

BOOK REVIEWS

Ilhan Niaz, *The Culture of Power and Governance of Pakistan 1947-2008*

(Islamabad: Oxford University Press, 2010), 320 pages.

Dr Ilhan Niaz has examined the culture of power and governance in Pakistan during 1950s-1980s and briefly up to 2010. He also refers to the ancient period in history as well as to other countries in Europe and Asia besides the South Asian Subcontinent. He terms the pattern of governance under Emperors in Europe and South Asia, e.g., under Maurian or Mughal Empires, as “continental bureaucratic empire”. In this system the emperors considered the state as their private estate and depended on bureaucracy for administering a vast country. In this system the stability of the state depended on the capability of the emperor. When the ruler weakens, the servants carve out personal estates for themselves and there is anarchy. Again, when a strong ruler emerges, small states are fused into a single grand state. Powerful rulers such as Chandragupta Maurya or Akbar could manage through force, but less able rulers found themselves incapable of controlling vast empires (241). The author therefore focuses on rulers, their bureaucracy, military, judiciary, police and finance. His main thesis is that in post-independence governance, the rulers, while exercising power, have “steadily regressed” into a pre-British form (247). He praises the last 70 years of British rule because of the establishment of institutions and introduction of the principles of pay, prestige, accountability and *esprit de corps* in services (245). Presently the governance degenerated to the extent that Lal Masjid challenged the writ of the state in Islamabad in 2007, and in 2009 the Taliban militants consolidated their control over a large part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (vi-vii).

Immediately after independence in 1947, senior civilian servants were “quietly working themselves to death” for re-structuring the state (94). During April 1953 – March 1969, Pakistan was governed by CSP officers, senior military officers and elements within the judiciary. And “there was undeniable improvement in the efficiency of the administration as politics had receded into the background” (98,102).

By 1953, the members of legislatures were perceived to be interfering with the police (193). Thereafter, lawlessness and corruption within the police force was on the increase. After 1973, arbitrary dismissals, appointments, and transfers reduced the higher bureaucracy to a quasi-medieval instrument” (114). The continuation of the emergency under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto meant that “fundamental rights remained suspended”. Besides, on 13 October 1976, under the Fifth Amendment Act, the High Courts lost their powers to grant bail” (188). “By 1977, the shocks administered through purges, lateral

induction, equalization and standardization of pay-scales and destruction of service guarantees had almost reduced the police to its 1850 conditions – a dangerous lawless force, politicized, corrupt, and a threat to peaceful and law-abiding citizens” (196).

During 1977-1988, the principal achievement under Zia-ul-Haq was stability (118). But the society became increasingly ungovernable as resources from home and abroad were poured into funding the growth of religious seminaries and arming, training and launching legions of Islamic militants into Afghanistan (190).

During 1988-1999 the system floundered for lack of leadership and little attention was paid to its improvement” (121). During this period, both PPP and PML-N rotated into and out of office and “tried to concentrate as much power as possible in their own hands and inflict one-sided accountability upon each other” (190-91). “By October 1999, Pakistan stood on the verge of collapse of the state of order” (198) and the police force had become “utterly medieval” (199). Musharaff’s “devolution scheme had exacerbated the Pakistani state’s institutional crisis by rooting the military in local politics” (126-7).

According to the author, in terms of performance, the period between 1947 and 1969 was “probably the best”. But “prolonged authoritarian rule left a huge void in Pakistan’s political leadership” (128). He refers to “Pakistan’s first successful coup” when, on 17 April 1953, Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad arbitrarily dismissed the Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin, the majority leader in the National Assembly, and its legitimization by the Higher Judiciary. Thereafter, it would be either civilian bureaucratic dictatorship supported by military or military dictatorship supported by civilian bureaucracy. Military coup has taken place “when the incumbent regime is already discredited and perceived by the public as leading the country towards anarchy” (152). All military rulers “came to power through bloodless coup. All of them sought accommodation with political elements soon after coming to power” (153). Self-seeking politicians would join the officially patronized party to maintain the semblance of constitutional democracy (83). Similarly, military regimes compromised when opposition elements asserted themselves (152).

The civil and political elite did not realize that in destroying the autonomy of institutions (i.e., the constituent assembly, the provincial assemblies, the local governments, the higher judiciary, political parties, etc.) they were preparing the ground for their own downfall (159). Again, both civil and military leadership failed to comprehend the difference between a modern and a mediaeval state in which the country is the estate of the ruler. (161).

As for finance, he highlighted the inability of the state to increase revenues through taxation. The “macro-economic stability was an illusion” as it was not backed up by the ability of the state to “generate revenues from its domestic resources” (231). For instance, only one per cent of population pays

income tax (215) and “the officers in the revenue department accept illegal gratification to meet their various needs due to inadequate salaries” (222). The author has asserted that there are growing similarities between the pre-British Mughal Empire under Aurangzeb and his successors and the state of Pakistan.

He has paid special attention to corruption in governance which was always there in varying degrees especially during the period of British East India Company (239-43). Later, according to him, under British rule the AIS in general and the ICS officers in particular were almost completely free from corruption. But, deterioration took place after independence, when “corruption had infected every segment of the apparatus, even at the senior levels” (245).

In 1950, Lahore High Court found the Chief Minister of the Punjab, Nawab Mamdot, as “guilty of corruption, abuse of power and obstruction of justice” because he had illegally acquired 1900 acres of evacuee land for himself (246). Ayub Khan “set the personal standard for corruption and patronage” (255).

Bhutto’s rule experienced “authoritarian rule at its worst” (257). Before Bhutto corruption was a serious problem. By the time he was overthrown, it was a way of life (257). Anti-corruption agencies added to the corruption without reducing it (259). The author has agreed with the perception that “so great was the level of corruption that it would be declared an industry” (261).

Bhutto and his successors privatised public assets. Zia privatised Cantonment lands worth hundreds of millions of rupees. Benazir and Nawaz Sharif awarded lands worth billions of rupees to “friends and cronies” (261). Musharraf’s devolution plan resulted in displacement of corruption to the district level (264). Presently Zardari is believed to be “corrupt” and is generally known as “Mr. Ten Per Cent” (264).

There is substance when the author asserts that the bureaucrats were corrupted due to “ministerial interference and slackening intra-departmental accountability” (244). In order to get elected “politicians rode roughshod over democratic and legal norms” (251). The root cause of corruption was because of (a) abuse of power and (b) privatisation of state resources and (3) disregard of “laws, procedures and constitutionalism” (247). But the author excels in praising British concept of “state morality”. His assertion is negated by the famine in Bengal in 1943 when food grains were shipped for Allied Forces in the Far East and the poor natives of Bengal were allowed to suffer death due to non-availability of food.

The author has presented a bleak picture of administration and is not optimistic about the future (xiii). It appears that he has mostly depended on interviews with retired senior civil service officers, and seems to have given credence to their evidence of regression of standards. In addition, besides interviews and published material, he has used declassified record held by the National Documentation Centre and Cabinet Secretariat Library and such

official documents as “Report of the Special Committee for Eradication of Corruption from Services, 1967” and “Report of the Committee on the Study of Corruption 1986”. The work is based on his PhD thesis finalised under the supervision of Professor Dr Naeem Qureshi of Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. He has carried out extensive research and fills in the need of a serious work on the administrative history of Pakistan. It is a useful study for all those interested in the history, politics and issues of governance in Pakistan. ■

Dr Noor ul Haq, Senior Research Fellow, IPRI.

Maffuz Ullah, ed., *Water Disputes in South Asia: Threats to Security*

(Bangladesh: Center for Sustainable Development, Bangladesh Center for International Studies, 2010), 191 pages.

The book “Water Disputes in South Asia Threats to Security” edited and contributed by Maffuz Ullah describes water as a finite resource that is fast depleting due to growing global population, changing water technologies, and impending impact of climate change. According to United Nations estimates, by 2050 water scarcity or “hydrological” poverty could affect as many as three out of every four people on earth. With the tripling of the global population over the last seven decades, the demand for water has increased six times, causing stress in densely populated areas where water source is distant, depleted or simply too polluted to use.

Comprising nine essays, this volume studies water as a critical shared resource, whose flow is not restricted by political boundaries. It is not only of strategic importance to nations but escalating competition over its availability has the potential for security threats. Against this backdrop, water security has emerged as a paradigm involving a new understanding of how security is viewed. Traditionally, the term security has been used to imply conflict, but it assumes much broader meaning when water is discussed. The aspiration to own or have control over water resources leads to greed and protectionism making governments to invest heavily in expanding military power to make citizens feel secure about this essential commodity. This exclusive protectionism of one nation threatens regional security and adversely affects the overall development prospects of the people. It is an area where cooperation rather than competition would secure a workable solution for all.

The linkage between water and security has raised global awareness about the importance of ownership and control over resources. The assertion of national claims results in conflicts that could be harmful for economic development as disruption of natural resources could lead to violent action by affected parties.

The various studies in the book highlight the tug of war over rights between the upper and lower riparian nation's in the context of territorial sovereignty which is an issue of great complexity and involves the concept of absolute integrity of rivers. Discussing the conventional international law - empowering international and regional actors by legitimatizing their claims - this work provides the organizational pattern based on United Nations Convention on Non-navigational uses of International Watercourses for long-term solution to the contradictory claims of upper and lower riparian states that can be reached using the concept of equitable utilization and "no-harm rule", with the view to attaining optimal and sustainable utilization and benefits consistent with adequate protection of the watercourse.

The prospects in the situation as they exist in the present century, however, look gloomy for the present and future generations of South Asia because of increasing water scarcity with the grave potential for conflict. Many observers have termed South Asia as the most volatile and explosive part of the globe, fraught with dangerous implications, making it vulnerable not only to conventional hostilities but also to nuclear confrontation. South Asian countries are becoming water-stressed nations because of accelerating demographic pressures and unequal distribution of water, especially deepening problems for the lower riparian countries by the withdrawal of upper riparian countries. India lies at the centre of this problem, when the issue of water with Pakistan and Bangladesh surfaces. In truth, India unilaterally uses water of common rivers without considering the environmental and social costs on the neighbours. The book highlights India's hegemonic unilateralism in building up dams on international rivers in the region by ignoring the rights of the people of the lower riparian neighboring countries, and disregarding the evil effects on man, nature, agriculture, fisheries, environmental disaster and ecological degradation in the region. This gloomy prospect is not merely an issue of scarcity of water; it has by now turned out to be an issue of national security.

The situation in South Asia calls for a regional approach to handling the problems within a multilateral framework by effectively using the spirit of SAARC (South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation) which seems to be the only answer at this point of time. As perceived in the book, SAARC should be reactivated and used as a platform of action for meaningful development of river systems to ensure equitable sharing of waters in South Asia. Unfortunately, India prefers only bilateralism, which gives India an edge over the smaller neighbours. Such a mindset of India is unfortunate. For peace, stability and development of the region – the countries of South Asia, especially India, should adhere to the multilateral approach, specifically to resolve the water issue. South Asia indeed is a single ecosystem in which big India and other small states can participate profitably.

The essays also point out that development of the Himalayan water resources, to be undertaken jointly by countries of the region will help meet not only critical shortage of irrigation water and pollution free energy but also manage the scourge of recurring floods in the deltaic region. This also underlines the need for rational cooperation on the river systems, which so profoundly influence South Asian economies, encompassing five of the eight SAARC nations and make them mutually dependent. While discussing the importance of geo-politico-hydro relations among South Asian countries, the essays also draw attention to the Ganga-Brahmaputra river system, for which Bangladesh forms the single deltaic outlet, connects the nations of India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan, in an indivisible hydrological relationship with each other, and collectively with the People's Republic of China to their north and Burma to their east. Indirectly because of the adjoining watershed areas, the Indus river basin system is also interlinked with that of the Ganga and the Brahmaputra, and, therefore, Pakistan is geographically associated with the Indian Ocean and cannot be visualized in isolation. ■

Khalid Chandio, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI.

Syed Shahid Husain, *What Was Once East Pakistan*

(Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 214 pages.

There are a number of studies by both Pakistani and foreign scholars on the causes of dismemberment of Pakistan. Syed Shahid Husain's book *What Was Once East Pakistan*, is also an effort in this regard and provides an interesting perspective from the point of view of a senior civil servant who served in all the provinces of Pakistan including the former East Pakistan. The book is based on his personal experiences and observations during his stay there which gives this account the impression of a memoir that is also history. Some of his views may be deemed to be controversial but they also offer a new perspective on the situation.

The study is divided into three broad parts which the author has further subdivided into smaller topics. Part one broadly deals with the socio-political situation in East Pakistan, and those initial events that led to the creation of Bangladesh. In the second part, the author analyses the political situation and the effects of some of the decisions of the rulers that were responsible for the break up. Part three is about the aftermath of the secession.

There is an interesting account of the events that the author encountered while posted in East Pakistan. Regarding the ultimate responsibility for the dismemberment he holds a different view from that commonly held involving the late Z.A. Bhutto's hand in the fall of Dhaka. What he believes is substantiated with cogent arguments. He believes that people who hold Bhutto to be responsible for the dismemberment of Pakistan

have no basis for such a position as Bhutto was not in a position to decide anything. It was Yahya Khan who was making all decisions. Bhutto didn't even assume power until December 1971. "Holding Bhutto responsible for the break-up of Pakistan and claiming that the calamity did not represent a military defeat but a political failure was another canard deliberately spread by the West Pakistani establishment..."(p.xiii).

He argues that the common Bengali's love for Pakistan ran with his love for his language. Their joy was ecstatic when they heard the author make the Independence Day speech in Bangla. However the resentment against discrimination was always there though it erupted on a large scale only after the 1970 elections. The author pieces together little events and incidents which if they had been addressed timely the disaster could have been averted. He mentions the Bhola cyclone which resulted in the reported death of 500,000 people. The author admits that the government was slow to react and made only token efforts at providing relief to the victims (16).

In the first part Syed Shahid Husain also discusses the six-point programme, the general elections of 1970, the military crackdown of March 25, 1971 and the events which lead to the fall of Dhaka. He defends Shiekh Mujib's six -point programme and says that it was portrayed in a misleading way in West Pakistan, to create anti-Bengali sentiments. The debate about the six-point programme is worth reading. He argues that the programme was aimed at achieving provincial autonomy. In the post separation period "The federal government has been encroaching on provincial turf in utter disregard of the Constitution that itself has been mutilated beyond recognition" (25). Shahid Husain referring to Hamood-ur-Rehman commission report says that Yahya Khan believed that Shiekh Mujeeb's Awami League would never be able to secure 60 per cent seats in the elections but to his surprise "The Awami League secured 75.1 per cent of the votes cast in the province for the national assembly elections" (31).

The author believes that the crisis which emerged after the general elections was engineered and was one which could have been averted, but the negligence and short-sightedness of Yahya Khan hastened the end. Perplexed by the election results, Yahya Khan at first postponed the National Assembly session indefinitely, and later on imposed martial law. "The junta reckoned that if the National Assembly was called into session it would be difficult to prevent peoples' power from sweeping them out of office" (36).

In the second part of the book he analyses the events which took place after the fall of Dhaka. Instead of focusing more on what happened, the author seems more concerned about how it happened. He suggests that failure to transfer power was the main reason which led to the tragedy. Referring to the Hamood-ur-Rehman commission report he says "[in the report] The ToR [terms of reference] did not even touch the core issue. What, for instance, led to the delay in transfer of power after the 1971 general elections?" (76). In this

regard he assesses the role of different important actors and with the help of documents holds Yahya Khan as the architect of dismemberment.

The last part is focused more on the role of external factors, specially the US. The author believes that America didn't play any significant role to solve the crisis, and washed her hands off by describing it as Pakistan's internal problem. President Nixon suggested a political solution of the conflict (155) and kept on supporting Yahya Khan without realizing the complexity of the situation.

Syed Shahid Husain concludes that Bangladesh has failed to realize its true potential and the independence has done little good to the common man and the country is expected to remain a troubled nation in the foreseeable future (209). The author also mentions the "goods and bads" of independence for Bangladesh, its common people and the society as a whole.

The author doesn't mince his words. It is time to learn from the past mistakes. The book makes delightful reading interspersed as it is with lighter anecdotes that make the reader smile amidst serious discussion. This book is not only useful for students of history but also interesting for the general public who keep asking why Pakistan broke up. ■

Aftab Hussain, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI.

Graeme P. Herd, ed., *Great Powers and Strategic Stability in the 21st Century: Competing Visions of World Order*
(New York: Routledge, 2010), 234 pages.

The book *Great Powers and Strategic Stability in the 21st Century: Competing Visions of World Order*, edited and contributed by Graeme P. Herd in 2010, examines the world's transition from unipolarity to an existentially complex and interdependent multipolar system. Such complex interdependence generates shared interest in cooperative solutions, while driving convergence, consensus and accommodation between great powers. The key centres of global powers include US, EU, Russia, China and India that seek to manage contemporary strategic threats. Comprising a collection of eleven chapters, this edited volume studies the conjoint and dissonant capability of great powers in handling increasingly interlinked strategic threats – not least, terrorism and political extremism, WMD proliferation, fragile states, regional crises and conflict and the energy-climate nexus.

As the Cold War ended, the certainties and stability of the bipolar world were replaced by a post-Cold War world in which, in dizzying succession, new paradigms attempt to capture best the nature of the new world order. With this, multilateralism is on the rise featured by a combination of states and international organizations. What follows is a brief consideration of the history

and evolution of our understanding of the issue, including state-related international and transnational aspects of strategic threats.

Defining the threat of terrorism as intentional use of violence against civilians and non-combatants by non-state actors to achieve political goals in an asymmetrical confrontation, this book terms an extremist ideology as the main characteristic shared by the broader phenomenon of political, religious and ideological extremism, as well as the narrower phenomenon of militancy. The main distinction between extremism and terrorism is not so much the degree of ideological radicalism, but the preferred methods for action. Disproportionately destabilizing and politically manipulative, the effect is the main hallmark of terrorism. The highly asymmetrical nature and effects of terrorism mainly explain why it is considered to pose a strategic threat to many individual states and societies, and for international security. The future trends and trajectories in the dynamics of terrorism at all levels from local to global, and their impact on state and international security and stability, are likely to display patterns of international cooperation with other urgent security concerns – nuclear proliferation, regional crises and conflict and energy security - on the agenda at the national and international levels.

The prospect of return to global multi-polarity is, however, prosaic in this volume in conceiving a peaceful world order and leaves the debate inconclusive without spelling out the salient aspects of strategic stability. Surveying the geopolitical landscape, the contributors attempt to explore the security threats and functional challenges as centerpiece of great-power politics in the years to come. Parallel to the aforesaid, similar focus has been aimed at the grand strategies of the emerging power poles such as China, India and Russia arguing that the operational spirit of the emerging world order is a concert of great powers buttressed by a new institutional order, with shared norms and regimes, whose combination is strategic–threat specific, regional sensitive and inclusive of major states – not least Brazil, Turkey, South Africa and Indonesia.

The volume highlights that tension is at the heart of the multi-polar system, wherein the ineluctable struggle for influence between the US and the emerging non-western powers will loosen clusters of cooperation, while the challenges that the great powers will encounter in the coming decades will be problems of interconnectedness in areas such as environment and weapons proliferation, thereby requiring intensified collaboration.

Validating in the backdrop of classical theories of international relations, the contested concepts of security and models, the book compares and contrasts great power approaches to the surveyed strategic threats in terms of their nature, relationship to state, regional and global security, and likely future evolution. The book examines president Obama's new emphasis and direction veering away from the policies of the previous administrations and in response to the present policies of the Russian government under President Medvedev.

The work draws attention to China's understanding and management of strategic threats as China recognizes increasing problems for the country caused by "non traditional" security threats. Beijing's policies regarding these challenges are shaped by globalization and engagement with international organizations. The vast majority of Chinese strategists and policy-makers would probably give different priorities than those in the West to such challenges as terrorism, failing states and regional instabilities, proliferation of WMDs, and environmental and energy security. However, while these issues did not traditionally receive a great deal of attention in recent decades in China, their salience has quickly increased over this period with some issues - such as energy, environment and security - gaining ground faster than others. The study appreciates that China has made encouraging progress towards becoming a more "responsible stakeholder", and engaging constructively with international patterns emerging in the globalised world of today.

The work under review elaborates the evolution of the European Union in the political and security domains and as a potential pole of that system. As the EU does not resemble other security actors and is built on liberal values, it would be able to behave on the international scene more as a force for good than as any form of hegemon. No systematic assessment of security threats to the EU had been done prior to the adoption of the European Security Strategy (ESS) in 2003. The ESS makes the distinction between global challenges and threats. Global challenges characterize general features of the international system that may be the sources of threat. They are globalization, conflicts, poverty, underdevelopment, disease, global warming and energy dependence.

This work provides the organizational pattern for long-term strategic stability in the twenty-first century, whereby the global governance system will be able to prioritize and manage the interlinked strategic threats efficiently, effectively and with legitimacy by finding appropriate security policy responses. In the future international architecture, the emerging centres of global power may create an institutionalized directorate of great powers acting as a coalition-based hegemony as new players gain seats at the international high table to which they will bring new stakes and rules of the game. Leadership can be singular, collective or concert-based, designing the nature of strategic stability and the world order. ■

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Javid Husain et al., *Post 9/11 Globe*, ed., Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, Mussarat Jabeen and Naheed S. Goraya

(Lahore: Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Punjab, 2010), 349 pages.

The attacks of 9/11 in New York seem to have changed the dynamics of global politics at least in the current perspective and reshaped the paradigms of global power structure. The event proved to be a turning point in American domestic and foreign policy, which led to the proclamation of the Bush doctrine of unilateral preemptive military intervention and to the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and later of Iraq in 2003. Since then Pakistan and Afghanistan have become the focal points and front line states in the global war on terror.

Post 9/11 Globe is a collection of studies edited by Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, Mussarat Jabeen and Naheed S Goraya. Its 12 articles examine and analyse the deterioration that took place in the international scenario in the wake of 9/11. The “war on terror” is seen in its impact on the geo-strategic situation in the region and how the policies and responses and developments ever since have affected Pak-US relations. The major security dilemma faced by Pakistan and the trends and challenges in Pak-Afghan relations have been discussed in detail in their historical perspective. The book also examines America’s new “Af-Pak” policy and its implications for Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The book opens with Javid Hussain’s brief analysis of post 9/11 international scenario which is moving from a unipolar to a multipolar order in strategic, political and economic dimensions. US hard power in military and economic fields with its soft power gives it a formidably dominant position globally but the growing emerging powers - China, India, Brazil, and Indonesia along with South Korea, South Africa, Nigeria and Turkey - will play significant roles in international affairs as economic forces are pushing the world towards integration at regional levels and political forces are working towards decentralization and devolution of power at the global level.

The next two articles by Dr Riffat Hussain focus on the security challenges faced by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the wake of the “Global War on Terror” (GWO’T) as despite its forcible ejection from Afghanistan, al-Qaeda continues to survive both as an idea and as a lethal force having potential to mount terrorist attacks anytime anywhere in the world. Thus GWO’T has failed to secure the world against the scourge of terrorist violence. Saudi Arabia faced the al-Qaeda threat compounded by the spill over effects of the violence in neighbouring Iraq while Pakistan suffered the repercussions of the intensifying insurgency in neighbouring Afghanistan. Both the countries

suffered religious radicalism and local militancy and tried to evolve counter terrorism strategies that best suited their national interests.

Dr Maqsudul Hassan Nuri, in the next article highlights the role of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) in Afghanistan. Originally created in 1949 as an Anglo-US military alliance to contain Soviet communism, NATO now has a new role in the post Cold War Central Asia with its nuclear potential, threat of Islamic militancy, and quest for energy resources. ISAF (International Security Agency Force) is the predecessor of NATO in Afghanistan; it's not a UN force but is deployed under a UNSC mandate. Its role is viewed with mixed feelings by neighbouring countries that both seek and fear the consequences of an early exit of the foreign forces from Afghanistan.

Central Asia which witnessed the spillover effects in the back drop of 9/11 is studied by Dr Saif-ur-Rehman Malik in respect of the roles of various regional and extra regional players. Before 9/11, it was a low profile region but US entry in the region through its military bases forced China and Russia to establish an important regional forum of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization). Moreover CARS (Central Asian Republicans) have strategic and economic significance that regional countries seek to exploit, for instance the idea of a North-South corridor in which India, Iran and Russia have shown interest.

Umbreen Javaid describes terrorism as a major threat to Pakistan's national security and highlights the role of sectarian terrorism after 9/11.

The next two chapters by Mussarrat Jabeen and A.Z.Hilali discuss the evolution of US relations with Pakistan, the changing trends in American foreign policy and implications for Pakistan. The US-Pakistan alliance has been shown as an excellent example of an opportunistic relationship in which Pakistan took U-turn in its policy towards the Taliban regime.

In their articles Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, Naheed S.Goraya and Mussarat Jabeen have focussed on Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan and USA. Despite their religious, cultural, geographic and historical closeness, Pak-Afghan relations have remained estranged. But after 9/11, both states became key allies of USA in the global coalition against terrorism.

The authors regard US policy as detrimental to the region for its dependence on military means ignoring the option of talks with the insurgents. It has now adopted a new AF-Pak policy which is also facing a number of challenges.

The study of this book provides insight into the global aspects of post 9/11 events and their implications for Pakistan which is facing increased drone attacks in the tribal border areas and insurgency in Balochistan. The articles emphasize the need for a comprehensive national security strategy and

productive foreign policy initiatives. ■

Aymen Ijaz, Intern, IPRI.

James F. Dobbins, *After the Taliban: Nation-Building in Afghanistan*

(Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2008), 179 pages.

This book is more or less a narration of the events at the Bonn (Germany) Conference which took place in November 2001 to select an Afghan transitional government to succeed the fallen Taliban administration. James Dobbins, who was also one of the participants of the conference, in a very interesting way, writes how the conference participants succeeded in creating an Afghan transitional government but failed at nation-building thereafter.

Dobbins criticizes former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's strategy of minimum deployment of forces. He suggests that the ratio of one international soldier to every 50 inhabitants of the unstable country could have made the difference in helping build the nation. However, he does not give any details of this magic formula. In the presence of a weak government, influenced and run by drug lords and warlords, any such simple formula would not have worked and it indeed did not work. The author also contends that resources were diverted from Afghanistan to the invasion in Iraq in 2003 which also contributed to the failure of nation-building. Thus a war-torn country that was direly in need of financial, economic, and military support was left with hollow promises.

The author says that the aim behind selection of an Afghan government at Bonn was to obtain the cooperation and collaboration of regional powers, including Russia, Iran, India, Pakistan, and the Europeans. The participation and decisions of these delegations enabled the conference to successfully forge a transitional government for Afghanistan.

On the selection of the next President of Afghanistan, the author reports that the name of Hamid Karzai was mentioned on several occasions as the choice of the regional powers. Abdullah Abdullah of the Northern Alliance had also mentioned Karzai for the job and the Iranian and Russian representatives too had agreed to his selection. But why the former King Zahir Shah whom the European delegation openly favoured was not considered has not been explained (91). The role of the Afghan delegations at the Bonn meeting is also hard to understand. According to the author, when he told an Afghan Hazara delegate that the US and Iran were of one mind on these issues, his response was, "You are naïve to believe that" (91). Dobbins apparently rejected Abdul Satar Sirat as the future Afghan President on the basis of ethnicity, noting that, "... further he was of mixed Uzbek Pashtun background whereas Hamid Karzai was a Populzai Pashtun" (90). Strangely,

Abdul Satar Sirat, a respected intellectual who had received the highest number of votes from the Afghan delegations at Bonn, could not be nominated for the president's office.

It is necessary to clarify here that there is no such entity as the so-called "Northern Alliance"- an alliance of the Northern Afghanistan which is multi-ethnic comprising diverse non-Pashtuns such as the Hazaras, Uzbeks, Tajiks, and others. They are no longer in alliance with each other. In fact what is referred to as the Northern Alliance is a Panjshiri ethnic group called the Nizar, which represents less than 4 per cent of the population of Afghanistan. However, according to the author, at the Bonn meeting, the Nizar group had demanded and was awarded the ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Defence. It also demanded three-fourths of the total cabinet posts. This created an impasse that was broken when, according to the author, "Mr. Javad Zarif (the Iranian head delegate) stood up and signaled Mr. Younis Qanooni (the Northern Alliance delegate) to join him in a corner of the room. They whispered something for no more than a minute. Qanooni then returned to the table and agreed to give up two ministries" (p. 97). And when the head of the Northern Alliance, Burhanuddin Rabbani, objected to the selection of cabinet members in Bonn, he was instructed to drop his objection by no other than the Russian Ambassador in Kabul—which he did (p. 94).

The picture drawn by the author lends a conspiratorial look to the conference. Perhaps, the Russians and the Iranians were sure of Karzai government's failure which will keep the Americans trapped in this losing war for a long time. Hence they persuaded the so-called Northern Alliance to hold their objections against the selection of the president and the composition of the Cabinet.

There is a need to study the causes of the failure of the post-Taliban regime in meeting world expectations. The author raises a lot of alarming questions which when they are not answered in the book make the Bonn conference look like a great conspiracy. It is hard to understand why the other participants of the Bonn conference, including the author who was a participant himself from the US side, could not understand the mind of the opposition. It is surprising that a book that is so full of unanswered questions was able to bag the 2008 Douglas Dillon Award for Distinguished Writing on American Diplomacy by the American Academy of Diplomacy. However, as it is the first writing on the Bonn conference, it is worth reading for further academic and research endeavours. ■

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