



One Year of the Russian Ukraine War **WHERE GLOBAL ECONOMY STANDS NOW?**

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One year after Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, and the resulting widespread suffering, the world economy is still enduring the consequences, including tight supplies of grain, fertilizer, and energy, as well as more inflation and economic uncertainty in a world that was already grappling with too much of both. After the invasion, and with the Covid-19 pandemic still raging in the backdrop, the world economy went chaotic, negatively impacting economies from Asia to Europe, from developing country like Bangladesh to the mighty United States.

The conflict triggered a significant shock to the global economy, and the economy is still reeling from the war's effects, such as major trade disruptions, food price shocks, and fuel price shocks, which are all contributing to high inflation and a subsequent tightening of global financial conditions. But, the invasion's most severe repercussions are soaring energy prices and significant losses in Russian energy supply. While worldwide prices for oil, gas, and coal have been on the rise since early 2021, they surged with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, pushing inflation in the region to levels not seen in decades. Existing food shortages were further aggravated by the ongoing conflict

in Ukraine. According to the update of the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), by the middle of 2022, the population facing the three highest phases of acute food insecurity was greater than at any point in the Report's six-year history; up to 205 million people in 45 countries were facing acute food insecurity, as those countries required urgent external assistance for food. This unusual crisis has consequences for both consumers and governments, reducing budgetary affordability, firm productivity, and family well-being.

The euro area has been more susceptible to the economic implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, compared to other economic zones. This is mostly due to the fact that the euro area is highly dependent on energy imports, particularly from Russia, which accounted for more than half of the euro area's energy consumption in 2020. In general, the euro area has a relatively open economy, making it susceptible to disruptions in global markets and supply networks. The crisis is having ramifications for developed economies, particularly Europe, which has been confronted with soaring energy prices, challenges to its energy security, and an influx of Ukrainian refugees.

The economic upheaval in the

economies of South Asia has been worsened by the Ukraine crisis. Sri Lanka's economic collapse demonstrates how weaker nations bear the brunt of Western sanctions against Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine. Pakistan faces economic challenges, including enormous external loans, electricity shortages, and excessive inflation. Myanmar, following a coup, has a shutdown of firms and a large increase in unemployment, while Nepal experiences a widening trade imbalance and a decline in foreign exchange reserves. Undoubtedly, the Ukraine-Russia conflict has precipitated a crisis in the energy markets of several countries in the Global South. Since both countries exported more than one-third of the world's wheat and barley and around 70 percent of the world's sunflower oil, governments around the world were badly impacted when the war halted the shipment of over 20 million tons of Ukrainian grain. Each month, around 6 million tons of agricultural products were sent to Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. This figure had diminished to a quarter of its original value by June 2022. Examining the data on energy imports reveals that all BIMSTEC nations, particularly India, Myanmar, and Bhutan, rely heavily on imported energy. The region is extremely susceptible to exogenous macroeconomic shocks as a result of its reliance on the gasoline trade. Bangladesh, in particular, has been

placed in a difficult position in terms of energy security due to its inability to initiate the transition to renewable energy and its massive reliance on petroleum imports. Conflict between Russia and Ukraine has added fuel to this flames. Due to rising energy prices and subsidy costs, Bangladesh's fiscal balances and current account deficits have been a source of concern for the economy. The war has made it hard for Ukraine and Russia to send wheat, barley, and cooking oil to Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Asia, where many people struggle to get enough food. In certain areas, bread costs have doubled due to wheat shortages. All of this points to a worldwide economic slowdown.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 stunned the entire globe. The lives lost and the humanitarian disaster caused by the vast number of besieged and displaced people are the most serious results of the war between Russia and Ukraine. Russia's

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commitment to keep invading for at least another year means that the globe will likely become more politicized and protectionist, with emerging and least developed economies bearing the brunt of the consequences.

Policymakers need to focus on establishing macroeconomic policy buffers and institutions to increase stability, and promote an inclusive and more equal recovery by

protecting the most vulnerable, including refugees. Notwithstanding the devastating results of the war, there is some cause for optimism: things could have been much worse. So far, developed-world businesses and economies have proven remarkably robust, avoiding a devastating recession. Nonetheless, the suffering has been particularly severe in rising economies.

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IMPACTS OF RUSSIA – UKRAINE WAR IN SOUTH ASIA

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More than two years from 2020 to 2022, the world economy was affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic. In the meantime, the Russian invasion on Ukraine has created a fragile situation in world politics and world trade. Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered for attack on neighbouring Ukraine on February 24, 2022. After almost a year so far there appears no hope of stopping the war. Russia, one of the five veto powers of the United Nations, the UN and the international community could not find any solution to this combat.

Within a few days of this war, the impact of war spread from Europe to Africa, Africa to Asia. Russia is one of the largest suppliers of oil and gas in the world, while Ukraine is a major producer of wheat. As a result of this war, oil, gas, energy and wheat prices have increased and affected both businesses and consumers.

South Asia is a region of emerging economy, and has not yet covered the Covid shocks in its economy. South



Asian nations only started to recover their economy after overcoming the Covid crisis. In the meantime, the Russia- Ukraine war has had a huge impact on the economy, trade and geopolitics of South Asia. This war directly impacted on middle-economy consumer markets in South Asia which began mainly through inflation, unemployment, rising commodity prices and a collapse in imports and exports. Not only the economic crisis, this war drew a new geopolitical landscape in South Asia.

Geographically theorists have different opinions about the boundaries of South Asia. Generally, eight SAARC nations are considered to be South Asian. The United

Nations General Assembly voted on the Russia-Ukraine war in the first week of March 2022. The South Asian nations were divided in this vote. Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan voted against Russia, while nuclear power India, Pakistan, and two non-nuclear country Bangladesh and Sri Lanka abstained from voting. The four countries that voted against are quite small in terms of geographical area, population, military power or economy. Some of them are even under the influence of big neighbours India and China. But here their individual position was significant.

Bhutan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Dom Tshering, said in a speech to the General Assembly, "We cannot accept the unilateral drawing of international borders in any way." Nepal's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Amrit Rai, said in a statement, "Nepal opposes any threat to the territorial integrity and political independence of any sovereign country."

China's influence in Nepal and Maldives has been growing in recent times. On the other hand, India is the most influential neighbour to Nepal, Maldives, and Bhutan. Nepal and Bhutan are 'sandwiched' between two big neighbours, India and China. While balancing these two emerging powers, the two states have faced security risks at various times. Maldives is a country where small land becomes a big issue in maritime geopolitics. Due to its geographical and strategic location, China and India are keeping eyes on Maldives.

Russia attacked Ukraine in broad daylight and immediately occupied the capital despite Ukraine's independence and sovereignty due to military strength, location, and political factors. World powers could not stop Russia. The position of small South Asian nations in this war is largely an expression of their experience and concern.

Indian media and analysts have criticized India's abstention from voting. India has come out of non-aligned diplomacy and is now looking forward to the West. Yet Russia is a diplomatically reliable friend of India at the UN. Russia is by far the largest arms supplier to India. India has recently received Russia's advanced defence system S-400. On the other hand, India's relationship with the US has been deepening since 2014. A quadrilateral security dialogue, known as the QUAD, between Australia, Japan, the United States and India has formed. Apart from India, the remaining three

countries of the QUAD have imposed sanctions on Russia. In this situation, India's silence regarding Russia has downhearted those western nations who had reached out to the Indian market just instead of the Chinese market. But under western pressure, Delhi has not changed its old Russia policy. India is a closely associated BRICS, an alliance of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and is also a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, an economic and security ally with China and Russia. Even though India is a military ally of QUAD, it did not go to war with China after the bloody border fighting in 2020.

This is one of the crucial times of World politics, two poles automatically created, with Russia or with Ukraine, few states try to be neutral and want to gain geopolitical interest, India is one of them.

The situation in Pakistan is not as crucial as in India. But the Russo-Ukraine war has had a major impact on the latest political equation in Pakistan. Over the past few years, Pakistan's Russia-oriented relations have

developed in contrast to India's pro-Western policy. Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan went to Moscow purely for bilateral talks. But while Khan landed in Moscow and Russian troops crossed the

border, the incident shocked the world leaders.

As soon as Imran returned to Islamabad, he faced the opposition party's no-confidence motion in the parliament. He eventually had to resign in the face of a no-confidence motion in parliament. He claimed that he was forced out by western diplomats. However, Pakistan's stance towards Ukraine was much stronger than India's. The Pakistani ambassador in Kiev has announced that Islamabad will provide necessary assistance to protect the national integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine.

Despite Western pressure, India has maintained a neutral and delicately balanced diplomacy in the Ukraine-Russia war. In response to western journalists, Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar said quite bluntly, "Somewhere Europe has to grow out of the mindset that Europe's problems are the world's problems but the world's problems are not Europe's problems. That if it is you, it's yours, if it is me, it is ours. I see reflections of that," through these words of the minister, India has indicated that India will not compromise friendship with Russia in exchange for western friendship.

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A Yearbook on Turtle Ride of UN THE PERSPECTIVE OF RUSSIA – UKRAINE WAR

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"Life is a living hell for the people of Ukraine," said the UN secretary general Antonio Guterres in United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The Council has undergone more than 40 debates since the full-scale invasion of Russia in Ukraine. The United Nations was established as the pioneer in preserving international peace and security. The realpolitik game of security council members has rendered it ineffective and impotent.

Russian bureaucratic foot-dragging in Security Council

Russia vetoed the US-backed UNSC resolution proposed for ending the war in Ukraine on 23rd February 2022. Even since then, the united action against the Russian invasion has moved down the hallway. The resolutions passed in the General Assembly are like public opinion polls, these don't have any real implications as economic sanctions, and deployment of military action.

In 1945, after fascist and totalitarian regime domination, wartime allies thought of institutional frameworks such as the Security Council and General Assembly to oversee the peaceful settlement of disputes. However, UNSC has the prominent responsibility to design a framework for the institutions of the UN system to contribute to a peaceful settlement of the conflict. But UNSC's working mechanism got paralyzed because threats towards international peace and security started to come from P5 countries including the US and USSR in the cold war period. The resolutions of collective security organizations only found a way in real politics when great powers didn't have any direct stake in that conflict.

At the beginning of the invasion, on February 25, 2022, 81 of the 193 member states of the UN had passed a resolution condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia vetoed it on the logic that it doesn't have the Russian side of the story in that resolution. Ukrainian activities namely shelling the people of Donetsk, and Luhansk, and also Ukraine didn't implement the Minsk agreements. These are Putin's war propaganda which he made by compromising war history. He denied that the Russian army is attacking civilians and bombing cities. In response, Ukraine reiterated that nothing justifies the shelling of a kindergarten and orphanage.

It has been a policy of Russian counterparts that according to Nicolas de Rivi re, the U.N. ambassador to France, they try to draw out discussion of the war in Ukraine and kill too much time of Council devoted to the conflict. Every time there is a proposal for a meeting on Ukraine, Russians propose another one on a different policy issue.

A yearbook of resolution after resolution trapped in the face of the Security Council

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, UNGA adopted a resolution on March 2, 2022 against the aggression of Russia. On March 4, the UN Human Rights Council passed another revolution for the " swift and verifiable withdrawal of Russian armed troops. On March 5, they called for the immediate establishment of an " independent international Commission of Inquiry ". On March 30, the UN appointed three human rights experts to investigate the dire humanitarian crisis created by Russia in Ukraine and to see how violation of international law is taking place. On April 7, the UN

general assembly suspended Russia for human rights abuses. On April 26, the UN body asked P5 members to justify their use of veto power which they are misusing deliberately.

On 23rd February 2023, UNGA passed a resolution condemning Russian atrocities in which 141 of the 193 countries voted against Russia. On 24th February a special session marking one year of the Russia- Ukraine war, revealed the fault lines within the organization. If the security council is meant to be the common ground for diplomacy, it has become no man's land. The foreign minister from both Russia and China were absent. Russian ambassador to the UN objected to the fact that a Ukraine representative would approach the microphone before the security council members. He demanded another moment of silence for all the war victims after the Ukrainian foreign minister requested a moment of silence for martyrs in war. China's 12-point resolution proposed dialogue and negotiation between the warring parties. Ukraine and other Baltic countries have simultaneously criticized it because the peace plan called for the upliftment of unilateral sanctions on Russia and no mention of Russian war atrocities.

Although Ukraine welcomes this peace initiative, the future of implications of this peace plan is highly debated. UNSC has failed to de-escalate the crisis because it is paralyzed by a self-interest-motivated mechanism with absolute power to make peace in the 21st century.

Although the UNGA resolution on 23rd February was non-binding, it revealed the largest sentiment of the global body on the event of Russia- the Ukraine war. The UN is a good mirror of the state of world politics. The UN watchers have always said the world is not a big democracy of what is expected from the UN. Rather UN tries to find some shared common ground. But still, a majority of countries look towards the UN to provide a solution to emerging situations. Russia has exercised its veto power more than any country in the world and Ukraine demands its expulsion from the UNSC. As the security council has produced a deadlock UNGA can step up to make recommendations. In 1956 the general assembly established the UN emergency force in the Middle East but the only problem is these resolutions are non-binding, countries are not bound to implement them. Russia- Ukraine crisis has made the dismantling of a radical overhaul of the UNSC a need of time.

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Upcoming Events



7-9 October 2023

The Bay of Bengal Conversation is an annual geopolitical conference hosted by the Centre for Governance Studies in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The conference serves as a platform to facilitate Track 2 diplomacy among all nations that consider themselves stakeholders in the Indo-Pacific region. This year will be the second edition of the conference. The conversation will be focused on addressing all faultlines that threaten regional peace, stability, and prosperity. CGS organized the first edition of the yearly international flagship conference BOBC between 21-23 November 2022 in the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka. Diplomats, CSO leaders, politicians, academicians, young professionals, researchers, ministers, and members of parliament were among the 600 participants from different parts of the world who attended the conference. The next edition will be held between 7-9 October 2023.



5-14 November 2023

The Global Directions Conclave (GDC) is an annual intensive ten-day policy workshop scheduled to be held from 5-14 November 2023 in Dhaka and Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Each year, the Conclave will bring together 50 outstanding young leaders, between 28 and 40 years of age, from diverse backgrounds, geographies, and sectors. The young leaders will be nominated by heads of governments, private sector leaders, and global experts. The Conclave aims to foster leadership qualities among the selected fellows, engage them in discussions on issues that are trending worldwide, and serve as a networking platform. Through cross-border dialogue, deliberations, discussion, industrial visits, brainstorming sessions, debates etc with prominent figures from the world of politics, business, and academia, fellows of the Conclave will get opportunities to assess as well as confront conventional interpretations of the global challenges.



Bangladesh: Supporting Bottom-Up Demand for Democratic Governance Through Private Sector Mobilization Against Corruption

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the private sector in Bangladesh encounter numerous obstacles when conducting business. Many of these impediments can be attributed to corruption in the approval process, lack of transparency, and bureaucratic lethargy, such as corrupt practices of public officials in providing licenses to entrepreneurs, customs evasion syndicates, the usage of political power or bribes to obtain facilities from public offices, etc. A communication gap between policymakers and SME owners exists, which causes a mismatch between government initiatives and the needs of the private sector. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed this gap; for example, information about procedures related to the stimulus packages for SMEs was not well communicated.

To address these challenges and unlock the potential of the sector, the Center for Governance Studies (CGS), in partnership with the US-based organization, the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), launched a project on February 2021 titled "Bangladesh: Supporting Bottom-Up Demand for Democratic Governance Through Private Sector Mobilization Against Corruption." The project's objective is to identify and connect private sector stakeholders, especially SMEs, and economic reformers to create a corruption-free business environment.



Confronting Misinformation in Bangladesh

Confronting Misinformation in Bangladesh is a project under the 2022 Alumni Innovation Fund and is funded by the U.S. State Department. The spread of misinformation has been a major challenge to democracy and peace in contemporary times. The popularity of social media and its increased accessibility to the masses have further complicated the fight against misinformation.

In Bangladesh, with a population of 170 million and thousands of media outlets, both electronic and print, misinformation poses an enormous challenge. Social media influencers and journalists can play a crucial role in countering misinformation. However, the societal machinery involved in this production is different in every society and country. This context necessitates that the proposed project tackles the issues in two ways. First, through a series of dialogues with journalists and editors, it intends to identify the mechanisms of misinformation at the local level as well as the challenges in dealing with misinformation. Second, we plan to prepare training materials based on the insights gained from these discussions that will be given out through training sessions for the journalists in five divisional cities.



Voices of Youth in Geopolitics

Being a member state of the Indo-Pacific region, Bangladesh has substantial geopolitical significance, particularly given its closeness to China and placement inside India's geostrategic border. The terrain of Bangladesh is a critical component of its geopolitical role. Bangladesh is a natural bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia due to its geographic location. As a result, any regional cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) must include Bangladesh. In addition, the nation is an important strategic ally of India since it has the ability to promote further integration between Northeast and Central India. During these trying circumstances, a country like Bangladesh must maneuver with agility and tenacity to acquire its geopolitical and geostrategic advancements, which requires more discussions and scholarly guidance from the government. In light of this, FES Bangladesh and CGS have agreed to announce a Research Fellowship for the working journalists and PhD students living in Bangladesh and outside. The fellowships are intended to engage them to write papers on geopolitical issues between Bangladesh and neighboring countries. The key focus will be on the Bay of Bengal region.



The Asia Foundation

Understanding the Challenges to Human Rights Activists

Human rights in Bangladesh have deteriorated significantly over the last decade. Reports from the US State Department and various international human rights organizations have documented various aspects of rising instances of human rights violations. Several national and international media outlets have recently reported harassment and arrests of human rights defenders. However, the issue of human rights violations has gained prominence in recent months, particularly following the US sanctions imposed on the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and seven of its former and current officials. Human rights are fundamental and universal, and defending them is critical to the advancement of peace, justice, and democracy. Yet, human rights violations are rampant in many countries, including Bangladesh, and those who fight to promote and preserve human rights encounter substantial obstacles. Therefore, by learning about the challenges that human rights advocates face in Bangladesh, this project can help shape policies and strategies to protect them. Centre for Governance Studies is collaborating with the Asia Foundation on this project.



The Dark Cloud Over Freedom in Bangladesh: The Digital Security Act 2018

The Digital Security Act was passed by the Bangladesh Parliament in 2018 after five controversial sections of the Information and Communication Technology Act/ ICT Act were eliminated. Since the DSA Act-2018 came into force, journalists, social and human rights activists, academicians, members of civil society, diplomats, and various international organizations have strongly objected to nine sections of the law, which they described as detrimental to freedom of speech; these sections are: 8, 21, 25, 28, 29, 31, 32, 43, and 53.

Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) is committed to promoting democratic values, good governance, freedom of speech and expression, and fundamental civil rights. CGS, with the support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), has taken the initiative to document the cases filed under the DSA 2018 since January 1, 2020. Dr. Ali Riaz, Distinguished Professor at Illinois State University, USA, is leading the research team of the project. DSA Tracker: <https://freedominfo.net/>.

National Budget and Economic Pathway



Meet the Ambassador || European Union Ambassador to Bangladesh



Celebrating 50 Years of German-Bangladesh Relations



Meet the Ambassador || British High Commissioner to Bangladesh



Bay of Bengal Conversation 2022



Meet the Ambassador || US Ambassador to Bangladesh



Call to Action Against Corruption: National Summit



Meet the Ambassador || Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh



Confronting Misinformation in Bangladesh



Meet the Ambassador || Ambassador of Turkey to Bangladesh





EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

On behalf of the Centre for Governance Studies, I am delighted to announce the release of the latest issue of Clips, the Centre's monthly newsletter. The newsletter's primary purpose is to analyze the contemporary global and national issues concerning Bangladesh and the South Asian region. The issue's theme for the month is "One year of the Ukraine War".

More than a year has passed since Russia invaded Ukraine and sparked a war that shook the entire world. The war has inflicted casualties, claimed the lives of innocent citizens, and generated an ongoing state of instability. As of March 19, 2023, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) had confirmed 8,317 civilian deaths as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In addition, 13,892 individuals were reported to have been injured. However, OHCHR said that the actual number may be greater. In a world already coping with the COVID-19 pandemic and environmental issues, the global population is experiencing a cost-of-living crises not witnessed in more than a generation, with growing price shocks in the global food, energy, and fertilizers markets.

This issue of CLIPS focuses on the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Three articles by young scholars discuss various facets of the conflict, including its economic impact on the world, its influence on South Asian states, and the United Nations' approach to peace negotiations.

In the period of free speech, a country like Ukraine had to confront invasion because its citizens desired to govern their homeland in their own way while causing no harm to others. Ukraine is an illustration of the fact that democracy is still vulnerable to authoritarian aggression. It is long past time for international solidarity with Ukraine to put an end to this.

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