

Short Reviews of Recent Books

Tomorrow's War : 21st Century Defence Strategies. By Air Commodore (Dr) CN Ghosh (New Delhi : Manas Publications, 2007), 320p, Rs. 695.00, ISBN 81-7049-3056.

'Tomorrow's War : 21st Century Defence Strategies' by Air Commodore (Dr.) C N Ghosh, is a book that makes interesting reading. His views, at the beginning of each chapter as an introduction, and the end of each, put forth his recommendations for the path that should be adopted in the future to move towards preparing for wars of the 21st Century, but what is most significant is his chapterisation of the book which shows clearly his trend of thought as the important aspects that one needs to focus on for "Tomorrow's War".

Starting with Globalisation and its impact on Military Planning, he goes on to show the effect of ageing populations in the world. He highlights the five types of global connectivity, namely; Ethnoscape, Financescape Ideoscape, Mediascape and Technoscape, which are rapidly moving us towards globalisation. In the aspect of ageing of the world population he argues that the resources of the governments will transfer to the older generation through public pension and healthcare benefit programmes and will thus take bulk of the resources away from the younger population.

A fair amount of time and space is devoted to Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) where the author clearly brings out the meaning of RMA and its different dimensions very explicitly, often confused by others. He stresses on the five-dimensional warfare that includes breadth, height, depth, space and time. In fact, this chapter is at the core of the study and is beautifully handled.

The chapter on Dominance of Information Technology in Military, Roles of UAVs and UCAVs in the 21st Century, Electromagnetic Pulse Weapons: A New Arsenal, Direct Energy Weapons, Space Application & Indian Space Programme and Rapid Militarisation of Space are fairly technical and racy and contain a fortune of information including a historical trace of each.

The chapter on the Roles and Missions of the Indian Armed Forces in the 21st Century, containing the types of threats to India and the missions of each of the three Services, forms the basis of the book's title. It contains the author's clear and forthright views in a very military fashion.

Air Power of the 21st Century, Air Land Battle and Challenges for the Indian Navy, chapters toward the end of the book are very interesting and

tickle the mind of the reader, for they are outlined in a very plain and simple manner for even a layman to enjoy. The concluding chapters cover the Energy Security Challenges and Nuclear aspects in the 21st Century and are a must read.

In essence the book by Air Commodore Ghosh, with books to his credit in the most varied subjects, has for the first time laid out in one place, thinking of future ears of the 21st Century, normally spread out in articles and writings in a variety of magazines and publications. To find this together in one place, clearly and explicitly given in a lucid military fashion with a wealth of details, both factual and thought provoking, is the strength of the work. Intellectuals, researchers and laymen alike can read it with interest.

Lieutenant General BM Kapur, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)

Conduct of War. By Colonel (Dr) Narendra Singh (New Delhi : Manas Publications, 2007), 246p, Rs 495.00, ISBN 81-7049-318-8.

The author has structured his book in four chapters. The first chapter goes on to describe the three levels of war—viz. strategic, operational and tactical—besides defining various types of war, such as 'Low Intensity Conflict', 'Limited War', 'Conventional War' and 'Total War'. One may not agree fully with the analysis or even with some of the definitions, but what is admirable is the author's forthright view on matters of national importance and the conduct of war.

The other three chapters titled 'Strategy', 'Operational Art, and 'Tactics' seek to explain these aspects of war. The style of writing seems to be aimed at the public rather than for experts. Some of the author's viewpoints on these may be debatable. Nonetheless, despite the fact that there are some contentious parts to the book, the attempt to explain such subjects for general information is wholly laudable. This is especially so, since problems relating to national security have multiplied. Thus, both public perception as well as policy formulation by those associated with national security issues, must be shaped by and based on strategic vision and the core values of the nation. In this age of information revolution, there will be a demand for more and more transparency on issues relating to security. This book is a reminder that the country should have better informed citizens with a sense of involvement and a national vision. Public support to wage war and bear its accompanying pain and loss, whether in Vietnam, Afghanistan or Iraq will be more forthcoming from a well-informed citizenry.

Colonel (Dr) Narendra Singh has, in his book, done considerable research and analysis and addressed the challenges faced by decision

makers in dealing with present and future wars. He has made good use of references from reputed military authors to support his analysis effectively. Most importantly, he has addressed military matters, and the art of warfare not normally ventured by most writers in India, with courage and a sense of mission to make the book interesting.

Lieutenant General Chandra Shekhar, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)

Unlearned Lessons : An Appraisal of India's Military Mishaps. By Gautam Das (New Delhi : Har-Anand Publications Pvt Ltd., 2007) 352p, Rs 595.00, ISBN 978-81-241-1257-1.

At first, I was hesitant to review this book by Lieutenant Colonel Gautam Das (Retd), a relatively young officer, who served in the Indian Army from 1968 to 1991. The reasons for this reluctance were threefold. It is one thing to comment on wars or battles of history, because judgements have already been pasted on them by many historians; it is quite another matter to pass judgement on more or less contemporary battles of independent India by an officer of the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (in-experienced in matters of higher direction of War and National Security Policy). My reluctance was further enhanced by the remark of Mr. G Parthasarthy, who has written the 'Foreword' to the book ".....While many will seriously disagree with some of the conclusions of Lieutenant Colonel Das....."

Notwithstanding this initial hesitance, it was only after I had begun to read this book that I found it absorbing. I was pleasantly surprised to realise that Col Das's perceptive mind and incisive research were noteworthy and merited attention. One of the lacunae of the book is the lack of detailed and decipherable maps to help the reader to understand and go along with the author's thinking process, to draw logical conclusions on his own. The maps at the end of the book are an afterthought and hence of limited value.

In Part II of the book, *Kashmir 1947 - 49*, Das brings out that though anti - Maharaja and anti - Hindu feelings in the northern territories were running high, the pro - Islam sentiment did not mean that it was pro - Pakistan - as the British officer in charge of the Northern region (Major Brown) tried to persuade the Govt of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) headed by Prime Minister Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan. Das's narrative also confirms that the invasion of Kashmir, was undoubtedly an operation planned and mainly carried out by the Pakistan Army to capture the Valley using the tribesmen as front-runners, to conceal the Pakistan Army's role.

I disagree with Das's comments on "The Indian Style of Battle Command", relating to Indo-Pakistan Wars of 1965 and 71, that, as distinct from the German style of command i.e. to say a General Officer Commanding of a division and a Brigade Commander in the Indian Army rarely left their Headquarters, depending on the Commanding Officers of battalions to fight the main battle. My experiences in battle and the teaching at the Infantry School stressed that a Commander in the field, while advancing to battle, is supposed to move ahead of his own Headquarters with his Reconnaissance Group (R Group) and remain in contact with the Headquarters of the next (lower) formation / unit - i.e. one step ahead of his Headquarters, to keep in touch with the battle.

I found the author's exposition of Exercise Brass Tacks and the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) operations against Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) - "The God Who Failed" and the "Operation Gone Sour" – interesting, in some ways he has contributed a new slant in his commentary and I found it thought provoking.

The author exposes the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) operations and the poor performance by Indian Infantry in Sri Lanka - the haphazard half-limited and botched manner of its induction (because of mismanagement by Army HQ in Delhi) and General Sundarji's incompetence that turned "modem India's first overseas foray into a politico-military fiasco of the worst kind". This is a harsh judgement but it is difficult to disagree with the author. It is also difficult for an old soldier to stomach the fact that, in the end, the Indian Army was asked to get out - and that in the process of getting out, the Indian Prime Minister was thumped on the head by a disgusted Sri Lankan naval rating.

Major General DK Palit, VrC (Retd)

India and Pakistan : Pathways Ahead. Edited by Amitabh Mattoo, Kapil Kak and Happymon Jacob (New Delhi : K W Publishers Pvt Ltd, 2007), 307p, Rs. 840.00, US \$ 32, ISBN 978-81-87966-66-1.

The birth of India and Pakistan in Aug 1947 was marked by extreme hostility. Dispute over J and K and Pak attempt to present a fait accompli by armed occupation resulted in a full scale war in 1947 and 1948. Have we realised that for the good of both, we need to improve our relations and establish normalcy in all spheres? Have we overcome pathological hostility? Can we communicate to establish normalcy in all spheres of our relationship? Amitabh Mattoo observes that a section of India opinion believes that New Delhi has a stake in the future of Pakistan. He writes "A few years ago, Prime Minister Vajpayee unambiguously stated that Pakistan's stability

was also in India's national interest." Another point that he makes is that there is greater convergence between the positions of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Musharraf on Kashmir: both have ruled out a change of borders or an exchange of territories.

The book covers a variety of Indo-Pak issues by acknowledged specialists: such as Jasjit Singh on "Nuclear Stability in South Asia", Afsar Karim on "Cross Border Terrorism" and Karim Bahadur on "Reconstructing Evolutionary Realities". He analyses Muslim separatism which took the form of the "Two Nation Theory"; and grew out of the British policy of 'divide and rule' and some mistakes made by the Indian National Congress. He observes that there has been some improvement in Indo-Pak relations in the last two years. Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) have brought relief to divided families across the LOC as also to missing fishermen and prisoners. New bus connections are also a positive step. Yet there has been no progress on many other issues. "It is clear that as long as the military in Pakistan remains in control of the levers of power, there is little hope of any breakthrough in the relations between India and Pakistan".

Kapil Kak, on the other hand, is of the opinion that there is a distinct downward trend in salient parameters of terrorist violence in J & K, combined with cross-LOC CBMs and vastly increased people to people linkages, have imparted a fresh dynamism in improved India-Pakistan relations".

Pran Chopra's piece on 'Resolving the Kashmir Issue' observes that permitting the people to go across the LOC without passports and visas has enabled them "to see more virtues in the people and institutions on the other side than they had seen before."

Satish Kumar puts across the role of the Track Two Diplomacy, and the part played by 'Neemrana Initiative'.

As the cover states, India and Pak relations are at a historic juncture but much remains to be done. One can only hope that Pakistan's political future, presently in a state of suspense, is resolved early and stability is established which alone can permit the consideration of our bilateral differences.

Lieutenant General AM Vohra, PVSM (Retd)

Pakistan's Foreign Policy 1947-2005 : A Concise History. By Abdul Sattar (Karachi : Oxford University Press, 2007), 329p, Rs. 595.00, ISBN 0-19-547167-9.

As the title suggests, it's a concise history of Pakistan-India relations as they developed over the period 1947 onwards. Basically, it comes out

clearly that Pakistan's foreign policy has remained India centric ever since the beginning. For a student of our relationships, it should not come as a surprise because, till recently, our foreign policy also had to consider the influence of Pakistan in moulding world opinion about Kashmir which has all along been contested as a disputed territory by Pakistan.

The author, having served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, and later rising to the rank of Secretary of Foreign Affairs, followed by two stints as Pakistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, is indeed well qualified to write on the subject. One should grant him the privilege of seeing Pakistan-India relations from Pakistan's point of view, especially when he is writing them down for posterity. Like he has put the blame for all the wars they have fought at the doorstep of India, including the Kargil episode. Pakistan has been shown as an unwilling accessory to these wars because of its obligations to the Muslim community that has been shown to suffer at the hands of the Indian government which is supposed to be indulging in gross violation of human rights. Yet, it must be admitted that a careful reading of the book shows patches of candid admittance of shortsightedness of both Presidents Ayub Khan and Zia ul Haq in miscalculating the reaction of Indians in the wars of 1965 and 1971. Though mentioned very briefly, it is shown that Pakistan was virtually prepared to accept Bangladesh as part of a federation but was quite unprepared for the India action that led to Bangladesh acquiring an independent status.

A glaring fact that emerges from the reading of the book is that Pakistan's foreign policy was virtually the policy of its military dictators who did not consult others about their moves. Their desire for gaining the leadership of the Muslim world also came to a nought because the Arab Muslims did not favour such a leadership to go out of their hands. The book renders an analytical description of the need of the times when Pakistan joined CENTO and SEATO and cozied up with China. Their desire for joining hands with the USA for financial and military support has been described in detail. The book contains an objective analysis of all the matters that went into forming, and changing the foreign policy of Pakistan from time to time. On the whole, it is an immensely readable book for persons of all age groups, including those who have lived through the period covered in the book.

Major General Dinesh Chandra (Retd)

Glimpses into the Corridors of Power. By Gohar Ayub Khan (Karachi : Oxford University Press), 354p, Rs. 595.00, ISBN 987-0-19-547354-4.

The book is written in a narrative form based on author's personal observations. First as President Ayub's son, ADC, spokesman and later

as the leader of the opposition and finally as Speaker and Minister, he was privy to all development in the turbulent history of Pakistan. In spite of such high credentials, nothing new has been revealed. However, some of his views are of interest.

Break up of Pakistan is attributed to not acting on wise counsel of Ayub and evil manipulations of Bhutto. Ayub had advised against taking any action which may lead to an open war with India, but Bhutto brought it about, to weaken Ayub's hold.

The claim that India's Operational plans had been secured, is betrayed by the fact that complete surprise was achieved when international border was crossed and Pakistan's major offensive based on Patton tanks got severely mauled when it ran blindly into the Indian defences.

In 1971, Ayub had advised Yahya to negotiate with Mujibur Rahman to withdraw the army and work for a federation but intransigence of Bhutto led to breaking away of the majority group. There was such confusion in the rank and file of the army that the advancing columns of Indian Army to Dhaka, were mistaken for the Chinese coming to their aid, as had been assured by Bhutto! After the surrender, the feeling among the army officers was that they could only fight a short defensive war against India.

Corrupt politicians, when ever in power, viewed judiciary with distaste. Nawaz Sharif even toyed with the idea of arresting the Chief Justice. Musharraf behaved no differently. Capture of large area in Sindh by the Indian Army in 1971, Islamisation of the polity and armed forces by Zia and surreptitious development of nuclear capability and its export to rogue nations, finds no mention. Also ISI is absolved of its prime role in training and tasking of Mujahideens for spreading terror across the border.

Infiltration in Kargil is considered tactical success but strategic failure as India captured back the lost territory and Pakistan lost the good will of US President. By extolling the army for this misadventure, Nawaz Sharif denied himself any valid reason to sack Musharraf who turned tables on him and became the fourth military ruler.

Brigadier Kanwar Narendra Singh, IA (Retd)

Kargil : From Surprise to Victory. By General VP Malik, (New Delhi : Harper Collins, 2006), 436p, Rs. 595.00, ISBN 81-7223-635-2.

In the overall context of Pakistan's proxy war in Kashmir, operations in Kargil in 1999 was a strategic roll of the dice by Musharraf wherein he hoped to restore imbalance in Pakistan's designs in the Valley with the

insurgency going against Islamabad. The India security establishment used to linear thinking was surprised by this asymmetric venture. But recovering rapidly the triad of overwhelming national power, valour of the Indian jawan and resolute leadership succeeded in restoring the status quo.

General Malik's in depth review will provide the reader a lucid account of the Kargil operations from the vantage point of the principal military protagonist in 1999, with a rare insight in the band of events which spread from New Delhi to Islamabad to Washington to the fire assaults on Tiger Hill. Reading between the lines it would be evident that surprise in Kargil was inevitable given lack of understanding of the disconnect in Pakistan's political and military hierarchy, limited perception of the continuums of war under the nuclear umbrella, serious deficiencies in strategic intelligence, lack of planning for the contingency of a localised limited conflict and mismanagement of inventories of weapons and equipment.

The author has succeeded in capturing the flavour of compartmentalised Indian national security decision making practice, even during a crisis most effectively. From the minutest details of operations to nuclear signalling and political confabulations he has covered it all. In the process he has provided an insight into a whole range of issues from the China factor, to media to the role of AWWA. Some of the issues touched upon which need redress are greater integration amongst the Service chiefs which had to be constructed on 23 May, understanding of nuances of India as a status quo power in the Indian military, need for a continuous top-down-top intelligence cycle at all levels, developing the ability to think beyond the inevitable fog of indecision that exists in the corridors of power in South Block and breaking the stability-instability paradox in the Sub Continent.

The style is lucid though one would have preferred sequential chapterisation leading to the conclusions. This book will remain a significant work of reference on a whole range of issues in the context of Indo Pakistan strategic equilibrium during the period in the years to come.

Brigadier Rahul K Bhonsle, SM (Retd)

Defence from the Skies – Indian Air Force through 75 Years. By Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, VrC, AVSM, VM, IAF (Retd) (New Delhi : Knowledge World, 2007), 280p, Rs. 2300.00, ISBN 81-87966-51-3.

Authenticity and detailed research by Air Commodore Jasjit Singh (Retd) is the hall mark of this magnificent historic, operational and conceptual documentation of the Indian Air Force (IAF) over the last

VM (Held)

75 years. Jasjit has not deviated from the USP of his earlier books, works that stand apart and form a complete encapsulation of the subject. The thirty odd years spent in the making of this book have been well rewarded and I venture to state "justified", all this notwithstanding his other involvements in the realm of National Security.

The book traces the history of the IAF from its conceptualization, its creation as a unique independent force unto the modern times where it is on the threshold of creating a genuine Aerospace Force. A journey from the early shackled mindset, of the concept of Favorable Air Situation to the present day concept of Air Dominance.

Jasjit's interpretation of the events and the perceived acts of commission and omission form the basis of this "Seamless Treatise".

The initial role envisioned for the Indian Air Force was of coastal defence and support to the Army. How, with imaginative and innovative utilisation of the limited force, comprising primarily of the earlier generation of aircraft pioneers of the IAF like Jumbo Majumdar, Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh created history by slowly but surely expanding the role in the employment of the available assets of the IAF. He traces the failure of the Higher Defence Management in not employing the available combat air power most gainfully, earlier against Japan on the eastern front and later on the adversely loaded advice to Prime Minister Nehru in 1947 that establishing the Corridor Sanitaire on the western border of J&K was not possible with the available assets. One aspect amply enunciated is the one of the fact "that no one has ever won a war without using air power and that air power has contributed to the success whenever it has been attained. Not using the IAF in 1962 based on the advice of the then US Ambassador has rankled subsequent generations of the IAF as no possible military logic supports this. Notwithstanding varying claims on the outcome of the 1965 air war with Pakistan, Jasjit highlights the factor as to whether the IAF had a clear doctrine and strategy in air to air combat and air to ground strikes. The details assembled by him on all aspects of the 1965 war and the IAF's role and performance make very illuminating source for research and reading.

Jasjit takes us through the 1971 war highlighting the significant difference in the perception on the employment of the IAF. The clearly thought and enunciated objectives in respect of the attainment of the freedom of the skies so as to enable us to operate in the skies on both the fronts and carry out offensive attacks on the clearly spelt out target systems of energy and transportation. In his inimitable way he brings out the fact that the IAF had learnt its lessons from the acts of omission and commission in the 1965 war. The operations relating to the attainment of

has been described clearly

complete air superiority in the East, the Helebridging operation, the Paradrop at Tangail and the culminating strike on the government Headquarters when the cabinet meeting was going on followed by the second strike by the fighters of the same target which broke the back of the enemies resistance, leading to the decision to surrender to the Indian forces are well documented. The separation of the facts from fiction about the Longewala battle with his emphasis on Pakistan's operational concepts is very relevant. He clears lot fog over the Kargil War about the mindest of the military and political leadership. More specifically in respect of the so called refusal of the IAF to commit the force. He unambiguously brings out the political leadership's decision in the May 18th cabinet meeting related to the denial of permission for the proposal to use the air force, the foreign ministers apparent role in this decision is also brought out.

In a similar incisive manner he has covered the IAF's peace keeping missions, both within the UNO's ambit and others. Staring with the one in Congo in 1961 the other ones including Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

Overall he has analysed the past conceptual perceptions, their limitations, gaps and mindsets to the transformation challenges faced by the IAF in the conventional war, limited war, war with the nuclear hangover, and the airpower balance, giving us very useful specifics for strategic and continental reach and exploiting the space spectrum.

The rather sensitive aspect of force levels is well discussed particularly in the concept of Air dominance being a major war winning factor. I am personally very appreciative of the fact that he supports the case for a 64 squadron force level target.

This book is a most read for all air power enthusiasts no matter what garb they wear.

Air commodore Jasjit Singh AVSM, VrC, VM (Retd) deserves full praise for the very professional, painstaking and balanced handling of the IAF's history over the past 75 years.

Air Vice Marshal V Kapila, AVSM, VrC (Retd)

India, Europe and the Changing Dimensions of Security. Edited by Rajendra K Jain and Hartmut Elsenhans (New Delhi : Radiant Publishers, 2006), 309p, Rs 750.00, ISBN 81-7027-262-9.

This book contains sixteen essays by Indian and European security and policy analysts and academics. They cover assessments of the changing dimensions of security since the end of the Cold War on defence and security policies of India and Europe and the politico-military

ramifications of events of 9/11. The writings cover a wide range of issues like nonproliferation, humanitarian intervention, conflict resolution, terrorism, fundamentalism, European Policy towards South Asia and Afghanistan, reform of the United Nations and American unilaterism. The book contains revised version of papers presented at the international seminar organised by the JNU, European Union Studies Programme at the India International Centre on 21-22 Nov 2002; some aspects may therefore, appear a bit dated.

Nuclear proliferation that has taken place in South Asia and some other countries from the EU, has been chronicled in some detail. It highlights the fact that notwithstanding the platitudes mouthed by their leaders at various fora, EU members are to blame as much, whatever be the reasons/compulsions for having permitted proliferation whether it was by "transfer of material, production technology, blueprints, knowledge or facilities. Measures being contemplated or those that have been formulated as part of the export control systems, need greater deliberation and more importantly the will to implement them, failing which the "nuke's" may find its way into the hands of fundamentalists or non state organizations with disastrous consequences.

The essay on "Security and Conflict Resolution" articulates India's concepts very clearly, especially *Conflict Prevention* and *Peaceful Resolution of Disputes*. It has been also mentioned that these necessarily are not the best and may not have been successful always; perhaps these concepts have contributed to our image of being a soft state; these thus merit review.

These essays would certainly assist in understanding of security concerns of EU and India, by policy makers, analysts, defence officers besides intellectuals; the book would be an useful addition to the library.

Sharma vsm
Lieutenant General Arvind Kumar, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)

India's External Intelligence: Secrets of Research and Analysis Wing. By Major General VK Singh (New Delhi : Manas Publications, 2007), 185p, Rs. 495.00, ISBN 81-7049-332-3.

This is the first account of R and AW by a person who has worked in it at a senior level. The book brings to light several lacunae in the premier intelligence agency, which in author's opinion must be brought in public domain, to preclude the danger of their becoming a law unto themselves, like the ISI of Pakistan. The author needs to be commended for lifting the veil of secrecy from our premier foreign intelligence agency. The book created quite a turmoil both in the media and R and AW.

After dwelling on the reasons that compelled him to write the book, the author tells us about his transition from a soldier to a professional spy at the fag end of his service. His initial trials and tribulations and the outsider syndrome experiences led him to the premonition that he was not going to like the new outfit that he had joined.

In tracing the history of the organisation, he laments the non-existence of documented history to get an accurate picture of its evolution, organisation and present status. He has, however, listed some of the R and AW's objectives when it came into being in 1968, and its efforts for seeking clear definition of its role and responsibilities to prevent an overlap in respect of external intelligence with other agencies. Despite it being counted among premier intelligence agencies of the world, R and AW, in author's opinion, has not been able to develop a distinct ethos of its own.

Opinions formed by the author while 'learning the ropes' have been narrated interestingly to say that most of the RAW personnel he came across, appeared to be soft with a very low risk taking profile and not full of 'hard nosed, tough-as-nails agents, who took enormous risks and were undeterred by adversity and danger'. They were also seen to be prone to human failings associated with bureaucrats.

Due to his strong Signals background, the author has narrated the shortcoming of the Telecom Division clearly, where he was posted as Joint Secretary (Tele-TE/DM). He observed that unlike the armed forces, the R and AW did not have its own communication networks; and although like other intelligence agencies it relied heavily on interception of communications, the personnel of Telecom Division were not treated at par with personnel of more glamorous operational divisions. Matters connected with procurement of tele communication equipment were marred with the malaise of time consuming procedures, favourite dealers and wastage of funds.

Chapter 5, 6 and 7 include a few interesting case studies. Chapter 9 is of special significance. It covers signal intelligence in detail and would be of interest to those technically inclined and interested in the various facets of electronic intelligence gathering. The various terms like SIGINT, HUMINT, COMINT and ELINT and some new ones like INIENIT have been explained. The author has also attempted to give details of what is happening in other countries so far as SIGINT is concerned. The actions that were being taken towards monitoring of the Internet and Under Sea Cable, during his tenure have also been referred to.

The final chapter is interesting as it brings out the rivalry between R and AW, IB and MI. He also refers to the love-hate relationship between R and AW and MEA. It is here in this chapter that the author writes about the intercept of the conversation between Musharraf and his Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Aziz, which was picked up by the media and beaten to death.

In the Epilogue, the author once again makes a strong case for introduction of checks and balances in the organization; as according to him there is no control to curb or restrict the activities of R & AW. He concludes by saying "If war is too serious a business to be left to generals, should not intelligence be considered too serious a business to be left to the spies."

The book will make a good read for those technically inclined and interested in the various facets of electronic intelligence gathering, while it has enough material for the general reader, for him to remain reverted to the book, in giving some idea as to how R and AW, the premier foreign intelligence agency functions.

Brigadier Lakshman Singh, VSM (Retd)

The Kaoboys of R&AW – Down Memory Lane. By B Raman, (New Delhi : Lancer Publishers, 2007), 294p, Rs. 795.00, ISBN 0-9796174-3-X.

The Research and Analysis Wing (R & A W) is the external intelligence agency of the Government of India. It was created in September 1968, with Shri Rameshwar Nath Kao heading the Organisation. The author Shri B Raman retired on 31 August 1994 after serving the Organisation for 26 years.

The book deals largely with Human Intelligence (HUMINT) aspect of the working of the R&AW and only a passing reference has been made to Technical Intelligence at places. The book has 19 chapters and traverses through India's contemporary history covering the Indo-Pak 1971 War ; insurgency in the Northeast, the Punjab and the state of Jammu and Kashmir ; the period of the Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi and the war in Afghanistan. The R&AW is accountable to the Prime Minister of India pertaining to the on-going sensitive operations of the Organisation, its capabilities and accomplishments. The book covers the intelligence imperatives and dispensations under Indira Gandhi, Morarji Desai, Rajiv Gandhi, V P Singh, Chandra Shekhar and Narasimha Rao in an interesting manner. The part played by the different R&AW chiefs during their interaction and personal briefings of the Prime Minister has been described very well. The role played by the R&AW during major events has been covered in an objective

manner. The focus has been on analysis of both the strengths and the weaknesses which make interesting reading.

Chapter 18 of the book is titled "Terrorism and Karma". This chapter makes particularly interesting reading. Among other aspects the author has brought out that since the days of anti-Soviet Jihad in Afghanistan, the US State Department has extended protection to Pakistan by closing their eyes to the spawning of Jihadi terrorists in Pakistan territory and breeding of terrorist organisations. The US State Department took the stand that Pakistan could do no wrong. It was after 11 September 2001 strikes in the US homeland that their eyes opened partially. But an over anxiety to protect Pakistan from the consequences of their misdeeds still continues. The author has expressed a view, which I fully support, that if there is an act of terrorism in the US homeland involving the use of weapons of mass destruction one day, it would have originated from the Pakistan territory. Only then the eyes of the State Department would open fully. That would perhaps be a bit too late as thousands of innocent lives would have been lost.

The book gives a clear and comprehensive account of the functioning of the R&AW. It also covers the aspect of networking of certain foreign intelligence agencies based on their national interests. The intelligence agencies of different countries strive to penetrate intelligence systems to access sensitive documents relating to clandestine operations. The modus operandi in recruiting moles in intelligence agencies has been covered in an effective manner. The recent case of the CIA penetrating the R&AW and the National Security Council Secretariat has also been covered. In this case the CIA not only penetrated the R&AW through Rabinder Singh but also took him out of the country reportedly with a US passport under an assumed name when he was about to be arrested.

Written in simple language, with bold print using good quality paper, the book is well edited and very well laid out. It has an extremely good flow and is non-put-downable.

Major General YK Gera (Retd)

Weapons of Terror : Freeing the World of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Arms. (*Sweden : The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, 2006*), 227p, Price not indicated, ISBN 91-38-22582-4.

An independent international commission was set-up in the year 2003 with the major financial support from Swedish Government to examine: How the world could tackle the problem of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)? The commission was chaired by former head of the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (Unmovic) Mr. Hans Blix.

The book presents ideas and recommendations on what the world community-including national governments and civil society-can and should do to address the threat from these weapons of terror. The best part of the book is that it is focused, lucid and concise. It does not carry the so called baggage of 'academic rigour' like many other books on WMDs and unnecessarily does not venture into abstractions like theorising the threat but presents a more realistic view based on empirical evidence.

The book is divided into eight chapters and discusses wide array of subjects related to nuclear, chemical, biological weapons and their delivery platforms. The book also addresses the issue of weapons in space. In end the book offers sixty evocative recommendations towards handling the present and emerging threat from the WMDs. These suggestions address the threat at various levels from terrorism to disarmament to arms control. Particularly, in respect of chemical and biological weapons the book recommends the necessity for factoring the rapid developments in chemical sciences and biotechnology while undertaking the threat assessment.

Normally, for many years the issues related to WMDs are being addressed mainly at the backdrop of the 'treaty regime' but this book specifically covers the possible threats and responses in detail. It outlines the limitations of traditional responses to handle the WMD threat and suggests some new approaches.

On the other hand, in respect to the nuclear weapons the book takes a very 'holistic' but highly unachievable position and makes a call for total disarmament. On issues related to space weapons, the book fails to take note of growing Chinese investments in the space arena.

On the whole the book addresses a very important issue of WMD threat in a very systematic manner. The book is an easy read and makes a significant contribution towards the ongoing global debate on the weapons of mass destruction.

Shri Ajey Lele, Research Fellow, IDSA

Sky is the Limit : Signals in Operation Pawan. By Major General Yashwant Deva, AVSM (Retd) (New Delhi : Maj Gen Yashwant Deva, AVSM (Retd), Operation Pawan Veterans, 2007), 372p, Rs 990.00, ISBN 978-81-903719-0-2.

This book readily answers many a question agitating a seeking mind. Why are the Americans in trouble in Iraq? What makes terrorists and terrorism work? What if any, is the answer to suicide bombers? Who

taught the Al Qaida, ULFA, Naxalites and the LTTE how to go about their chosen tasks? And above all, "wither, indeed what state, the intelligence agencies and their smug ways, in face of memetic and cyber terror tactics? It also teaches you all that you need to know about asymmetric warfare.

Major General Yashwant Deva, AVSM, a reputed scholar writer, defence and technology analyst has excelled himself in this master piece, which though burdened with many a technical detail reads like a symphony. He writes here all that he did as Chief Signal Officer of Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka. He was awarded Ati Vishisht Seva Medal for engineering a wide ranging and integrated network of highly responsive communications to the IPKF over diverse media during Operation Pawan.

His other written works include, *Secure or Perish* (2001), *Dual Use Information Technology: An Indocentric Perspective* (1997), and numerous edited compilations. A serious and committed scholar, he draws heavily from the scriptures and renowned thinkers to suggest a blue print for the changing art of warfare.

Throughout the read, one is aware of strenuous research undertaken by the author over two decades. Although, it's title misleads one to feel the technological burden, the book is of immense interest to a lay reader, also. Where it is a text book of conceptualising, planning, provisioning and securing of Signal Communications in a very hostile environment for higher Signals Commanders, it can well be a very useful study for officers undergoing various courses of instruction in the Armed Forces. Interspersed with appropriate quotations and relevant maps, photographs and sketches the book holds readers' interest from beginning to end. It's anecdotal style beautifully adds to that. It makes a major contribution towards crystallisation of valuable lessons learnt in provision of state of art communications for their use by future generations. Like a breath of fresh air, this is the only book, one can find that, *inter alia*, tells volumes about the contribution of the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force and underscores integration through communications. It showcases the role of warriors of all hues and technology that they vend and wield. The Chapter "Mission Goodwill" is a motivator, and "Sparrows among Tigers" and "Memetic Warfare" myth busters, that belie the LTTE's insidious propaganda, quoting as they do, revealing intercepts.

Recommended for all formation and unit libraries and inclusion in syllabi of examinations in the Armed Forces.

Major General Yatindra Pratap (Retd)

The European Union in World Politics. Edited by Rajendra K Jain, Hartmut Elsenhans & Amarjit S Narang (New Delhi : Radiant Publishers, 2006), 324p, Rs. 750.00, ISBN 81-7027-263-7.

The success of West European states in forging first economic and then political unity after the devastation of the Second World War, is an outstanding development in the post-War world and ranks alongside the emergence of erstwhile colonies as independent states in significance. Its success has encouraged the newly-independent countries to emulate them in their own regions and continents. The successful emergence of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the African Union testify to this trend.

In fifty years since the European Economic Community was constituted by a treaty signed in Rome in March 1957. The Economic Community has transformed itself into an influential player on the global stage. Its rapid expansion in the post-Cold War period coincided with the advent of economic globalisation. The consequential problems of persistent slow growth and high unemployment, have induced a mood of introspection. Members of the Union are engaged in a protracted debate on the future structure of the Union - its political cohesion and economic policy.

At the same time, the Union seeks to determine its role in global political and security system, which is intimately linked to its expansion to cover all of Europe and its assumption of per-eminent role on the periphery. Should it forge a role separate from, and independent of the United States or secure an interdependent partnership in managing global security?

While the European states debate the merits of a multipolar over a unipolar world, the rest of the world wants to know how multilateral or global concerns will be addressed. The endless debate in the World Trade Organisation on forging a global development strategy, does not encourage the belief that concerns of the developing countries will be addressed any time soon or at all.

By examining these and other important issues, the editors have contributed significantly to our understanding of the Union and its functioning.

Shri SK Bhutani, IFS (Retd)

Decentralisation and Local Governance in Developing Countries : A Comparative Perspective. Edited by Pranab Bardhan and Dilip Mookherjee (London : Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2006), 363p, \$ 35.00, ISBN 978-0-262-52454-4.

Both internationally as well as within the country, decentralisation of governance to local communities is a critically important political process. A lesson of development experience is that decentralisation helps deepen democracy and give poor people and local communities a stake in development efforts.

The case studies in this book cover eight countries with varying social and economic profiles: Bolivia, Brazil, South Africa, Uganda, China, India, Indonesia and Pakistan. Each study looks at the context, design, impact as well as the political economy of decentralisation, focusing on aspects like the motive of governments for decentralising e.g. ideology, strengthening of democracy; nature of decentralisation e.g. gradual vs. big bang approach; extent of devolution of funds, functionaries and powers.

Although structured according to a common framework, the country studies are self contained and complete in themselves. The authors are country experts with deep knowledge and insights into the subject, and the papers are generally well researched and analysed.

Of particular interest are two case studies relating to India. Shubham Chaudhuri's paper is an excellent primer on the history and key issues on decentralisation in India, though it seems slightly dated, covering only upto about 2003. The paper on West Bengal by the editors shows how the largely ideology driven decentralisation effort in Bengal was successful in making the system more responsive to the needs of the poor. Amongst the international case studies, worth mention is the case of Bolivia where according to the author Faguet "decentralisation put real power over public resources in the hands of ordinary citizens --- it changed the way the country is run." The broad conclusion that tends to emerge from almost all the cases is that despite considerable progress, there remains significant potential for further benefits from decentralisation.

While this volume is a significant contribution to the literature on decentralisation, it would be more of interest to development practitioners and those with a deep specialised interest in the subject than to the lay reader.

Dr Rajan Katoch, IAS (Retd)

Legal Safeguards for Defence Personnel. *Air Commodore Ranvir Kumar, AVSM (New Delhi : Manas Publications, 2007), 299p, Rs 495.00, ISBN : 81-7049-277-7.*

This book has been written with the aim of enlightening the armed forces community about their legal rights and privileges. The book is divided into fifteen chapters, which deal with the various privileges available to armed forces personnel/their families in matters of litigation, eviction of property and exemptions allowed by the Central and state governments. Chapter 8 is dedicated to privileges under the Arms Act, 1959, while Chapters 12 and 13 cover financial and employment schemes available for ex-servicemen.

The information contained in the book is of relevance to armed forces personnel. However, an introductory chapter on the privileges available to armed force personnel under the Army Act, 1950 (also the Air Force and the Navy Act), could make it more useful. This chapter could also contain a broad outline of the book. A few factual errors need to be corrected. For example, in Chapter V, while discussing free legal aid, the author has mentioned that servicemen and ex-servicemen whose annual income is below Rs 12000/- are entitled to free legal aid. In reality, they have no 'special' right of free legal aid under the governmental scheme. The author is also incorrect when he mentions (p. 65) that military personnel have the privilege of choice of court for trial under the Criminal Procedure Code (Cr PC). The provision contained in Section 475 of the Cr PC empowers a commanding officer to decide whether a military accused be tried by a regular Criminal Court or by a Court-martial.

There are far too many typographical errors in the book which need to be corrected. Also, the lay reader may find the legal terminology and some long-winded sentences difficult to understand. Some cases mentioned at the end of chapters are no longer of any relevance and some cross-references in the text (pp. 94, 96, 128) are incorrect.

Wing Commander UC Jha (Refd)

Thar : A Living Desert. *By Brigadier Hardeep Singh Narang (New Delhi : The Spirit of India Publishers, 2004), 288p, Rs. 2997.00, ISBN 81-902508-0-9*

Thar: A Living Desert by Brigadier Hardeep Singh Narang is an excellent album of the arid Thar Desert, with extremely well placed and appropriate quotations from Satya Sai Baba.

The Thar Desert is the world's seventh largest desert and is without doubt, the most inhospitable eco region in the Indo-Pacific

Region. However, 4000-5000 years ago, this area supported what is considered to be the World's oldest civilisation of Mohenjodaro and Harappa.

This large eco region lies to the West of the Aravalli Mountain Range in the North-Western Region and includes the deserts that cover portions of the Indian states of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Punjab as well as the Punjab and Sind in Pakistan

The Thar probably, is the World's most densely populated desert. Grazing of livestock, mostly sheep and goats is intensive, affecting soil fertility and destroying native vegetation. Many palatable perennial species are being replaced by inedible annual species, thus changing the vegetation composition and the eco system dynamics. Availability of water since the completion of the Indira Gandhi Canal Scheme has provided irrigation water to the once non-arable desert, thus attracting farmers to the area. Salt pans for commercial salt production will have serious impact on Sambhar Lake in Rajasthan. Together with recent climatic changes these pressures combine to degrade and destroy the fragile eco system.

Typically a Coffee Table Book, no doubt is highly illustrated with photographs and other illustrative materials. Somehow, in 'Thar: the Living Desert', the author has missed an excellent opportunity of getting the optimum from the excellent photographs. Far more value could have been added to the book if some good maps and/or sketches could have been included to co-relate the photographs with some brief descriptions. Some well known historical anecdotes relating to certain places photographed in the book such as the Kishangarh Fort or Ghatauru, would have made it more interesting.

On the whole a good reference book which draws the attention of tourists.

The book has an excellent foreword written by General N C Vij, PVSM, UYSM, VSM (Retd), ex Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Army Staff.

Lieutenant General Shankar Prasad, PVSM, VSM (Retd)

History of the Corps of Signals, Volume I : Early Times to Outbreak Second World War (1939). By Brigadier T Barreto (New Delhi : The Corps of Signals Association, 2006), 288p, Price not Indicated, ISBN-NA.

The book was first published in 1975. Regrettably the author was not given credit for the sterling work. The anomaly has been corrected by

the Signal Officer-in-Chief in the preface to the present volume where he has acknowledged the outstanding contribution of Brigadier Barreto in documenting the Corps History.

The author is a highly distinguished, illustrious veteran of the Corps of Signals. The book is well researched and pioneering effort towards covering the History of Signalling from early times to the outbreak of World War II in 1939. He starts with ancient methods of signalling, like use of human voice, drums or tom toms of Africa, bell by the Chinese, conch shells in Mahabharata, bugle by the Romans, fire signals by Hanibal at the siege of Syracuse, foot and dispatch riders by Caesar in 54 BC. The reader is then taken to the Semaphore Era at the end of 18th Century and introduction of telegraphy in 19th Century. Significant military incidents have been included to arouse interest about the hardship and achievements of the signallars which led to their emergence and development as an independent Corps in the Army. For example, role of 'communications' in the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 (First War of Indian Independence) has been covered well.

In 1872, the War Office assigned the duty of imparting instructions in signalling and telegraphy to Royal Engineers. Thereafter in 1888, Central Schools of Signlling were established at Kasauli and Poona. Training was in heliograph, lamp and small flag using Morse Code to which Semaphore signalling was added. First issue of telephones was made to units in 1906 and by 1911 the telephone equipment was issued upto brigade level. The author takes the reader through the 'memorable' Rajoia Manoeuvres held in 1908 in which extensive use of telephones was made and Deoband Manoeuvres of 1918 in which they were tried out on a large scale. The birth of the Corps in 1911 as a separate entity has been covered in detail. The Abor Expedition of 1911-12 brings out the integration of helio and cable communications and the cooperation of India Telegraph Department to Signals in building cable routes.

Commencement of World War I in 1914, provided the Signallars experience of the war, and linemen came for special praise for their coolness and skill while forming part of the Indian Expeditionary Force 'A'. Similar performance during the Second battle of Ypres helped them to prove their merit, under extremely adverse weather and terrain, and earn appreciation from the Corps Commander in his "Farewell Order". Phase 1 (1914-1916) covers the initial successful operations against Turks in muddy terrain and extreme climatic conditions in which more than half of the manpower was disabled by sickness and casualties. The write up amply illustrates the heroic manner in which Signals earned laurels and gallantry awards in four years long War in Mesopotamia.

Signal Service won a lot of laurels again, for the excellent manner in which communications were maintained throughout the operations in East Africa (1914-1917). The story of 'Z' company is an example of how a "fortuitous collection of different faces with none having previous experience of the Signal Service, each not knowing the language of the other, still faced hardship and dangers of war together as a team with a feeling of 'pride and comradeship'. The Signallars won a large number of awards in World War I, across numerous battlefields, details of which are given in the chapter on Miscellaneous Operations 1914-1920.

The author covers in detail the reorganisation of Signals after World War I. In 1920, the designation of Signal was changed to Indian Corps of Signals, as per the latest Indian Army Act Rules and India was divided into Four Commands, with Chief Signal Officer at the helm to guide and control the 'Signals' affairs. Indianisation of the Signals started in 1928 and Major General SH Powell, CB was appointed the first Colonel Commandant in 1936. Princess Royal was made the Colonel-in Chief of the Indian Signal Corps.

The operations against tribesmen in Waziristan and North West Frontier (1936-37) and build up of communication infrastructure in extremely difficult terrain and hostile environment have been covered in detail. The performances of Signals against rebellions in Punjab (1919), Afridi and Red Shirt Rebellion (1930-31), and Burmese Rebellion of 1930 have been well commended. The text also includes the appreciation of Corps of Signals' performance in rescue operations of Quetta Earthquake victims in 1935, when complete civilian communication set up was destroyed.

The book is extremely professional with full extracts from the diaries of individuals, recorded during the operations, and from the war diaries of units. A large number of interesting anecdotes makes the book a happy reading. It is recommended as a Reference Book for the scholars of Military History in all training institutions and for libraries of all Signals units and formations.

Lieutenant General SL Mehrotra (Retd)

Encyclopedia of North-East India Vol 1-5. By Colonel Ved Prakash (New Delhi : Atlantic, 2007), Rs. 4750.00, 2338p, ISBN 81-269-0708-8.

Colonel Ved Prakash has come out with a prodigious effort in presenting these five volumes of the Northeast. He has put in an enormous effort and must be complimented on the sheer hardwork that he has put in. The five volumes have a wealth of knowledge of the seven states of the Northeast and is a fine contribution to the literature of the Northeast.

The books must be read by any student who is starting out to understand the Northeast. He excels in the chapters on the different tribes, their culture and their way of life.

It is when he enters the field of the different insurgent movements; that a comprehensive picture of the causes of the different movements has not been analysed. Unfortunately, the Indian Government has failed on this front in tackling all the insurgent movements in this country. In each of the insurgent movements, the party in power in Delhi had its own agenda in tackling the movements. The real causes of each of the insurgent movements were never analysed and countermeasures taken accordingly. Professional officers were sidelined when they pointed out the main cause of each insurgent movement and their advice went unheeded. These aspects have not been elaborated by the author.

Corruption by the unholy nexus of the politician, the bureaucrat and the businessmen, generally cronies of the political leadership, has been one of the major causes of all the insurgent movements of the Northeast. This aspect has not been covered. Also, the protection accorded to the illegal immigrant from erstwhile East Pakistan and later Bangladesh, by the party in power in the centre has also not been examined in detail.

The five volumes are otherwise an excellent addition to the literature of the Northeast. The author deserves the appreciation of all students of the Northeast.

Shri EN Ram Mohan, IPS (Retd)

Partition and The South Asian Diaspora: Extending the Subcontinent. By Papiya Ghosh (New Delhi : Routledge, 2007), 285p, Rs. 650.00, ISBN 0-415-42409-7.

The partition of India is one of the greatest tragedies in human history. It still persists in the lives of the migrants. Over the past several decades, numerous scholars have focussed on history of post-partition states of South Asia with different dimensions of its enduring legacies. This significant work by Papiya Ghosh, Professor of History at Patna University, seeks to widen partition studies by looking at an unwritten strand of the subcontinental partition diaspora that folded into the South Asian diaspora, spread over a period of time. The author has discussed the trauma of partition in an increasingly transnational context.

The book covers six decades to emphasise the edge between nations, diaspora and region. The study also re-maps insight from partition, refugees, diaspora and transitional peace studies. The first

part covers details of Biharis negotiating and claiming Pakistan in the two Muhajir formations, one in the east and the other in the west. The second part looks at the post-eighties years to show partition as a major reference point, both in installing and resisting Hindutva, as well as in recasting the South Asian region diaspora beyond the politics of religion.

The book carries three main themes: retrieval of the Muhajir voices and their critique of the two-nation theory; playing out the remains of partition in the diaspora and reconfiguration of the subcontinent beyond partition that is in process. Author has used government and private archives, refugee camp narratives, family and organisational histories, diasporic mediations, literature and web postings as resources.

Despite its intricate language, the book is valuable for those interested in South Asian studies, history, political science, sociology, refugees and peace studies.

Smita, Research Scholar, South Asian Studies Division, JNU