



NEWSLETTER

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Visit of Chinese Delegation



Chinese Delegation and IPRI Staff during the meeting

An eight-member delegation, led by Mr. Wu Sikang, President of Chinese Think Tank Association of Special Economic Zones and Director of Development Research Center of Shenzhen Municipal People's Government accompanied by Researchers and Entrepreneurs, Mr. Wang Chao, Mr. Huang Hucheng and Ms. Wang Yilin from China Special Economic Zone Think Tank and Ms. Xia Yanna, Ms. Zhang Weiju, Ms. Yang Ya and Ms. Nancy Tang from various business enterprises to include robotics, visited Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on June 09, 2017. The purpose of the visit to Pakistan by the Chinese Delegation was to project the success of Shenzhen as successful model of Special Economic Zone (SEZ), and to seek opportunities for business enterprises from Shenzhen to invest in the SEZs being established under CPEC.

In his opening remarks, Brig (R) Sohail Tirmizi, Acting President IPRI welcomed the Chinese delegation and said that Shenzhen is a great success story of economic development which is based entirely on innovative technologies. Since the initiation of development strategy in 1998, it was expected that Shenzhen would come out to be a success as an economic development zone in accordance with the Chinese policy. IPRI was grateful for this visit and as for Pakistan; there is much to learn from the success of Shenzhen. There could be no better people than Mr. Wu Sikang and his team of experts, who understand economic development, and can share the great secrets behind this achievement. To the best of our knowledge, out of many economic zones established by China, Shenzhen is leading as a model of success to be followed globally.

Mr. Wu Sikang in his opening remarks said that the delegation is happy to visit Pakistan, a country which is China's closest strategic ally and friend. The

discussion was started with a video presentation about the economic and social development in Shenzhen, China, specifically after its transformation into a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). It was mentioned that during 1998-2016, the GDP of Shenzhen has risen from US\$ 20 billion to US\$ 300 billion alongside an export-import volume of US\$ 450 billion. Its port is ranked number three worldwide from the point of trade.

Mr. Sikang stated the Belt and Road initiative, proposed by President Xi Jinping is a strategic project, of which CPEC is an integral part. While discussing the pre-requisites of such collaboration, he stated that the development of basic infrastructure such as ports, bridges, roads and airports etc, is considered to be the most important

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Ambassador (R) Sohail Amin (1951-2017)

In the memory of Ambassador (R) Sohail Amin who served Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) as its President from May 2013 to June 2017 till he breath his last on the morning of June 30, 2017. He is succeeded by his wife, two sons and a daughter. He will be remembered for his kindness, dedication and belief in merit. He has left behind a legacy of hard work which will serve as a guiding principle for the institute and all its members.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Surely we belong to Allah and to Him shall we return

Visit of Chinese Delegation

In-house Discussion with Foreign Delegation

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aspect besides the promotion of education and communication among individuals, entrepreneurs and cities. Mr. Sikang regarded 'education' as the secret of Shenzhen's success. Around 4.02 per cent of the Shenzhen's GDP is being spent on the Research and Development (R&D) with primary focus on the enterprise development concerning enhanced productivity and higher industrialization. He added that Shenzhen's success is largely based on industrial transformation. Shenzhen was once known as a 'fishing village' with no industrial base but is now recognized as a 'hub of global information and communication.'

Mr. Sikang also elaborated the strategies employed for the success of Shenzhen as SEZ. With the implementation of an open approach, a new culture of innovation, interaction and immigration was adopted, with primary emphasis on equality, pursuance of citizen rights and encouragement of foreign investors. As an integral part of 'innovation' strategy, the agenda for the development of high-tech industry was proposed, which is why, around 80 enterprises of Shenzhen are contributing worth US\$ 145 billion to the Chinese economy. Now, the emphasis has been onto transforming the national level enterprises into global sized enterprises. Another aspect which contributed to the development of Shenzhen is its proximity to the Hong Kong. Mr. Sikang said that biggest and developed

cities are the motors and drivers of regional development. From Shenzhen's experience, it can be concluded that SEZs, if established in the proximity of big cities, will have greater chances of success.

Mr. Sikang also elaborated that in order to attract foreign investment, following two approaches must be adopted that are i) industries that best fit the resources of a particular area should be

developed to facilitate an economic boost and ii) the establishment of high-tech industries with a foresight to integrate them as part of the international value chain such as robotics. Pakistan has a large population which, if remained unskilled could be a big burden on its economy, it should be turned into a valuable resource through proper education and skill development.

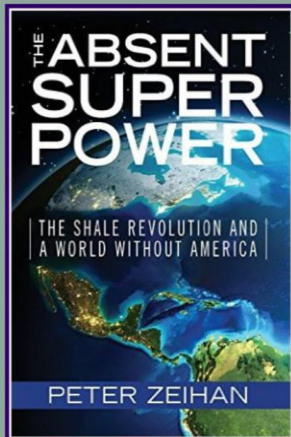
Mr. Sikang opined that the Chinese can train Pakistan's labor force on the use of technology and high-tech machinery. But before initiation, there is a need to have basic and comprehensive infrastructure to reach certain global standards of production and manufacturing. He said, there is a need to create financial centers as well, which could grant economic assistance to people interested in carrying out economically sustainable projects. Mr. Sikang added that SEZs have a close relationship with central, bigger and established cities and could give their maximum if located near them.

In the concluding remarks, it was said that the initiative of CPEC is greatly valued in Pakistan. The Government and agencies related to it are trying their best in coming up with required legislations, establishment of projects including SEZs and the provision of security. The establishment of SEZs is considered to be the backbone of the entire CPEC framework for which a detailed study of already existing models is required. It was opined that alongside Pakistan, China will also have certain benefits of CPEC in specific and Belt and Road Initiative. Even for a success story like Shenzhen, distance to the Arabian Sea will be reduced through CPEC. For Shenzhen, major cities like Lahore, Multan, Karachi, Hyderabad, Peshawar and Quetta could be the possible future locations of engagement.



Addition to Library

The Absent Superpower: The Shale Revolution and a World without America

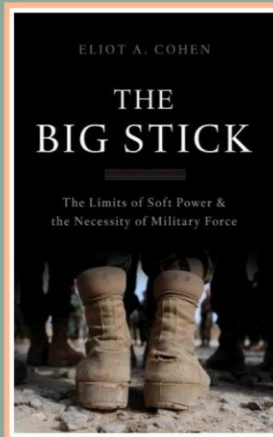


Author: Peter Zeihan

"Peter Zeihan has written a smart, well-crafted page-turner that lays out the compelling reasons why America's role in the world has changed - and why that's good news for Americans and sobering for everyone else. His vivid account of the impact of America's good fortune for the rest of the world makes this an original and invaluable read."

Ian Bremmer,
Eurasia Group

The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power and Necessity of Military Force



Author: Eliot A. Cohen

"A balanced and sensitive analysis of America's military record since the attacks of September 11, 2001... Mr. Cohen's lucid book is a must-read for anyone interested in military might - and how it can help us maintain the edge we need in this treacherous age."

Walter Russell Meade,
The Wall Street Journal

Impact of Climate Change on Pakistan's National Security

Mr. Syed Abu Ahmad Akif, Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change and Mr. Muhammad Irfan Tariq, Director General (Environment & Climate Change), Ministry of Climate Change, Government of Pakistan jointly delivered a lecture on the topic of, 'Impact of Climate Change on Pakistan's National Security' to IPRI scholars on June 08, 2017.



While welcoming the guests and introducing the subject, Acting President, Brig. (R) Sohail Tirmizi said that Climate Change is increasingly being called a 'security' problem which undermines human security in the present day, and will increasingly do so in the future, by reducing access to, and negatively impacting upon the quality of, natural resources that are important for sustenance. Climate change is also likely to undermine the capacity of the state in providing opportunities and services that help people to sustain their livelihoods and in ensuring food security.

He also said that Pakistan is among the country with extreme weather conditions, decreasing fresh water sources, increasing population and is already being impacted by climate change with changes in temperatures, rain pattern and the relatively excessive melting of the glaciers in the North. It has been ranked eighth on the list of countries most vulnerable to climate change by the German Watch Global Climate Risk Index in 2016. Climate change represents a unique and novel security threat as it has the capacity to devastate human civilization. This complexity in it makes it challenging for policy makers to assess climate change threat and consequently to prioritize resources for countering these.

Speaking on the impact of climate change on Pakistan's national security, the two speakers in their joint presentation said that according to the International Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variation or as a result of human activity refers to climate change. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) refers to change of climate as a phenomenon that is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity which alters the composition of the global atmosphere and that is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

Assessing the climate change situation and its vulnerability, the speakers explained that climate change is linked with the use of natural resources. The living patterns are being determined by the climate around us.

Based on the IPCC fifth assessment report of 2014, it was stated that there was a 0.6 °C increase in average global temperature during the last century. It is predicted that it would increase by

1.8-4.0 °C over the 21st century. There are massive changes (increase and decrease) in the global temperature and precipitation in different world regions. Similarly, there is a considerable increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme climatic events such as cyclonic storms, floods, droughts and heat waves etc. The sea level has risen by 0.19 mm and will continue to rise during the 21st century. There is also an increase in the ocean acidification which has affected the global water cycle.

While highlighting Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change threats, the speakers stated that Pakistan is facing serious threat of climate change, at present. There is an increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as erratic monsoon rains causing frequent and intense floods, heat waves and droughts etc. The frequency and intensity of weather extremes in Pakistan have remained much higher after 1991 than during the period of 1950 to 1990. Pakistan is in the third pole, i.e. the third largest ice mass after the two poles, but there is a high sea level rise due to melting of glaciers. The sea-level rise (SLR) is threatening the coastal areas, which has resulted in the displacement of people around these coastal areas. On the average, the sea-level rise in Pakistan is also higher as compared to rest of the world.

The speakers said that the climate change has adversely affected the water availability in Pakistan. In the World Bank Report of 2006, Pakistan was classified as a 'water-stressed' country and is now heading to become a 'water-scarce' country. Pakistan's storage capacity is limited to 30-days supply of water, which is far less of the recommended 1000-days reserve. The increased variability of river flows is due to an increase in the variability of monsoon and winter rains and loss of natural reservoirs in the form of glaciers. The Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC) of Ministry of Climate Change, has predicted that the monsoon in Pakistan has shifted 100 kilometers above North which will decrease the agricultural productivity of mainland by 15 per cent. There is an increased demand of irrigation water because of higher evaporation rates at higher temperatures.

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Ambassador (R) Muhammad Khalid Khattak visited IPRI to deliver a lecture on "Strategic Situation in the Region and Pakistan" on June 20, 2017.

While discussing the contours of strategic environment, Ambassador

Khattak said that two elements define strategic environment i.e. i) strife and ii) uncertainty. Given the regional dynamics of South Asia, the specter of terrorism has come to overwhelm the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. There are numerous and divided versions as how this menace has affected the region but there are no clear determinants or solutions present to end this problem.

In the particular situation of Afghanistan, the subject of security is interlinked with the long persistent issues of drug cultivation and trafficking, internal chaos and ethnic divide etc. Pakistan is currently seen as part of the Afghan problem but not solution, which he said was damaging as well as a wrong perception. As the situation deteriorates in Afghanistan with obvious effects for Pakistan, the US alongside other powers intervene as this being the only policy option available. However, such intervention has yielded no good results as chaos and internal divide continues to prevail.

He said that the Taliban who were a potential threat once, are now potential shareholders of power in Afghanistan. Russia is increasingly supporting participation of the Taliban in the political process in Afghanistan as otherwise there could be no peace in Afghanistan.

Another issue is the rise of Daesh in Afghanistan. Daesh is fighting a war of survival in Syria and Iraq. Prime focus of Daesh has been

Strategic Situation in the

Middle East where it has established a strong presence. Western media and sources put that fight against Daesh to be in its final phase. The focus of this violent entity will definitely shift towards other regions for survival. He said that in today's world, it is impossible to eliminate terrorism with a short term strategy, as it is difficult to assess who is terrorist and who is not.

With regards to the Middle East, he said that a great deal of uncertainty also prevails in the Arab world. The Kurds are going to hold a Referendum in September 2017 for a separate state. By all accounts, it is believed that Iraqi Kurds are going to vote for an independent state. In Syria, the Asad regime is under pressure due to massive presence of extra-regional, regional and local forces. In the middle of war, the major powers and global community are entirely ignorant of the human rights violations happening in Syria.

Qatar crisis present to us another challenge posed to the Arab strategic environment, with obvious implications for Pakistan. Amidst the quagmire, there must be an understanding that any scuffle among Arab states would only threaten the region's stability, leading it further towards greater chaos.

While discussing the stalemate between Pakistan and India, he stated that Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) cannot afford a compromise on its hard stance taken against Pakistan now, specifically in the case of Kashmir. However, he said that for the very first time, there is a genuine civil uprising in Kashmir and India has to deal with it politically rather through force. He also ruled out the possibility of any major conflict between India and Pakistan in the near future.

On the US greater role in the region, Ambassador Khattak said that the US is a declining power but its military/destructive capability, is still unmatched. As long as it remains a dominant military power, its grip over global economy will ensure that Dollar remains to be the global exchange currency. Under Trump administration, the policy of uncertainty both vis-à-vis allies and



Region and Pakistan

adversaries prevails which is ultimately of great concern to countries like China, European Union, Japan, UK, Iran and others. As America moves from interventionism to isolationism, world observes revival of cold-war politics. In the context of US-China relations, North Korea remains to be a contentious issue. But overall, the relations are taking a new shape as the US has walked out of Pacific Trade Agreement and ASEAN countries are approaching China to establish trade and economic ties.

Given Pakistan's inclusion in SCO, Ambassador Khattak opined that China must be made member of the SAARC, given the fact that China has borders with four members of SAARC including Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

On emerging regional re-alignments, he said that there are three points of convergence between Russia and Pakistan. These are counter-terrorism, maintenance of security and stability in the region and pro-

promotion of economic relations and regional connectivity. The third point was also emphasized by the Russian President Vladimir Putin during last SCO Summit at Astana.



Impact of Climate Change on Pakistan's National Security



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The food insecurity will be a challenge for Pakistan due to water scarcity and rising temperature. Higher evapotranspiration, elevated temperatures, glacier melting and altered precipitation patterns have brought an uncertainty in timely availability of irrigated water, which indirectly affects the crop production. The change in water availability for both hydropower generation and cooling of thermal power plant has also affected the energy sector, the most. There is reduced thermal power plant efficiency at higher temperatures. The increased transmission and distribution (T&D) line losses alongside occurrence of blackouts are also resulting from line sagging. Higher temperatures increase the electricity demand for space cooling, which ultimately requires additional generation capacity.

Explaining the economic and political impact of climate change in Pakistan, the speakers stated that the environmental degradation costs 6 per cent of GDP i.e. Rs. 365 billion per annum and the government of Pakistan is spending 7 per cent of its GDP on climate related expenditures. The country has suffered heavy losses because of floods owing to climate change. At the moment, 22.8 per cent area and 50 per cent population in Pakistan is at risk due to the impact of climate change. According to the World Bank report, there are US\$ 3.86 billion losses annually due to effects of climate change in Pakistan. The German watch has ranked Pakistan among the ten most vulnerable countries consecutively since 2010.

On the impact of climate change on national security of Pakistan,

Mr. Akif said that the security implications of climate change need to be examined in the context of pre-existing social, economic and environmental threats, or stresses, which are key factors in the security of individuals, communities and states. Pakistan needs to shift focus from a narrow to a broader security perspective. The climate change has an impact on economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security. The major threat in Pakistan due to climate change include scarcity in water, food, energy and lack of opportunities and frequent occurrence of disasters like floods, droughts, cyclones, health and migration due to lack of livelihood opportunities and the climate impact on human and military security. The human security encompasses social, economic, natural resources and environment, while military security comprises of direct threat to military infrastructure, preparedness, and operations. The military security can alter the international borders.

In the end, the speakers said that at international level, under the obligations of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Pakistan is working with national communications and UNFCCC Climate Technology Center. To deal with the threat of climate change in Pakistan, the government is engaged both at domestic and international levels.

Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS): Ethical, Legal and Security Implications



Ms. Gulshan Rafique, Assistant Research Officer, delivered a presentation on the topic of, "Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS): Ethical, Legal and Security Implications."

Following are the salient points of the discussion:

Introduction

Weapons are often presented as the promoters of security, particularly during the times of regional or international instability. But weapons that inflict catastrophic and irreversible humanitarian losses cannot seriously be viewed as the protectors of nation states or human civilization. In the light of potential humanitarian consequences, progress in the banning of such weapons has been insufficient. Such is the case of LAWS. Pakistan believes that banning the development of LAWS through a legally binding international agreement is a humanitarian imperative because they have the ethical, legal and security implications for humanity.

What are LAWS?

LAWS are a type of military robots, designed to select and attack military targets (people, installations) with intervention by human operator. They have different names such as 'robotic weapons or killer robots'. As of 2016, the autonomy of current system is restricted in the sense that a human gives final command for an attack. They may be understood as belonging to two distinct categories: semi-autonomous and fully autonomous. The difference between these groups is based on the extent of interference with them by a human operator. Semi-autonomous weapons denote those systems which remain under the control of humans in the performance of their critical functions. Fully autonomous weapons are those which are capable of handling and controlling their entire functioning without human involvement. Semi-autonomous weapons are part of the arsenal of many states, such as sentry-guns deployed along borders and the Israeli Iron Dome. Be that as it may, the possibility of the development of fully autonomous robots for military or policing purposes cannot be ignored. LAWS with the ability to make life or death decisions and sniff out the enemy could very soon be a feature of warfare as new age arms race between the world powers heat up. Their induction in the military is regarded as the third revolution in warfare after gunpowder and nuclear arms. LAWS should not be confused with unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAV) or 'combat drones', which are currently remote-controlled by a pilot, meaning having 'a human in the loop.'

The Concerns

Though commentators take into consideration different criteria for defining LAWS, thereby contributing to the absence of a universally accepted definition, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) defines it as a system with autonomy in its critical functions, i.e. such a system would be able to detect, track, select and attack a target without direct human intervention. It is viewed that when it comes to decisions over life and death, there will and should always be a man in the loop.

There are multiple issues that need to be addressed and have been the point of much deliberation when it comes to LAWS. First and foremost is the issue of their legality. They violate the Principle of Distinction (*Jus in Bello*) and Principle of Proportionality (*Jus ad Bellum*) of Just War Theory.

Another issue that has been extensively discussed is whether it is ethical to handover critical decisions such as selecting and engaging targets to weapons, while taking humans-out-of-the-loop. The third crucial problem is the determination of accountability for the unlawful use of a weapon which does not involve a human operator. The concerns dealing with different levels start from the very narrow definition of autonomy. There is a big question mark on what counts as lethal and fully autonomous.

The Security Debate

The most commonly cited security concerns are that these weapons have the potential to escalate the pace of warfare and the likelihood of resorting to war. They could also ignite and foster arms races. The LAWS can be acquired and used by non-state armed groups, including terrorist entities and rogue states. They undermine existing warfare law, controls and regulations. Unlike nuclear weapons, LAWS require no specific hard-to-create materials and will be difficult to monitor. It is predicted that because of their easy availability in future 'autonomous weapons will become the Kalashnikovs of tomorrow.'

It can be said that they could also lead to an increase in asymmetric warfare, i.e. where one party to the armed conflict is in possession of advanced military technology while the other one, not capable of affording or developing such advancements, thereby making them rely on other unacceptable means or methods to gain advantage over the militarily-strong adversary.

Pakistan's Position

Pakistan has categorically called for a preemptive ban on autonomous weapons. It states that 'LAWS are by nature unethical,' and irrespective of the degree of sophistication, they 'cannot be programmed to comply with International Humanitarian Law (IHL).' It has stated that autonomous weapons will 'lower the threshold of going to war' and create an accountability vacuum. Such weapon systems, in Pakistan's opinion, would deprive combatants of the protection of international law and would also greatly risk the lives of civilians and non-combatants. Pakistan has argued for a legally binding CCW protocol that preemptively bans the development and use of such weapons.

Options for Pakistan

The exact manner in which LAWS will be used in the future remains unclear. Pakistan is therefore correct in demanding increased deliberations about their use and place within International Humanitarian Law. It is, however, certain that many of these technologies exist today and will likely be used in the battlefields of tomorrow, with or without human intervention. So the options for Pakistan are as follows:

- The usefulness of LAWS in the other functions such as targeting, surveillance, and damage assessment, will remain unchanged. Automation of these functions will also provide a significant advantage to a party and it is essential that countries like Pakistan aggressively pursue research and development in this field.
- Given Pakistan's defence policy and its unique security situation in the region, it should keep its options open as far as the development of these weapons is concerned as the induction of LAWS seems inevitable in the military strategy of major international players.

Conclusion

In international affairs, states pursue their self-interests only, without defining them. Despite international law, countries continue to develop nuclear weapons to achieve their security, political and military objectives. Similarly, LAWS present major states with an upper hand in warfare, so they will continue to develop and operationalize them, such as drones.

Competing Interests of Major Powers in Middle East: Implications for Regional Stability

Ms. Saman Zulfqar, Research Officer, delivered a presentation on the topic of, "Competing Interests of Major Powers in Middle East: Implications for Regional Stability."

Following are the salient points of the discussion:

Introduction

Middle East, a conflict prone region is in a state of flux due to shifting geo-political landscape of the region. The current phase of instability and turmoil can be traced back to the two important developments i.e. i) US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and ii) disastrous consequences of the Arab Spring especially in Syria.

Since post World War II, the United States (US) has remained to be the most dominant and unchallenged external player in Middle Eastern affairs and has been a guarantor of regional security. In the last decade, the US focused on East Asia and maintained relative disengagement from Middle East which created space for Russia and China to enhance their relations with the Arab states. As we see the influence of Russia and China growing in the region, the US still remains to be a dominant actor, militarily.

Strategic Importance of Middle East

Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf has immense strategic importance due to its huge energy resources. The most developed and the burgeoning economies of the world are heavily dependent on energy resources of the Gulf region. The region holds 52.5 per cent of the total crude oil reserves of the world and 44.6 per cent of natural gas reserves. Maritime Transportation through the choke points of Suez Canal (which connects Mediterranean and Red Sea), Bab al Mandab (which connects Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden), and Strait of Hormuz (which connects Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea) play a significant role in global economy. The maritime transportation of crude oil through these choke points accounts for about 45 per cent of total world maritime oil trade.

Competing Interests of Great Powers and Implications for Regional Stability

- The clash of geo-economic, geo-strategic and geo-political interests of regional as well as extra-regional players have made Middle East, the most volatile and turbulent region in the world. The agendas driven by the ambitions of dominance in the region so as to ensure free flow of oil across regions alongside the containment of nuclear proliferation and terrorism have remained to be key contours of great powers' policy regarding Middle East.
- For instance, the US has always wanted to ensure secure and easy access of oil not only for itself but also for its allies in East Asia and Europe. The Middle Eastern countries, especially the states of the Persian Gulf are key oil producers and energy exporters to countries in Europe, China and Japan who are heavily dependent upon imported oil to meet their energy requirements.
- Since the 9/11 attacks, the US has prioritized counter-terrorism in its

policy towards the Middle East. In this regards, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen rank high in terms of bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation. Through these cooperative efforts, the US alongside others, seeks to target and disrupt terrorists at home and abroad. However, the emergence of the Islamic State has raised range of concerns among global powers.

- Muslim population in Russia accounts for 10-15 per cent of its total population. Russia desires to engage with Muslims countries to keep its population pacified at home. Russian engagement in Middle East can be seen through the prism of countering secessionist movements in North Caucasus and curbing growing radicalization of Russia's Muslim population. Besides, Russia also deems to establish economic ties with the Middle Eastern States. However, Russia's role remains to be marginal.
- Over the last two decades, Russia has been trying to have mutually beneficial economic relations with Middle Eastern states like Turkey, Israel and Gulf states. Initially, Russia remained neutral regarding developments taking place in Tunisia and Egypt as part of Arab Spring. However, subsequent development and prospective military intervention in Libya, followed by events in Syria attracted Russia's attention.
- As the conflict in Middle East intensifies, one can simply not brush off the implications under the rug. Many have speculated even the redrawing of state boundaries in Middle East. The likely formation of new state, called Kurdistan can be considered as a case in point. In the presence of sectarian fault lines, weak institutional structures and the denial of socio-political rights also provide breeding grounds for the rise of non-state actors.
- Most importantly, a significant outcome of the structural shifts in Middle East has been the rise of regional swing states that has added new dimension to the regional conflict dynamics. Swing states possess economic as well as political clout with a desire to formulate independent foreign policy while having potential to shift the balance in particular crisis situation. On the one hand, there are powerful states in Gulf such as Iran and Saudi Arabia while on the other hand, there are militarily weak states that lack political clout or have strong ideological bonds with these patron states. The rise of middle powers having means and resolve to act independently in Middle East resembles to a situation similar to Cold War non-alignment camp. Such states are also called 'Swing States' and states like Turkey, Qatar and Egypt are the most appropriate examples who aspire to play greater role in the region and 'prefer issue based cooperation over fixed alignments.'

Conclusion

The competing interests of regional as well as extra-regional states in Middle East are creating turbulence in the region. There are no prospects for regional stability and security, rather instability is going to prevail in the near future.



Col (R) Muhammad Hanif, Research Fellow
 "CPEC to Benefit all SCO Member States"
(Pakistan Observer)



Asghar Ali Shad, Research Fellow
(Urdu Articles)

"Aik Saal... Itni Khudkushian?"
(Nawa-i-Waqt)
 "Majeed Nizami, Dushmanaan-i-Watan ke
 Khilaf Shamshir-i-Barhana"
(Nawa-i-Waqt)
 "Ye Blame Game, Friendly Fire Aur...!"
(Daily Pakistan)
 "Maqbooza Kashmir Main Bharti
 Mazalam...!" *(Daily Pakistan)*
 "Samjota", Bharti Aqliyatein Aur...!"
(Daily Pakistan)



Muhammad Munir, Research Fellow
 "AFIC: An Emerging Financial Services Hub"
(Pakistan Observer)



Muhammad Nawaz Khan, Research Officer
 "Waging an Undeclared War"
(Pakistan Observer)

Saman Zulfqar, Research Officer
 "Qatar Crises" *(Pakistan Observer)*
 "Afghan Reconciliation: New Dynamics"
(Pakistan Observer)



Amna Ejaz Rafi, Assistant Research Officer
 "India-Pakistan and the SCO Platform"
(Pakistan Observer)



Gulshan Bibi, Assistant Research Officer
 "Between Hegemony and Isolation"
(Pakistan Observer)

Khurram Abbas, Assistant Research Officer
 "Cornering Iran"
(The Nation)



Aymen Ijaz, Assistant Research Officer
 "Daesh: An Existential Threat to Islam"
(Pakistan Observer)



Maryam Nazir, Assistant Research Officer
 "Qatar and Greater Politics"
(Pakistan Observer)



Adeel Mukhtar Mirza, Assistant Research Officer
 "Future of Paris Agreement"
(The Nation)



Call for Papers IPRI Journal Winter 2018

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