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## AMBASSADOR LECTURE SERIES-II

### Pakistan-Russia Relations: Is there a New Trajectory?



L-R: Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit, Ambassador Alexey Dedov and Ambassador (R) Inam Ul Haq

Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Pakistan, Mr Alexey Dedov, delivered a lecture on "Pakistan-Russia Relations: Is there a New Trajectory?" on 1 August 2018 at IPRI.

President IPRI, Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit, in his welcome address stated that historically, diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Russia have oscillated from high to low phases. He added that Pakistan-Russia relations are slowly but steadily moving in the right direction. The newly elected Pakistani government is expected to provide a good opportunity to review the relations and give a push to cooperation in all areas. He was hopeful that President Vladimir Putin would also be able to visit Pakistan in the not too distant future.

Ambassador Alexey Dedov said that Pakistan remains an important partner for Russia and cooperation between both countries extends to all fields. The significance of Pakistan is determined by its role in regional politics, its influence in the Muslim world and its

geostrategic location. Interaction with Pakistan in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), as a full-fledged member is very important for Russia to carry out cross-regional economic, energy and infrastructure projects, and 'we are very glad that Pakistan is practically engaged in SCO, especially in joint counter-terrorism efforts,' the Ambassador said.

Discussing the Afghan quagmire, the Ambassador said that Russia believes that it is for the Afghans themselves to determine the pace and direction of peace in their country. 'Like Pakistan, we believe that the national reconciliation process should be Afghan-owned and Afghan-led', he stressed.

Discussing trade relations, Ambassador said 'the low level of direct business ties and insufficient knowledge about each other's business communities' capabilities, remain weak points'. Early settlement of mutual financial obligations, about

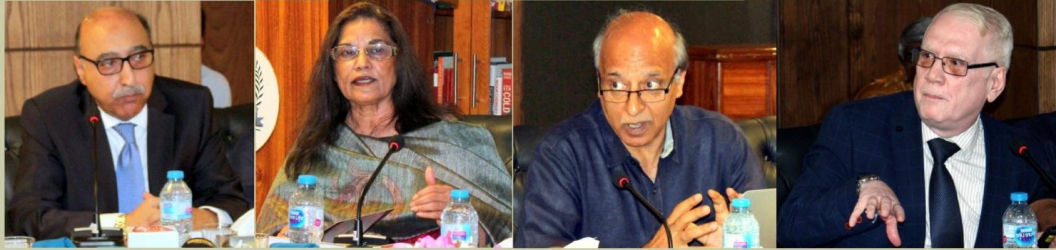
which an agreement has been agreed on between both sides recently, will open up excellent opportunities for comprehensive investment cooperation with Pakistan', he shared. 'Both countries make consistent efforts to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation for the benefit of their people and in the interests of regional peace and stability,' he concluded.

### Recommendations

- A strong and stable Pakistan is in Russia's favor. Providing political, economic and military support to Pakistan would help in improving the country's economic and overall security environment of the region. Therefore, to enhance economic ties, the new government in Pakistan should engage Russian counterparts at high levels and propose concrete economic projects to them.
- Keeping in view the complicated situation in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan and India should find a solution on a bilateral basis in light of the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration which they signed and mutually agreed on.
- The biggest fear among the regional countries, including Russia and Pakistan is the emergence of the Islamic State (IS) in Afghanistan. Pakistani and Russian security interests are increasingly intertwined. Both states should work in close cooperation to address the growing threats of extremism, terrorism, human trafficking, and illicit drug trafficking in the region.



## Pakistan's Relations with the US, China and Russia



L-R: Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit, Ambassador (R) Fauzia Nasreen, Mr Imtiaz Gul, and Ambassador (R) Tajammul Altaf

The second one-day media workshop titled "Pakistan's Relations with the US, China and Russia," was organized by IPRI on 29 August 2018. The eminent panelists included: Mr Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, Center for Research and Security Studies, Islamabad, Ambassador (R) Fauzia Nasreen, Member, Board of Governors, IPRI and Ambassador (R) Tajammul Altaf, former Additional Foreign Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), GoP.

The workshop focused on the complexities of Pakistan's relations with the US, China and Russia, and whether or not the country has been managing the complexities effectively and efficiently.

**Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit**, President, IPRI, in his welcome address stressed the importance of capacity building of media personnel in understanding the complexities involved in foreign policy-related issues and reporting on the subject in a manner which is in congruence with Pakistan's foreign policy.

### Pakistan's Relations with the United States

Mr Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, Center for Research and Security Studies, Islamabad gave a presentation on "Pakistan's Relations with the United States".

Mr Gul said that US' super power status has led it to arrogance. However, Washington has lost whatever leverage it had over Islamabad. Unfortunately, the world continues to view Pakistan through a US lens, which needs to be countered. He said that the US-India nexus has squeezed Pakistan in multiple ways, especially with

respect to the country's nuclear program and its role in Afghanistan.

According to him, nuclear non-proliferation has always remained an obsession with the US elite, however, countering terrorism and the role of non-state actors were made part of non-proliferation. Consequently, these two elements became a problematic issue for strong Pakistan-US diplomatic ties.

Mr Gul said that Pakistan's biggest challenge is creating a balance between its relations with the US and strategic partnership with China. 'Pakistan should continue to maintain good relations with the US', he remarked.

### Pakistan's Relations with Russia

Ambassador (R) Fauzia Nasreen in her presentation on "Pakistan's Relations with Russia" observed that Russia's pivot to Asia is impacting the regional dynamics of South Asia and the world at large. She noted that Pakistan and India's inclusion in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) have increased Russian interest in South Asia, particularly, when it comes to resolving tensions between both countries, as well as curbing terrorism. She further explained that Russia along with China can play an important role in strengthening confidence-building measures between Pakistan and India. She pointed out that Russia is already cooperating with India and Pakistan and encouraging both states to thaw their frozen ties.

Explaining the key elements of Russia's foreign policy, she said that Russia sees itself as a Eurasian power that has economic and strategic interests in both Europe and Asia. Therefore, it attaches great significance to Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and Belt & Road Initiative (BRI). 'Russia sees BRI and the Eurasian Economic Union as a vehicle to integrate

economic activity in the region,' she said.

Regarding counterterrorism cooperation, Russia views Pakistan as a key player in the fight against terrorism. In September 2016, a counterterrorism exercise 'Druzhba-2016' was held between Russian and Pakistani Special Operations Forces in Cherat, Pakistan, despite Indian objections, she added.

### Pakistan-China Relations in the Perspective of CPEC Strategic Partnership

Ambassador (R) Tajammul Altaf spoke on "Pakistan-China Relations in the Perspective of CPEC Strategic Partnership".

Discussing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Ambassador Altaf said that the project is aimed at China's development pathway through BRI and uplifting Pakistan's economy through development of the Gwadar Port which will be the second deepest port in the world; energy projects of 17,000 MW; infrastructure and data communication projects; construction of Industrial Parks and 26 Special Economic Zones (SEZs), apart from enhancing the agriculture and tourism sector. He explained that Pakistan's GDP growth is expected to rise to 7 per cent by 2020. '80,000 trucks will transport oil & gas, agricultural, industrial products and natural resources daily from Central Asia and Russia to China, Asia, Africa and Europe via Gwadar Port, with expected annual earnings of USD 5 billion by 2022 from toll collection, which would ease the balance of payments. The relocation of light engineering sector industries from China and international foreign direct investment in SEZs would be a major contributor to revenue, jobs and GDP growth worth USD 20 billion annually,' he shared.

*Continued on p. 3*



## Gulf Countries' Concerns about Iran's Nuclear Capabilities and Iran Nuclear Deal

Ms Iqra Mobeen Akram, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI, delivered a presentation on "Gulf Countries' Concerns about Iran's Nuclear Capabilities and Iran Nuclear Deal" on 28 August 2018. Salient points are given below:

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as Iran nuclear deal was signed on 14 July 2015, between Iran, P5+1 and the European Union. It placed restrictions on Iran's nuclear program in exchange of relief from economic sanctions. However, US' withdrawal from the agreement on 8 May this year, created uncertainty over whether the restrictions on the Iranian program would remain in place or not.

On the other hand, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries—United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait—have serious apprehensions about Iran's nuclear program as well as its nuclear deal with P5+1 countries.

The Gulf states' concerns are based on following main factors: historical and religious differences based on identity politics and sectarianism; security concerns; power capability differences vis a vis Iran; and energy politics.

Moreover, nuclear programs in the Middle East are associated with regional security competition. Therefore, aspirations of acquiring nuclear power by Saudi Arabia, and several other Muslim countries (including Iran) will increase the likelihood of a nuclear arms race within these states.

In terms of discourse and perception, despite economic sanctions imposed on Iran, it is perceived as allocating a disproportionate amount of its reserves to assert its interests from Lebanon to Yemen.

Hence, Iran is viewed as an actor which is exploiting fault lines between and within Arab countries, which is a serious concern for Saudi Arabia. Moreover, absence of relevant data is one of the obstacles in corroborating the facts and controversy over the JCPOA, which is one of the main challenges of broaching the GCC concerns about the agreement.

As a result, precarious geopolitical dynamics in terms of changing behavior of the US, role of non-state actors such as the Islamic State (IS), regional tensions, as well as proxy conflicts between Saudi Arabia and Iran are aggravating controversy on nuclear power development in the Middle East.

## Cultural Imperialism in India

Mr Asghar Ali Shad, Research Fellow, IPRI delivered a lecture on "Cultural Imperialism in India" on 8 August 2018. Salient points are given below:

Cultural Imperialism is defined as 'the imposition by one usually politically or economically dominant community of various aspects of its own culture onto another, non-dominant community.' In this type of imperialism, 'the imposing community forcefully extends the authority of its way of life over the other population by either transforming or replacing aspects of the non-dominant community's culture.'

Mr Shad said that media plays a major role in promoting the ideas and beliefs of the dominant community and remains the main instrument of cultural penetration/colonization. Indian media continues to project Hindu culture as superior and depicts

caricatured versions of its minorities in an attempt to alienate them from their own culture, religion, language and values and coerce them to give in to Hindu culture.

He shared that Parvez Dewan, an author and former Indian civil servant, analyzed 786 Indian movies, 300 TV dramas and 400 advertisements and found that Indian electronic media portrays minorities as lowly human beings, often with biased projections, while Hindus were shown belonging to a superior race, culture, language, and religion.

He recommended that regional and international human rights agencies should pay attention to this Indian media's biased and prejudicial policy.

## Pakistan's Relations with the US, China and Russia

*Continued from p. 2*

### Recommendations

Following recommendations were put forth in the workshop:

- It is vital to turn Pakistan's strategic location from being a liability to a major driver of the country's economy by overcoming domestic political frictions.
- The Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform of Pakistan needs to analyze current and future trends in China's developmental and foreign policy options to effectively evaluate their implications for Pakistan.
- The new government of Pakistan should focus on people-centric policies. If the

government fails at capacity building of its human resource, progress cannot be achieved.

- Given dependence on Western financial institutions and India's hybrid warfare tactics to sabotage CPEC development,

Pakistan needs to strengthen itself internally. Therefore, the government should focus on strengthening Anti-Money Laundering Laws (AML).



**Asghar Ali Shad, Research Fellow (Urdu Articles)**

"Eid, Azadi aur Bharat ki Saqafati Yalghaar," *Nawa-i-Waqt*  
 "Pakistan he Muslim India Hai?" *Nawa-i-Waqt*  
 "Pyar Hai Pakistan se," *Roznama Pakistan*  
 "Pak Fazaiya aur Jang-e-September -1" *Roznama Pakistan*  
 "Pak Fazaiya aur Jang-e-September-2" *Roznama Pakistan*



**Khalid Hussain Chandio Research Fellow**

"America First or America Alone!" *Regional Rapport*



**Muhammad Nawaz Khan Research Officer**

"Capitalizing Pak-ASEAN Economies" *Pakistan Observer*



**Amna Ejaz Rafi Assistant Research Officer**

"Will a New Political Landscape Translate into New Politics?" *Daily Times*



**Gulshan Bibi Assistant Research Officer**

"Revitalising Nuclear Security," *Daily Times*



**Khurram Abbas Assistant Research Officer**

"Dehshat Gardi ke Khilaf Jang-Aik Naya Mor" *Hilal Magazine-Urdu*



**Umar Farooq Khan Assistant Research Officer**

Review of *Regional Dynamics and Strategic Concerns in South Asia* (2018), *Global Village Space*



**Adeel Mukhtar Assistant Research Officer**

"Convoluting Afghan Peace Process," *Daily Times*  
 "Sham Climate Security Agenda," *Pakistan Observer*



**Usama Nizamani Consultant**

"Pakistani Cinema: A New Ray of Hope," *The Nation*



**Sajid Aziz Consultant**

"An Intimate Account of Syria's Unraveling,"  
 Review of, Rania Abouzeid, *No Turning Back: Life, Loss, and Hope in Wartime Syria* (2018)  
*Friday Times*



**Benjamin Clark, Intern**

"Evaluating China's Commitment to Pakistan," *Daily Times*

**Aqsa Ejaz, Intern**

"India Hangs in the Balance as Trump goes after Iran" *Daily Times*

**Call for Papers IPRI Journal 2018-19**

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- Referencing Style: The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition (Full Note)

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- For the Summer issue: End of March
- For the Winter issue: End of September

**Submission Email:**

Editor IPRI Journal  
[ipri.editor@gmail.com](mailto:ipri.editor@gmail.com)

**UPCOMING TWO-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**Irritants in Pakistan-US Relations: Way Forward**

**Date: 9-10 October 2018**

**Venue: Marriott Hotel, Islamabad**

**Note: For participation, email: [ipripak@ipripak.org](mailto:ipripak@ipripak.org)**



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