Indian Foreign Affairs Journal Vol. 10, No. 4, October–December 2015, 383-404

BOOK REVIEW

Kate Sullivan, ***Competing Visions of India in World Politics: India's Rise Beyond the West*** (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), Pages: 224, Price: £58.00

India's international status has been rising over the last two decades at the back of its growing economic and military power. India has, simultaneously, tried to engage with the big powers and its long-standing friends amongst the developing world. Therefore, it's role in world politics is being increasingly debated. Perceptions about India are formed based on mostly Western viewpoints, and perceptions of other important stakeholders rarely receive attention. Different countries have different perspectives on India based on issues that affect them directly. However, the less articulated and divergent views are sometimes overlooked by Indian elites. It is in this context that the book "Competing Visions of India and World Politics: India's Rise Beyond the West", edited by Kate Sullivan, consisting of chapters by ten other experts with country and regional specialisation of non-Western countries, makes a valuable contribution to understanding how other important countries and regions view India through the prism of specific issues important to them. It is a significant attempt and should be appreciated.

Kate Sullivan underlines three central objectives in bringing out this volume: to see greater diversity in contemporary readings on India's global role; to assess the extent to which external perspectives on India match or are discordant with its projection of self as a global power; and to further develop understanding of contemporary international society as it is experienced, understood and shaped by core "non-Western global stakeholders". The countries chosen for their perspectives are all important in their own right. The volume mainly contains official and governmental perspective of the countries concerned. The issue selected for focus in each chapter reveals some aspect of both, the values and interests, that affect the perspective on India that the respective countries have.

Examining from the theoretical construct of "compliance and resistance", the author attributes India's demonstrated behaviour of simultaneously seeking recognition from countries at different levels of power hierarchy as typical behaviour of a rising power. On some issues, Indian elites project Indian aspirations and behaviour in a manner distinct from the behaviour of great

powers of the 20th century, in normative terms. Other views of self include a "synthesizing power" aimed at bridging global divides, a norm setter by example, and an alternative power.

The success of Indian democracy amidst its diversity and pluralism, its policy of non-interference in the affairs of other states, and non-use of coercive power, quite obviously place India in a unique position as an exemplar. However, India's quest for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and its de-facto nuclear status does create some doubt in the minds of outsiders whether it is actually an "alternative power".

Nicola Horsburgh examines the Chinese view of a nuclear India covering the period since India's Peace Nuclear Explosion (PNE) in 1974 until the special exemption granted by Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in 2008. China's reaction to the PNE and the 1998 tests were dictated by apprehensions of its sole regional nuclear status being challenged and perhaps as a long-term security challenge rather than as an altered threat perception in the short term. To address the security challenge, it secretly provided missile and nuclear technologies to Pakistan. It was India's rationale for the 1998 tests that enraged China rather than the tests themselves. Notwithstanding the criticism, China did not stop engaging with India. It did try to sabotage the 2008 Nuclear Suppliers Group waiver but finally allowed it to be passed since it did not want to be seen standing alone in resistance to India and the US. India-China relations are of course much more complex. However, the nuclear issue has certainly altered China's perception of India's potential.

Kobayashi looks at the Japanese perception of India from their respective positions in the climate change negotiations. While maintaining that improved India-US relations, strained Japan-China ties, and common interest in economic and other spheres are important, the author opines that Japan continues to be sensitive about nuclear non-proliferation due to its "nuclear identity" as the only victim of nuclear attacks. The differences in approach to climate change issues continue to persist despite overall improvement in the relationship.

Chubb examines South Korean perceptions of India through its own middle power identity and its historically cautious approach to great powers. South Korea's emphasis on multi-lateral institution building and its efforts to develop stronger ties with other middle powers is meant to diversify its strategic options. Both countries share common values and India's consistent advocacy of universal disarmament and non-proliferation has helped in removing distrust between the two countries. The economic relationship between India and South Korea has grown steadily and both countries are now looking at

developing closer strategic partnership also.

Lee's analysis of South Africa's views about India highlights the influence of historical factors, and points out India's consistent and strong support to the nationalist movement in South Africa against Apartheid. Nevertheless, the bonds have been tested by distance, cold war politics, and broader context of power equations. The Indo-South African relationship has grown with both countries sharing membership of multilateral organisations like IBSA, BRICS and BASIC. He expects the relations to grow further.

Harris and Vittorini have examined the African views about India through the lens of developmental cooperation. Western engagement with Africa is seen as liberal and interventionist and that of China as business-oriented and non-interventionist. Indian engagement lies somewhere in between. India is looked upon favourably in comparison to China in terms of its business practices. India's development cooperation with Africa comes in many forms but lines of credit, training and capacity building programmes driven by local demands are more popular. While not ignoring its self-interest, in most cases, India undertakes these activities to meet the genuine needs of African countries. Many countries in Africa, therefore, view India's development cooperation as not merely interest based but as also based on values.

The volume contains contrasting perspectives about India from Latin America. Brazil perceives India as its "Eastern Brother" and a key partner in international trade negotiations. The relationship started developing meaningfully only in the latter half of 1990s as both were keen to create a space for themselves in a unipolar world. Both see each other as reliable diplomatic partners in BRICS, IBSA and G20 groupings and seek membership in an expanded UNSC in future. Due to shared long-term interests, and similar positions on trade issues as well as a common identity as emerging powers, the relationship is likely to sustain during coming years. Mexico does not buy into India's self-perception of being an "exemplary and an alternative power". India does not figure very high in Mexican political discourse perhaps, because of the low level of political and academic interactions between the two countries. Mexico does not support expansion of the UNSC. It did not take kindly to the 1998 nuclear tests by India. These two issues have, perhaps, been the main obstacles to the bilateral relationship, despite broad similarity in aspirations albeit distinctive approaches to the realisation of these aspirations.

Adib-Moghaddam traces the contours of India-Iran relationship from a historical and cultural perspective. India-Iran relations were affected by the geo-politics of the Cold War and later, the Islam centric focus of the new rulers after the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Although there was cooperation on

the issue of Afghanistan before 2001, it was the Iranian President Khatami's visit to India in 2003 and the signing of the "New Delhi Declaration" that helped improve bilateral relations. Strained US-Iran relations did cast some shadow over India's relationship with Iran. Iran's offer to involve India in large infrastructure projects and the signing of the deal on Chabahar Port augur well for the future of the bilateral relationship.

The ongoing conflict has created divergence of opinion about India in Syria. The regime has appreciated India's policy of non-intervention by outside powers in the conflict in Syria, even ignoring the risk of losing some goodwill amongst the Arab regimes. The opposition groups on the other hand do not consider India as important enough to engage with. Since the conflict has now become sectarian in nature, India perhaps wishes to insulate Indian society from any negative domestic impact of sectarian conflict.

A lot can be written about the longstanding India-Russia relationship. However, Kuhrt's analysis is focussed on "Russian views of India in the context of Afghanistan". Russia and India have cooperated on the Afghanistan issue in the past and share similar concerns regarding the future of Afghanistan. However, Russia has perhaps developed suspicions about long-term US policies in the region and India's role in US plans. The author has also opined that to a large extent, relations with India will depend on Russia's relations with both China and the West.

Overall, views about the extent of India's global influence vary widely amongst the countries examined. While in some cases, external perspectives match India's own perceptions about self, in other cases there is variance. There is a feeling in some countries that India in some ways behaves like the existing powers but in each of the chapters, it is suggested that there is something distinctive about India as a global player. Careful reading of the book also suggests that most of the countries examined, see opportunities in developing relationship with India. This conclusion should provide some comfort to the Indian policy makers.

Over all, the volume is well structured and has much to offer to the discerning reader.

RUMEL DAHIYA
Deputy Director General
Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

★★★

P. J. S. Sandhu (ed.), ***1962: A View from the Other Side of the Hill*****,** (New Delhi, VIJ Books, 2015), Pages: 228, Price: 900.00

Utterly demoralizing as the 1962 Chinese armed attack on India was for us ('traumatic' is the word we invariably use to describe it), and self-incriminating as Indian analyses have been about the event, there is every need – in the interests of objective historical record – for a wider understanding of why the invasion occurred, for the overdue exorcism of at least some of our own demons - to have an idea of how the brief armed conflict was seen from the Chinese side.

The volume under review attempts to fulfil this requirement, although as the Director of the USI says in his Foreword, "much more work needs to be done to come out with a more comprehensive history of those fateful years…" (p.x). Even so, this compilation is a useful primer as much for our army strategists as it is for our political leaders, diplomats, analysts from the media, political commentators, and scholars and students of international politics / relations. This is so not merely for its insights into the Chinese strategic mind but also as a cathartic recognition of our own failings.

The study's bibliography gives its sources, among which the most-quoted are two Chinese documents about the war: *A History of the Counter-Attack War in Self-Defence along the Sino-Indian Border* (Military Science Publications, Beijing 1994); and *Snows of the Himalaya Mountains, the True Record of the China-India War* (Taiyuan 1991). It will be recalled that both Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping characterized the 1962 Chinese action as "teaching India a lesson", and having done so through a devastatingly effective military campaign, it declared a unilateral cease-fire and withdrew its forces to the borders claimed by China. The volume under review provides the background to this tragedy by pointing to the factors as seen by both the Indian and the Chinese sides, which resulted in the two countries misinterpreting their motivations over a period of time, and blundering into an incendiary confrontation which China ended up using to its blatant advantage.

The Introduction to the book laments our lack of strategic planning and preparedness and questions our ability at that time. This is notwithstanding the fact that our armed forces, at the time of our Independence, were a superb fighting outfit; and that in the years since then, we had both the time and the opportunity to take it to greater heights in order to meet future contingencies. It poses the rhetorical question: "…are we confident of taking on another act of belligerence by China?" (p.xii). The unspoken answer

being in the negative makes the telling point that we still have much to learn from our defeat in 1962.

Misperceptions, according to the study, began with our needlessly "soft" approach towards China's annexation of Tibet in 1950. Such an approach was dictated – on the Indian side more than on the Chinese – by our euphoric rendering of India-China relations during the 1949–1959 decade. Both bilaterally and at the United Nations, we refrained from placing China in the dock for its aggression in Tibet; and compounded our folly by failing to read Chinese intentions following its Tibet adventure. On its part, China cleverly avoided substantive discussions with us, lulling us into complacency by pointing to the then excellent state of bilateral relations, and persuading us that differences between the two countries, if any, could be sorted out in due course. One measure of Chinese duplicity was in the innumerable exchanges of high-level visits, meetings, *aide memoires*, messages, and so on that the two countries indulged in, quite unaware – at least on the Indian side – that the tide was building up into a potential tsunami.

One might note at this stage that the Chinese, who have a keen appreciation of their classics – as much as we have of our *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, although our recall is perhaps with less contemporary impact – acted in accordance with one of their so-called *Thirty Six Stratagems*, a manual of deceptive tactics whose origins are unknown but which are said to have been codified during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). These stratagems, condensed into short pithy sayings include, among others, *"xiao li cang dao":* literally translated, this means "within smile hide knife"; that is, charm the enemy and then attack – a stratagem that appears to have been skilfully applied by China in the months preceding their 1962 invasion of India.

The book proceeds to analyse the shortcomings of our defensive posture, especially in the area of strategic deployments. Among other things, the so-called "forward policy" of our Government in the months immediately preceding the 1962 conflict, called for the ground-level assertion of our territorial claims by troop movements, the establishment of sensitive border posts and, generally speaking, a more muscular strategic stance *vis-à-vis* China. Decisions were taken to modify brigade deployments which, the study reveals, "dislocated the complex concept of operations for a coordinated defensive battle as visualised by the Army HQ and the HQ Eastern Command. The effect of this change was to prove disastrous later" (p. 41).

To begin with, however, the Chinese were "restrained" in the face of our "forward policy", and it is interesting to note that their advice to their army

was "never to make any concession; try your best to avoid bloodshed; be in interlocking positions like dog's teeth; be prepared to be in a state of armed co-existence for a long period" (p.50). By mid-October 1962, however, Chinese plans had changed dramatically, and preparations for a general offensive culminated in the attack on 20th October 1962 in both the sector. According to Chinese assessments "the attacking troops had a superiority of 10:1 in numbers and 7:1 in fire power" (p.53) – a significant admission in the sense that it revealed the extent to which the Chinese, while professing friendship and innocence, had prepared for the invasion.

From here on, the study goes into the details of various battles, which need not figure in this review but which hold important lessons for our military strategists. Suffice it to say, however, that the rapid disintegration of India's defence – indeed, at the end of some battles, there was no Indian survivor left to give an account – and the unexpectedly rapid advance of Chinese forces from the mountainous heights down to the lower regions of Indian territory underlined, among other things, two principal factors that influenced the outcome: first, Chinese political direction for its military action was far more decisive, pugnacious and relentless than the Indian; and second, having decided to act, the Chinese made the necessary preparations, before the conflict erupted. These included the acclimatization of troops to high-altitude warfare, adequate provision of supplies, elaborate ground reconnaissance, formulation of operational plans, air defence measures, and inculcation of confidence in the soldiers. These preparations were in marked contrast to the somewhat incoherent political and military activities that characterized the Indian response to the looming threat.

A primary Chinese objective, according to their sources, was "on winning the first battle of the war" (p.76). Implacable as the Chinese gambit was designed to be, Marshal Liu Bocheng, the Head of a Core Group in China's Central Military Affairs Commission, "outlined the strategy of concerted attacks by converging columns. Under this strategy, Indian positions were to be split into numerous segments and these were to be destroyed piecemeal" (p. 76). Indian military dispositions, according to Liu, resembled "a copperhead with the tail made of tin, a stiff back and a soft under-belly"; and the Chinese attack entailed "smashing the head, cutting off the tail, snapping at the waist and dissecting the belly" (p.76). Largely clueless, bereft of inspirational leadership, the vaunted courage of its troops hostage to all kinds of planning and operational deficiencies, short of supplies, devoid of air support, the Indian "copperhead" – which, given its impressive history, should have been lethal in nature – was reduced to a caricature. The Chinese might have wished to win the first battle of the war;

in the event, they speedily won the war itself.

The descriptions of the various important battles, especially in the western Ladakh and eastern Kameng sectors, give an idea of the confusion plaguing the Indian armed forces. (This failing is further emphasized in the several personal recollections that form the concluding section of the study between pages 165 and 188). These recollections resemble the wanderings of Alice in Blunderland. Recounting the battle of Namka Chu in the eastern sector, the study notes that the Chinese "had infiltrated through Indian positions…during the night as there were large gaps. They had thus occupied higher ground behind Indian defences and were attacking downhill. The Indian defenders were, thus, forced to turn around and face the attack" (p. 79). Indian communications were cut during the night, and the brigade in position was unable to communicate with any of its battalions. In the words of one participant, "the Brigade having lost both command and control could do little to influence the battle" (p. 80).

In describing the battles of Se La and Bomdi La, the study, goes on to make an especially trenchant comment on page 85.

> The majority of Indian officers and soldiers had developed a strong sense of fear towards Chinese forces and their fighting spirit had almost vanished. This created a situation (in the Chinese mind) that a further attack by the Chinese forces would crush the opposing army like dry weeds and rotten wood. Such was the feeling of confidence and elan of the Chinese troops on the eve of the battle.

Little wonder, then, that the Chinese faced hardly any tough opposition on the battlefield, as these crucial battles at Se La, Bomdi La, and an even more critical battle for Tawang, showed.

Indian troop withdrawals, while being as systematic as they could be in the circumstances, were plagued by inexplicable command deficiencies. A harrowing account in the book is about a Brigade Commander, following the debacle in our defence of the important hamlet of Walong (the bloodiest battle of all), and recognizing the indefensible position in which the Indian troops found themselves, recommended retreat. However, the Corps Commander – "an accomplice (of) the politicians and bureaucrats in the formulation of the (disastrous) 'forward policy'" (p. 101) – rejected the idea, and ended up condemning his troops to a hopeless fight till they were overwhelmed by the Chinese.

For domestic and international reasons, the Chinese had, at the planning stage itself, considered the advisability of a unilateral cease-fire and withdrawal. As the study points out on page 89, "by a unilateral cease-fire and withdrawal

they hoped to show to the world that they were principled and not aggressors". In other words, given India's high international reputation at the time, as compared to China's far less impressive one, it made sense for the Chinese to tell the world that the culprit in igniting the conflict was India, not China; and that China had no interest in prolonging it.

In a couple of other chapters, the study makes the point that notwithstanding India's shattered defence, it could have done better in theatres where its position was superior to the Chinese (see page 116). For example, in the Subansiri and Siang sectors, "the overall force ratio…was in India's favour and there was no reason why we could not have got the better of the Chinese…" This potential was, however, nullified by our shortcomings: among these was the lack of intelligence about the Chinese; delayed dispositions of Indian troops; frequent change of command and control; no planning to meet contingencies; and lack of air support. In brief, the higher direction of the war as well as a comprehensive strategy and operational planning were found grievously lacking. The study also comes to the conclusion that the Chinese air force "was neither allocated…nor deployed during the operations" (p.122), and thus posed no threat to India.

Besides noting the inferior quality of high-level political direction, prior strategic planning and supplies, and effective command and control, the study draws specific attention to some other important aspects of the 1962 debacle. First, why was our air power not brought into play in support of the army when this could have made a substantial difference to our defence? Second, why did our intelligence apparatus fail both in predicting the conflict and in foretelling its course? And third (this is more in terms of the future), what could be the role of our media - fledgling back in 1962 but far more judgmental now - in any future conflict? (p.xii). In detailing the story of our strategic collapse, the study lays the ground for a more critical dissection of our deficiencies not just as a self-flagellatory exercise but as the precursor of, one hopes, a truly improved political-bureaucratic-military defence machine.

Subsequent chapters deal with the effect that public opinion had upon India-China relations; and India's immediate post-World War II political and military ethos that had the overall effect, on the one hand, of enfeebling our military posture and preparedness, and on the other, of minimizing the Chinese threat. Equally important was the intelligence aspect which, during the years preceding the conflict, tended to be unreliable. The book ends with what amounts to the rueful conclusion that without (a) a proper appraisal of our strengths and weaknesses; (b) "a close working relationship between the political and military leadership" (p.162); (c) without adequate planning and

corresponding deployments; and (d) without a reform of the nation's higher defence organization, the outlook for our national defence is not sanguine. Indeed, the study concludes with the sobering, if not ominous, comment that "the prospects of another defeat, probably as disastrous as in '62, continue to stare at us" (p.159).

1962 is for us a sorry tale of what could have been but wasn't. Our armed forces have since gathered laurels in – to name only a few instances – the 1971 war for the liberation of Bangladesh, in the defence of Siachen, or in the recapture of Kargil, to say nothing of their sterling performance in United Nations peace-keeping operations around the world. In addition, they have acquitted themselves with honour in tasks entrusted to them – whether it is saving lives during natural and man-made disasters or in combating domestic insurgencies.

PRABHAKAR MENON
Former Ambassador of India to the Netherlands,
Ireland, Senegal, (the then) GDR and
Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN.

★★★

Rajiv Dogra, ***Where Borders Bleed: An Insider's Account of Indo-Pak Relations*****,** (New Delhi, Rupa, 2015), Pages: 288, Price: Rs 500.00

This book is an out of the ordinary read on the much discussed, debated and deliberated issue of Indo-Pak relations. A perusal of the book iterates the point that Indo-Pak relations have been suffering from what can be termed as "Obsession, Deceit and Hope". A reader would certainly come across the three distinctly running throughout the text. It is against this background that one can understand the nuances of the uneasy relationship between India and Pakistan.

To elaborate further, Pakistan's rival historical narrative is of "Obsession" with India. This obsession, as noted by the author, is of hatred and fear. The author quotes India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (p. 61) who in November 1957 wrote in one of his occasional letters to the chief ministers,

> Our world is a haunted one in which every country has its own special ghost to carry. For India it is Pakistan. No Government in that country had any policy except of fear and hatred of India and till that ceases the future is dark.

The other is of "Deceit". There are numerous instances mentioned in the book where deceit and deception have been the hallmarks of Pakistan's policy towards India. At one point in the book, the author while discussing the manipulations made by the erstwhile Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in tricking the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on the issue of choosing either Prisoners of Wars (PoW) or 5000 miles of captured Pakistani land, quotes Zulfiqar (when he was questioned by his daughter Benazir) about why he chose territory over PoW (p. 167),

> Prisoners are a human problem. The magnitude is increased when there are 93,000 of them. It would be inhuman for India to keep them indefinitely. And it will be a problem to keep on feeding and housing them. Territory, on the other hand, is not human problem. Territory can be assimilated. Prisoners cannot be...

"Bhutto was heartlessly right", writes the author (p. 167). Mrs Gandhi's trust was misplaced. This was one among such incidents during the 1971 Simla Summit when India was willing to take up the issues of occupied territories and PoW, in addition to solving long term problems, like Kashmir.

Thus, this book, as evident from the above narrative, apart from owing an intellectual debt to earlier works on Indo-Pak, is also a revelation. The revelations made by the author regarding his personal experience during his posting in Karachi, his talk about Pakistan with the young professionals in Delhi, and his extensive analysis on Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto are some points that spark curiosity in the reader's mind. For instance, the disturbing point that will make one question the contemporary young generation of India comes in Chapter 20 of the book. One is compelled to ponder over, and question, is the youth of India embarking on a path that has already been laid and travelled by the youth in Pakistan? Does hope, which the author incessantly pursues, have another chance if the future of India sounds aggressive in their understanding of its neighbour, which is more than six decades old?

Despite the intense negative responses from these young professionals, the author continues to give a counter-narrative to the crisis-ridden state. "The issue is more complicated. From the very beginning , the masses there have been content to be led because there is no middle class to protest and

articulate society's concerns", the author writes (p. 185) in a failed attempt to convince an already convinced audience. To argue in the same line as Dogra, an anti-Pakistan sentiment will not serve the purpose. The hardened hostilities of the youth of the country could prove to change the course of action that India has taken in the last six decades. Importantly, "India will be tempted to enforce its will". (p. 187)

Another point that makes the reader think, is the valid question that the author raises in the last chapter of the book. While talking about the partition that left between one to two million people dead and displaced 15 million others, he questions, "Why is the resentment limited to Punjab?" Elaborating his point, Dogra further writes (p. 259),

> The bitterness should have been equally intense in Bengal...And it is Bengal, rather than Punjab, which has always prided itself on its literary genius. Yet, the most moving accounts of the partition were written by people from both sides of divided Punjab-Saadat Hasan Manto's *'Toba Tek Singh'*, Amrita Pritam's *'Pinjar*', Bhisham Sahni's *'Tamas'* and Khushwant Singh's *'Train to Pakistan'*, to name just a few. Was Bengal insensitive to its suffering or was there another reason to its writer's block?

This question on the Bengal sensitivity towards the partition that ruthlessly dissected the syncretised culture of our society is a teaser to one's mind. Though there are several answers to this, the one given by the author is of statistical migration.

There are numerous questions raised throughout the book. Some have been answered by the author, and some remain unanswered, for the reader to think and find the answers for themselves.

With 31 chapters, the book's composition makes the reader go through a wide swathe of emotions while reading it. However, the emotional swing is certainly limited to Pakistani and Indian readers. Varying from anxiety to relief, empathy to indifference, disappointment to hope, the book starts with a chapter titled, *Prelude to Pakistan,* where the author questions the futility of partition and the political manoeuvrability of the leaders of the undivided sub-continent. The last chapter of the book, titled, *Chasing Hope*, looks forward to ways of coming together.

In between the first and the last chapter, one clearly finds the three expressions "Obsession, Deceit and Hope" prominently taking shape. There are junctures in the book where one gets a whiff of the wind of hope, amidst the harsh rays of obsession and deceit. One can see "Obsession" in chapters

(Chapter 1 to 17) on the partition of the subcontinent, the ever-boiling issue of Kashmir, and the separation of East Pakistan. This expression is best elaborated upon in Chapter 4, titled, *Give me Pakistan*. Chapters 18–29 discuss the deteriorating relationship between the two countries in the face of deceit and deception. The expression of "Deceit" is aptly expressed in the title of Chapter 18, *The Peril of Shaking Bhutto's Hand*, and in Chapter 28, *Cutting India down to Size*. The last Chapter, *Chasing Hope*, actually chases hope despite the past terror trails from across the border and the mounting evidence of institutional hatred preached in Pakistan.

Quoting conversation with a newly graduated Pakistani Naval officer, the author emphasises the institutional hatred endorsed in Pakistan. He writes (p. 19),

> When he found out I was from India, he enquired if there would ever be good relations between our two countries. I replied encouragingly and said that given the goodwill on both sides there would surely come a time when we would begin to live in peace as two such closely connected neighbours should. At this he stiffened...with innocence of youth he asked, 'Then what will happen to the oath that I took this evening?' ...Later I found out that a part of the oath for all newly commissioned defence officers of Pakistan calls upon them to engage in a jihad against India.

There are various chapters that include the author's experience while in office as the Consul General of India in Karachi, the commercial capital of Pakistan. In fact, most of the chapters include his account and experience. His work is certainly an addition to the knowledge base on Indo-Pak relations.

"Where Borders Bleed" is a quick and smooth read about the horrors of violence that accompanied the partition, the early period of post-partition Indo-Pak relations that were marred with mistrust and animosity, the complex and still burning issue of Kashmir, the Sino-Pakistan and Af-Pak relationship, the Washington-Islamabad marriage of convenience and more dangerously, the active sponsoring of terrorism as a long term instrument of state policy.

Lastly, a concluding line on "Hope": The Indo-Pak relation is always given another try. Every failed attempt to talk peace is followed by another. Picking up from a Pakistani student's innocent statement, "…we seek forgiveness", during a debate on nuclear tests by Pakistan in response to the Indian tests in 1998, the author suggests (p. 274), "If only the two nations could take a cue from that child and decide to forgive and forget the past".

With such crucial issues and the tumultuous relationship, this book is recommended for policy makers, journalists and the relentless seekers of peace between the two estranged and bitterly hostile neighbours.

AMBREEN AGHA
Research Assistant
Institute for Conflict Management,
New Delhi.

★★★

Rumel Dahiya and Udai Bhanu Singh (eds), ***Delhi Dialogue VII : ASEAN-India Shaping the Post-2015 Agenda*** (New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2015), Pages: xlvi + 204, Price: Rs. 995

This useful volume from IDSA brings together the speeches, presentations and papers delivered at the Seventh Delhi Dialogue, devoted to the theme of "ASEAN-India: Shaping the Post-2015 Agenda", held in New Delhi on 11 and 12 March 2015. Apart from the obvious importance of the theme itself, Delhi Dialogue VII assumes added political significance on account of the increased salience and impetus, which the India-ASEAN ties have acquired under the NDA Government.

Delhi Dialogue VII was preceded by the 12th India-ASEAN Summit and 9th East Asia Summit held at Nay Pyi Taw in Myanmar in November 2014, at which Prime Minister Narendra Modi had pledged to upgrade India's hitherto "Look East Policy" towards ASEAN to an "Act East Policy". In the past, such declarations have generally tended to remain at the level of rhetoric, with little or no follow-up action, virtually forgotten until the next scheduled meeting.

This time, however, India's expressed interest in strengthening relations with the ASEAN region was followed by a flurry of heightened diplomatic activities. During the last six months, President Pranab Mukherjee has visited Vietnam and External Affairs Minister Shushma Swaraj has visited Myanmar, Singapore and Vietnam. In turn, there have been high-level visits to India from Vietnam and Singapore. India and ASEAN signed a long awaited Agreement on Trade in Services and Investments in September 2014. In

January 2025, India established an independent Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta.

At the same time, ASEAN itself is moving towards closer integration and cooperation on the basis of an ASEAN Community, to be established at the end of this year, as the principal instrument for realising the objectives of its ASEAN Community Vision 2025. How does India fit in this scenario and what are the perspectives and prospects for the future development of India-ASEAN relations?

The ASEAN was established in 1967 at the height of the Cold War. Beginning essentially as a bulwark and ideological counter-balance to the spread of communism in South East Asia, ASEAN has adjusted well to the changing realities of the international situation. It has co-opted former adversaries such as Vietnam, as well as economic back-waters such as Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, into the organisation. It has moved away from its earlier posture of suspicion and antagonism towards China and created institutionalised structures of co-operation with China as well as with Japan and South Korea, the other economic power-houses in Asia. The creation of ASEAN Plus Three in 1997 was a watershed for the organisation, marking the shift to an era of closer economic co-operation and better integration of the economies of ASEAN as well as the "Plus Three".

The India-ASEAN relations got off to a slow start, largely because of the benign neglect, which characterised the approach of both sides in the years prior to the liberalisation of the Indian economy. India prioritised its linkages with the oil-exporting economies of West Asia and paid little attention to its Eastern neighbours beyond making the expected token references to the cultural and people-to-people links bequeathed by history. With the license-permit Raj constraining the Indian economy to a 'Hindu rate of growth', the ASEAN exhibited little interest in strengthening trade and economic linkages with India.

Relations moved on to a qualitative new track after the Indian reform process got under way in the early 1990s when Prime Minister Narasimha Rao initiated "Look East" as the policy paradigm to frame India's approach to ASEAN. India-ASEAN relations were progressively upgraded as India became a Sectoral Partner of ASEAN in 1992, a Dialogue Partner in 1996 and a Summit Level Partner at the Eighth ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh in 2002.

Since 2005, the ASEAN Plus Three Summits have been followed by the East Asia Summit meetings. The EAS is a "leaders led" forum for dialogue on broad strategic, geopolitical and economic issues aimed at promoting peace, security, stability and economic prosperity in the region. India participated in

the first EAS in Kuala Lumpur in 2005.

This progression reflects the increasing levels of trust and comfort between India and ASEAN, and has been mirrored in the parallel track of growing economic co-operation, trade, and investment; the landmark event marking the progress was the setting up of the ASEAN–India Free Trade Area (AIFTA), effective from 1 January 2010.

India hosted the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in New Delhi in December, 2012 to mark 20 years of its "Look East Policy" and ten years of its Summit level partnership with ASEAN. The India-ASEAN relationship was elevated to a Strategic Partnership and a Vision Statement for future cooperation was adopted.

The ASEAN is currently India's fourth largest trading partner. Two-way trade has registered an average increase of 22 per cent per annum over the past decade and was in excess of US$ 76 billion in 2013. India and ASEAN have set a trade target of US$ 100 billion to be achieved by 2015 and US$ 200 billion by 2020.

The Delhi Dialogue process began in 2009 as an India-ASEAN Track 1.5 platform bringing together State and non-State actors, including policy-makers, trade and business organisations, think tanks and academicians. The Seventh Edition, Delhi Dialogue VII, featured, for the first time, a dedicated Business Session focussing on "Make in India", industrial co-operation, and trade in services.

The volume under review is a handy compendium, tracing the path that relations between India and ASEAN have traversed, marking achievements and shortfalls, identifying issues as well as potential bottle-necks that may hold up progress in future. Further, the pronouncements and assessments on the subject are authoritative, informative as well as balanced, adding to their value as a road-map for the future.

In a thoughtful Keynote Address at the Inaugural Session of the Delhi Dialogue VII, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj emphasised, "enhancing connectivity between India and ASEAN in all its aspects, physical, institutional and people-to-people, is a key strategic priority" for India. This involves, among other projects, completion of the Trilateral Highway connecting Moreh in Manipur to Mae Sot in Thailand via Myanmar and the Kaladan Multimodal Transport Project, which will provide a road as well as riverine link between Mizoram and Myanmar; and the finalisation of the ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Co-operation Agreement. Further, the aim is to "transform the corridors of connectivity into corridors of economic cooperation" so as to achieve the ambitious targets set for trade and economic co-operation.

Enhancing physical connectivity with Myanmar through the North-Eastern States is admittedly a work in progress, which must contend with various territorial, security and engineering challenges. Probir De provides an overview of the present state of play with regard to road and rail connectivity and flags the financial issues involved in such infrastructure projects. When completed, these linkages will open up numerous cross-border possibilities for trade and investment and in particular, transform the economic profile of the North-Eastern States, which will become a vital link in the India-ASEAN trade and commerce.

The ASEAN's engagement with India and other non-ASEAN countries is predicated on the concept of "ASEAN Centrality", or the ASEAN being in the "driver's seat" in the emerging regional economic architecture. Senior Thai journalist and scholar, Kavi Chongkittavorn, argues that Russian and Chinese proposals on regional security are emerging as challenges to the various ASEAN-led frameworks and urges India to support and advocate ASEAN centrality in the EAS.

Many of the ASEAN countries are engaged in territorial and maritime boundary disputes with China over its assertion of sovereignty in the South China Sea. In this context, senior Vietnamese diplomat Nguyen Vu Tung suggests that the EAS should become the principal forum for addressing maritime security issues in South-East Asia. The wheel has indeed come full circle with some ASEAN countries seeing India as a diplomatic counterpoise to an increasingly assertive China.

India has signed Security Co-operation Agreements with Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Cambodia and has stepped up defence co-operation in the region in terms of capacity-building, exchange of visits, institutionalised dialogue, and basic maritime exercises. How far should such activities go? What role should India play with regard to security issues in South-East Asia? Abhijit Singh, Research Fellow at IDSA, attempts to answer these questions, and provides a framework for security co-operation while rightly sounding a note of caution against India being dragged into disputes between China and its neighbours.

The command and control systems of many infrastructure activities, including water and power distribution, air and rail transport, banking, and e-governance are increasingly and critically dependent on the information and communications technology. In the wake of successful and suspected cyber attacks, ensuring cyberspace security has emerged as a new area where a co-operative strategy will be of mutual benefit. Papers by Kamlesh Bajaj, Tan Sri Azumi and Alok Vijayant, who head governmental cyber security agencies in India and Malaysia, sketch out preliminary ideas for an India-ASEAN cyber security partnership.

The perspective for the future includes the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), an over-arching trade and economic co-operation Agreement between the ASEAN ten and the six states with which ASEAN has existing Free Trade Agreements (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand). The RCEP will cover trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical co-operation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement and other issues. The RCEP grouping includes more than 3 billion people with a combined GDP of about $17 trillion (45 per cent of world population and around a third of world's total GDP), and accounts for about 40 per cent of world trade. The RCEP negotiations were formally launched in 2012 at the ASEAN Summit in Cambodia and it is envisaged that they will be successfully concluded by the end of 2015.

The social and cultural linkages between India and ASEAN are wide-ranging, strong, vibrant and of considerable antiquity. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata have been adapted and indigenised throughout South East Asia, particularly in Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia. The region is home to around 17 per cent of the Indian diaspora, with significant communities of Persons of Indian Origin resident in Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia. Three interesting papers explore how these linkages can be further developed to mutual advantage without hurting national sensitivities in the region.

R. L. NARAYAN
Former High Commissioner of India to Malaysia and Canada
Former Ambassador of India to Poland and Qatar

★★★

David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan, Srinath Raghavan (eds.) ***Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy,*** (Oxford, Oxford University Press, July 2015), Pages: 746, Price: GBP 95.00

This is an impressive compendium of 50 essays dealing with India's foreign policy in a rather comprehensive manner. Divided into seven parts including the *Introduction*, the handbook has sections on *Evolution of India's Foreign Policy*, *Institutions and Actors*, *Geography*, *Key Partnerships*, *Multilateral*

Diplomacy, and the concluding one- *Looking Ahead*. The editors, David Malone, C. Raja Mohan, and Srinath Raghavan are eminent and well-known scholars.

In the 35-page long *Introduction* it is argued, "...much high-minded Indian rhetoric obscured hard realities from Indian eyes, helping precipitate a traumatic border war with China in 1962 and at times exhausting even India's friends". It would have been useful if more was said about "the high-minded rhetoric". The reader might note after reading the book that the contention about the "high-minded rhetoric" is not argued out anywhere in the essays. Alka Acharya's lucid account of the 1962 war does not refer to any "high-minded rhetoric" at all. The 1962 war had a complex cause and to attach, without substantial argument, such importance to "high-minded rhetoric" without a discussion of other factors of equal or higher importance is unwarranted, to put it mildly.

The reader might also wonder what is meant by "high-minded rhetoric". We are all familiar with Henry Kissinger's description of the Cold War as two heavily armed blind men chasing each other in a small room, each believing that the other has full eye sight. The fundamental raison d'être for non-alignment was that there is no point in following a blind man. On the contrary, the blind should be led by those with sight. Take the case of the crossing of the 38th parallel in Korea by the US-led UN troops despite China's warning communicated through India. After thousands of deaths, the cease-fire was established along the same parallel. If Truman had followed Nehru's advice to talk to China, the course of history might have been different for the better. Nehru's advice was followed more than two decades later by Nixon. It is this sort of critical account of what happened and what might have happened that is generally lacking in this compendium.

The handbook is fair to Nehru in evaluating his foreign policy. By following non-alignment policy, supporting the United Nations, and advocating disarmament, Andrew B. Kennedy maintains, Nehru was "both sincerely committed to what he saw as a moral cause and convinced that advancing it would serve India well". This is a sober assessment at variance with the growing trend to ridicule Nehru's "idealism" and to condemn him for not invoking "national interest" as often as it is fashionable to do so these days.

Raja Mohan in his well-argued *Foreign Policy After 1990* has pointed out that while Nehru took positions on international issues that clashed with both the superpowers, "...he presided over expansive engagement with all the major powers". It was after Nehru that the concept of non-alignment acquired a decisively anti-Western orientation. Raja Mohan further argues that India's

relationship with the great powers today is similar to that of the 1950s when India engaged widely but avoided aligning with any power. Such engagement has not happened yet, though it might in the future.

Under Nehru India had an international visibility and relevance- whether it was the repatriation of prisoners of war in Korea or the Suez Canal crisis. Nehru's successors have not succeeded in maintaining that level of engagement, partly because of the geopolitical changes and partly because they lacked his international prestige. Sneh Mahajan's contention, "India's foreign policy is acquiring a new orientation today because new equations of power are emerging. India has grown from a peripheral player to a key participant at the top level of global diplomacy" is rather overstated.

Manu Bhagavan in *India and the United Nations* gives a good account of India's engagement with the world organisation. At the 1945 San Francisco conference to discuss the draft UN charter, Vijayalakshmi Pandit spoke on behalf of an India yet-to-be independent. She spoke for global justice, the need to address racial inequalities, and to put an end to colonialism. She clashed with Churchill and lost the battle over the formulation of chapters XI and XII where "trusteeship" was introduced into the charter. The British Foreign Office exulted. Little did they know that soon India would conduct a successful de-colonisation campaign at the UN. Mme. Pandit decisively scored victory over General Jan Smuts of South Africa when his contention of right to pursue a policy of racial discrimination was rejected by the General Assembly with an overwhelming majority.

Bhagavan's treatment of the Kashmir issue leaves much to be desired. He does not seem to recognise that it was Pakistan that stood in the way of carrying out a plebiscite by refusing to comply with the UN resolution calling for withdrawal of its troops. He also fails to mention that it was President Eisenhower's supply of arms to Pakistan in 1954- at a time when Nehru was looking for a plebiscite administrator despite Pakistan's non-compliance- that made India conclude that plebiscite was not a viable option.

The origin of India's foreign policy is dealt by Rahul Sagar in *Before the Midnight: Views on International Relations, 1857-1947*. The latter half of the 19th century witnessed the emergence of three distinct views on international relations. The first view was of "universal brotherhood", promoted separately by Keshub Chandra Sen, based on Christianity, and by Vivekananda, based on Hinduism. The second view was of principled conservatism based on texts such as the *Hitopadesa* and *Manu Smriti,* made recently available. Swami Dayanand Saraswathi's *Satyarth Prakash* (1875) summed up this view. The third was a liberal view promoted by Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal

Krishna Gokhale and others. Their purpose was to work with the British Raj and "temper" its foreign policy.

The historical account given by Sagar brings out many factors commonly lost sight of. However, he fails to point out that it was Gandhi who said for the first time (1921) that the people of India did not approve of the policy of the British Indian Government. Gandhi asked Indians not to go to Iraq to fight for the British imperialism. It is important to mention Gandhi's criticism of the policy of the British Indian Government of the day in order to correct the popular misunderstanding that independent India's foreign policy came out of Nehru in the same manner as Athena Pallas came out of the head of Zeus: "fully grown and armed".

Kanti Bajpai in a highly theoretical essay "*Five Approaches to the Study of Indian Foreign Policy"* argues that India has had three "protracted conflicts" with Pakistan, China, and the US. He gives five prisms to look through in order to understand these conflicts: post-colonial sovereignty, alliance pressures, power distributions, conflict over political values, and domestic politics. The obsession with sovereignty pushed India into a "low-level equilibrium trap". "For 70 years, it (India) has been preoccupied with not giving an inch to Pakistan, China, and the US, and as a result, with some exceptions, has been prevented from playing the more constructive global role it had envisaged at its birth". This conclusion appears to be a little harsh as it gives the impression that India alone is at fault for what has happened. In any case, we do know that during the Bhutto-Swaran Singh talks post-1962 on Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan was offered 1,500 sq. miles in Kashmir. Bhutto haughtily rejected the offer and when asked to indicate what he wanted, he put a pencil mark on Kathua at the border with Himachal Pradesh and added that India should vacate the rest of Jammu and Kashmir. He generously added that India could take six months to vacate the capital.

Sneh Mahajan in *The Foreign Policy of the Raj and its Legacy* gives a lucid account of the efforts made by London to protect its assets in India. In 1798, when Napoleon invaded Egypt, the British government thought of means to defend India and the route to India. In July 1807, Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I held a discussion about a joint invasion of India. London instructed the Governor General to send friendly missions to all states lying between India and Europe-Punjab, Sind, Muscat, Afghanistan, and Persia. In 1912, of every 100 persons in Britain and the Empire, ten lived in the United Kingdom; five lived in self-governing dominions; 12 in other colonies; and the rest, 73, in India.

One looks to a handbook for the best available information and judgment on matters of common interest. Let us take the case of the story going round that Nehru had rejected the offer of a permanent seat on the Security Council. Stephen R. Cohen says, "...emerging from the Second World War Indian leaders focused on achieving independence as the world's fourth largest industrial power and second most populous state, and *let pass the opportunity to stake a claim as a permanent member of the UN Security Council"*. (Italics added.) The statement is a complete misreading of history and shows ignorance of the background to the selection of the permanent members starting with the "three policemen" (US, UK, and USSR) that Roosevelt wanted. Fortunately, Andrew B. Kennedy more or less sets the record straight. The point is that there was no offer that was rejected by Nehru. There were feelers not worth taking up.

The style is generally reader-friendly, but at times the reader might get the impression that this handbook has been written by scholars for scholars. For example, the general reader might be perplexed by the reference to "Waltzian realists", "Keohanean liberals" and "Wendtian constructivists" in a single sentence (page 36).

The blurbs on the back of the book claim that India is "the only Asian country with the heft to counterbalance China". Considering that China's economy is almost five times bigger than India's and so is its superiority over India in military terms and otherwise, it is better not to make such statements drawing attention to an unnecessary comparison. Editing could have been better. For example, under the 1964 agreement on the "stateless" persons of Indian origin, India agreed to grant citizenship to 525,000 persons and not 5,250,000 (page 415). A time-line of major events would have added to the value of the handbook.

All told, the editors can be complimented for undertaking a difficult task and delivering a handbook that is of great use to all those interested in the subject matter.

K. P. FABIAN
Former Ambassador of India to Qatar,
to Finland and to Italy