

**Bhumitra Chakma, *South Asia in Transition: Democracy, Political Economy and Security***

(London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 284.

Bhumitra Chakma, Senior Lecturer, School of Politics, Philosophy and International Studies at the University of Hull and the Director of the School's South Asia Project, has attempted to answer whether, after the end of the Cold War, South Asia is on a transformation process. He has mainly focused on India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and considered changes in respect of democracy, political economy and security. Eleven scholars, including Chakma, have contributed their articles.

Professor Subrata K. Mitra, in his scholarly essay, analyses the strengths and weaknesses of Indian democracy in comparison with other South Asian states. He acknowledges that while democracy in India is firmly grounded, it is not without weaknesses and he is right in saying that the success of democracy in India has 'important significance for South Asia, as well as for broader democracy theory' (p.46).

Dr. Samina Ahmed has taken a maximalist position when she writes that 'until the restoration of democracy in 2008', for most of its existence 'Pakistan has been ruled either directly by military or by military-controlled governments' (p.50). Influenced by the Indian and Western propaganda, she has written without any reservation that '*jihadi* groups', who attacked 'Indian heartland, including Mumbai' in November 2008, besides being linked to some terrorist organizations, are backed by the military (pp. 64-65). She concludes that 'the democratic transition will remain fragile so long as elected governments are unwilling to assert control over the military' (p.67).

Professor Amena Mohsin highlights confrontational politics of Bangladesh and discusses causes for the politics in that country becoming violence-ridden. She correctly evaluates that the main reason is the polarization between those who want Bangladesh to be an Islamic state and those who are secular nationalists. Amena Mohsin concludes that 'the division between the secular and religious forces has widened in the past decades due to globalization' (p.84). In her opinion Bangladesh will take some time before 'it charts a clear path of democracy for itself' (p.85).

Associate Professor Rahul Mukherji argues and considers that India's 'embedded liberalism' is responsible for its economic behaviour and foreign policy. The transition is apparent from 'import substitution' to economic 'globalization'. India embraced globalization and deregulation in 1991 when it faced a severe balance of payments crisis (p.98). India

therefore decided: (i) greater autonomy of the public sector from political interference; (ii) promote exports for financing development; (iii) encourage foreign investment especially for acquiring technology; and (iv) liberate the private sector from the 'clutches of excessive government intervention' (p.98). This led to compromises such as devaluation of currency and its convertibility, easy investment by entrepreneurs, and increase in the limit of foreign investment (p.100). Today, Indian economic growth has made it the 'third largest economy in the world constituting more than five per cent of global GDP measured by purchasing power parity (p.100). He, however, does not give the statistics of poverty in India.

According to Professor S. Akbar Zaidi, Pakistan's economy remains hostage to structural weaknesses and violence. He has given statistics to show that the country's economy has met ups and downs and is likely to continue to struggle in the future. He concludes that the problems are created by and are solvable by the elites. There is high level of corruption, excessive tax evasion, no long-term planning, and unreasonable demands of the affluent elites for writing off loans (p.125). The biggest question for the next decade would be 'whether Pakistan's non-military elites, in politics, civil society, the media and the judiciary' identify, understand and address all pressing problems which affect the citizens of Pakistan (p.126).

Associate Professor Shapan Adnan discusses Bangladesh's social, economic and political transformation since 1970s and focuses on 'impacts of globalization and liberalization, taking account of shifts in the structure of the economy, external dependence, global economic integration, and impact of neoliberal policy regimes as well as the outcomes in terms of growth, poverty reduction, distribution, inequality and related conflicts (p.9). He concludes that 'Bangladesh needs to find alternative strategies and policies of sustaining growth that do not exacerbate domestic inequality and conflict (p.148).

Dr. Bhumitra Chakma examines 'the impact of anti-terror war' which resulted in making the Af-Pak region as an 'epicentre of global terrorism' and the main frontier in the war on terror. He hopes the war may bring India and Pakistan as well as Bangladesh together in fighting a common enemy, although at present there is a conflict between India and Pakistan for influence in Afghanistan. He states that both India and Pakistan have fallen victim to terrorist violence. The anti-terror war that began in Afghanistan in October 2001 still continues and is likely to continue to be a source of concern for South Asian security and stability. The anti-terror war in Afghanistan has also increased Indo-Pakistan strategic rivalry. The terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan are a threat to both India and Pakistan. The Indo-Pakistan collaboration to fight against terrorism would strengthen the pattern of cooperation in the region (p.156).

Professor Rajesh M. Basrur thinks that 'one of the most spectacular developments' was the conduct of nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998. He analyses the impact of nuclearization of South Asia on national, regional and international security.

Associate Professor Shibashis Chatterjee points out that South Asian states are 'consistently ranked low' in human security index. He recommends that human security should get priority and there should be 'peaceful regional order' in South Asia.

Professor Rajesh M. Basrur argues that the effects of nuclear weapons in India and Pakistan are most prominent in the realm of civil-military relations. 'In India, they have undermined the power of civilian authority and strengthened that of the armed forces' while, in Pakistan, initially they had the same effect, but 'over time they have contributed to the weakening of military power' (p.175). In addition, these weapons had 'a powerful impact on the India-Pakistan relationship' (p.181).

Professor Akmal Hussain rightly thinks that the SAARC had remained hostage to Indo-Pakistan rivalry. The policy of not discussing the inter-state disputes has not helped SAARC. He suggests that SAARC should address 'politico-strategic issues' and recommends a 'framework for regional cooperation in South Asia'. He gives history of SAARC formation, assessment of its performance, and the reasons why SAARC has failed to live up to its potential. He concludes that the key barrier to SAARC's progress is the lack of mutual trust resulting from bilateral political disputes. These are not included in the agenda but discussed on the sidelines of SAARC summits. The political issues should be included in the agenda and should be addressed. As the largest country in the region, India should pursue accommodative diplomacy, if SAARC is to remain relevant (p.245).

General Dipankar Banerjee states that Pakistan considers J&K as the core issue and wants to resolve it first unlike India which wishes to solve less intractable issues first. He should have written that Pakistan wishes to discuss and make progress on all issues simultaneously. He is wrong that Jinnah's two nation theory was nullified with the separation of Bangladesh. Jinnah's two nation theory was that in the northeast and northwest where Muslims were in majority should become independent state or states to save them from hard or soft 'Hindutva' which is being practised in India under the garb of democracy and pluralism. Banerjee is pessimistic about the future. Being an Indian national, he exonerates India of its failure to have friendly ties with Pakistan and concludes that the relationship would become better when Pakistan becomes a 'liberal democracy'.

Chakma's summing up brings out six main changes taking place after the end of the Cold War. First, in response to globalization, South Asian states have introduced economic and market reforms policies.

Second, 'Af-Pak region' has become an epicenter of terrorism and a frontier in the fight against terrorism and the regional countries including India and Pakistan may cooperate in this fight. Third, India and Pakistan have become nuclear states after 1998. Fourth, South Asian states have become functional democracies. Fifth, the US has reoriented its policies in as much as it is building strategic partnership with India and its traditional support for Pakistan is weakening. China's partnership with Pakistan is deepening and at the same time its economic relations with India are improving. Sixth, there are 'off and on' reconciliation dialogue between India and Pakistan, and he hopefully foresees economic interdependence in future between China and India as well as between India and Pakistan.

Since the majority of the contributors are Indians as compared to those belonging to other countries, the Indian viewpoint is more pronounced. In any case, the book is useful for scholars and general readers interested in the politico-economic developments in South Asia.

*Reviewed by Dr. Noor ul Haq, Senior Research Fellow, IPRI.*

**John A. Turner, *Religious Ideology and the Roots of the Global Jihad Salafi Jihadism and International Order***

(UK: Palgrave Macmillan Publishers 2014), 207.

John A Turner's book "Religious Ideology and the Roots of the Global Jihad, Salafi Jihadism and International Order" discusses the phenomena of global jihad, with focus on Salafi Jihadism which is in conflict with the US and Western interests generally. The author is an independent scholar and his interests focus on 'jihadism' and political Islam.

Prior to 9/11, Islamic fundamentalism was not unknown to the world. Events like the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat, bombing of US Marine barracks in Lebanon had happened. Also, the Islamic factions, Salafists, Khomeinists, Wahabists did exist. However, the attacks on the World Trade Centre by al Qaeda gave a new dimension to the Islamists' fight against the West. The attacks irrevocably changed the security landscape of the world, and the conflict between the Salafi Jihadists and the West was exposed (p.1-47). The attacks also revealed the Islamic political violence outreach to the Western world, beyond the confines of the Islamic sphere, and the US vulnerability to non-traditional security threats.

Salafi Jihadism is described as a religio-political ideology, based on a fundamentalist conceptualization of Islam (p.38). It is related to Sunni Islam and is influenced by Islamic history. The ideology of Salafi Jihadism is not against the concept of state sovereignty, rather, it seeks an alternate concept that pre-dates the contemporary international system. The Salafis reject the division of the Islamic world into separate political entities and support the establishment of a legitimate Islamic state (p.60,61). This concept is in sharp contrast to the prevailing international system of nation states. The book argues that the current international order is, in part, maintained by a willing hegemonic actor, while the contemporary order, characterized by the sovereignty of nation-states, is disruptive to the Islamic concepts of order grounded in Islamic theology and alternative concept of sovereignty, legitimacy and unity. Seen in the context of Western ingress in the Middle East, Salafis view the US involvement in the region, and in particular support to Israel, as an obstacle in the way of Muslim unity and religiously sanctioned leadership (p.23-26 & 148,149). The US is being viewed as a belligerent actor and violence is being employed to unravel the US endeavours, and to challenge its supremacy. As regards the tendency of the individuals to become part of jihadist organizations, it is argued that the compelling factors behind terrorist acts vary. Socio-economic factors alone cannot be held responsible for such rogue behaviour. As is evident from the 9/11 perpetrators; the men were neither poor nor uneducated, but still they

chose to give up their lives for al Qaeda's cause. Similarly, Bin Laden himself was not from a poor background, nor were the other influential figures of al Qaeda (p.32). Other disturbing factors behind such provocations could be the Western discriminatory practices.

Al Qaeda, as the manifestation of Salafi Jihadism and the organization's outreach in various parts of the world have been discussed. Al Qaeda outfits are in the Arabian Peninsula, Islamic Maghreb and Iraq. Besides, al Qaeda also has affiliate groups operational in other regions. Jeemah Islamiyah, behind the Bali bombings (Southeast Asia) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) are its allies (p.132, 134). The book also discusses the subject of 'Islamic International Theories' and stresses the need to articulate them within the field of international relations. It is argued that Islam is a theory in itself, it contains the guidance to the structure of a political order. Therefore, religion must be taken into account in international relations theorizing. This would not only cater for the Arab scholars' views but would also be helpful in understanding ideologies like the Salafi Jihadism as well as the strategic orientation of extremist outfits, like al Qaeda. It is further argued that the international system and the Islamic history are two competing universalisms in the contemporary era. Islam and Middle East are not extensions of the Western political and social experience; the Western political perspective alone cannot visualize Islam and the Islamic world. Therefore, to understand the ideology of Salafi Jihadists, religious ideology and historical perspective need to be considered (p.63-65 & 78). Besides, a via medium between the past and the contemporary, as well as the Islamic and the Western concepts needs to be formalized.

The book has tried to explore the mystery of Salafi Jihadism. The author apart from highlighting the Salafis extremist acts has also tried to explain the causes behind such extreme behaviour. The book has also recommended to include Islamic theories in the international relations theorizing. The book is indeed a unique study and could be useful in understanding the contrasting views of the Jihadists and the rift with the Western world. It is a valuable work for the scholars of International Relations, Security Studies, the Middle East and Terrorism.

*Reviewed by Amna Ejaz Rafi, Assistant Research Officer, (IPRI).*

**Robert Kaplan, *Asia's Cauldron: the South China Sea and The End of a Stable Pacific***

(New York: Random House, 2014), 225.

Robert D. Kaplan's acclaimed work, *Asia's Cauldron the South China Sea and The End of a Stable Pacific*, which famously propounds that the centre of world power has shifted to Asia and warns of the dangerous tussle that is looming around the Asia Pacific region as a result of China's assertion of its rights in the South China Sea has turned geopolitical analysts' attention to a new theme for discussion and debate that may continue for years. Kaplan, Chief Geopolitical Analyst at Stratford, holds that the South China Sea is "becoming the most contested body of water in the world" involving littoral claimants China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan, Singapore and India. He cautions that the US in spite of its naval prowess may find it difficult to maintain domination or adequately protect its allies. His theory that future battles in the area would be decided at sea rather than land has alerted military planners. Already countries in the South China Sea, big or small, are opting for huge naval build ups despite their meagre resources.

Kaplan highlights the economic importance of the South China Sea as "the throat of the Western Pacific and Indian oceans — the mass of connective economic tissue where global sea routes coalesce and is the heart of Eurasia's navigable rim land. More than half of the world's annual merchant fleet tonnage passes through these choke points and a third of all maritime traffic worldwide." The writer contends that in addition to the centrality of location, the South China Sea has proven oil reserves of seven billion barrels, and an estimated 900 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. It is estimated the South China Sea could yield 130 billion barrels of oil, more oil than any area of the globe except Saudi Arabia. Some Chinese observers have called the South China Sea "the second Persian Gulf."

Kaplan highlights the rising ambitions of Vietnam in the backdrop of US exhortation to the Philippine government to reposition its military from being an inward-looking land force to one focusing on external "maritime domain awareness" — all this obviously in order to counter China. According to Kaplan, Taiwan plays a role of strategic importance in the region as it controls the access route between Southeast and Northeast Asia, the two conflict regions of the Pacific Rim. The former US Assistant Secretary of State, East Asia, Wolfowitz termed Taiwan as "Asia's Berlin" as it represented both an outpost of freedom in comparison to mainland China, as well as the bellwether for the political and military situation throughout the Western Pacific. China's strategic need to protect its sea lines of communication across the Indian Ocean to the Middle East remains a bone of contention.

Kaplan reveals that the root of the problem lies in Chinese traditional and historical claims to three archipelagoes, i.e. the Pratas in the north, the Paracels in the northwest and the Spratlys in the southeast. The Pratas are claimed by China but controlled by Taiwan. The Vietnam claims Paracels but its western part has been occupied by China. The Spratlys have been claimed by the Philippines only since the 1950s. Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei too claim features in the Spratlys.

The era of Atlantic and Pacific oceans being the primary theatres of war has long passed. While the next conflict zone may be East Asia, yet it should be seen in an overall context of the Indian Ocean. Pakistan, India, China, Iran, Afghanistan and Indonesia would all figure out prominently in any future power nexus and balance in the region. Countries bordering not only the South China Sea but also those in the vicinity of the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea would occupy the centre of any global change. For the Muslim world, the critical area encompasses the entire arc of Islam stretching from the Sahara Desert to Indonesia. The key importance of the Indian Ocean has not been amply highlighted by Kaplan probably since the book is devoted primarily to East Asia and South China Sea. Another aspect, which requires an even greater thought, is Kaplan's hypothesis that future battles are less likely over land but across water. Though it is correct that only a seafaring super or regional power with a formidable naval armada could dominate the South China Sea, yet historically the Korean, Vietnam, Indo-China wars were all fought on land rather than the sea.

It is difficult to agree with Kaplan's hypothesis that China would in the long term attempt a "Finlandisation" of the East Asia region by maintaining absolute maritime hegemony over its neighbours namely Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Borneo and Taiwan. This may not be possible since these countries are all fiercely independent and would not like to become pawns in any future US-China power struggle. However, for some countries which are not that much stable, both economically and militarily, like Indonesia and the Philippines, it would not be possible to avoid the US proxies. Even for India to be the regional power broker, the chance of becoming a US proxy is too attractive an opportunity to miss when it comes to containing China.

Overall, the readability of this book lies in the fact that Kaplan's narrative is a fascinating mix of philosophy, history, culture and travelogue. The book is entirely China-centric; it raises alarm bells for littoral states, and predicts a doomsday scenario in terms of US-China conflict.

*Reviewed by Adila Abbasi, Intern, Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI).*



**Amitava Acharya, *Rethinking Power, Institutions and Ideas in World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2014), 264.**

The book, *Rethinking Power, Institutions and Ideas in World Politics*, by Amitava Acharya analyses three most important theoretical concepts used by political scientists namely power, institutions and ideas. It exposes their narrow meaning in the theory of International Relations (IR) and examines how these concepts, when applied to the world at large, are limited in capturing the contexts, experiences and agencies of the actors in the third world. The work seeks to identify the dynamics of power, institutions and ideas in the broader and more inclusive context of world politics.

As a discipline, IR has seen endless contestations and compromises over its theories, paradigms and methods. The study of IR, has traditionally been dominated by Western ideas and practices, and marginalized the voice and experiences of the non-Western states and societies. As the world moves to a “post-Western” era, it is imperative that the field of IR acquires a more global meaning and relevance. To make its point, the book critically discusses numerous examples and case studies concerning multilateral institutions, approaches to regional integration in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, and the creation and diffusion of ideas and norms like non-intervention, cooperative security, and humanitarian intervention.

The author discusses diverse themes under four parts. The first deals with Western dominance in IR thought. The author argues for broadening the concept of IR theory with the help of non-Western political philosophy. He suggests that comparative studies of regional dynamics and regionalism are a good way to bridge the gap between Western-centric IR theory and experiences of the non-Western world.

The second part focuses on the central issue of power and intervention under bipolar and unipolar systems during Cold War and War on Terror periods, which caused global disorder. The author finds the realist view of IR that states always define their interests in terms of power as disconcerting. He cites the frequent intervention by the great powers especially in the Third World during the two periods which have undermined the meaning of sovereignty of states. This view of power has been a primary contributing factor to a number of regional conflicts worldwide. The IR theories both realist and liberal are ambiguous about the morality of great power intervention in the Third World.

The third part of the book is dedicated to institution building, autonomy and regional order. It examines the dominant concept of multilateralism in the post-World War II period and analyses three principal challenges to hegemonic multilateralism: civil society, the emerging

powers, and regionalism, both in terms of their strength and limitations. Despite their limitations, the author says, they could redefine the multilateral order under American hegemony. The author is hopeful that these challenges could also form the basis for a new post-hegemonic multilateralism in international relations.

Acharya asserts that the US opposes the induction of regional values other than its own in refining old multilateralism and creating new multilateral institutions. The decline of the US hegemony could mean redefinition of existing multilateral institutions, encourage new forms of multilateralism and new coalitions of transnational and local actors. In fact, the important part that international institutions and multilateralism play in world politics comes from regionalism. Thus regionalism can be a building bloc of multilateralism. Multilateral institutions are an important factor in peace and order-building in world politics, but institutional dynamics is not always necessarily the prerogative of a hegemon or a group of great powers.

For Third World countries, ideas and ideologies are far more important than power or wealth because their powerlessness amidst unequal distribution of the world's wealth is constant. In this perspective, the fourth part deals with diffusion of ideas and norms in world politics and focuses on the agency of local, less powerful actors in the non-western world. It proposes a model of normative change which describes how local actors, even when faced with opportunities for enhancing their authority and legitimacy through the borrowing of universal norms, reconstruct the latter to ensure a proper fit with their cognitive priorities and identities. Therefore, congruence-building and circulation of norms from global-local, North-South and East-West becomes the key to settle down normative contestation. The work not only discusses an agency oriented explanation of how global norms are diffused to the local level but also focuses on the diffusion of locally constructed norms to the transnational and global level.

Acharya illustrates this with the help of the diffusion of sovereignty norms and by looking at why and how Third World states and regions create rules to regulate relationship among them and with the outside world. It develops and tests a new conceptual tool and norm subsidiarity, which concerns the process whereby local actors create rules with a view to preserving their autonomy from dominance, neglect, violation, or abuse by more powerful central actors of Western states.

After a theoretical discussion of the definition, motivations and effects of this concept, the author offers a case study of normative action against Cold War alliances (especially South East Asia Treaty Organisation) by the group of Third World leaders. Thus, the theory and practice of norms subsidiarity shed more light on the agency role of Third World countries in world politics. In this regard, both localization and

subsidiarity stress the agency of local actors to build harmony between existing and emerging norms. The author argues that normative change in world politics is not a one way street in which good global norms promoted mainly by Western transnational norm entrepreneurs displace bad local ideas, norms and practices in the non-Western world. This discursive idea needs to be replaced with the broader perspective that views norms constructed at different locations and by varieties of agents in terms of a dynamic process of contestation, congruence-building and circulation.

Acharya suggests the idea of norms subsidiarity to fill the gap in international relations theory about norms that can be inducted from the Third World or the Global South.

*Reviewed by Muhammad Nawaz Khan, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI.*

**Mohammed Yunus: *Awakened China Shakes the World and now Pakistan's Mainstay: Memoirs of a Diplomat***

(Karachi: IPS, 2015), 295.

This book is a first-hand account of the personal experience of a diplomat, Mohammed Yunus, who is a former Ambassador of Pakistan and has spent a large part of his diplomatic career in China during 1953-1982. Alongside he also discusses the remarkable rise of China and the evolution of Pak-China relations. The book comprises two parts. The first part gives a fascinating account of China's eventful period from 1953 to 1982 and the author's role in building the historic relationship between the two countries. The second part is unrelated to the author's diplomatic career as it deals mainly with the rise and fall of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) of which Ambassador (R) Yunus was a senior Advisor.

To highlight China's rapid rise he compares the China of the 1950s with that of today's. During his first assignment in 1953, there was no bridge or ferry across the Yangzi River. Pakistani diplomats were taken by car to the river bank and their belongings were loaded on a flat barge that was pushed by long wooden poles across the river. Now there are 85 bridges over the Yangzi River. In 1953, from Hankou to Beijing, the train took a day and a half. But now, it only takes 5 hours by a high-speed train. The Gross Domestic Product of China has jumped from a mere 50 billion US dollars in 1978 to 9.3 trillion US dollars in 2013, making China the world's second largest economy. China's contribution to world economic growth now stands at 30 per cent. China's total imports and exports reached 4.16 trillion US dollars last year, ranking it first in the world. China's high-speed railway operation mileage is over 12,000 kilometres, almost half of the world's total. China has set big goals for the future like to double the GDP per capita by 2020. These figures provide a window on China's progress. In China, it is called the "Chinese Dream".

The fundamental reason for China's spectacular progress is its success in finding the right way of development — a socialism that is suitable to China's national conditions. China has properly handled the relationship between reform, development and stability. Reform is the driving force and the guarantee of social development and progress. Development is the ultimate goal; stability is the pre-condition; without it, nothing could possibly be achieved.

The objective of the Chinese development model is that all the Chinese people should live a better life and all the children should grow up with greater happiness, comfort and better quality of life. China has

resolved to continue to follow this road. For this, China plans to adhere to peaceful, cooperative and shared development focused on win-win results on the basis of equality and mutual benefits with other countries of the world.

China-Pakistan relationship continues to maintain a strong momentum. The Chinese refer to Pakistan by the endearing term of “Iron Pak”. In the heart of the Chinese people, Pakistan has always been regarded as a “hardcore” friend. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, China-Pakistan relationship has been carefully cultivated by generations of Chinese and Pakistani leaders. China and Pakistan claim to have an all-weather strategic partnership. In the new era both are working to build what they call the “China-Pakistan Community of Shared Destiny”.

China and Pakistan always support each other on the affairs concerning their core interests. China-Pakistan relations have four distinct features: First, they enjoy high-level mutual political trust. Second, Pakistan-China friendship enjoys very solid public support in both countries; it is deep-rooted in the hearts and blood of the two peoples. Third, bilateral cooperation is all encompassing. Leaders of the two nations frequently exchange visits. Political cooperation is being continuously consolidated and economic cooperation is making steady progress. China is now the second largest trading partner of Pakistan; and Pakistan is the biggest destination of Chinese investment in South Asia. People-to-people exchanges are much closer and more frequent. Cooperation concerning security interests is also expanding smoothly. Fourth, China and Pakistan have gone through tough periods together. China will never forget that in the 1970s, Pakistan served as a bridge to improve China-US relations and in restoring China’s seat in the United Nations. The Chinese also have fond memories of Pakistan’s help in the Wenchuan earthquake when it sent all of its tent stocks to China. Chinese support has also been generous during Pakistan’s natural calamities.

Moreover, China also supports Pakistan’s efforts to safeguard its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and its fight against terrorism. China has helped Pakistan in formulating and implementing its security strategy based on its own national and regional environment.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor builds a strategic framework for bilateral cooperation and is a flagship project for the connectivity between China and its neighbouring countries. It covers all four provinces and other areas of Pakistan. The construction of Gwadar Port and the RuYi-Masood Textile Industrial Park in Faisalabad are projects that will inject new energy and impetus to China-Pakistan’s substantive cooperation and bring tangible benefits to the people of both countries.

Ambassador (R) Yunus stresses that after passing through testing times, Pak-China relations have evolved into strategic partnership. The documentation of diplomacy related details relating to the formative period of Pakistan-China relations was long overdue; the book under review fills that void.

A number of lessons can be drawn from this useful account. China has largely been focusing on the people, particularly peasants and agriculture; these policies have worked. Pakistan should also reorganise its rural sector like China and that's the way of bringing prosperity to the country. Pakistan could also emulate the way China has struck a balance and link among three important sectors — reforms, development and stability.

The writer is of the opinion that the strategic and economic interests of China and Pakistan are intertwined and for that very reason China is the only world power which is genuinely interested in the stability, integrity and progress of Pakistan and can be rightly regarded as its “mainstay”.

Book presents an interesting perspective about the insurgency in Balochistan. Ambassador (R) Yunus is of the view that despite the ill intentions of many regional and global powers, they are not able to openly support the insurgency in Balochistan because China is there to check their moves. “The sponsors know China would not allow Balochistan to be separated from Pakistan because of its own interests.” The integrity of Pakistan is in the best interest of China itself and it will never allow any international conspiracy to destabilise Pakistan.

The book takes a look at China from three perspectives: internal dynamics of emerging China and its evolving role in the modern world; the dynamics of Pakistan-China relations and measures for its further strengthening; and increasing awareness between the two countries on various subjects and levels. The book also offers an analytical review of communism and comparative evaluation of its two powerful variants – Marxism and Maoism.

*Reviewed by Air Commodore (R) Khalid Iqbal, Non-resident Consultant, IPRI.*

**Aqil Shah, *The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan*** (London: Harvard University Press, 2014), 399.

Western press and the media generally have not been fair to Pakistan in the portrayal of what the country has gone through since the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. There is a readership there in Europe and America which has grown used to reading things against this country, particularly its army. As a result, political writers have discovered they can sell if the subject of their critique is Pakistan. Aqil Shah's *The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan*, belongs to this category. Apparently he is examining the factors that have contributed to the rise of Pakistan's military as the foremost power elite of the country. But in matter of fact what he seems to be doing is the lining up of facile arguments to paint the Pakistan Army as the villain of the piece in undermining the country's democratic prospects.

Shah gives a detailed description of civil-military relations since 1947 to the present day. In this account his bias becomes apparent as he appears to be all too soft on the other side of the story, the politicians and the civil bureaucracy. He alleges that it was the army which, because of its ambition to retain power in its hands and keep the civil establishment under its control, has prevented democracy to take root in Pakistan. As a scholar had Shah been impartial the grey areas of the political culture (the other side of the story) would also have been mentioned and analysed to give his readers a balanced story. He has nothing to say about the causes or events that led to different military interventions in the country. In one instance only while discussing the 1990s situation that he refers to the "corruption, nepotism, and economic mismanagement" of the politicians which paved the way for an army intervention.

The book is full of pronouncements and hackneyed half-truths that one is tired of hearing and its rhetorical tone does no service to its claim as a work of research. Coming as it does at a time when the military is engaged in a vital mission for the country's survival, the book in its unabashed effort to discredit and weaken it as an institution appears to fulfil some hidden agenda of forces that would like the present fight against terrorism and extremism to fail. The author also appears to be supporting those forces which want Pakistan's nuclear status to be compromised.

The author accuses media of being under the control of the ISI and mentions that "...after the American CIA contractor Raymond Davis was arrested...the ISI selected journalists to spread the word that the [former] PPP government's lax visa policy had made it possible for the CIA to expand its spy network within Pakistan" (p.228). This is an irresponsible allegation as Mr. Aqil does not mention the names of those "selected

journalists.” Objectivity demands that even when one is writing a two-page newspaper article, one provides credible references but here Mr Shah’s 400-page book is content with unfounded accusations. The details that he gives of the meetings between ISI and the media persons cry for proof.

The writer holds the persistent Indian threat responsible for civil-military disconnect which “spurred the militarization of the Pakistani state...thus provided the context in which the [Pakistan’s] generals could increase their influence in domestic politics” (p.13). This is an invalid argument since during the initial years it was the civilian leadership that entered into the defence pacts (SEATO and CENTO) with the United States and the military had no hand in this decision. No such disconnect existed then between the civil and military establishments. Making policies about the security and defence of the country was the sole responsibility of the civilian government at that time.

The book makes sloppy errors uncharacteristic of a research work. Kashmir is referred to as “Indian Kashmir” (p.19), and in the same breath as “disputed territory”. The book makes no mention of the services the army has rendered the country during times of national crises like floods and earthquakes. In fighting against the terrorists in Swat and now in South and North Waziristan the army has broken the back of the extremist elements which neutral observers everywhere have mentioned in words of praise. The author ignores this brave existential struggle altogether. He also fails to mention that the army has maintained its institutional integrity and its discipline and in this capacity is a strong and reliable arm of the civilian government.

Propaganda often presents facts selectively (thus possibly lying by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis, or uses loaded messages (even books) to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented. The desired result is a change in attitude in the target audience to further a political, religious or commercial agenda. This is what the book under review seems to be doing through its unsubstantiated assertions and selected list of facts. Whose interests are thus being served is for the author to know. Nevertheless the book would not find favour with serious inquiry and neutral circles would certainly reject it as a tool of propaganda.

*Reviewed by Khalid Chandio, Research Officer, IPRI.*



**Major General Shaukat Iqbal, *The New Great Game and Security Challenges for Pakistan***

(Karachi: Paramount Books, 2014), 281.

In his book “*The New Great Game and Security Challenges for Pakistan*” Major General Shaukat Iqbal focuses on security challenges of Pakistan in the light of the policies being pursued by the world’s major powers with regard to South Asia. The author argues that the world is transforming from a unipolar to a multipolar world. This transformation presents both challenges and opportunities to South Asian countries. A new great game is being played in the region. The Indo-US strategic partnership is affecting Pakistan. In the backdrop of these developments the book examines Pakistan’s relations with USA, China, Russia, India and Afghanistan. The author suggests what could be the way forward for Pakistan to handle its internal and external security challenges.

The book is divided into nine chapters. Chapter one entitled “Conceptual aspects of Geo-strategy, Geo-strategic importance of Euro-Asia Heartland” dwells on the conflicting interests of major powers in the region and the rivalry between India and Pakistan which results in the kind of power politics that is seen in South Asia. The Indo-US nexus and the security situation in Afghanistan have put Pakistan in a very difficult situation. US interests in the region concern the rising power of China, the nuclear ambition of Iran and making India a regional power to contain China. China on its part is developing cooperation with Pakistan and other SAARC countries. Similarly, Central Asia has become a playfield for a new great game due to its geostrategic and geo-economic importance. The interests of major powers — USA, China, Russia, as well as those of the countries of the region are involved in this game. It is perceived that the region will remain in turmoil for these conflicting interests of the major powers to which the regional countries will have to fine tune their policies.

Chapter two entitled “The Mightier of the World-USA, China, Russia and South Asia” covers major powers’ relations with Pakistan and Afghanistan. The author blames the USA for its self-serving relations with Pakistan especially during the latter’s wars with India and in recent times during the course of the ‘war on terror’. On the other hand disregarding Pakistan’s sacrifices in the ‘war on terror’ the US rewarded India with the nuclear deal that threatens Pakistan. In the second part of the chapter the author presents an analysis of Pakistan’s relation with China which are based on mutual trust and are time tested. Today both countries are working to expand cooperation in defence, economy and trade. In the third part of the chapter, Shaukat Iqbal focuses on Pakistan’s relation with Russia by

identifying areas where both countries have a great potential for cooperation.

Chapter three entitled “India — An Emerging Power and the Region” discusses India’s policy towards Afghanistan, Central Asia and Iran. The author argues that Afghanistan being the gateway to Central Asian Republics (CARs) is India’s priority for diplomatic, political, and economic reasons. Indian involvement in both Afghanistan and CARs may affect Pakistan’s security. He thinks that the Indo-US nexus and the emerging new world order has placed India in a position of advantage which has enabled her to launch effective strategic, economic and diplomatic manoeuvres to undermine Pakistan’s position in the region.

Chapter four “Great Powers of the Region – Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics” covers Pakistan’s relations with the countries of the region. It discusses Iran in her relations with Pakistan and India and Afghanistan in terms of its geostrategic importance as a gateway to CARs. The potentials and problems of CARs and Pakistan’s economic relations with the republics are also discussed with special mention of the trade routes.

Chapter five is titled “Muslim World — a Dwindling Identity”. It discusses the future of the Muslim world in the context of its potentials and problems. The way forward for the Muslim countries lies in building collective security by creating an OIC peacekeeping force, and enhancing cooperation in technological, defence and economic fields.

The next chapter — “SAARC Countries — Under Shadow of Power Players” presents the profiles of some SAARC countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Chapter seven is focussed on Pakistan and its importance as the fulcrum of the region.

Chapter eight discusses Balochistan as a security challenge and as an opportunity. Balochistan holds the key to the future of Pakistan in view of its immense mineral and natural resources, huge land mass and long coast line. While highlighting geo-political and geo-economic importance of Balochistan, the author mentions the conflicting interests of various countries — USA, China, India, Iran and the Gulf States — in the province.

In the last chapter titled “Perceived New Great Game in the region and Threat Perception of Pakistan” the author describes the salient features of the new Great Game in the region, especially what the US has in mind. He explains how the US and India are exploiting the vulnerabilities of Balochistan for their own interests. The US game plan is to build India as regional power so as to contain China, make Pakistan a dependent state by curtailing its army and nuclear programme, prevent China from having free access to the Indian Ocean via Gwadar Port and promote the bogey of Greater Balochistan to put pressure on Iran and Pakistan.

In the concluding part Maj. General Shaukat Iqbal focuses on Balochistan and suggests the way forward: the problem should be treated as an internal issue in the framework of national integration by enhancing the pace of development there; China's role in managing Gwadar Port and mineral development projects should also be enhanced. Secondly, Pakistan should avoid war with India and should resolve issues through a comprehensive political dialogue.

The analysis of what is romantically termed as the New Great Game is interesting from the point of view of security challenge it seems to pose for Pakistan. But there is hardly anything new or any fresh insight into the obtaining situation. What the book discusses and goes at length to explain is a well-known narrative, rather a popular viewpoint that many authors on the subject have been writing about.

*Reviewed by Muhammad Munir, Research Fellow, IPRI.*

**Andy Marino, *Narendra Modi: A Political Biography***

(Noida, Uttar Pradesh: Harper Collins Publishers, 2014), 310.

The book under review, “Narendra Modi: A Political Biography” by Andy Marino, is the story of the Indian Prime Minister’s rise to the country’s highest office from the lowly position of the son of a poor tea vendor. The writer has divided it into four parts. The first part describes his early life in a village of Gujrat. The second part focuses on Modi’s political career and describes his political struggle and achievements. The third part describes his administrative skills as Chief Minister of Gujrat while the last part dwells on the challenges he faces as Prime Minister of India. The book unfolds the struggle, hard work and determination of Narendra Modi in rising from the rank of a ‘Parachark’, the lowest position in RSS of a political worker to the BJP’s candidate for the country’s chief executive.

Andy Morino briefly describes his life in Vadnagar, the village where Narendra Modi grew up. He was only eight when he stepped into politics distributing party badges. A couple of years later he began to attend the local youth meetings of Rashtriya Samyamsevak Sangh (RSS) (p.16).

Modi made gradual rise in the RSS due to his devotion to the party. The Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi was a turning point in Modi’s political career when he came to be recognised nationally as an RSS activist for his staunch opposition to Indira Gandhi. He was arrested for a few days during the Emergency. The RSS acknowledged his services for the party and promoted him to the rank of ‘Sambhaag Pracharak’, a regional organizer in 1978. This steady progress helped Modi to act as an organizer of municipal elections of Ahmadabad in 1987. He utilized his organizing skills and his knowledge of ethnic politics in approaching the Hindu majority to oppose the Congress for its support to the local Muslims. That was the time when Rajiv Gandhi had passed a law for Muslim women which the Hindu community considered discriminatory. His strategy helped Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in winning two-third majority in Ahmadabad.

Next, Modi decided to go for ‘Yatra’ in order to increase the vote bank of BJP. Modi started his ‘Yatra’ in late 1980s. A Yatra in Indian political culture is a mass contact journey which enables the Yatri to interact with common people, particularly in rural areas. Narendra Modi used his Yatra to promote Hindu nationalism as his political campaigns often started from temples and approached the middle and poor class of the Hindu community. This political mobilization raised his stature within BJP as well as in Gujarati politics. However, BJP was not always a throne of flowers for Modi. He had hard times within the party, as prominent politicians including Shankarsinh Vaghla felt threatened by Modi who was

getting huge publicity all over India through his Yatra. The media highlighted him due to his social mobilization for justice and development. Therefore, he was ousted from the BJP twice, first in 1992 and the second time in 1995. Modi responded to this animosity with calmness which is a most prominent characteristic of his nature. His commitment to party ideals did not allow him to join any other party, despite Congress offers on various occasions. Later, as an acknowledgement, senior BJP leader L.K. Advani stepped in and appointed him as the national general secretary of the party in early 1996.

According to Marino, Modi believes that India can draw strength from its culture and can modernize without sacrificing its identity. Moreover, over the years of nationalist politics, Modi has learned the lesson that Hindutva can only initially win vote but it is development that would sustain electoral power. The writer stresses that Modi is an ambitious person blessed with strong administrative skills. For him what you do and how well you do matters more than who you are and where you came from. Modi calls Indian political elite the 'Delhi Club' and does not want to be part of it. Marino believes that Modi banks on innovation and new ideas. He remains calm under tense and disappointing situations. He hopes that Modi will prove to be a decisive leader of India.

The writer had unprecedented access to Narendra Modi which is good for those who have interest in Indian politics as it covers all dimensions of Modi's life. Though Marino has praised the administrative skills of the Indian Premier, he has overlooked the second theory about Gujarat's development. According to some critics, the development of the province is nothing but an illusion. Critics say that Modi projects himself as the man who is developing Gujarat at a very fast pace. But he has used government resources for his publicity. Almost 40 per cent of Gujarat population is below the poverty line. Minority groups including tribals, Dalits and Muslims are considered second grade citizens in Modi's Gujarat. Moreover, Marino has not discussed the reasons why Modi was unsuccessful in stopping the communal riots in 2002? On the contrary, the writer has tried to defend Modi by discussing various factors responsible for 2002 Gujarat communal riots. Moreover, he says that there were six major communal riots during the Congress era before Modi's administration so what happened was not the fault of his administration (p.119). Marino also fails to point out that Modi made no expression of regret over the Muslim carnage but focused on the victims of Godhra, implying that Muslims deserved what had come to them.

*Reviewed by Khurram Abbas, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI.*

**Akhtar Ali, *Issues in Energy Policy***

(Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2014), 438.

The issue of energy has been a serious concern for the past decade. Governments did not initiate any new energy generation projects and failed to pay due attention to the widening gap between the demand and supply of energy which resulted in the current crisis. Akhtar Ali's book *Issues in Energy Policy* is an effort to comprehend the energy crisis in all of its possible perspectives.

The book is divided into seven broad sections. The author starts with the fundamental issues related to energy production, planning and management in Pakistan. He blames lack of knowledge in the bureaucracy, corruption, the greed of project builders and indifference of the politicians for the flawed planning of this vital sector. A policy maker and a functionary must integrate himself with the stake-holders intellectually, but insulate himself from stake-holders' vested interests socially (p.32). Akhtar Ali believes in developing indigenous sources of energy to overcome the crisis.

In the second section on "Oil & Gas," the author discusses crucial issues relating to pricing of these commodities and the production and distribution of natural gas. He emphasizes the need to use alternative means for the production of gas. He suggests that using organic waste for the production of gas which is gaining popularity in other countries can be utilized in Pakistan as well. He recommends that coal gasification can be a solution to overcome the shortage of gas in the country.

The third section discusses coal and related issues. The potential of Thar coal and the role it can play in overcoming the energy crisis in Pakistan is discussed in detail. He maintains that coal reserves in Thar are larger than the oil resources of Middle East and without fast tracking Thar coal, Pakistan does not have any other viable option to deal with the energy crisis. The bureaucratic circles tend to show that there is progress on Thar coal. But the fact remains there is no progress (p.179). He suggests that Thar coal can be a starting point for India and Pakistan to initiate regional economic cooperation. Pakistan can export coal to the coal deficit adjoining states of India including Rajasthan and Gujrat; India can assist Pakistan in the development and exploitation of Thar coal (p.187). India is producing 34,000 MW electricity through lignite. Akhtar Ali suggests that Pakistan can export coal to Indian power plants and the electricity produced in those units can be exported to Pakistan (p.195).

Sections four and five of the book deal with electricity and the renewable sources. The author is of the view that the crisis is not due to power generation capacity which is 22000 MW against a maximum demand of 18000 MW; but it is because of financial problems (p.227). The renewable energies which include solar and wind power could provide a relief to the consumers. The book provides substantial data in support of this argument with the help of comparative data and studies of countries where solar and wind energy projects are adding to the national grids.

Akhtar Ali then discusses institutional issues relating to the energy crisis in the country. Among these are the constitutional restraints, royalty issues, federal-province conflicts, and construction of mega projects. For example, there has been a long drawn tussle between federal and provincial bureaucracies on Thar coal. The Sindh government would like to handle the project directly and exclusively as they believe it to be their right under the constitutional provisions relating to minerals. On the contrary electricity is a federal subject. The author proposes the creation of a Ministry of Energy by merging NEPRA, OGRA, Ministry of Power and Ministry of Petroleum (p.343). He suggests that institutional as well as constitutional reforms are needed to remove the controversies which act as barriers in the implementation of energy projects.

The final section of the book sums up the whole issue and recommends solid steps to address the problem in a holistic manner. After a brief review of the energy sector the author suggests a ten point agenda covering resource management, integration of energy related decision making, energy pricing, cost management, creating an energy market, reorganization of the energy companies, conservation of energy and resolving political issues. Akhtar Ali goes into the debate on management of natural gas and the issues relating to the use of nuclear power for the generation of electricity. He concludes that Pakistan has more than one reason to add nuclear power (p.432). He concludes that energy crisis can only be solved if it is dealt with in a holistic manner. Short-term, medium-term and long-term measures should be initiated simultaneously so that the rising demand for energy can be met with the urgency it demands.

*Reviewed by Aftab Hussain, Research Officer, IPRI.*