

## Short Reviews of Recent Books

### **Profligate Governance : Implications for National Security.**

*By TP Srivastava (New Delhi: Alpha Editions, 2015), 364p, ISBN: 9789385505713.*

The book contains multi-topical articles written by the author over a span of three decades. The articles cover issues pertaining to strategic and international affairs, military matters, Indian Air Force (IAF) and civil aviation in four separate sections. The author analysed critically the higher decision making process at the political, bureaucratic and the military levels.

The author has included a variety of issues in Section 1. Some of these have been overtaken by subsequent developments in the strategic or technological domain; e.g. the chapter written on Environmental Modification as an instrument of war (though relevant) is of 1981 vintage. Similarly the strategic security imperatives in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) have undergone changes due to capability enhancement of the major players and the dynamic geostrategic environment. Section 2 has also discussed the Defence Acquisition Policy, as evolved in 2007, which has been revised, a few times, to make it more responsive, thereafter. The proposed creation of the Chief of Defence Staff as per the author is not viable, not only on the administrative grounds but because neither, the Service Chiefs want to get their respective authority reduced nor, is the Government keen on it.

The author also opines that the assessment systems in the IAF and the Navy are more realistic and objective as compared to the Army. This objectivity is attributed to the closed system of reporting where annual confidential reports are not shown in the IAF and the Navy, whereas the Army follows the open system, leading to inflated reports. This appears to be true to a large extent.

Section 3 is devoted to issues pertaining to the IAF and makes interesting reading, based on his personal experience of combat flying and command of a fighter Squadron. He attributes flying accidents in the IAF mainly to lack of “professional discipline”, rather than professional competence or the absence of modern trainer aircraft. This is questionable judgement.

Section 4 makes a short review of civil aviation in the Country. He is critical of the standards of our flying institutes which lack the necessary infrastructure, have inadequate training aircraft and are staffed by inexperienced flying instructors. The eligibility conditions for a flying institute have been listed in the Appendix to Section 4.

Overall, the subjects and the issues discussed in the book are revealing and interesting; however, the vintage of articles being old, the accuracy of some of the conclusions is suspect.

*Lieutenant General Chandra Shekhar, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)*

**Cyber Warfare : Its Implications on National Security.** By Sanjeev Relia, (*United Service Institution of India, New Delhi, 2015*), pp..245, Rs. 850.00, ISBN 9789384464820.

There can be little doubt that cyberspace has changed most aspects of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. From social interaction and education to politics and business, it would be hard to imagine a world that is not connected by computers and online activities. Can this information revolution which has made cyberspace an integral part of all facets of life, influence the way wars will be fought in the times to come? The said book delves into such issues and provides a thought provoking and comprehensive detail of what steps does India need to take to prepare herself for cyber war.

The book is divided into six chapters. In Chapter One, the author has covered the basic aspects and the kind of threats that loom in cyberspace. In Chapter Two global hot spots of cyberwar have been discussed along with analysis of some recent cyber attacks which have shaped our opinion on cyber warfare. The central theme in Chapters Three and Four is the threat that our critical information infrastructure faces from cyberspace and actions that have been taken at the national level to ensure protection of such infrastructure in India. Chapter Five presents a cyberwar model at the operational level and brings out how military systems in the battlefield can be targeted by cyber attacks. Finally, the last Chapter makes policy and organisational recommendations at the National level as well as the efforts required to be made at the international level to prevent a cyberwar.

The book has systematically highlighted how cyberspace today is an operational domain and how cyber security is a contributing factor towards national security. Critical infrastructure when targeted and threatened from cyberspace can destabilise a nation and that is why it is essential to develop a secure cyber ecosystem in the Country. The author in his recommendations has emphasised on the need of possessing offensive cyber capabilities both at the strategic as well as operational level by the three Services to deter possible cyber attacks from our adversaries. While the Government needs to play an important part in ensuring the security of cyberspace, the author recommends that the private sector too plays an equally important role in this domain. Hence, to be effective, our cyber security framework must be based on a public-private partnership model.

The cyberspace will be affected by conflict, just as is the case with every other domain in which individuals, groups and societies interact. Indeed, the real message for soldiers and political leaders is that cyberwar involves a broadening of the dimensions of warfare, rather than narrowing the future of conflict.

*Lieutenant General Sunit Kumar, AVSM (Retd)*

**Mother, Where's My Country? Looking For Light in the Darkness of Manipur.** By Anubha Bhonsle (*Speaking Tiger Publishing Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 2016*), pp 250, Price Rs 499.00, ISBN 978-93-85288-35-7.

A painstakingly researched book on the disturbed society, which is Manipur, today. The author has drawn on the tragic circumstances and results of some selected atrocities and their resultant effect which has led to the total destruction of the lives of a few individuals and their families. Developing the theme further, the distorted and disturbed life of the common citizens, consequent to the application of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) has been described with emphasis on how it affects the day to day life of the women in particular. The picture painted is of a society, located in a bountiful land, but which is merely surviving with limited hope for improvement.

The author enumerates the existence of nearly forty five insurgent groups with their diverse motivations and the curtailed role of security Forces, largely Police Forces, operating under the

umbrella of AFSPA, which has led to a state of stalemate. Violations do take place due to individual transgressions and poor leadership but the resultant situation indicates aimlessness and lack of any progress towards a lasting solution. Manipur is depicted as a society where Institutions regularly fail their citizens.

The political class and their functioning too indicate a lack of vision, bereft of any progress towards the common good. Greater attention seems to be devoted to petty rivalries and extraction of more funds from the Central Government. For the Central Government too Manipur appears too far. The existing low level of violence achieved on the strength of funds allotted and misused with marginal benefit to the common good, suggests a strategy of a convenient stalemate. The common citizen will, therefore, continue in anguish to search and cry for their Mother, that used to be Manipur.

Easy to read, well arranged matter with excellent editing, this book is a valuable addition to our knowledge of the northeast of India. Greater analysis of the compulsions of the State would have given the readers a more balanced view.

*Brigadier N Bahri, VSM (Retd)*

**Governance in Pakistan : Hybridism, Political Instability and Violence.** *By Sagheer Ahmad Khan (Karachi, Oxford University Press, pp..327, 2016, Rs. 995/-, ISBN 978-0-19-940184-0)*

This well researched volume covers a range of complex issues of governance in Pakistan. The author's approach is deeply analytical. He posits that the governing elite's response to governance in Pakistan has been essentially an oscillation between rational-democratic order and traditional- authoritarianism. The intervention for the latter form is considered as inevitable till conditions improve for 'real' democratic rule. The author's emphasis in this study includes historical, sociological, political and economic factors that impact governance and which are deliberated upon at length in seven chapters. Suitably structured, the analysis is supported with references, notes and tables.

Initially, Khan identifies and explains key terms and concepts. The author opines that rational-democratic discourse along with traditional structures during colonial rule resulted in hybridism, ethnic and religious assertiveness developing new power equations. Khan

brings out that Pakistan has experienced ethnic disintegration, repeated insurgency, urban guerilla warfare, sectarian violence and terrorism. Subsequently, the author explains that the ruling elite hamstrung by structural factors kept changing their viewpoint with changing internal and external situations resulting in 'ad-hocism'. Thus the people remained vulnerable to mass mobilisation by demagogues. Due to this inherent authoritarian-democratic paradox the governing elite followed inconsistent policies that neither fully coerced nor accommodated the people's aspirations resulting in ethnic nationalism.

Khan admits that religion as a basis of separate identity provided a rationale for Partition. Yet as Khan brings out it was Yahya Khan who actively promoted Islam as the ideology of Pakistan and co-opted Islamic groups especially Jamaat-e-Islami. Later, Zia introduced Hudood Ordinance (public lashings, stoning, amputation), lowering the status of women and a deeper 'Islamisation' of the military. Daniel Pipes, a social scientist, quoted by the author, states that the incompatibility of Islam with secularism is a source of violence! Just how violent? In 2011, Punjab Governor; Salman Taseer was killed by Qadri – his security guard, for demanding reforms in Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Qadri's execution in March 2016 has triggered massive protests all over Pakistan. Fact is – religion is the *raison d'être* of Pakistan. A transitional regime is violence prone yet the author is unable to fully explain why the military routinely takes over the reins in Pakistan? Five *coups d'état* are not mere coincidence.

*Major General Ashok Joshi, VSM (Retd)*

**Candles in the Dark : Successful Organisations in Pakistan's Weak Institutional Environment.** *By Mahmood Ali Ayub and Syed Turab Hussain (Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2016), pp..288, Price Rs 995, ISBN 9780199403363*

As the title of the book suggests, it analyses a few entities and organisations in Pakistan that have successfully survived the weak institutional environment, fragile economy and a hostile security situation that has prevailed in that country for decades. The authors have selected nine institutions for their research, from both public and private sectors; namely, Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Motorway Police, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP),

National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), Punjab Education Foundation, Edhi Foundation, Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Rescue 1122, that have earned respect and trust of its citizens, their Government and also legitimacy in international circuits.

Having described the numerous political, economic and security challenges that Pakistan is facing that has led to a weak institutional environment in Part I, the authors have compared Pakistan's ranking in World Economic Forum's Executive Opinion Survey for 2014-2015 with six other Asian countries on various counts such as quality of institutions, corruption, judicial efficiency etc. and found Pakistan lagging behind its Asian neighbours.

Part II takes up the nine selected institutions as case studies to understand how and why these institutions have excelled domestically and internationally, despite the 'hostile and fragile milieu within which they operate and what are the underpinnings of success for these institutions.' These case studies make for an interesting reading and give a streak of hope to the readers that amidst the chaos and gloom of Pakistan's vulnerable political and security situation, there are these islands of excellence that are imparting quality higher education to their youth, helping the poor uplift their lives and generate employment opportunities as also providing financial help mainly to women through schemes like BISP. To bring a balance in their research, the authors have also discussed two failed institutions – Pakistan International Airlines and Pakistan Railways.

Part III discusses the underpinnings of success of these nine institutions and concludes with some remaining issues that these institutions should watch out for. Despite the depth of research involved, the authors have managed to keep the contents easy to read and comprehend. It will provide the Indian readers with insight into Pakistan's lesser known successful institutions and Pakistan's policy makers some food for thought.

*Major Sonali Gupta (Retd)*

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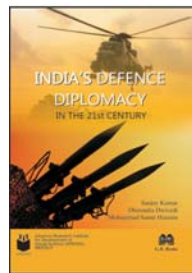
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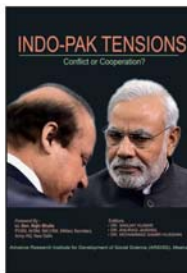
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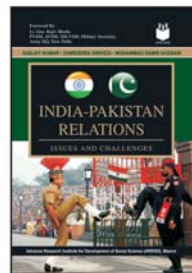
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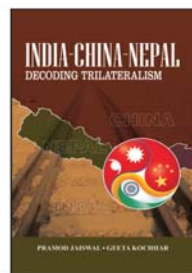
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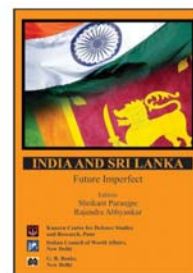
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