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ISSUE 1



FASS

NEWSLETTER



EMBRACING GROWTH AND CELEBRATING MILESTONES

Delve into the inspiring narrative of FASS's journey, fostering inclusivity, and shaping the future of education.

DEAN'S MESSAGE

I am very happy to see our students from the Department of Strategic Studies (DSS) taking initiatives that are creative and important for their learning and grooming. The idea of publishing a newsletter was conceived by the students themselves, which seems very promising as it provides an overview of the activities that were conducted over the past year. Several of these activities were led by the students and were successful due to their active participation.

I hope that such initiatives would encourage other students to come up with more innovative ideas that would make their stay at the department more productive and interesting. Such activities are also useful as they provide students with an opportunity to explore themselves and use their strengths to achieve excellence in whatever career choices they opt in the future. We as faculty members would always be supportive of our students' initiatives, to help them achieve success in their academic as well as professional careers.

Dr. ADIL SULTAN

Dean FASS / Actg Chair DSS

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LETTER FROM



Dear all,

Welcome to the very first edition of the FASS NEWSLETTER!

I am thrilled to present our very first issue, born from the desire to strengthen our departmental community and create a sense of connection among us all.

This newsletter is a product of collaboration, innovation and creativity. I want to give a huge shoutout to our amazing team; your hard work and commitment are deeply appreciated.

A special thanks to Dr. Adil Sultan, Dean FASS, and Ma'am Aiza Azam for giving us the space and freedom to develop this initiative. Their support has been crucial in making this newsletter a reality.

Our goal is to showcase the achievements, activities and highlights of our department, documenting important moments throughout the academic year to keep everyone informed and engaged. We envision it as a platform that can be built upon.

Thank you for being a part of this exciting journey. We look forward to your continued support and engagement as we grow this publication together.

Warm regards,

Rahat Arshad
Editor-in-Chief
FASS NEWSLETTER



THE EDITOR

TEAM FASS AS TEAM EPISTEME



In the spring of 2024, as the first blossoms dared to break from their buds, the Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies (FASS) at Air University orchestrated an event of such intellectual opulence that it promised to redefine the academic landscapes of South Asia. Dubbed "Developing Indigenous South Asian Epistemes", in a splendid collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), a revered German foundation dedicated to fostering social democracy across the globe, FASS orchestrated a conference of such intellectual magnificence it promised to redefine the contours of South Asian academic discourse.

The Genesis of a Grand Dialogue

Conceived in the quietude of scholarly reflection, the conference was the brainchild of visionaries who saw beyond the academic horizon. The FASS, with its pillars grounded in intellectual inquiry, joined hands with the FES, whose commitment to promoting inclusive dialogue spans across

continents, to curate a symposium where the echoes of thought would resonate across the realms of policy, culture, and academia.

A Confluence in Islamabad

As the event unfolded, Islamabad transformed into a vibrant conclave of intellect and inquiry. Scholars from distant shores converged, bringing with them a kaleidoscope of perspectives. The conference became a crucible, within which the rich ores of thought were smelted into new, unexplored forms. Each session, each discourse, was a step towards illuminating the diverse epistemological pathways that

South Asia could tread. The discussions that ensued were not mere exchanges of words but the kindling of a great beacon, casting light on paths hitherto shadowed by Western canopies.

As scholars from Nepal, India, and Bangladesh descended upon Islamabad, they carried with them more than just their personal belongings. Their suitcases were laden with powerful, transformative ideas—concepts of decolonisation, indigenesness, locality, paradigm, and epistemes. These were not mere academic terms, but rich, actionable insights, packed alongside their attire, ready to be unpacked and woven into the fabric of discussions, enriching and deepening the intellectual mosaic of the conference.

Echoes Throughout

The profound discussions initiated in Islamabad reverberated through to as far



as Lahore, where spontaneous roundtables emerged, buzzing with debates and discussions sparked at the conference. These gatherings wove the initial threads of dialogue into a broader fabric of discourse, transforming 'epistemes' and 'paradigms' from mere academic jargon into living, breathing entities that inhabited the cafes, classrooms, and corridors.



EXPLORING THE NEXUS OF STRATEGIC ESCALATION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT:

INSIGHTS FROM THE IISS DELEGATION VISIT

In a riveting exchange of ideas and insights, the corridors of Air University reverberated with intellectual fervor as a delegation from the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London (IISS) graced our campus on the 8th of March. The occasion? An interactive panel discussion shedding light on the intricacies of strategic escalation and crisis management, delving deep into the lessons pertinent to air and space power.

Under the canopy of an intellectually charged atmosphere, the session commenced at 11 am and unfolded into a captivating two-hour exploration of the dynamics that underpin strategic stability. At its core, the discourse resonated with the essence of inter and multidisciplinary research, illuminating the interwoven tapestry of military, economic, and political realms.

One of the paramount takeaways from the discussion was the indispensable role of robust relations in ensuring strategic stability. With a delicate dance between military might, economic prowess, and political acumen, the session underscored the interrelatedness and interdependence of these facets in the grand theater of geopolitics.

A focal point of the dialogue was the burgeoning issue of space militarisation, where the delegation elucidated how the weaponisation of space could potentially disrupt the delicate balance of power. Drawing upon regional examples, particularly the evolving dynamics between Pakistan and India, the discourse navigated the nuances of airpower's transformative potential and its implications on regional stability.



A Legacy of Discourse

In the rich tapestry of global academia, FASS has embroidered its sigil, not with thread, but with the gold of wisdom and the silver of insight. The "Developing Indigenous South Asian Epistemes" conference was not the end, but the enchanting beginning of a new chapter in the annals of scholarly pursuit—a chapter penned in the ink of innovation and bound in the leather of tradition.

-Hania Mir



The session not only served as a platform for the exchange of cutting-edge insights but also showcased the latest developments and publications in the realm of strategic studies. With a rich tapestry of ideas woven together, the IISS delegation visit left an indelible mark, igniting a beacon of knowledge that will continue to illuminate our pursuit of understanding the complexities of strategic escalation and crisis management.

As we reflect on the illuminating discourse that transpired, one thing remains abundantly clear: in an era defined by uncertainty and flux, the quest for strategic stability stands as a testament to the enduring pursuit of peace and security in our ever-evolving world.

-Rahat Arshad



BRIDGING MINDS: FASS HOSTS UNIVERSITY OF PUNJAB DELEGATION FOR INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE

On 5th March 2024, the Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies (FASS) at Islamabad's Air University bustled with intellectual exchange as they hosted a delegation from the University of Punjab's esteemed Department of Political Science and International Relations. This delegation wasn't your average group; it comprised a vibrant cluster of leading academics whose expertise spanned the realms of domestic politics, international organisations, and leadership across diverse fields.

Dr. Zahid Mahmood Zahid kicked off the event with a warm welcome, introducing the Department of Strategic Studies to the esteemed guests. He reminisced fondly about his time at UCP, highlighting the department's remarkable achievements in social sciences – one of the most renowned in the country. Dr. Zahid then emphasized the importance of fostering connections among students within the same discipline. He also took a moment to acknowledge the remarkable progress FASS has made in a mere three years, a testament to the tireless efforts of both faculty and students in making this department a resounding success.

Following Dr. Zahid's address, the introductions flowed seamlessly. The Air University International Relations Society (AUIRS) took center stage, with Ms. Aleena Afzal, the vice president, eloquently outlining the society's impressive work within the department in arranging conferences, discussions, academic activities, and book launches. The introductions continued, showcasing the diverse talents of FASS students. Ms. Nuverah Ansari, the department's sports head, Ms. Arooj Azhar, who engaged in research on transgender death rights, Mr Noman, who is a debater and public speaker for the Islamic Society, Mr. Abdullah Bin Tariq, whose main focus of research is China's growing influence in the world, and Mr. Junaid Hussain, responsible for managing departmental events, all gave their introductions to the guests. Adding onto the

intellectual exchange, Ms. Hasala Tanveer, a former president of the Voltaire Society at UCP, also took the stage. She delivered a captivating introduction to their society's work, underlining the vital role of seminars, conferences, and open dialogues on local and international issues. Ms. Tanveer also spoke of the society's flourishing under the guidance of their current HOD and the unwavering support of their mentors, who continue to propel the society forward.

Once the formal introductions were complete, the atmosphere shifted to a more informal setting as guests and FASS students mingled on the balcony over afternoon tea; it may have been a brief visit, but it proved to be an enriching one, igniting young minds through the exchange of diverse perspectives and challenging established beliefs within the student body.

-Arooj Azhar

FASS WELCOMES DANISH AMBASSADOR FOR INSIGHTFUL DISCUSSION ON GREEN TRANSITION IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CRISIS

In a momentous occasion, the Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies (FASS) proudly hosted the esteemed Danish Ambassador to Pakistan on March 27, 2024. Facilitated by the visionary leadership of Air University's Vice Chancellor at the time, Air Marshal (Retd) Javaid Ahmed, this special visit sparked illuminating conversations centered around the imperative topic of the Green Transition in the context of the escalating climate crisis, recognized as a pressing international threat.

Under the capable moderation of Mr. Faraz Haider, a distinguished expert renowned for his profound understanding of climate security and faculty member at FASS, the session unfolded into a captivating dialogue exploring Denmark's exemplary model of sustainability. With a keen eye towards adapting such models to the Pakistani context,

participants delved deep into the mechanisms and challenges of this transformative journey, acknowledging climate change as an urgent global challenge demanding concerted action. The ambiance was electric as the ambassador personally engaged with students, fostering an atmosphere of active participation and exchange. Perspectives on Denmark's success story were vividly articulated, offering invaluable insights into policy reforms and socio-economic dynamics crucial for a sustainable future, all within the context of combating climate change on an international scale.

Central to the discourse was the pivotal question: Can Pakistan afford to embark on a similar trajectory in the face of climate change as an international threat? Through a rich tapestry of historical narratives and comparative analysis, the ambassador painted a compelling picture of Denmark's evolution, juxtaposed with Pakistan's current landscape. Emphasizing the need for strategic alignment and resource mobilization, he underscored the essential ingredients requisite for catalyzing a green revolution in Pakistan while addressing the urgent need to confront climate change as a global challenge.

As the session drew to a close, minds were ignited, perspectives were broadened, and a renewed sense of purpose permeated the air. FASS's commitment to fostering such transformative dialogues stands as a beacon of hope for a greener, more sustainable future for Pakistan and beyond, in the fight against climate change as a pressing international threat.

-Rahat Arshad

INTELLECTUAL DUEL AT AIR UNIVERSITY:

EXPLORING CHINESE SOFT POWER WITH DR. BILAL ZUBAIR

Imagine a room buzzing with the excitement of young minds ready to dive into the depths of global strategy. That was the scene at Air University when the IR Society hosted an unforgettable afternoon with Dr. Bilal Zubair, the acclaimed Assistant Professor of Strategic Studies at the National Defence University, Islamabad. His book, "Chinese Soft Power and Public Diplomacy in the United States," promised to unveil the subtle art of influence in a superpower showdown, and it delivered in spades.

From my perspective as the moderator, the afternoon was a blend of intellectual discovery and subtle personal moments. Watching the audience lean in, their eyes reflecting a shared eagerness, I felt a connection with every inquisitive mind in the room. Dr. Zubair began with an exposition that was nothing short of mesmerising. He painted a vivid picture of China's strategic use of soft power—cultural diplomacy, educational exchanges, and media influence—each element a brushstroke in a grand canvas depicting China's efforts to shape American perceptions and policies.

The room was abuzz with anticipation, every attendee leaning in, eager to catch every nuance. When the floor opened for questions, it was as if a dam had burst. Students and faculty, their minds alight with curiosity, bombarded Dr. Zubair with a barrage of inquiries. As questions flowed, I sensed the unique sparks of collective quest and the silent exchange of ideas. His responses were masterclasses in clarity and depth, each one a small revelation that further illuminated the intricate dance of international relations.

Then came the *pièce de résistance*: Dr. Afsah, a luminary in the field of international relations, rose to challenge the very foundation of soft power. She posited, with a dramatic flair, that soft power without the backing of hard power was akin to a sword without a blade—impressive but ultimately ineffective. This bold assertion set the room alight. A spirited debate ensued, with Dr. Zubair deftly parrying each critique,



his counterarguments sharp and compelling. The audience was drawn into the fray, transforming the session into a dynamic, electrifying exchange of ideas.

The session concluded with thunderous applause, a testament to the impact of Dr. Zubair's insights and the exhilarating intellectual duel that had unfolded. The Air University IR Society had succeeded in not just hosting an event but in creating a memorable experience that invigorated minds and sparked a renewed passion for the study of international relations.

-Hania Mir

EXPLORING RELIGIOUS DIPLOMACY:

MUHAMMAD ISRAR MADNI'S INSIGHTS ON PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

FASS hosted a timely guest lecture on March 26th, 2024, exploring the potential of religious diplomacy to improve relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The speaker, Muhammad Israr Madni, shared his expertise with a captivated audience. Moderated by Dr. Zahid Mahmood, this session took a deep dive into the rollercoaster relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. This lecture by Mr. Israr provided valuable insights into the historical and contemporary challenges in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations because the talk was not just about the here and now; it explored how historical events, like the controversial reforms of Amanullah Khan and the devastating Soviet invasion, continue to cast long shadows over the region. He even touched on the heartbreaking reality of Afghan children raised amidst constant conflict. The lecture sparked a lively discussion about the reasons behind the simmering anti-Pakistan sentiment in Afghanistan.

Things got interesting when Mr. Israr proposed using religious diplomacy, a lesser-known approach where religious education becomes a bridge between cultures. This idea offered a glimmer of hope for improved relations. However, the discussion also unearthed some major roadblocks, like the presence of the troublesome Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its suspected ties to the Taliban.

The lecture concluded on a thought-provoking note, leaving the audience with a sense of cautious optimism. While the path to peace between Pakistan and Afghanistan might still be long and winding, Mr. Israr's exploration of religious diplomacy offered a fresh perspective on how to bridge the gap and foster a more peaceful future for the region.

-Arooj Azhar



**YOUR MENTAL
HEALTH IS A
PRIORITY!**



**PRIORITISING
MENTAL
HEALTH**

**A CRUCIAL CONVERSATION
FOR BS IR 5TH SEMESTER
STUDENTS**

In the face of academic pressures, societal expectations, and the myriad challenges of university life, mental health can often take a back seat. Recognising the importance of addressing this crucial aspect, Ms. Aiza Azam, the class advisor for BS IR 5th semester, consistently emphasized the need for open discussions on mental well-being from the beginning of the academic year. These advisories culminated in a highly anticipated mental health session held on May 15, 2024, titled "Self-Care: Why Prioritising Mental Health is Important." 7

Clinical psychologist Ms. Rohia Nusrat, from the Centre of Counselling and Career Advisory (C3A) at NUST, led the discussion. She provided valuable insights into common mental health challenges faced by students and shared practical strategies to address them effectively.

The session began with an engaging exercise where students were asked to reflect on their childhood experiences. This set the stage for a deeper exploration of emotional well-being and the importance of acknowledging and processing one's feelings.

Throughout the session, Ms. Rohia Nusrat introduced several coping techniques, including methods to manage panic attacks and grounding exercises. Students also practiced these techniques. Ms. Nusrat also emphasized the plethora of online resources available to help practice mindfulness and foster emotional well-being.

A significant aspect of the session was the interactive dialogue between the students and Ms. Nusrat, which highlighted the shared human experiences and emotions that often go unspoken. The discussion also touched on the concept of toxic positivity, underscoring the importance of allowing oneself to experience and process a full range of emotions without feeling pressured to maintain a facade of constant happiness.

Towards the end of the session, Ms. Nusrat brought the students back to the initial reflection on their childhood. She encouraged them to consider what they would now say to their younger selves, armed with the insights and coping mechanisms they had just learned. This reflective exercise was both poignant and liberating for many participants.

Sessions like this are vital for promoting a positive environment at universities. They provide students with the tools and understanding needed to prioritise their mental health, ultimately leading to a more supportive and empathetic academic community. The students expressed their gratitude to Ms. Aiza Azam for her unwavering dedication

and efforts in organising such an impactful session. It is through initiatives like these that we can hope to foster a culture of well-being and resilience in our educational institutions.

-Rahat Arshad



BEHIND THE SCENES OF FASSCONFINT24:

THE QUINTESSENTIAL CONFERENCE

“We choose to hold this conference and do all the other things, not because they are easy but because they are hard.” - JFK maybe.

Standing out in a distinguished manner and looking good along the way is right up there at the top of the FASS agenda. Nothing embodies it more than the recent conference on the development of South Asian epistemology. Like always, the joint efforts of the faculty and students have played a cardinal role in bringing this conference to fruition. But what exactly went on behind the scenes? Unquestionable optimism? All-nighters? And missed classes? Well, perhaps that and a lot more.

The idea of bringing together an intellectual herd for this conference and the subject matter must be accredited to our faculty member Ms. Ayesha Malik. During her classes, she hinted at bringing such a topic to mainstream discussions, which eventually was the purpose of this conference. Her endurance of the constant trial of back-and-forth mental triads for arranging logistics, preparation itineraries, keeping the students on their toes (not that they aren't already), and the all-nighters (the bane of every student and teacher) saw tremendous results! On more than one occasion, she was seen directing the student body on how to go about conducting their duties in the days leading up to the conference.



FASS DOES IT BETTER

Have you ever seen students whip up in shape for an event as fast as FASS students? They haven't either, but they always come out successful in every way possible! Between the rehearsals for masters of ceremony and setting up required logistics to ensure the event goes smoothly, quite a lot happened 'behind closed doors.'

A student member of the management team was quite forthcoming with details. When asked about how they depended on the students to play their part, their response was, “We see which team (social media, ushers, or host team) plays to the strengths of the students and assign them respectively.” It shows how thorough the management team was in ensuring everything went smoothly.

SOCIAL MEDIA GURUS

“Where there is a will there is a wifi connection” (or maybe the other way around) - Dr. Zahid

The efforts of the social media team as always are significant contributing factors to the success of any event. This time the social media team was headed by Sir Zahid, who made sure that the team performed without any

hitches and took it upon himself to curtail any dullness when it came to work. Of course, his positive and good-humored nature pushed the team members to carry out a barrage of tweets, quotes, and retweets (well that was the whole point) which led to a prominent presence on X and in some cases... account bans...

The students and faculty were happy with how the event turned out; a post-conference appreciation talk by our dean Dr. Adil Sultan followed the sentiment. All the volunteers were congratulated on a job well done and encouraged to embrace the experience they garnered from it and translate it into professional endeavours. The volunteers were also satisfied with being recognized for all that they did – getting a certificate to pin on a resume does that of course. All in all, a job well done for everyone.

Props to the FASS team! It wouldn't have been possible if not for them.

-Anas Yamin



STUDENTS' INSIGHTFUL VISITS TO ISSI AND CASS: A GATEWAY TO REAL-WORLD LEARNING

Our BS International Relations (IR) and BS Strategic Studies (SS) students recently had the privilege of visiting two renowned think tanks in Islamabad, enriching their academic journey with practical insights and interactive learning.

Visit to the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI):

The ISSI graciously hosted our students, providing a vibrant platform for discussion on the contemporary world order, key regional and global issues, major-power contestation, and the salient aspects of Pakistan's foreign policy. This interaction allowed students to delve deep into the complexities of international relations and strategic studies, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-

world application. The sessions at ISSI were particularly valuable, as they offered our students a chance to engage with seasoned experts and practitioners in the field, enhancing their understanding of the dynamic and often volatile nature of global politics.

Visit to the Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS):

Equally enriching was the visit to CASS, where students attended a compelling talk on the fusion of emerging technologies with strategic studies and international relations. The discussion highlighted the transformative impact of technological advancements on global security dynamics and international diplomacy. Students

were actively engaged in the interactive session, gaining fresh perspectives on how emerging technology shapes security policies and international strategies. The immersive experience at CASS underscored the importance of integrating technological literacy with strategic and international studies, preparing our students for future challenges in these fields.

These visits underscore the department's commitment to providing co-curricular learning opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. Such engagements not only enhance academic knowledge but also foster critical thinking and practical understanding.

-Hammad Madni

BEAUTIFUL DISASTER: A TRIP TO MUSHKPURI TOP



Getting hit in the eye with a snowball – that's probably the most prominent detail from our trip to Muskhuri Peak. A cold, sunny, snowy, and eventful day? Definitely not. It was more like a nightmare out of a horror movie with a happy ending. Let me explain why. I don't think many people realize how dangerous it is to climb a mountain where the ice is melting rapidly, and each step feels like it could be your last.

Before we started the hike, this kid came up to me and said, "Buy this stick, or you're going to regret going on this hike." I remember thinking this kid must be out of his mind if he thought that tactic would make me buy the wooden stick. Fifteen minutes later, three minutes into the hike, guess who bought the stick at triple the price the boy had offered? That's what you get for robbing a young boy of his daily wage who was just trying to save your life.

Halfway through, we saw a group of friends coming down. I watched them, one by one, fall because they couldn't climb down the mountain. Suddenly, a thought struck me: Am I next? Am I going to fall down this

mountain on my way back? I looked up to the sky and spoke to God. "Dear God," I said, "if there's a rescue crew nearby, they need to come here and save me". But looking back, the determined faces of my friends made me feel a little more invincible and a little less cowardly. Right then and there, it was decided: we're going to make it to the very top, even if that meant pushing ourselves to the limit (though we certainly hoped it wouldn't come to that). A couple of hours, a dozen "I give ups", and a few scratches later, we did make it.

Rolling down a mountain covered in snow? Check. Throwing snowballs at each other (even at the cost of permanent damage)? Check. Making snow angels? Check. We made a core memory that day. We carried each other forward, carried each other back. We went there as acquaintances and came back as a team, with the knowledge that when push comes to shove, we've got each other's backs.

It was a beautiful disaster of a day. Maybe it wasn't the wisest decision to go there with the melting snow, but that didn't stop us. March 9th, 2024, is a day that will live in my mind rent-free – a memory I'd want back if I had amnesia, a day I wish I could relive, or at least have a chance to experience something like that again. I mean, a girl can hope.

-Arooj Azhar



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: CELEBRATING EXTRACURRICULAR TRIUMPHS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STRATEGIC STUDIES

The Department of Strategic Studies stands as a beacon of rapid advancement within our esteemed university. Notably, the students of International Relations exhibit a remarkable blend of academic passion and a keen interest in extracurricular pursuits, particularly outdoor activities. Each year, Air University continues to ignite the spirit of competition through its departmental sports, where footballs fly, cricket bats swing, shuttlecocks dart, and volleyballs soar. The competitions during the previous academic year were no exception.

Leading the athletic symphony were the sports heads of the 6th semester: Sib Tul Hassan, who commanded the men's team, and Nuverah Ansari, who led the ladies' team. They worked together across semesters to coordinate and collaborate in the assembly of outstanding teams for each sporting discipline.

Under Nuverah as the captain, the basketball team showed remarkable skills and abilities as they dribbled their way to the quarterfinals of the inter-sports tournament held at the sports complex. Meanwhile, Moaz Khan led the football team to the quarterfinals. This was a commendable achievement for

our department. The cricket team, led by Taimur Raza from the 4th semester, also showcased their unwavering dedication and secured a spot in the semi-finals. Sib Tul Hassan led the volleyball team into the quarterfinals, embodying the indomitable spirit that defines our department. Last but certainly not least, Asim, a master's degree student and our badminton maestro, elevated the department's pride by reaching the semi-finals.

Students excelled not only in physical activities but also in academic endeavors such as Urdu and English essay competitions, debates, and the intellectually stimulating Kasoti competition. This challenge required participants to identify a famous personality through cryptic hints, testing their intellectual prowess. The Kasoti team, headed by Urooba Shafqat from the 5th semester, demonstrated their creativity and emerged victorious in the finals. Additionally, Dua e Zahra consistently displayed her exceptional writing skills by winning top awards in the university's Urdu essay competitions. Their unrelenting commitment to their crafts, coupled with the unwavering support of our faculty, was the driving force behind every student's accomplishments.

Throughout the competitive matches, the entire department came together to support all participating teams. This collective backing proved instrumental in boosting the confidence of the players and enhancing their performance. The matches were enjoyed by all and provided a valuable opportunity for the department to bond as a group.

The accomplishments of our department are a testament to its unwavering dedication to empowering students to excel in all their endeavors. Currently, the sports heads are training successors to take over their responsibilities. These achievements highlight the collaborative efforts of both students and faculty, who continue to offer their unwavering support and encouragement.

-Sidra Fatima

CRAFTING THE FASS NEWSLETTER:

VISIONS FOR A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

Within the heart of the FASS Newsletter, there's a chorus of ideas echoing through its corridors. Each voice brings its own dreams and hopes, painting a picture of what this newsletter could be.

One voice is like a burst of energy, eager for the newsletter to buzz with news about what's happening on campus. They want to hear about the latest research projects, exciting guest lectures, and visits from renowned professors. They even imagine a fun section where students can get creative, maybe writing stories that mix fact and fiction or poems that explain scientific ideas.

Then there's another voice, warm and friendly, wanting the newsletter to feel like a cozy gathering of friends. They're excited about sharing stories from behind the scenes, showing all the hard work that goes into making things happen in the department. They also dream of bringing people together across semesters, celebrating each person's unique contribution, and maybe even adding some fun and entertaining pieces to lighten the mood.

Lastly, there's a voice of wisdom, looking for the newsletter to be a place of learning and connection. They hope for a mix of insightful articles, interviews, and opinions that reflect the department's diverse interests. They see it as a platform for sparking conversations, bridging different fields of study, and helping everyone feel more connected to each other and to the world of academia.

Together, these voices weave a variety of ideas, each adding its own thread to the story of the FASS Newsletter. With their combined vision, they're shaping a space where creativity thrives, friendships blossom, and learning never stops. In their shared dream, the newsletter becomes more than just a collection of words—it becomes a vibrant community where everyone has a voice and a place to belong.

-Hammad Madni

THE JOURNEY OF FASS: EMBRACING CHANGE AND CULTIVATING EXCELLENCE

The people of Ogimi, the village renowned for its longevity, sing a song celebrating all seasons that goes, “Spring, summer, fall, winter, we happily enjoy all the seasons.” This melody, as highlighted in Héctor García and Francesc Miralles’ book *Ikigai*, echoes the teachings of Buddhism and stoicism—philosophies that emphasize the impermanence of life. Similar to these teachings, Marcus Aurelius, a Roman emperor, once remarked that the changes in our world are not accidental but intrinsic to the universe’s nature. To live is to grow, and our department is no less than a living being.

Just as the residents of Ogimi find joy in every season, our department thrives by embracing change, recognising it as growth. Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies, FASS, began its journey in fall of 2021 with the introduction of its BSIR program. It came its first batch, and then the second in spring. Since then, it has expanded to accommodate six diverse batches of students.

From its inception, FASS’s curriculum was designed to be dynamic. Dr. Adil Sultan, Dean FASS, explains that the motivation behind the BSIR program was to create a contemporary and unique program addressing current and future challenges. He, on more than one occasion, has emphasised the importance of innovative curriculum design, incorporating subjects like emerging technologies and climate security to prepare students for the evolving global landscape.

A goal FASS started out with was to build a strong foundation and this was achieved with its first two batches, now the goal is to maintain and enhance this standard. Dr. Adil and FASS faculty envisions producing a group of intellectuals who, equipped with practical experience, will excel in diverse fields.

With this, the faculty’s perspective has evolved to appreciate students’ extracurricular talents. Ma’am Aiza Azam, in particular, fondly talks about her student’s talents outside the classroom, placing emphasis on students supporting each other in their endeavours especially in those where the department is being

represented. I'm sure we all can reminisce on matches, be it football or basketball, where we have cheered our hearts out. This resonates with the supportive and inclusive environment FASS has tried to create from its very beginning.

When asked about what sets FASS apart from other departments, Sir Sabir Muhammad states that it is its student centric approach that encourages debate and initiative. The students would agree, from our very first day here at FASS we were encouraged to be creative and to think out of the box to excel in our field; this rings true to all of Dr. Adil's orientation sessions.

Something the department has been able to achieve is the creation of a harmonious community without rigid hierarchies. Faculty and students alike contribute to its culture, promoting mutual respect and understanding. There's a sense of harmony and agreement on the department's vision and values. Dr. Zahid Mahmood appreciates the promotion of inclusivity and positive competition among colleagues, enhancing his work life. Similarly, Ma'am Ayesha Jamil reflects on her time filled with laughter, learning, and occasional mishaps, showing that education at FASS is both serious and joyful. Both these experiences highlight that learning is a two-way street at FASS, with growth evident in both students and faculty, as well as the simple fact that their experiences are alike.

When talking about change, the biggest would be the department's growth in not only numbers but also in diversity, strengthening the bonds within the faculty and the department as a whole. Despite the increased busyness, a cohesive thread binds everyone together for the duration of their time at FASS. Beyond that, the future remains an exciting story yet to unfold.

Overtime, students at FASS have also found their niches within the bustling environment, maintaining a balance between individual pursuits and communal connection. This dynamic creates a home for all members of the department. I would describe mine to be this newsletter, giving you all space to consider and define yours.

Amongst all the change, one thing remains and that is the pride FASS takes in the strong sense of family and solidarity among its members. This unity becomes particularly evident during departmental events, which Ma'am Aiza Azam describes as the department's greatest achievements.

FASS can be envisioned as a hub for creative minds, known for its progressive approach to education and adaptability to new concepts and technologies. Dean FASS outlines plans for further expansion, including the introduction of postgraduate programs in IR to provide students with specialized skills and career opportunities in policymaking and academia, owning to perpetual growth.

As the cycle of seasons repeats itself, so too does the cycle of growth and evolution within our department. We understand that to live is to grow, to adapt, and to thrive in the face of change. Like the resilient people of Ogimi, we approach each season of our department's journey with gratitude, humility, and a steadfast commitment to excellence.

-Rahat Arshad



INTERACTIVE CAREER COUNSELLING SESSION FOR BS IR 5TH SEMESTER: NAVIGATING FUTURE PATHS

On March 13, 2024, an enriching career counseling session was held for the BSIR 5th semester students. Organised by Ms. Aiza Azam, the class advisor, this event provided a platform for students to engage with professionals from diverse career backgrounds within the social sciences field.

The session was initiated in response to students' growing concerns about their career prospects. Ms. Aiza Azam recognized the need for a structured discussion to alleviate these concerns and provide clear guidance. The panel comprised six distinguished professionals: Javairyah Aatif from the Islamabad Policy Research Institute, Etfa Mirza from Radio Pakistan, Abbas Hassan from the National Security Division, Adeela Khan from the British High Commission, Talha Ul Huda from Infer Digital and Faez Roger from Tabadlab. Each speaker shared their unique journey, shedding light on the pathways that led them to their current roles, offering students a realistic view of the professional world.

The session was highly interactive and a significant portion of the questions focused on practical aspects such as CV building, identifying and seizing opportunities and the platforms best suited for job searches. The speakers unanimously stressed the importance of published work, presentation skills, and effective communication as key differentiators in the competitive job market.

Students walked out of the session with a renewed sense of clarity and confidence regarding their career goals. The real-life experiences and advice shared by the speakers provided them with tangible steps to take in their career planning. Moreover, the emphasis on continuous learning and skill development resonated with many, highlighting the importance of adaptability in an ever-changing job landscape.





NEW DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMER 2024

A DYNAMIC SUMMER AT FASS: WORKSHOP AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

As the days grew longer and temperatures rose, the Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies (FASS) geared up for an eventful summer. With an exciting lineup that included both a workshop and an internship program, there was plenty to look forward to as we dove into the warmer months.

FASS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM:

This summer, FASS was proud to offer an immersive internship program designed to provide participants with hands-on experience, mentorship, and opportunities for professional growth. Spanning four weeks from mid-July to mid-August, this program promised to be a transformative experience for students and professionals alike. From research mentorship to practical learning opportunities, networking events, and the chance to contribute to event organization, the FASS Internship Program was a gateway to new opportunities and experiences. Interns were tasked with helping organize the 4th FASS Annual Workshop, launching and creating content for the FASS Instagram page, all aimed at offering them a well-rounded learning experience.

NEW
NEW
NEW
NEW

1

4TH FASS WORKSHOP ON CONTEMPORARY SECURITY ISSUES:

In addition to the internship program, FASS also hosted the highly anticipated 4th Workshop on Contemporary Security Issues. Held from July 22nd to August 2nd, this workshop offered participants the chance to engage with leading experts in the field, participate in extensive discussions, and take part in interactive sessions and tabletop simulation exercises. Participants comprised young scholars as well as early to mid-career professionals from the academic, government, and research sectors. With a focus on pressing global issues and real-world challenges, the workshop was a stimulating and enlightening experience for all involved.

2

INTERN DIARIES

The first week of the internship was a breeze, filled with fun and ease. However, the real journey began with the commencement of the FASS 4th Workshop on Contemporary Security Issues. Those 10 days were intense, packed with 16 thought-provoking sessions that delved into a diverse array of topics, from space deterrence to geo-economics. Each session was an eye-opener, leaving me not only more knowledgeable but profoundly inspired to make a change.

As the workshop progressed, we engaged in various enriching activities. Writing the post-workshop report was a deeply educational experience, allowing us to synthesize and articulate the vast amount of knowledge we had absorbed. Creating Instagram reels to document and share our journey was equally exciting. It developed our skills in digital storytelling and helped us reach a broader audience with the insights we gained. Moreover, writing op-eds taught us the power of persuasive writing and its role in public discourse and policy influence. These tasks not only enhanced our understanding but also sharpened our communication skills, making us more confident and competent individuals.

“This certificate is provided to Ms. XYZ for successfully and outstandingly completing the Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies Research Internship Program 2024 at Air University, Islamabad, from 15th July to 13th August 2024”, symbolizes 20 days of tireless effort. However, it is much more than a piece of paper. The experiences we gained, the responsibilities we upheld, and the duties we fulfilled during this period were invaluable. They have shaped our skills and character in ways that no certificate alone could ever encapsulate.

As I reflect on this experience, I'm uncertain about what the future holds. Yet, I am confident that this internship has equipped me to face any challenge that comes my way. I feel incredibly fortunate to have had



this opportunity, and I am deeply grateful for the memories created with fellow interns and mentors. These are moments I will cherish forever.

A quote from Winnie the Pooh often comes to mind: "How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." These words perfectly define my time at the FASS internship. There is no other place where I could have gained such a profound and enriching experience. From the intense workshops and report writing to creating engaging Instagram reels and writing op-eds on various topics, each moment has been a step towards growth. I will always hold this time dear to my heart, forever grateful for the journey and the growth it fostered.

-Arooj Azhar

A GLIMPSE INTO THE WORKSHOP

The 10-day workshop organized by FASS covered a broad range of topics, from the complexities of contemporary international relations, to security, and economics. It began with an exploration of Afghanistan's evolving situation under the Taliban and its implications for regional security, followed by an analysis of the media's role in balancing national security with public information rights. From there onwards, sessions delved into pressing global issues, such as climate deterrence, the emerging global order, and the impact of new technologies on international security. Discussions also addressed the future of South Asia post-Indian elections, with a focus on maritime security and Pakistan's foreign policy challenges.

As the workshop progressed, and week two began, speakers emphasized the importance of strategic stability in South Asia, the relevance of multilateral arms control, and the contested nature of space in modern deterrence strategies. Interactive sessions with Dr. Adil Sultan, Ms. Aiza Azam, and Mr. Faraz Haider further explored the dynamics of Pak-China relations, space developments, and their implications for climate change. The final days included a crisis simulation exercise on AI in military technology, discussions on Pakistan's geo-economic vision, and the securitization of discourse in global politics. The workshop concluded with a comprehensive overview of the interconnected nature of security, technology, and economics, highlighting the need for informed strategies and international cooperation.

-Arooj Azhar

FASS NEWSLETTER

CREDITS

As we wrap up the first edition of the FASS NEWSLETTER, we want to thank you all for your time and interest in this new venture. Our goal is to keep you connected and engaged with everything happening in our department.

We're excited about the future and the opportunity to share more stories, achievements, and updates with you. Your feedback is invaluable, so please let us know your thoughts and suggestions for future editions.

Together, we can continue to build a vibrant and supportive community. Here's to a fantastic academic year ahead!

Warm regards,

Team
FASS NEWSLETTER

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