



IPRI
Building Consensus



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GUEST LECTURE

Asia Pacific: Relevance of Pakistan

A guest lecture on “Asia Pacific: Relevance of Pakistan” was organized by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on August 28, 2014. Dr. Muhammad Khan, Head of Department (HOD) Faculty of Contemporary Studies (FCS), National Defence University (NDU) delivered the lecture. He discussed various security, economic and political aspects of Asia Pacific coupled with their impact on Pakistan and its policies. The salient points of the lecture are:

- Strategic history of the region focuses primarily on the interaction among United States, China, Russia and Japan.

- Since 1905, US essential strategic interest in East Asia has been to establish balance of power on the western shore of Pacific Ocean.



- Although, the US is facing various challenges in the region, it will remain a major player in Asia Pacific.
- North Korean nuclearization has become a consistent concern for the regional US allies.
- Japan is advocating a “democratic security diamond” comprising; Australia, India, Japan and the US, i.e., Quadrilateral Security Dialogue.

- China does not want any armed conflict in the region as it would be detrimental to its economic growth and peaceful emergence as a global power.
- Sino-Indian economic interdependence has increased in recent years. For its security and military needs, however, India mainly depends on Israel, Russia, France and the US.
- The joint statement signed by Prime Ministers of both countries Shinzo Abe and Manmohan Singh in 2006 “Towards Indo-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership” has influenced various aspects of trade, investment and defence cooperation.
- Asia’s security architecture is undergoing profound changes and it will have impact on Pakistan's geo-strategic environment.
- Pakistan needs to diversify its geo-strategic interests and has the ability to improve relations with all three important countries of Asia Pacific, i.e., US, China and Japan. Pakistan should seek every opportunity for improvement of its bilateral and multilateral cooperation in Asia Pacific region.



Highlights

Guest Lecture

- **Asia Pacific: Relevance of Pakistan**

IPRI Review Meeting

- **China’s Relations with South Asian Countries**
- **India Re-thinking Indus Water Treaty**
- **Role of Iran in the Region**
- **Genesis of Indian Ambitions in Afghanistan: Implications for Pakistan**

IPRI Scholars’ Participation in Pakistan-China Think Tanks Seminar

Building China-Pakistan Community of Shared Destiny in the New Era

Ambassador (R) Sohail Amin, President, IPRI and Mr. Muhammad Munir, Research Fellow, IPRI participated in Pakistan-China Think Tanks’ Seminar on “Building China-Pakistan Community of Shared Destiny in the New Era” held on August 5-6, 2014 at Pakistan-China Friendship Centre, Islamabad. The Seminar was jointly organized by the Embassy of China and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan. Prominent scholars from Chinese and Pakistani think tanks presented their papers in the seminar. The seminar was divided into sub-forums covering four themes: 1) Development of China-Pakistan Relations; 2) China-Pakistan Economic Corridor; 3) Counter Terrorism; 4) Regional and Afghanistan Issues.

Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Advisor to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, in his opening remarks said that friendship with *Continued on p. 4*



IPRI Scholars' Publications (July)

- "Afghanistan Should Seize The Moment" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, July 1, 2014, <http://thefrontierpost.com/article/181199/>
- "Border Management: The Right Focus" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, July 7, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/07-Jul-2014/border-management-the-right-focus>
- "Militants Ultimate Defeat Will Ensure A Prosperous United Pakistan" by Aftab Hussain, Research Officer IPRI was published in *Global Times*, July 7, 2014, <http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/viewer.aspx>
- "Joint Pak-Afghan Efforts To Fight Terrorism" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 9, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=246688>
- "Challenges For Ashraf Ghani" by Khurram Abbas, Assistant Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 11, 2014
- "Expansion Of Nuclear Suppliers Group" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, July 14, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/14-Jul-2014/expansion-of-nuclear-suppliers-group>
- "Criteria for NSG Expansion?" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 16, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=247313>
- "Zionists' State Terrorism" by Gulshan Bibi, Assistant Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 16, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=247314>
- "Pakistan-India-US Relations" by Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, July 20, 2014, <http://thefrontierpost.com/article/185530/>
- "Pakistan-India-US Relations" by Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 21, 2014
- "Afghanistan: The Last Laugh" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, July 21, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/21-Jul-2014/afghanistan-the-last-laugh>
- "Cyclic Uncertainties" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, July 22, 2014, <http://thefrontierpost.com/article/185941/>
- "India Belittles The UN" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, July 27, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/27-Jul-2014/india-belittles-the-un>
- "Pak-Afghanistan Relations in Post-2014" by Khalid Hussain Chandio, Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 27, 2014
- "Upsurge in China-India Ties & Pakistan" by Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 28, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=248350>
- "Significance of UNMOGIP" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, July 29, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=248456>
- "Foreign Propaganda Won't Shake Solidity of Sino-Pakistani Relations" by Aftab Hussain, Research Officer IPRI was published in *Global Times*, July 30, 2014, <http://backup.globaltimes.cn/NEWS/tabid/99/ID/873442/Foreign-propaganda-wont-shake-solidity-of-Sino-Pakistani-relations.aspx>

Urdu Newspaper Articles by Asghar Ali Shad, Research Fellow, IPRI

- "TTP Ki Galat Bayanian aur Haqqaiq" *Nawa-i-Waqt*, July 8, 2014
- "Ijtamai Qabron Ki Masmari Aur Bharat" *Daily Ausaf*, July 9, 2014
- "Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Kashmir" *Nawa-i-Waqt*, July 13, 2014
- "Youm-e-Ilhaaq-e-Pakistan Aur Bharti Hatdharmi" *Nawa-i-Waqt*, July 18, 2014
- "Awami Legi Insaaf Ya Intikam?" *Daily Pakistan*, July 8, 2014
- "UN Mubassar Mission Aur Bharat" *Nawa-i-Waqt*, July 25, 2014
- "Kashmir o Ghaza Aalmi Bay Hissi" *Nawa-i-Waqt*, July 28, 2014

IPRI REVIEW MEETING

China's Relations with South Asian Countries

Ms. Asiya Mahar, Assistant Research Officer at IPRI, gave a presentation on "China's relations with South Asian Countries" on August 29, 2014.

Salient points discussed during the presentation are given below:

- China enjoys cordial diplomatic ties with all countries in South Asia.
- Chinese discourse on South Asia particularises three levels of China's engagement in this region. Firstly, China attempts to institutionalize China South Asia network; secondly, China wants to strengthen bilateral ties with individual countries of South Asia; and thirdly, China explores possibility of cooperation on infrastructure and energy sectors.



- China's engagement with South Asia has distinct elements due to conflicts between India and Pakistan, power struggle among global powers, i.e., US and Russia, and low level of regionalization in South Asia.
- China's rise as a world power has prompted it to affirm itself as a "natural leader" in the region.
- Due to multiple intra-regional political conflicts, the involvement of global powers in South Asia is limited.
- Countries in South Asia are densely populated, energy deficient and lag behind in terms of economic development. China, being an emerging global economic power, should be a guiding motive for South Asian states. Cooperation with China can become a source for sustainable development. South Asian states should increase intra-regional cooperation as well as bilateral ties with China.

- "Gaza Needs a Lasting Solution" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, August 3, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/03-Aug-2014/gaza-needs-a-lasting-solution>
- "All Eyes on Cairo Negotiations" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, August 5, 2014, <http://epaper.thefrontierpost.com/articleprint/188531//>
- "Pakistan's 'Look-Africa Policy'" by Muhammad Nawaz Khan, Assistant Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, August 9, 2014, <http://epaper.pakobserver.net/201408/09/comments-1.php>
- "Beyond Zarb-e-Azb" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, August 10, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/10-Aug-2014/beyond-zarb-e-azb>
- "March Towards Islamabad" by Amna Ejaz Rafi, Assistant Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, August 14, 2014, <http://epaper.pakobserver.net/201408/14/comments-2.php>
- "The Turkish Model" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, August 18, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/18-Aug-2014/the-turkish-model>
- "Weapons' Sale to India will Erode Peace" by Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, August 18, 2014, <http://thefrontierpost.com/article/191403//>
- "Is India a Regional Leviathan?" by Gulshan Bibi, Assistant Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, August 21, 2014, <http://epaper.pakobserver.net/201408/21/comments-2.php>
- "Gaza Conflict & Pak Response" by Khurram Abbas, Assistant Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, August 21, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=250258>
- "Gaza & Inane World Response" by Khalid Hussain Chandio, Research Officer IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, August 23, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=250425>
- "Cancelling Secretary Level Talks with Pakistan" by Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, August 24, 2014, <http://epaper.thefrontierpost.com/e-paper/2014-08-24/Editorial-15202/>
- "Calling off Foreign Secretary Level Talks" by Muhammad Munir, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, August 24, 2014, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=250581>
- "Modi Reneges on Peace Process" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, August 25, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/columns/25-Aug-2014/modi-reneges-on-peace-process>
- "Gaza Questions the Relevance of the UN" by Saman Zulfqar, Assistant Research Officer IPRI was published in *Daily Times*, August 28, 2014, <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/28-Aug-2014/gaza-questions-the-relevance-of-the-un>
- "India Continues to Pursue Hegemonic Policies in Region" by Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, August 28, 2014, <http://epaper.thefrontierpost.com/e-paper/2014-08-28/Editorial-15266/>
- "Solution of Kashmir Essential for Regional Peace" by Aftab Hussain, Research Officer IPRI was published in *The Frontier Post*, August 28, 2014, <http://epaper.thefrontierpost.com/e-paper/2014-08-28/Opinion-15267/>
- "India's Hegemonic Policies in Region" by Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow IPRI was published in *Pakistan Observer*, August 30, 2014, <http://epaper.pakobserver.net/201408/30/comments-2.php>
- "Afghanistan's Faltering Transitions" by Air Cdr (R) Khalid Iqbal, Consultant IPRI was published in *The Nation*, August 31, 2014, <http://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2014-08-31/page-7>

Urdu Newspaper Articles by Asghar Ali Shad, Reserach Fellow, IPRI

- "UN Mission, Kashmir Gaza Aur" *Daily Ausaf*, August 1, 2014, <http://www.ausaf.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014-08-01/?pg=15>
- "Zarb-e-Azb, Media Ka Roshan Kirdar Aur" *Daily Pakistan*, August 9, 2014
- "Bharti Musalman Aur Mah-e-Azadi" *Nawa-i-Waqat*, August 15, 2014, <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2014-08-15/page-15>
- "Pak Sri Lanka Dosti Aur Mukhalfeen" *Nawa-i-Waqat*, August 22, 2014, <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2014-08-22/page-15>
- "Kharja Secretary Muzakraat Ki Mansokhi" *Nawa-i-Waqat*, August 25, 2014, <http://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2014-08-25/page-15>

India Re-thinking Indus Water Treaty

Mr. Khalid Chandio, Research Officer at IPRI gave a presentation on Indus Water Treaty (IWT) under the title "India Re-Thinking Water Treaty" on July 17th, 2014 at IPRI Conference hall. He discussed various points regarding violation of the terms of treaty by India. He



highlighted number of water disputes between Pakistan and India e.g., Wular Barrage, Kishanganga Project, Baglihar Dam etc. Salal Dam was started by India without informing Pakistan which is a clear violation of the IWT. Although both countries have arrived at an agreement on this issue yet there was no guarantee that India would not do the same in the future. Also, India always

has the leverage to hold water for 25-26 days which can cause acute shortage of water for winter crops in Pakistan.

Since water security has become a principal concern for sustainable development, availability of freshwater is one of the greatest challenges that the world is going to face in the near future. Nowhere else on earth has the prospects of "water wars" been more acute than in South Asia, where two of the following world's greatest river systems crisscross the international boundaries of several of the world's largest and most densely-populated countries being:

- Indus River System (IRS)
- Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM)

Mr. Chandio described the following five Constituencies in India on re-thinking the IWT:



The first constituency seeks to evolve an Indus-II under the provisions of Article VII and Article XII of the IWT for an integrated or joint development of the Indus water basin. Indus-II should be fed into the current peace process as a means both of defusing current political strains over Indus-I and insuring against climate change.

The second constituency while understanding the merits of a new hydrologic relationship on the Indus does not see any viability of Indus-II and contends that a totally new treaty has to be negotiated. The IWT was a partitioning treaty, a coda to the partitioning of the land. How can such cooperation be built on that basis?

The third constituency is the domestic pressure group in (Indian occupied) Jammu & Kashmir which feels that the IWT has restricted the state's overall development by not allowing it the usage of "its" rivers, i.e., Jhelum, Chenab and Indus. It has been calling for a

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Role of Iran in the Region



Assistant Research Officer at IPRI, Mr. Khuram Abbas gave a presentation on “Role of Iran in the Region: Implications and Policy Recommendations for Pakistan” on July 10, 2014 at IPRI conference hall. Mr. Abbas in his presentation highlighted various aspects of Iranian Foreign Policy. He said that Iran was important for both South Asia and Middle East. Salient points of his presentation are as follows:

- Iran has developed robust capabilities for defence and deterrence. It is not resorting to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons for its security, as per IAEA 2014 report which stated that Iran had implemented seven practical measures to refrain from acquiring nuclear weapons capability.

- Iran has adopted a regional approach for its oil and gas supplies. It wants friendly relations with its neighbouring countries.

- Pakistan-Iran relations have a historical connection; Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan after it became independent in 1947. Both countries share a border of 900 kilometres. In terms of trade, the demand for Pakistani products was high in Iran. Rice, meat, paper & paper board, textiles, fruits (mangoes & oranges) and surgical goods were main Pakistani exports to Iran.

- Pakistan and Iran have established different forums for their cooperation with each other like Border Trade Committee, Joint Trade Commission, Joint Border Commission and Special Security Committee. There are several ongoing mega projects like Iran-Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline, 1000 MW Taftan-Quetta transmission line, 400 MW Gwadar power supply project, up-gradation of Quetta-Taftan railway line and Quetta-Taftan National Highway which have enhanced cooperation between the two countries. Pakistan and Iran, signed an MoU in 2013, for setting up Pakistan's largest oil refinery costing \$4 billion at the Gwadar port that would not only meet Pakistan's refining needs but would also open avenues for China to get oil supplies.

- India was relying on Iran for land access to Afghanistan. India had completed the Zaranj Delaram Highway (218 KM) which connected landlocked Afghanistan with alternative sea route through Iran's Chahbahar Port.

Mr. Abbas also gave policy recommendations

to further enhance Pak-Iran relations:

- Pakistan-Iran relations will further improve if links at the people to people level are improved. Such contacts will develop deeper understanding of each other.

- Frequent high level visits from both sides will create a favourable environment for adding more substance to bilateral relations.



- ECO is the appropriate forum for strengthening intra-regional as well as relations between Pakistan and Iran. Turkey was willing to play a constructive role in that context. ECO trade agreement for Islamabad-Zahidan-Istanbul container train service is required to be implemented at the earliest. This service would open new horizons of cooperation among ECO member countries.

- Pakistan should focus on 'commercial diplomacy' to get more access to the Iranian market. Moreover, textile exhibition by Pakistan in Iran could open new avenues of export of Pakistani items to Iran. It would also help increase economic interdependence between the two countries.

Building China-Pakistan Community of Shared Destiny in the New Era

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China had been the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy. Pak-China friendship stood as a model for state-to-state relationship in contemporary international relations.

He commented that China Pakistan Economic Corridor was the landmark project between the two states and was a shining example of win-win cooperation. He said that security of Chinese nationals working in Pakistan was the government's top most priority. The government of Pakistan believed that peaceful neighbourhood was vital for economic development of the country and Pakistan had reached out to India in its effort for improved relations. Recently, Pakistan had launched an unprecedented full scale military operation against all terrorist groups in North Waziristan. The military operation was proceeding successfully and large parts of the area had been cleared from terrorists.

H.E Sun Weidong, Ambassador of People's Republic of China in Pakistan in his speech said that increasingly powerful China would provide more opportunities to Pakistan. He added that China-Pakistan relationship would get further consolidated and upgraded in the course of China's development. He added, China hoped that Pakistan would play a greater constructive role in regional and

international affairs.

President IPRI, in his presentation on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), opined that the corridor would be the “game changer”. The empirical research proved that China was a reliable partner as it always accomplished the projects it started in any country. Therefore, Pakistanis were confident that the CPEC would also be completed. Geographically, the two friendly countries were at the cross-roads of multiple silk routes. The CPEC from Kashgar to Gwadar would help in integrating the economies of the two countries and establishing several economic zones along the corridor.

Mr. Muhammad Munir, Research Fellow, IPRI in his presentation on “Development of China-Pakistan Relations” discussed various phases of relations between the countries. He said that the geostrategic and geo-economic importance of Pakistan for China in the region would remain strong in the context of stability in Afghanistan, the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor and the issue of countering extremism.

In the concluding session, Ambassador Syed Tariq Fatemi, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, said that Chinese never colonized any nation in the world. Pak-China relationship was a must for regional peace and stability. This relationship was unique in the world and must be brought down to younger generation of both states.

Genesis of Indian Ambitions in Afghanistan: Implications for Pakistan

Gulshan Bibi, Assistant Research Officer at IPRI, gave a presentation on August 11, 2014. The salient points of her presentation are as follows:

India has been making strategic moves for decades to turn Pakistan into its market and encircling it through its presence in Afghanistan. Way back in 1990s, when there was a clash between Taliban and anti-Pakistan Northern Alliance (NA), India actively supported the latter. After incidents of 9/11, India offered every possible support to the US forces in Afghanistan. Later, India established full diplomatic relations with the government of Hamid Karzai by providing humanitarian and economic aid and becoming the largest regional provider of aid for Afghanistan.

- Throughout the years, US has been supporting India in getting a strong foothold in Afghanistan. It was given all-out help by the US to expand its



influence in Afghanistan, and also in Central Asian Republics (CARs) to emerge as a key player in the region.

- In addition to the humanitarian aid and reconstruction activities, India has expanded its political, economic and military power in Afghanistan and has enhanced its influence through soft power projection to create pro-India sentiments among the Afghans.
- Pakistan has always considered Afghanistan as a major component of its security and considers Indian involvement in Afghanistan a threat to greater regional stability. Hostile India on east, pro-India Afghanistan on west and Indian intelligence network in Afghanistan are posing security threat to Pakistan. As a counter move, Pakistan has to reconsider and redesign its strategy.
- Indo-Afghan, together with Indo-US nexus can become an impediment for Pakistan's outreach to CARs and can also place India in an advantageous position to maintain status quo over unresolved core issue of Kashmir. Indian access to Afghanistan and CARs markets can also adversely impact Pakistan's manufacturing industries and can also negatively influence Pakistan's trade with Afghanistan and with CARs.
- Pakistan and Afghanistan have a joint



threat from terrorist groups and Pakistan has officially acknowledged on several occasions that it should be addressed jointly. Pakistan's search for supportive elements within Afghanistan and its collaboration with other regional powers like Iran, Russia and China can lead to a joint strategy to counter Indian moves.

- Pakistan is already engaged in number of development projects in Afghanistan. It can improve its bilateral relations with Afghanistan by focusing more on cultural and economic exchanges and by projecting soft power.
- India is advancing its ambitions in Afghanistan in the economic, strategic and social spheres, and thus posing a threat to regional peace and stability. In spite of all Indian moves, Pakistan still enjoys a position of great significance for peace and progress in Afghanistan.

India Re-thinking Indus Water Treaty

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complete review of the treaty. The Indian occupied Jammu & Kashmir government has been contending that in spite of having an untapped hydro-electric potential of 15,000 MW, the state continued to suffer from acute power shortage and related agro-economic underdevelopment.

The fourth constituency in India springs into action when the political climate between India and Pakistan becomes acrimonious.

While war over water is not an option, this group suggests strong-arm tactics in dealing with Pakistan and using water as a coercive tool and a bargaining instrument in the larger politico-strategic objectives of India.

There is a fifth constituency that argues that any attempt to review the treaty, can be done only after India exploits the potential already permissible under the

treaty. Any attempt otherwise to review the treaty may not be seen as logical. The IWT is a product of its time and could be fruitfully modified and renegotiated to bring it more in line with contemporary international watercourse law, the Helsinki rules, and emerging concerns with water quality, environmental sustainability, climate change, and principles of equitable sharing.

Mr. Khalid Chandio concluded that Pakistan should call for a sophisticated forecasting system, accurately estimating how much water flows into the IRS, as almost 90% of the water in the Upper Indus River Basin comes from remote glaciers of Himalaya and Karakorum mountain ranges, which border China and India, and the Hindu Kush, bordering Afghanistan. Pakistan should continue to expose Indian violation of the IWT that India must stop and abide by the terms of the treaty in its letter and spirit.

Indian Secularism: Myth or Reality

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since partition. According to analysts, nearly 35,000 anti-minorities riots including all minorities of India had occurred in India.

- There is no definition of secularism in Indian Constitution. In fact, Indian Constitution is a document in which communalism and secularism have been mixed. To beef up votes, communalism has been used by Indian politicians.
- For political expediency and also for maintaining law and order in the country, the concept of secularism has been used. However, religion has always come in the way.
- Muslim population in India is not concentrated but scattered which is a factor for their weak political position in India.
- In India, all minorities are mistreated. If personalities like Modi remain in power, India will lose its image of a secular nation.

COSATT Meeting in Nepal

On the invitation of Director, Center for South Asian Studies (CSAS) in Nepal, President IPRI Ambassador (R) Sohail Amin visited Kathmandu from July 15-16, 2014 to attend a Conference on 'Realizing the Vision of a South Asian Union (SAU)'. The conference was organised by CSAS under the auspices of the Consortium of South Asian Think Tanks (COSATT) and in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. The conference was inaugurated by the Nepalese Foreign Minister Mahindra Bahadur Pandey. Foreign Secretary of Nepal, Secretary General SAARC, two former Secretary Generals of SAARC and a former Secretary General of ASEAN, who is currently High Commissioner of Singapore to Malaysia, also attended the meeting.

President IPRI presented a paper on 'South Asian Union A Dream or a Reality' at the Meeting. He said that South Asia was home to one fifth of humanity. Located on the confluence of West, East and Central Asia, along the shores of the Indian Ocean and in the neighbourhood of China, it assumed even greater significance. Unfortunately, all the South Asian countries faced the daunting challenges of poverty and under development. What further complicated matter is that many of the South Asian nations did not consider themselves to be living in a friendly neighbourhood. This was the background in 1985 when SAARC was established to promote regional economic cooperation between South Asian countries. Almost three decades later, the background remained the same. Ambiguities persist within South Asian countries on what should be the guiding force towards regionalism. Regional states were still at different levels of economic strength. What was encouraging was the fact that SAARC was still functioning and it was the tool that could ultimately lead the South Asian countries towards realizing the dream of establishing South Asian Union.

President IPRI continued that as a first step, SAARC should be made an effective and a dynamic organization. Its focus should remain on priority areas that affect all the South Asian states collectively. SAARC members themselves have to play a lead role in this regard. It should not be the responsibility of SAARC Secretariat but that of individual states to ensure their presence in all activities. Many initiatives have not been able to progress due to lack of participation of one or more member states. It was easy to delay or scuttle any SAARC process by any member state through declaring non-availability for a particular meeting. It was also important to review the status, role and engagement of observer states in SAARC activities and programmes by making them dialogue partners of SAARC. It will help SAARC in raising its profile globally. Added advantage will be the addition of diverse and varied experiences.

In conclusion, President IPRI said that SAARC was an important platform for creating an economically integrated regional block. We should invest our energy in strengthening regional mechanisms. ASEAN has worked wonders for its people and its networking with neighbours and major global powers has set a new example. We should emulate that example in SAARC.

Indian Secularism: Myth or Reality

Research fellow at IPRI, Mr. Asghar Ali Shad, gave a presentation on Secularism in India. The main points of his presentation are as follows:

- In 1976, during the emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi, the term secularism was introduced through 42nd constitutional amendment in the Indian Constitution in its preamble.



- BJP an extremist Hindu party has come into power in India through the recent elections held in April 2014 which shows the real face of secularism in India. Another prominent point to note is that, among the 282 BJP's elected members of Parliament, not a single member is Muslim.

- The coalition partner of BJP, Ashok Singhal, has said that if Muslims want to live in India, they must immediately

withdraw their claim for Babri Mosque, Mathra Eidgah Mosque and Alamgiri Mosque of Banaras so that Ram Janam Bhumi Mandir, Krishan Janam Bhumi and Shiv Mandir could be constructed there respectively. Muslims' existence would be annihilated from India if they did not accept his demand.

- According to Wikileaks, in December 2009, Rahul Gandhi told the then US Ambassador Timothy Roemer that in the days to come Safron Hindu extremists would become a greater threat to global peace than al Qaeda.

- According to the Sachhar Report prepared under the supervision of Justice Rajendar Sachhar, in rural India 94.9 per cent and in urban areas 61.1 per cent Muslims were living below the line of poverty. Likewise, 54.6 per cent Muslim rural population and 60 per cent urban Muslim population was deprived of education.



- India's Federal Secretary for Tourism, Parvez Dewan, authored a book titled "Hindus' are Heroes, All others are Villains". He researched 786 Hindi feature films and 300 advertisements to write this book. He depicted Muslims and all other minorities as "criminals, fools and lacking in moral values".

- The head of the "Aam Admi Party" and former Chief Minister of Delhi declared in December 2013 that in India 23,500 anti-Muslim riots had taken place

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