

# Conflict Weekly

An initiative by NIAS-IPRI and KAS India Office

*A brief review of conflict and peace processes across the world*

28 April 2021, Vol.2, No.04

## Israel-Syria missile strikes, Political deadlock and violent clashes in Somalia. and Afghan meetings in Pakistan

Jeshil Samuel J, Apoorva Sudhakar, and Rishabh Yadav



Syria and Israel continue to strike each other with a series of missile attacks. (Image Source: Arab News)

### Israel-Syria: Continuing Missile Strikes

#### In the news

On 22 April, a Syrian anti-aircraft missile landed near Israel's top-secret Dimona nuclear facility in the Negev desert. Although the missile did not cause any damage or injuries, the Israeli military immediately launched a counterattack the same day. It destroyed multiple defence batteries in Syria, including the one that fired the missile. Three soldiers were seriously wounded, and a Syrian officer was killed in the strike.

On 8 April, the Israeli military attacked an arms depot and military facility in the Al-Demas area near Damascus. Though Syrian air defences intercepted most of the missiles, a few

managed to hit targets, killing three and damaging military infrastructures as well. The depot is said to have been used by the Hezbollah militias operating from Syria.

### Issues at large

First, Israel's Syria problem. Since the beginning of the civil war in Syria a decade ago, Iranian troops have been a constant support to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The increasing number of Iranian troops in Syria was not welcomed by Israel, which shares its northern border with Syria. Iran also began supplying precision-guided rocket missiles to the militias operating under them in Syria. This became a huge security concern for Israel, which then began conducting regular air and missile strikes in Syria to disrupt the supply chain from Iran and keep the rising number of militants in check.

Second, Syria's Israel problem. Syria has not recognized Israel and does not have any bilateral ties. Despite their hatred towards Israel, Syria does not usually initiate or provoke any form of attack on the border they share with Israel. Most of the attacks that they conduct are retaliatory strikes against Israeli attacks. The recent missile attack near the Dimona nuclear facility was also reported by Syrian media outlets to be a defensive measure to prevent Israeli airstrikes near Damascus. However, the militias operating from Syria are said to have a keen interest in targeting Israel and have conducted numerous attacks on the Israel-Syria border.

Third, the use of proxies in the conflict. Syria has been home to numerous religious and regional extremist groups even before the Arab Spring movement engulfed in 2011. Groups such as the Shabiha who primarily consist of the Alawite Muslims, have been used as proxies by the Syrian government since the 1980s. After 2011, extremist groups such as the Hezbollah, backed by Iran due to their Shiite roots, began gaining a foothold in Syria. To suppress the violent uprising quickly, President Assad sought help from Hezbollah and the Iranian government, giving Tehran more control in Syria and opportunities to attack Israel. On the other hand, Israel has conducted most of their attacks in Syria, targeting Iranian troops and Iran-backed groups.

### In perspective

The constant missile strikes between Israel and Syria are nowhere close to an end. A report from the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights mentioned that Israel had conducted 29 strikes in Syria since the beginning of 2021. The tit-for-tat game between Iran and Israel is causing massive losses to Syria, which has been used as a battleground for proxy wars. For now, Iran could limit its use of proxies to orchestrate attacks due to its crumbling economy, and Israel might want to rethink its security measures after getting attacked deep within its territory.

## Somalia: Farmaajo reverses term extension following clashes in the capital

### In the news

On 28 April, President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, also known as Farmaajo, reversed the decision to extend his presidential term by two years after clashes within security forces gripped the capital, Mogadishu, for three days. Farmaajo said he would appear before the parliament on 1 May "to gain their endorsement for the electoral process that [was] agreed upon." He also asked the opposition not to initiate activities that could jeopardize the country's stability. However, the opposition maintained that they would not change their stand.

On 25 April, Mogadishu witnessed clashes between pro-government and pro-opposition units within the security forces. The New York Times reported that pro-opposition soldiers "took positions at several strategic locations in Mogadishu, drawing fire from pro-government forces." A former Somali president claimed that soldiers had attacked his residence and Farmaajo of the same. However, the Minister of Internal Security denied these claims and blamed foreign countries instead.

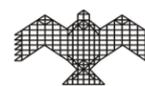
On 23 April, the UN Security Council called on all actors in Somalia to reach a consensus on the electoral process and "reject violence and resume dialogue as a matter of urgency and without precondition."

### Issues at large

First, the political deadlock. The latest clashes took place after Farmaajo extended his presidential term by two years on 12 April. This measure was taken after the regional governments of Puntland and Jubbaland, and the federal government disagreed on the procedure for parliamentary and presidential elections scheduled for February 2021. This was the second time elections were postponed; the parliamentary elections were postponed from December 2020.

Second, the clan-based electoral system. The presidential elections in Somalia are characterized by a clan system wherein clan elders choose lawmakers who elect the president. Further, clans do not have an equal share, and hence the system is called the 4.5 formula, where four major clans have an equal share, and the minority groups have half a share. Though the system has been under criticism from within and outside the country, the political leaders have not given it up. The clan divisions are also evident in the armed forces.

Third, external pressure on Somalia. Since 2012, external countries and organizations, including the US, EU and the UN, have backed the federal government in Somalia to prevent the country from slipping into a civil war. Therefore, following Farmaajo's bid to extend the presidential terms, the US threatened to impose sanctions, and the EU also said it would consider "concrete measures."



### In perspective

First, the recent clashes reflect the worsening internal political stability of the country. It also exposes the fragile nature of Somalia's clan-based system, whether in the political front or in the armed forces.

Second, the long-drawn political and electoral impasse shows that the political leaders, both federal and regional, lack a will to reach a consensus or a compromise. While the clashes have pushed Farmaajo to act in urgency, it is uncertain whether the immediacy will be reflected in other leaders.

## Pakistan: Meetings with Afghan leaders

### In the news

On 22 April, COAS Gen. Bajwa met Afghan Ambassador Najibullah Ali to discuss the Afghan peace process, bilateral security and defence cooperation. On the same day, an Afghan daily, Tolo News, reported that Taliban's chief negotiator Mawlawi Abdul Hakim had travelled to Pakistan from Doha to seek guidance from the Taliban leadership on the US-backed Istanbul dialogue.

On 23 April, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi attended the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Turkey trilateral meeting that issued a joint statement calling all parties, mainly the Taliban, to recommit to the political settlement. In an interview with the Anadolu Agency of Turkey, FM Qureshi also remarked that there is a fear of going back to the 90s if there is no political settlement.

On 24 April, Pakistan's special envoy to Afghanistan, Mohammad Sadiq visited Kabul to discuss the peace process, transit trade and counterterrorism measures. Tolo News reported that the Pakistan delegation had assured the Afghan government of the Taliban's participation in the peace process and subsequent agreement on reduction in violence and a ceasefire.

### Issues at large

First, Pakistan as a stakeholder in facilitating Afghan negotiations. The Deep State within Pakistan has nurtured and supported the Taliban in the Afghan civil war. Quetta Shura operates from Pakistan. Islamabad played a key role in brokering and facilitating the Doha dialogue. However, with the Biden administration shifting the date of troops' withdrawal, the Taliban has refused to participate in any dialogue. Now, there is increasing pressure on Pakistan to bring back the Taliban to the negotiating table.

Second, the fear of Afghanistan returning to the violent 90s. The intra-Afghan dialogue under the Doha process has produced a stalemate. The Taliban and Afghan government have failed to reach a consensus on the common political framework. Pakistan worries that the US withdrawal sans political accord between the Taliban and Afghan government will increase the upsurge in violence, whose likely fallout will be the influx of refugees into Pakistan. Islamabad

realizes its precarious situation in the immediate post-withdrawal scenario and therefore is attuning itself to work closely with the Afghan government to deter any negative fallouts.

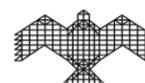
Third, security challenges' emanating from the Durand Line. The Quetta bomb blast was the handiwork of the TTP, which involved an Afghan national. The TTP, which is currently operating from Afghanistan, has regained strength in the last few months after uniting with its disgruntled factions. Therefore, Pakistan is not only worried about the internal situation in Kabul but its effects on the western front too. The presence of Afghan national in the ranks of the TTP becomes a concern, as there may be possibilities of disgruntled Afghan fighters joining the Pakistani Taliban. Therefore, coordination in counter-terror measures in the immediate after-effects of withdrawal becomes imperative for Pakistan to prevent the violence spiralling into its territory.

#### In perspective

The popular perception is that the victory of the Taliban is a success for Pakistan. There is no doubt that Pakistan has invested heavily in the Taliban and will like to see it at the helm of power in Kabul, providing a strategic depth to Islamabad. However, the US withdrawal without any agreement multiplies economic and security concerns for Pakistan. An uncertain and unstable Afghanistan dilutes any dividends that Pakistan could gain from the US withdrawal. Taliban claiming victory from the US departure will also embolden extremist groups in Pakistan. The descent of violence in Afghanistan bereft of any political settlement will spill over into Pakistan.

While Pakistan is trying to redefine its geography, from geostrategic space to geo-economic space, and gain the advantage of connectivity to Central Asia, its success depends on a secure western border, and a stable Afghanistan immediate future looks bleak.

Islamabad acknowledges the precarity of the situation, and therefore, the recent visit was an attempt to spur the stalled intra-Afghan negotiations.



## Also, from around the world

By Apoorva Sudhakar and Abigail Miriam Fernandez

### Peace and Conflict from East and Southeast Asia

#### Myanmar: ASEAN reaches consensus on resolving the crisis in Myanmar

On 24 April, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) reached a consensus on five points to resolve the crisis in Myanmar. The ASEAN chair Brunei stated that this includes starting a dialogue, ending violence, allowing humanitarian help in the country, releasing political prisoners and appointing a special ASEAN envoy to facilitate the dialogue process. In response, Myanmar's military leader Min Aung Hlaing said: "The suggestions would be positively considered if it ...serves the interests of the country and was based on purposes and principles enshrined in."

#### China: EU blames Beijing for endangering peace in the South China Sea

On 24 April, an EU spokesperson said: "Tensions in the South China Sea, including the recent presence of large Chinese vessels at Whitsun Reef, endanger peace and stability in the region," while reiterating the bloc's strong opposition to "unilateral actions that could undermine regional stability and international rules-based order." The bloc also urged all parties to abide by a 2016 tribunal ruling which rejected most of China's claim to sovereignty in the sea.

#### Japan: Government registers protests against China's claim on Senkaku in updated maps

On 26 April, the Japanese government raised a complaint in protest with China over topographical maps it published of the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. China's Ministry of Natural Resources had posted the maps on its website says it created the maps based on the latest satellite images and other survey results. However, the Japanese government maintains the islands are an inherent part of their territory.

#### North-South Korea: Three years of the inter-Korean summit between Kim Jong-un and Moon Jae-in

On 26 April, The Korea Herald reported that non-government groups would conduct events on 27 April to mark the third anniversary of the inter-Korean summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un during which the two leaders vowed for peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula. However, three years later since the Panmunjom Declaration, the two Koreas remain in a deadlock.

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### Peace and Conflict from South Asia

#### India: Avalanche leaves 15 dead in Uttarakhand

On 23 April, an avalanche occurred near the Indo-China border in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district after a part of a glacier collapsed beyond Sumna on Sumna-Rimkhim road where labourers were engaged in road construction work. As of 26 April, the death toll reached 15, while several others have been rescued. Further, the Uttarakhand police chief stated that a total of 430 workers were at the road construction site.

### India: Madras HC blames ECI for the second wave of COVID-19 in the state

On 26 April, the Madras High Court blamed the Election Commission of India (ECI) for the second wave of COVID-19 in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. The Chief Justice questioned the officials asking the commission: "Were you on another planet when the election rallies were held?" Further, the court said: "Your institution is singularly responsible for the second wave of COVID-19. Your officers should be booked on murder charges probably," adding, "Public health is paramount and it is distressing that Constitutional authorities have to be reminded in such regards. It is only when a citizen survives that he'll be able to enjoy the rights that a democratic republic guarantees."

### Sri Lanka: Officials prepare for the third COVID-19 wave

On 26 April, as part of preparing for the possibility of the third wave of COVID-19, officials in Sri Lanka said that all schools in the Western Province and the North Western Province would be closed. Sri Lanka recorded about 800 cases a day, taking the total number of cases reported to over one lakh. Previously, a new, more infectious, and potent strain of SARS-CoV-2 had been discovered in Sri Lanka according to a top immunologist in Colombo.

### Pakistan: TTP claims responsibility for the Quetta blast

On 22 April, The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility for the bomb blast at the Serena Hotel in Quetta. The Chinese ambassador, who was being hosted in the hotel was thought to be the target. However, the TTP said Pakistan security officials were the target of the blast. Further, the blast left at least five people dead and 12 others wounded. Meanwhile, addressing the incident, PM Imran Khan pledged not to allow the scourge of terrorism to rise again in the country as the nation has made great sacrifices in defeating it.

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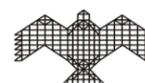
## Peace and Conflict from Central Asia, Middle East and Africa

### Armenia: PM resigns pave the way for snap elections

On 25 April, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan tendered his resignation, saying that he was returning power received from citizens to them so they could decide the future of the government through free and fair elections. However, he will continue to fulfil his duties as head of the interim government before the vote. The date for early elections has been set for 20 June. Pashinyan has been under pressure to resign after he agreed to a ceasefire in the fighting with Azerbaijan in 2020.

### Turkey: Armed forces attack PKK fighters in Iraq

On 25 April, Turkey's Defence Ministry announced that the country's armed forces had attacked the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) fighters in Iraq; the Defence Minister said the operations had begun on 23 April. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who called the offensive Operation Claw-Lightning, said: "There's no room for the separatist terror group in the future of Turkey, Iraq or Syria... We will keep on fighting until we eradicate these gangs of murderers who cause nothing but tears and destruction."



### **Iraq: Three rockets land near Baghdad international airport**

On 22 April, at least three rockets landed near the Baghdad international airport where US officials are housed. However, no casualties were reported. Reuters cited a military statement and said the "security forces found and defused more unfired rockets placed on the rooftop of an empty house" which was the launchpad. The attack comes less than a week after a similar strike took place on 18 April; two soldiers were injured when a rocket targeted the Balad military base where US contractors were present.

### **Israel-Palestine: Palestinians celebrate after Israeli forces remove barriers from Damascus Gate**

On 25 April, Palestinians began celebrations after Israeli police removed barriers from the Damascus Gate, the entrance to Jerusalem's Old City, which is a popular meeting place during Ramadan. The development comes after Israeli police clashed with Palestinians outside the Old City on 24 April. Reuters reported that Palestinians complained about the metal barriers, whereas Israelis were "angered by videos on social media showing Palestinians assaulting religious Jews in the city."

### **Libya: Shipwreck off Libyan coast claims 130 lives**

On 23 April, the International Organization for Migration confirmed that 130 people had died in a shipwreck off the Libyan coast, despite SOS calls. On the same day, the IOM and the UNHCR called on the international community to initiate measures "to end avoidable loss of lives at sea." The UN agencies said the SOS calls had started coming in a sense 21 April; however, no action was taken. Further, the IOM data says at least more than 500 people had died while crossing the Mediterranean in 2021 so far, which is "almost three times as many the same period last year."

### **Ethiopia: Nearly 200 killed in clashes in Amhara region, says chief ombudsman**

On 25 April, the chief ombudsman estimated that around 200 people had been killed in clashes between Amhara and Oromo ethnic groups in the Amhara region, which started on 16 April. He said the clashes had also led to displacement of nearly 250,000 people in the North Shoa Zone and around 78,000 people in the Oromia Special Zone. This ombudsman's claim comes after the federal government declared a state of emergency in the southern part of the Amhara region on 18 April.

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### Peace and Conflict from Europe and the Americas

#### **Turkey: Authorities arrest four people linked to Vebitcoin**

On 24 April, BBC reported that Turkish authorities had arrested four people linked to the cryptocurrency platform Vebitcoin, on charges of fraud. Previously, Turkey said it would ban the use of cryptocurrencies to pay for goods and services from 30 April. This move came amid the increasing numbers of people opting to use cryptocurrencies in Turkey in an attempt to protect their savings from a sharp decline in the value of the lira.

### **Spain: Coast guard finds 17 migrants dead off the Canary Islands**

On 26 April, Spain's coast guard found 17 dead migrants on a boat off the Canary Islands. A spokesperson from the maritime rescue service in Spain stated that all migrants on the boat were sub-Saharan Africans, however, it was not clear where the migrants had come from. Further, three survivors have been transferred to a hospital in Tenerife.

### **Russia: Navalny support group ordered to suspend activities**

On 26 April, Russian prosecutors ordered the network of offices supporting Alexei Navalny to suspend all activities across Russia. It also applied to a court to suspend the work of Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) and its regional networks. Meanwhile, Navalny's office in Moscow said that the group would "no longer be able to work as it would be too dangerous for our employees and for our supporters," adding, "Whatever happens, individually we will continue the fight against corruption, against the United Russia party, which is looting our country, and against Vladimir Putin, who builds himself palaces with state funds and kills his political opponents."

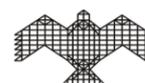
### **The US: Biden declares that atrocities against Armenia were genocide**

On 24 April, President Joe Biden recognized the 1915 killings of Armenians by the Ottoman forces as genocide. He said: "We remember the lives of all those who died in the Ottoman-era Armenian genocide and recommit ourselves to preventing such an atrocity from ever again occurring," adding, "We affirm the history. We do this not to cast blame but to ensure that what happened is never repeated." Conversely, Turkey rejecting the decision and accused the US of trying to rewrite history. The Foreign Minister of Turkey said: "Words cannot change or rewrite history," adding, "We will not take lessons from anyone on our history."

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### **About the authors**

Jeshil Samuel J is a postgraduate scholar from the Department of International Studies, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) currently enrolled at the NIAS Online Certificate Course on Contemporary Peace Processes, Thinkers and Theories. Rishabh Yadav is an independent scholar currently enrolled at the NIAS Online Certificate Course on Contemporary Pakistan. Apoorva Sudhakar and Abigail Miriam Fernandez are Research Associates at the School of Conflict and Security Studies in NIAS.



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IPRI Conflict Weekly #52, 07 January 2021, Vol.2, No.01

**GCC lifts Qatar blockade, Iran decides to enrich uranium, Argentina legalizes abortion, French soldiers targeted in Mali, and the AFSPA extended in India's Northeast**

Poornima Balasubramanian, Lakshmi V Menon, Aparajita Pandey, Apoorva Sudhakar, Sourina Bej, and Abigail Miriam Fernandez



A Gulf rapprochement: A step towards solidarity and stability as Arab leaders move to thaw relation with Qatar (Image Source: Al Jazeera)

**The Gulf Reconciliation: Blockade against Qatar lifted but the GCC crisis far from over**

In the news  
On 5 January, the Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani headed to Al-Ula in Saudi Arabia, accepting an invitation from the Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz to attend the 41st Gulf Summit. On 4 January, the Abu Samra border between Qatar and Saudi Arabia was opened after more than three years of blockade.

The summit witnessed the 'solidarity and stability' deal (also referred to as the Al-Ula statement) that calls for the end of the diplomatic blockade with Qatar and paves the way to wider negotiation space to extinguish the tensions with Doha. The deal was welcomed by

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IPRI Conflict Weekly#53, 14 January 2021, Vol.2, No.02

**Trump impeached by the US House, Hazara miners buried in Pakistan, Farm laws stayed in India, and the Crisis escalation in CAR**

D Suba Chandran, Abigail Miriam Fernandez, Alok K Gupta, Apoorva Sudhakar and Sourina Bej



Is there a light at the end of the Trump presidency? The House has impeached President Trump for the second time; security is getting strengthened with more troops being sent to secure the Capitol Hill (Image Source: WSJ)

**The US: Trump impeached by the House, as a disorderly transition looms large**

In the news  
On 13 January 2021, the US House impeached President Donald Trump for the second time. The vote was passed with a majority with 232-197; ten Republicans joined the Democrats in passing the vote. Nancy Pelosi, the House Speaker, was quoted stating: "We know that the

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IPRI Conflict Weekly #54, 21 January 2021, Vol.2, No.3

**New President in the US, new Chinese Village in Arunachal Pradesh, new Israeli settlement in West Bank, and another massacre in Sudan**

D Suba Chandran, Teshu Singh, Lakshmi V Menon and Apoorva Sudhakar



Change of Guard: Joe Biden becomes the 46th President of the United States. On 20 January 2021, he took oath, and issued 17 directives on the first day in office (Image Source: WSJ)

**The US: The new American President Biden issues 17 executive orders on day one, from rejoining Paris Agreement to wearing masks**

In the news  
On 20 January 2021, Joe Biden became the 46th President of the United States. In an address towards healing and pursuing a practical approach, he declared: "Politics doesn't have to be a raging fire destroying everything in its path. Every disagreement doesn't have to be a cause for total war. And, we must reject the culture in which facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured." He also pledged to the fellow Americans on the first day of becoming the President, "I will be a president for all Americans – all Americans. And, I promise you, I will fight as hard for those who did not support me as for those who did."

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IPRI Conflict Weekly #55, 28 January 2021, Vol.2, No.04

**Farmers' protests in India, Vaccine Wars, another India-China border standoff, and Navalny's imprisonment**

Alok Gupta, Sourina Bej, Sukanya Bali and Harini Madhusudan



Farmers' protest in India turns violent: On 26 January 2021, the farmers who have been protesting on the outskirts of New Delhi, decided to organise a tractor rally; it turned violent later. (Image Source: The Indian Express)

**India: Farmers' protest turns violent with a political game of double-speak**

In the news  
On 26 January, the farmers' protest turned violent on New Delhi's streets, after two months of their commencement. The outrage was massive and unprecedented; reportedly, 200,000 tractors were mobilized against the permission of 5,000 tractors for the rally and flouted the routes specified by the administration. The protesters and the police clashed after protesters removed the barricades to enter Central Delhi. They successfully entered Delhi, destroyed

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## IPRI Conflict Weekly

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IPRI Conflict Weekly #60, 4 March 2021, Vol.2, No.09

### From Myanmar and Hong Kong in Asia to Nigeria in Africa: Seven conflicts this week

Aparupa Bhattacharjee, Apoorva Sudhakar, Harini Madhusudan, Sukanya Bali, Abigail Miriam Fernandez, Jeshil Samuel J and Dincy Adlakha



This week witnessed violence in Myanmar, as the security forces retaliated with force; more than 50 were killed during the last seven days. (Image Source: DW/Reuters)

#### Myanmar: Deadliest week since the Coup

[In the news](#)

On 28 February, according to the United Nations, Myanmar's security force killed 18 and injured 30 in their attempt to clampdown the protest.

On 27 February, the government removed Myanmar's ambassador to the United Nations for his speech in the General Assembly where he had sought international assistance to restore democracy.

On 2 March, in a video conference court hearing, there were two more new charges against Aung San Suu Kyi. These charges will extend Suu Kyi's prison term to a total of nine years.

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## IPRI Conflict Weekly

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IPRI Conflict Weekly #61, 11 March 2021, Vol.2, No.10

### Women's Day, Swiss Referendum, Myanmar Violence, George Floyd Trial and Lebanon Protests

Abigail Miriam Fernandez, Harini Madhusudan, Aparupa Bhattacharjee, D Suba Chandran and Apoorva Sudhakar



Women's Day was observed across the world; different regions/countries focussed on different issues relating to women. Protests continue in Myanmar against the military regime. (Image Source: Reuters/BBC)

#### International Women's Day: Women across the world #ChooseToChallenge

[In the news](#)

On 8 March, the world commemorated International Women's Day, celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women while calling for action for accelerating gender parity. The campaign theme for International Women's Day 2021 was 'Choose To Challenge.' The theme explains a challenging world as an alert world, as a society one can choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality as well as choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements. Thus, collectively helping to create an inclusive world. The theme highlights that from challenge comes change, thereby urging society to #ChooseToChallenge.

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IPRI Conflict Weekly #62, 18 March 2021, Vol.2, No.11

### Gender Protests in Australia, Expanding Violence in Myanmar and Anti-protests bill in the UK

Avishka Ashok, Aparupa Bhattacharjee and Sourina Bej



Australian women assemble in thousands to protest against sexual violence and demand the removal of perpetrators (Image Source: NYT)

#### Australia: Women fight against sexual violence

[In the news](#)

On 15 March, close to 80,000 people participated in the March4Justice protests, which took shape in 40 local events spread across Australia. The organization urged the public to sign a petition which demands four actions from the government: independent and timely investigation into all cases of gendered violence; complete execution of all recommendations in the Australian Human Rights Commission's Respect at Work report; lift public funding for addressing gendered violence; and enactment of a federal gender equality act that will audit parliamentary practices.

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IPRI Conflict Weekly #63, 25 March 2021, Vol.1, No.12

### Sanctions on China, Saudi Arabia ceasefire in Yemen, the UNHRC resolution on Sri Lanka, and a massacre in Niger

Harini Madhusudan, Poornima B, Akriti Sharma and Apoorva Sudhakar



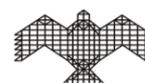
The war in Yemen (Image Source: BBC)

#### The US and allies sanction China; Beijing retaliates

[In the news](#)

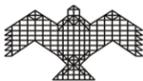
On 22 March, the US, UK, European Union, and Canada announced sanctions against four officials, former and current, in the Xinjiang province for alleged human rights abuses. The US had placed sanctions on two of the officials back in July 2020. The sanctions have also been placed on the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, an economic and paramilitary organization from the region. On the same day, China announced the imposition of sanctions on 10 European Union citizens, and four EU entities, calling the sanctions a "gross interference" in its internal affairs and a violation of international law.

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### About NIAS-International Peace Research Initiative (IPRI)

The International Peace Research Initiative (IPRI), initiated in 2018 at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), is a part of the Conflict Resolution and Peace Research Programme at the School of Conflict and Security Studies.

IPRI undertakes research on various issues relating to peace with special emphasis on radicalisation, sustainable peace, gender roles in peacebuilding and global protest movements. IPRI research are published as briefs, reports and commentary.



### About Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation. Established in 1955 as “Society for Christian-Democratic Civic Education”, in 1964, the Foundation proudly took on the name of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. With 16 regional offices in Germany and over 120 offices abroad, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is committed to achieving and maintaining peace, freedom and justice through political education. KAS promotes and preserves free democracy, social market economy, and the development and consolidation of the value consensus. KAS also focus on consolidating democracy, the unification of Europe and the strengthening of transatlantic relations, as well as on development cooperation.

KAS cooperates with governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations, building strong partnerships along the way. In particular, KAS seeks to intensify political cooperation in the area of development cooperation on the foundations of its objectives and values. Together with the partners, KAS makes a significant contribution to the creation of a global order that empowers every country to determine its own developmental priorities and destiny in an internationally responsible

### About Conflict Weekly

The Conflict Weekly an academic endeavour to bring every Wednesday/Thursday a weekly analysis of the conflict and peace processes in the world; aiming to look at the larger peace picture. It is published by the NIAS-IPRI in collaboration with the KAS India Office.



**Editor:** D. Suba Chandran

**Assistant Editors:** Abigail Miriam Fernandez & Apoorva Sudhakar