

Short Reviews of Recent Books

Emerging Asian Nuclear Environment: Implications for India.

Edited by Arvind Gupta and KD Kapur, Foreword by Anil Kakodkar (New Delhi, Lancer's Books in association with Indian Pugwash Society, 2012), pp.. 432, Price Rs.895/-, ISBN-9788170951247.

The book provides a comprehensive analysis of the diverse nuclear challenges and issues that Asia is currently facing. The book has been laid out in eleven chapters. Seven eminent scholars, namely, Dr Arvind Gupta, Professor KD Kapur, Dr Ch. Viyanna Sastry, Samuel C Rajiv, Dr Salvin Paul, PK Sundram and Kapil Dhanraj Patil have analysed the complex subject in a systematic manner.

While there are many books dealing with each aspect separately, there are very few that have attempted to tackle such a vast subject in a single book. The various aspects covered are; evolution of the nuclear non proliferation regime; transition from non-proliferation to counter proliferation; the new global nuclear agenda; Pakistan's role in the emerging Asian nuclear order; China's nuclear and missile programme with a focus on China's proliferation record and China-Pakistan nuclear focus; Japan's nuclear option and the East Asian politics; North Korea's nuclear and missile programme, and its impact on the future of Japan's nuclear policies; Iran's alleged pursuit of nuclear weapons; nuclear terrorism and nuclear security; nuclear energy renaissance; and India's nuclear programme, particularly the bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements with various countries after the NSG waiver.

While it is essentially historical, the scholars have analysed these events from an Indian perspective and have expressed their opinions in a clear and easy to comprehend manner. The salient aspects that stand out are the masterly coverage of the intricacies of the diverse nuclear challenges and the manner in which they influence India's security such as Pakistan's nuclear proliferation record, nuclear terrorism, nuclear security and the role of China in these new equations.

The contents of the book would interest a wide ranging audience; particularly the diplomatic community and the policy makers.

Colonel GG Pamidi

Conflict in Jammu & Kashmir: Impact On Polity, Society And Economy. Edited by VR Raghavan; (Published by Centre for Security Analysis Chennai, India) pp..288 Rs 850, ISBN : 978-93-81411-21-6

The book under review contains a number of papers on various facets of conflict in J&K. These papers were presented in a conference organised by the Centre for Security Analysis (CSA). The book is professionally edited. The editor claims that "over the years the original causes have invariably become less silent as the insurgency evolved. Its consequences have become causes for continuing conflict." These causes have become drivers of the conflict.

The authors have covered the historical background of the conflict to include the events leading to accession of the State to India, formulation and status of Article 370, agitation in Jammu for full accession and consequent provocation to the people in Kashmir to look for alternatives and genesis of the present conflict and its consequences. Circumstances leading to induction of Pakistani and Afghan terrorists in the valley and consequent marginalisation of local militants and alienation of the Kashmiri people have been discussed and it has been concluded that Pakistan's strategy of bleeding India through thousand cuts has failed.

It has been recalled that, in 2008, the valley had erupted over a 'fiction sold by separatists, media and main stream parties that the land allotted to Shri Amar Nath Shrine Board was aimed at constructing settlements for Hindus to undermine the Muslim majority character of Kashmir'. "Neither was the land allotted nor were the concrete construction to be undertaken". Similarly, Hindu communal elements sold a 'counter fiction'. The resultant violence, communal flares ups, economical blockade and 'Muzafarabad Chalo' calls have left a deep scar on the minds of the people.

Finally, the authors have also identified a few positives of the conflict. According to them the conflict has helped in 'mainstreaming of the people of the State. Many Kashmiri Muslims send their children outside the valley for the purpose of education and career building. Kashmiri Muslims were traditionally reluctant to move out of the Valley. The forced migration turned out to be a blessing in disguise for them. They found better avenues and opportunities for

their skills. Majority of them have carved out a place for themselves outside Kashmir.

The authors have been reluctant to highlight the role played by the huge amount of unaccounted for money which has poured in Kashmir from all sorts of sources. As a matter of fact this money has turned the conflict into an industry. This is a major consequence that has become the driver of the conflict.

Brigadier Virendra Saxena (Retd)

Thirty Years on the North - West Frontier: Recollections of a Frontiersman. By Leslie Mallam (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp..247, Rs 895.00, ISBN: 9780199063031.

Colonel Mallam's book gives the reader an understanding of life on the North-West Frontier between the World Wars and the partition of the Indian sub-continent. The narrative however is basically a memoir of Colonel Mallam's life before, during and after his service on the North West Frontier.

The book basically gives an account of the authors experiences in dealing with the tribes who inhabit the areas of the North-West Frontier of what is now Pakistan. It however also brings into focus the fact that no. government before Pakistan's independence or thereafter has had the foresight to integrate these tribes into the framework of the State. As a consequence, successive governments in Pakistan have failed to foresee the dangers of allowing these tribes to remain outside the pale of its laws and not fully within its administrative control.

Colonel Mallam does tell us of his efforts, as a political officer, to convince his superiors to start the process of integration but that his endeavours were cut short in 1947 when the British left the sub-continent.

The book relates to a past that is far from the present situation in the region but concludes that unless education, social and political development of the tribes takes place, the tensions between tribal areas and the Government of Pakistan will continue.

Major General Ian Cardozo, AVSM, SM (Retd)

Global Justice: Critical Perspectives. Edited by Sebastiano Maffettone & Aakash Singh Rathore (New Delhi: Routledge, 2012), pp .. 208, Rs 595, ISBN 9780415535052.

Sebastiano Maffettone and Akash Singh Rathore, the two Editors have brought out this volume of thought provoking essays by eminent thinkers on the subject of global justice. While the global justice debate has been ongoing for some forty years, this volume aspires to contribute to the debate in two ways. In Part-I, it seeks to introduce the major issues reflected in the works of John Rawls from 1950 to 1993. These publications include – A Theory of Justice, The Law of Peoples & Political Liberalism. In Part II, book makes a critical observation by exposing international ‘participation deficit’ and ‘parochialism’.

A catalyst for global justice debate was Peter Singer’s path breaking paper – ‘Famine, Affluence and Morality’. Singer was consumed by the famine in East Pakistan or as he puts it East Bengal / Bengal and hence questioned the moral obligation of helping the distressed. It may be mentioned that it was due to poor international understanding in 1971 of millions of refugees pouring in its territory from East Pakistan that forced a war upon India.

Nagel on the other hand points out that while morality may stretch beyond borders, global justice would require global basic infrastructures otherwise it is a chimera. Thomas Pogge circumvents the arguments of Nagel and radicalizes Singer’s demands. Pogge argues that the present system of international relations is rigged and the beneficiaries are the developed nations at the expense of the global poor, who for example are- obliged to accept the normative authority of - World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Amartya Sen breaks away from John Rawls with specific references to institutionalism and talks about *nyaya, niti & matsyanyaya*. Neera Chandhoke examines the notion of redistribution at global level. Rathore suggests that the global justice debate is not merely parochial (mainly Anglo- American) but out of touch with realities. Finally, Maffettone presents the liberal political theory of John Rawls that functions inclusively towards- post colonial concerns. Colloquially speaking, it may be said that the book is literally food for thought where erudite thinkers speak at length about the viability and morality of the haves helping out the have-nots.

Major General Ashok Joshi, VSM (Retd)

Jihad on Two Fronts: South Asia's Unfolding Drama. By Dilip Hiro (*Harper Collins Publishers India, 2011*), pp..443, Rs 699, ISBN 9789350291696.

Beginning quaintly from a visit to Sufi shrines of Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi, Dilip Hiro sets out to cover in rather ambitious vein the ideological linkages of Sufism in India with that in Pakistan, spreading westward to Central Asia, its impact on the Rishi order in Kashmir and its present day relevance in withstanding the onslaught of orthodox Salafi Wahabi Islam, especially in Pakistan.

The author argues in this book that interrelated jihadist movements in Afghanistan and Pakistan pose a serious threat to the Pakistani state and have even infected India, through the ideological contamination and penetration of outfits like the Indian Mujahideen. Using the strategem of eye-catching sub-headings Hiro narrates the history of recent developments in the region, reiterating mostly what is conventional wisdom on how the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was utilised by the Pakistani dictator, Zia ul Haq to project Pakistan's credentials as a frontline state, how the Taliban were spawned by the ISI, how ISI grew from strength to strength, using a new breed of non-state actors to foment terrorism in an already disaffected Kashmir. In between, in what seems a somewhat discordant interlude, Hiro suddenly switches to the travails of Indian muslims against Hindu revivalism, touching on the communal violence in India, especially the Gujarat riots and even the Babri mosque demolition.

Important developments of the era are enumerated though sometimes failing to establish logical co-relation between events. Hiro wants to let his readers know that he has kept abreast of the latest sensational incidents like the Mehran Naval base intrusion by islamic terrorists and the killing of journalist Saleem Shehzad. The intention seems to be to somehow connect all that happened, especially after the trauma of 9/11 till the rise of the Tehrik e Taliban (TTP). In the process, he offers opinions on matters of geo-strategic import pertaining to policies of major powers active in the region- viz the USA and China which do not necessarily follow from the sequence of narration.

While written in a racy style, the book does not add substantially to existing knowledge on the subject. However, it

does provoke analysts in the strategic community to ponder on the likely portends which may confront the region as the US/ISAF withdrawal looms.

Shri R Banerji

Afghanistan Revisited: The Brahmana Hindu Shahis of Afghanistan and the Punjab (c. 840-1026 CE). By RT Mohan, (New Delhi, General Mohyal Sabha Foundation, 2012), pp.. 207, Price Rs. 300/-, ISBN N.A.

As the name suggests, the book traces the history of the Hindu Shahi dynasties of North West India and Afghanistan over a crucial period of two centuries during the medieval era. This was the period that saw the rise and spread of the monotheistic doctrine of Islam throughout Central Asia and the Hindu Kush into South Asia. The author traces the history and ethnicity of the last important Hindu kingdoms that held sway in Afghanistan and undivided Punjab till they were ultimately decimated by the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni.

The book is significant in shedding light on an epoch of Indian history obscured by the successive writings of successive Islamic and colonial historians who, for reasons of their own, tended to deliberately gloss over the events that preceded the political ascendancy of Islam in South Asia.

The author describes the times of the Hindu-Shahis and covers, chapter-wise, the various rulers who made up the dynasties. There are four appendices and an epilogue. These discuss various important inscriptions and coins, while the epilogue focuses on the ethnicity of the Hindu-Shahis and links them to the Mohyal Brahmin clans of North India. The Mohyals, long known as the fighting Brahmins, have a long and proud history of military service, more in consonance with the Kshatriyas rather than the Brahmanical varna. The seven principal exogamous families are: Datta, Vaid, Bali, Chhibber, Mohan, Bamwal or Bhimwal, and Lawa. One of the most astounding pieces of ancient Mohyal folklore is their association with the armies of the Holy Prophet of Islam in Seventh Century Arabia, where they are said to have fought under the banner of Amir Mukhtar and helped avenge the death of the Prophet's grandson, Imam Hussain, by razing the fort of Kufa in 686 CE.

Although the author of this work is not an academician he