The Politics of Promoting Regulatory State in Pakistan

by Mr Kashif MUMTAZ (Presenter 1, 3:30 - 3:50 pm)
PhD Candidate, Department of Asian International Studies

ABSTRACT: The concept of regulatory state has become central to much of the contemporary debate about the role of the state. The concept seeks to encapsulate various changes in governance following extensive public sector reforms in many advanced economies throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Regulatory state model, thus, has its genesis in the North. Subsequently, however, many states in the global South also have introduced similar reforms. The crucial difference, however, is that while in much of the North, turn towards ‘regulation’ was states’ own choice (though it was dictated by economic compulsions), in the South it has been imposed upon by international financial institutions (IFIs) as part of their neoliberal agenda. Rise of regulatory state in the South, therefore, needs to be understood separately from the way it emerged and evolved in the North. Pakistan has introduced several regulatory reforms during the last three decades or so, almost always at the behest of IFIs. This research seeks to understand the politics of diffusion of regulatory state in Pakistan, focusing on how the results of regulatory reforms in Pakistan have differed from the ideal types of regulatory state. It employs a qualitative case study approach. It traces the history of state transformation in Pakistan to set the context against which regulatory reforms were initiated in Pakistan. The study will focus on three regulatory institutions Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) and Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

ABOUT THE SPEAKER: Kashif Mumtaz is a PhD candidate at the Department of Asian and International Studies of the City University of Hong Kong. His current research interests include political economy of development and governance reforms in Pakistan.
How Do Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives Manage the Sino-Indian Rivalry at the International and Domestic Levels?

by Ms Tshering EUDON (Presenter 3, 4:10 - 4:30 pm)
PhD Candidate, Department of Asian International Studies

ABSTRACT: Big power politics dominates the International Relations discourse. Yet, the strategic importance and competent roles of small states in marshalling agency to influence the international politics remains relevant. Small states have important political, socio-economic, military, and strategic significance to large regional and international powers. This research project aims to explore and understand the power dynamics and foreign policy behaviours of small states towards their great regional powers from the perspectives of South Asian small states. Specifically, the thesis will examine how Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives manage the Sino-Indian rivalry at the international and domestic levels. Using an eclectic theoretical framework, developed for this research from the foreign policy analysis (FPA) and neoclassical realism (NCR), this thesis will analyse the foreign policy making of these small states at the systemic, state and societal levels, so as to understand the roles of external (international) and internal (domestic) factors – and the interplay between them – in foreign policy. In doing so, the research attempts to examine the role of international and domestic factors in small states' foreign policy making, and ultimately the agency of small states in a region dominated by great powers. This thesis will delve into an underexplored aspect of geo-politics and advance a framework to understand small states’ bilateral and multilateral relations with China and India, and other large powers in similar geopolitical situations.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER: Tshering Eudon is a PhD candidate at the Department of Asian and International Studies of the City University of Hong Kong. Her current research interests include the security and foreign policy study of small states vis-à-vis big states in International Relations, particularly in South Asia.

Q & A Session
(4:30 - 5:10 pm)