo-Pakistani conflicts since 1947. Routledge.

· DeVotta, N. (2004). Blowback: Linguistic nationalism, institutional decay, and ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. Stanford University Press.

· Bose, S. (2009). Kashmir: Roots of conflict, paths to peace. Harvard University Press.

· Munir, S., & Ashok, A. (2020). Radicalization: Perspectives from India and Bangladesh.

· Upreti, B. R. (2012). Nepal from war to peace. Peace Review, 24(1), 102-107.

· Upreti, B. R. (2014). Peace and Post-conflict Reconstruction in Nepal: A Bird’s-Eye View.

· Schroeder, K. (2014). The politics of gross national happiness: Image and practice in the implementation of Bhutan's multidimensional development strategy (Doctoral dissertation, University of Guelph).

· Dorji, K. Peacebuilding through human-centered approach: the case of Gross National Happiness through Mahayana Buddhism in Bhutan. Journal of Liberal Arts and Humanities (JLAH) (5)(1); January 2024 (pp. 40-49) Website: www.jlahnet.com Doi:10.48150/jlah.v5no1.2024.a3

· Rubin, B. R., & Armstrong, A. (2003). Regional issues in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. World Policy Journal, 20(1), 31-40.

· Ganguly, S., & O'Donnell, F. (Eds.). (2022). Routledge Handbook of the International Relations of South Asia. Taylor & Francis Group.

· Behera, N. C. (2006). Involving Stakeholders in Conflict Resolution. SAPANA: Conflict resolution in South Asia, 8, 48.

· Gould, W. (2011). Religion and conflict in modern South Asia. Cambridge University Press.