

**International Seminar  
Report**

**India:  
A Pretentious  
Regional Power**



**Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad**



International Seminar

## **Report**

### ***India: A Pretentious Regional Power***

*May 7, 2018*

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# **The Institute of Strategic Studies**

**Islamabad, Pakistan**

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Registered under Societies Registration Act No. XXI of 1860

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The Institute of Strategic Studies was founded in 1973. It is a non-profit, autonomous research and analysis centre, designed for promoting an informed public understanding of strategic and related issues, affecting international and regional security.

In addition to publishing a quarterly journal and a monograph series, the ISSI organises talks, workshops, seminars and conferences on strategic and allied disciplines and issues.

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## CONCEPT NOTE

There is an old saying that power truly lies where people believe it to lie. Hence, the ‘great’ or ‘super’ power statuses are rarely self-anointed. However, one such example exists in the form of our Eastern neighbor India, the massively populated and highly divided state trying to masquerade as a ‘regional power’. Power in international politics pertains to the ability of a state to significantly influence the behavior of other states through use of its own strategic assets such as its own indigenous military prowess and political persuasiveness. India seems to have confused the outreach of its ‘soft’ power with illusion of having achieved the ‘regional power’ status in Asia. But facts are quite contrary to this delusion.

It was Nehru who said that external policy of a state is the reflection of its internal policy. In India’s case however, one could say ‘fallacy’ instead of ‘policy’. A glimpse at the internal state of affairs in India reveals the fissures within. Staggering poverty, weak institutions, poor governance, increasing political, social, religious and ethnic divisions and lack of a strategic vision is what ails India in the true sense. According to Asian Development Bank estimate as of 2015, 21.9 per cent of Indians, that is about 284 million people, lived below the poverty line of \$1.90, or about Rs. 123 a day. Another recent study suggests that by 2040, there will be no drinking water in almost all of India. Burgeoning population needs and environmental crisis are the real issues that plague India.

However, instead of remedying these internal fractures, the Modi government focuses its attention on tyrannizing its own Muslim minority, as well as the freedom fighters of Kashmir. The agenda of Hindu Rashtra is tearing apart the diverse internal structure of the Indian society. Dignity and safety of human life has become more and more fragile with every passing day in the Indian society. With record cases of assault and rape of women being reported every day, all non-Hindu communities especially Muslims are highly unsafe. The point of significance here is that this insecurity prevailing within the Indian society ensues from inaccessibility of government institutions and structures. A report from the National Bureau of Asian Research stated in its findings as far back as 2011, “Unless India is able to develop social and political



delivery systems that distribute the benefits of economic growth beyond the privileged few, the country's potential to be a regional or global power will be limited.”

Such xenophobic tendencies are the new normal in the Indian society where *Saffron* terrorism has taken root in all high offices. These political offices governing the country capitalize on the Muslim suffering in India and through perpetuating anti-Pakistan propaganda. A fitting example of this is the National Security Advisor of Prime Minister Modi, Ajit Doval, the hardened spy whose own writings focus on creating non-state actors to sabotage the national security interests of Pakistan. This is precisely why the blame placed at Pakistan for state-sponsored terrorism by Indian establishment reeks of hypocrisy. This type of hate-mongering is not an attribute of any country that aspires to gain regional significance. It merely stirs up communal violence within the society and creates more regional enemies in place of a docile neighborhood around India. Lack of strategic far-sightedness in Indian policymaking is its biggest fall-out as it has troubled its relations with its neighbors. Despite numerous commonalities of language, culture and ethnicity, the differences between India and its smaller neighbors only keep widening.

In the contemporary context of regional connectivity, where destinies of all countries in a neighborhood are tied together, the uncertainty of Indian strategic ambitions quite adversely impact stability of the entire region. It is imperative that fissures in the Indian state structure and society be highlighted so that regional countries and the international community observe fallibilities and misdemeanor of Indian state and its external policy. In this regard, the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad organized a one-day international seminar titled ***“India: A Pretentious Regional Power”***.

#### Objectives:

- 1) Map the existing narratives on traditional and non-traditional security challenges to India, accounting for all dimensions and perspectives.
- 2) Analyze the impact of these challenges on Pakistan and determine how pragmatic and relevant they are within the current regional strategic environment.
- 3) Produce policy-relevant recommendations by bringing together a core group of Pakistani and international experts, researchers and officials specializing in non-traditional security environment of India.



## PROGRAMME OF THE SEMINAR

### INAUGURAL SESSION

- 1000 hrs: Registration
- 1030 hrs: Recitation from the Holy Quran
- 1035 hrs: **Welcome and Introductory Remarks** - Ambassador (R) Khalid Mahmood, *Chairman ISSI*
- 1045 hrs: **Inaugural Address** - Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, *Minister of Defense*
- 1100 hrs: Group Photo followed by Tea/Coffee Break

### WORKING SESSION India: Standing on Clay Feet

Chair: Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque - *Former Foreign Minister of Pakistan*

#### **Presentations:**

- 1130 hrs: **Exploring the Social Threats: Declining Human Security, Public Health and Civil Liberties in India**  
Mr. Mohammad Waqas Sajjad - *SRF, ISSI*
- 1145 hrs: **Makings of a Xenophobic India: Issues of Increasing Religious Radicalism, Political Extremism and Separatism**  
Dr. Ejaz Akram - *Advisor to President NDU & Former Associate Professor, LUMS*
- 1200 hrs: **State Failure: Analyzing the Growing Economic Insecurity and Issues of Governance in India**  
Dr. habil. Christian Wagner - *SF, German Institute for Int'l Security Affairs*
- 1215 hrs: **India's Non-Traditional Nemesis: Environmental Challenges, Issues of Energy, Food and Water Scarcity**  
Ms. Laura Schuurmans - *Analyst, Jakarta*
- 1230 hrs: **A Fragile India: Impact Assessment and Recommendations for Pakistan**  
Dr. Muhammad Mujeeb Afzal – *Assistant Professor, Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU)*
- 1245 hrs: Q & A
- 1305 hrs: Concluding Remarks by the Chair



# PROFILES

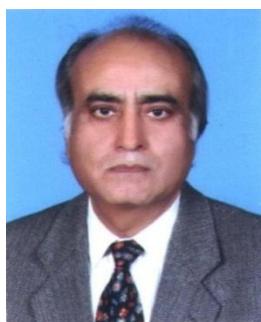


## INAUGURAL SESSION



**Honorable Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan** is a Pakistani politician and Minister for Defense, in office since August 2017. A member of the Pakistan Muslim League (N), he previously served as the Minister for Commerce in the third PML (N) government from 2014 to 2017.

Khan studied engineering from California Institute of Technology, and economics at Bowdoin College before being elected to National Assembly of Pakistan in 2008 general election. After getting re-elected to the National Assembly in 2013 general election, he was appointed as Minister of State for Science and Technology, Minister of State for Privatization and Minister of State for Commerce until he was made Minister for Commerce in 2014.



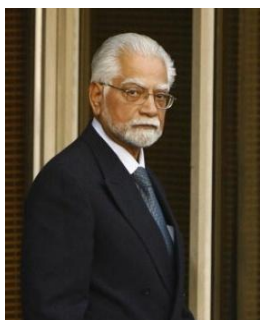
**Ambassador (R) Khalid Mahmood** is Chairman Board of Governors & Director General, Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI). He is also member of the Asian Regional Forum (ARF) Experts and Eminent Persons Group, member Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Eminent Persons Group, President, Islamabad Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Course Director at the Foreign Service Academy, Islamabad.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood is a former Ambassador of Pakistan to China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq and Mongolia. He has served as Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, New York and as Additional Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad. He is also Former Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and member UN Peace-Building Fund Advisory Group, New York.

He is a former President of the Institute of Regional Studies Islamabad, ex-President, Association of Former Ambassadors of Pakistan and former member Board of Governors, Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI).

### **WORKING SESSION:** **Session Chair/Speakers**

#### **Chair: Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque**



**Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque** is a Pakistani career diplomat who has served in a number of high positions. From June -November 2002, he served as the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in President General Pervez Musharraf's cabinet. Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque has also served as the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the caretaker government of Muhammad Mian Soomro in the winter of 2007–2008.

As an experienced diplomat, Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque was sent as Advisor and Chef du Cabinet to the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where the OIC benefitted from his expertise till November 1988. He has served as Pakistan's Ambassador to Turkey, China and Permanent Representative to the United Nations before being appointed as Foreign Secretary from February 2000 to June 2002. Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque was the Chairman, Board of Governors at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, a leading strategic studies think tank in Islamabad funded by the Foreign Office, Pakistan. He also held the position of Chairman, Pakistan-China Friendship Forum. Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque was also the member, Board of Governors at Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad. Being a seasoned diplomat, he was the Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the premier military academy, the National Defense University (NDU) Pakistan. He frequently delivers lectures at the National Security Workshops (NSW).

## Speakers:



**Mr. Waqas Sajjad** is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) and a doctoral candidate at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, with an interest in the history and culture of Islam in South Asia. Currently, he is completing his dissertation on contemporary Deobandi and Bareilvi discourses in Pakistan. For his doctoral studies, Waqas Sajjad was awarded the Fulbright Scholarship. He has presented his work at numerous academic conferences, and been selected for fellowships in India and Canada. He has also previously taught courses in History and Development Studies as a faculty member at Iqra University, Bahria University, and Quaid-e-Azam University. His research at the Institute of Strategic Studies is focused primarily on India-Pakistan relations and issues of terrorism and development.



**Dr. Ejaz Akram** is currently advisor to President National Defense University (NDU). He has also been Associate Professor at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS). Dr. Akram holds a PhD in World Politics (Specializations: Religion & Politics and Comparative Political Philosophy) from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. He also holds two M.A. degrees; Master of Arts in Comparative & Regional Studies (Middle East & South Asia) from the School of International Service at American University in Washington D.C., and Master of Arts in International Relations from Catholic University of America (CUA), Washington, D.C. Before joining LUMS, Dr. Akram was at the American University in Cairo and he has also been a part of the summer faculty of Franklin College, Switzerland.

Dr. Akram's research and teaching focuses on Islam and the Muslim world, but also the religio-political issues and political philosophies of Judaism, Christianity in the Western Traditions and Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism from among the Eastern Traditions. He teaches a variety of courses such as: Religion and World Politics, Islamic Philosophy and Theology, Islamic Political Philosophy, Western Political Philosophy, East Asia & the Muslim World, Islam & the West, and Philosophy & Politics of Global Ecology. Dr. Akram has published several books, scholarly



articles, reviews and editorials, and appeared on several radio and television programs in North America, the Middle East and South Asia.



**Dr. habil. Christian Wagner** is Head of Research Division Asia at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin. His areas of expertise lie in foreign, defense and security policy of South Asia. Besides working at SWP, Dr. Christian Wagner also served in different capacities as a researcher at Centre for Development Research, University of Bonn, Institute for Political and Administrative Sciences, University of Rostock, Research Centre Modern Orient, Berlin, and Department of Scientific Policy, University of Freiburg. He has extensive number of publications on South Asian affairs, particularly on India, and Pakistan.



**Ms. Laura Schuurmans** is an independent writer and researcher. She has been actively working on international security issues in the wider South Asia region, with a prime focus on the unresolved Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India. From 2011-2013 she was a post-graduate researcher at Peking University, Beijing, which is one of Asia's top universities. During this period, she focused on China's foreign policy with neighboring countries including Iran's nuclear program. Based in Jakarta where she has lived for over twenty years, she has actively witnessed the development of the political Islam in the world's most populated Muslim nation, adding to more in-depth understanding of international security issues that involve religion. From 2015 onwards, she has primarily focused on writing her book on the Kashmir dispute. The main purpose of her book is to bring the aggrieved parties of the conflict together and find ways and means to initiate a long lasting peace dialogue. Due to the political sensitivity of the Kashmir dispute, she has refused any financial assistance enabling her to take all viewpoints into an objective perspective.



**Dr. Muhammad Mujeeb Afzal** is Assistant Professor at School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. He is a visiting faculty member at National Defence University (NDU) and various other higher education institutions in Islamabad. Dr. Mujeeb is a distinguished scholar and contributes to national and international journals and magazines on a regular basis. He is also the author of a book titled, “*Bharatiya Janata Party and the Indian Muslims*”, published by Oxford University Press.

## PICTURES OF THE INAUGURAL SESSION







## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

**Ambassador (R) Khalid Mahmood**

*Chairman, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*

Ever since it acquired independence in 1947, India has been aspiring to emerge as a Great Power. There is nothing wrong with it, especially when it possesses the necessary ingredients. The problem lies in the kind of policies and strategies it has been employing in pursuit of this objective; whether they have promoted that objective or impeded progress towards it.

It cannot be denied that India is a country with a vibrant history and rich culture and civilizations, multiple languages, religions and ethnicities, a functioning democracy, rising economy and increasing military strength - conventional, as well as nuclear. But there are also other facts that cannot be denied either.

According to the Asian Development Bank estimate, 21.9 % of Indians, that is more than 300 million, lived below the poverty line of \$ 1.90. Millions have no access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities. In fact, a recent study suggests that by 2040 there will be no drinking water in most of India. In the recently published “*World Happiness Report*” that ranks countries according to multiple indicators including GDP per capita, corruption, life expectancy and freedoms, inter alia, India ranks at an abysmal 133rd position.

Despite some gains, Indian GDP in per capita terms remains around 10% that of the United States. In GDP growth, life expectancy, infant mortality, and literacy, it still lags far behind Brazil, China, Malaysia and South Korea. Indeed, the challenges are daunting. India needs to create millions of jobs annually, lest the demographic dividend turns into a liability.

Moreover, India faces multiple long standing insurgencies, structural violence and discrimination against minorities - Muslims, Christians as well as Sikhs - and disadvantaged groups of society like Dalits. Worsening situation in the Indian Occupied Kashmir is marked by escalating oppression and violence and unabated massive violations of human rights, including the denial of the right to self-determination.

The resurgence of rabid Hindutva ideology, which enjoys state patronage, is tearing the religio-social fabric of the Indian society. Alarming regularity of reports about shocking gang rapes that

have institutionalized support, mosques that are vandalized, and people who are killed for rumors about consuming or selling beef, shows a level of social strife and lack of civil liberties that is too conspicuous to be ignored. The rampant “Saffron Terrorism” puts paid the claims of secular pluralist India.

Externally, India has uneasy to hostile relationship, over-laden with unresolved disputes, with most of its neighbors, holding back much needed regional economic integration envisioned under the SAARC and CPEC. These communal, aggressive and coercive tendencies have received a new fillip following the advent of Prime Minister Modi, a long time Percharak (worker) of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

The ascendancy of Hindu militancy in India is manifest in the declaration of Mahatma Gandhi's assassin (Nathuram Godse) as patriot by RSS, BJP Government ban on cow slaughter throughout India, and forced conversion of Muslims to Hinduism euphemistically called 'Ghar Wapsi'. This reprehensible situation is also reflected in Hindu thugs assaulting Muslim males marrying Hindu women, planned revoking of Article 370 of Indian constitution which grants special status to Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK), and relocation and resettlement of Hindu Pundits in IOK with a view to change the demography of Kashmir. Hostility towards Pakistan and the people of Pakistan finds expression in the escalation of tension along the LOC and the Working Boundary, and the venomous statements emanating from Prime Minister Modi and other political and military leaders threatening Pakistan.

The erosion of democratic and secular space by emboldened Hindu extremist elements poses the greatest challenge for the protection of human rights and civil society. According to Indian former Chief of Army Staff General V.P. Malik, “what is worrisome currently is not just the external threats, but India's weakening from inside: weakening institutions, poor governance, sharpening political, social and ethnic divide, internal security, and our lack of vision and thinking.” The list, in fact, can go on and on. The efforts at image-building by the large and influential Indian diaspora and the Indian media notwithstanding, the mantra of a 'Shining India', loses its gloss.

Rather than expressing its power through violent means and assuming or claiming a regional leadership that is both unsustainable and unrealistic, India should strive to cooperate with other

countries in the region to achieve common goals of stability, peace, and development. As to the pretention to become a regional power, if that dream is to ever become close to a reality, what is required is commitment by India to its own people to guarantee their rights indiscriminately, and commitment to regional development that involves better relationships with its neighbors. India cannot gain the status of a leading power unless it resolves all major disputes and issues with the neighboring states.

But ultimately, the journey to becoming a great power begins at home with peace, harmony and prosperity within and peace, harmony and prosperity without.



## KENOTE ADDRESS

**Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan**

*Minister of Defense*

The topic of the seminar “*India: A Pretentious Regional Power*” is indeed apt and thought provoking. India has presented to the world a particular face: a rising India, a shining India, secular and democratic India, a country where spirituality thrives and where yoga comes from, a land with music and colors. It is this rhetoric that causes India to harbor desires for regional, if not global, leadership. But it also belies the harsh realities of the millions of impoverished citizens of the country whose voices and faces remain hidden.

It is certainly the case that India has shown tremendous growth in its economy, with a GDP in recent years of USD 2.2 trillion, and a 7% growth rate. There are also increasingly close ties with some neighboring and regional countries such as Bangladesh and China, when it comes to trade relations. Progress is also claimed by Indian policymakers on multiple social sectors.

Parallel to these facts, however, are also other sides of the same picture that need to be highlighted. A growing economy does not mean that people’s lives have necessarily been better. According to World Bank estimates, over 20% of the population - or 270 million people - live below the poverty line, with 80% living in rural areas. Even as these are by no means acceptable figures for a country with lofty ambitions, many analysts consider these to be gross underestimations based on relaxed assessment methods. When one adds problems of the poor - lack of access to education, water, health, sanitation, food - only then can such numbers begin to make better sense.

Similarly, on the foreign relations front, even as enhanced trade and high level visits have continued under the present BJP regime, what is also a fact is the enhanced insecurity. India, for instance, has been going through particularly troubling times in the Doklam region.

Any country with the ambitions or illusions that India has harbored, needs to ensure these internal and external issues are addressed before it can realistically embark on a path of dominance. There also needs to be practical commitment shown to values that it publicly affirms and appropriates - such as secularism and human rights. With multiple insurgent movements in

North-Eastern states, and not to mention the state-led violence in the occupied Kashmir territory, India's claims of being a regional power are certainly unfounded.

While Pakistan has for several decades been raising the issue of human rights abuses in Kashmir, it is only now that the international community is beginning - and that too inadequately - to notice the violence committed by state agencies. Mass graves, disappearances, human shields, staged encounters, rapes, and pellet guns are some of the phenomena that have emerged as normal practice of the military agencies of India against the hapless people of the region, whose struggles and voices are being ignored, and whose rights are being violated in the worst ways possible.

It is ironic that one of the largest countries in the world, one of the biggest and proudest democracies is going through a phase of escalating violence against minorities, as well as structural and institutional discrimination, and is counting on rhetoric of secularism and human rights to push forward an agenda for mutual benefit. One must ask in the face of the recent cases of rapes of children in India, and the ensuing mass protests in the favor of the rapists, including by BJP politicians, whether this is the sort of country that has the capability and will power at this point in time to assume leadership of its region.

This is not of course to deny the existence of such problems in other countries, including Pakistan. Rather the point is to understand the internal and external dynamics of India, which can clearly demonstrate how its claims and desires to gain regional supremacy are both impractical and potentially dangerous. And for this, India would do well to listen to sane voices from its own midst. Indian historians for instance, have repeatedly spoken against the BJP's moves to create alternate histories for the country. People have come on the streets to demand justice for rape victims. Writers have risked their lives and reputations for speaking against state violence. University students over the past few years on multiple campuses have been struggling for their rights. With freedom of speech under threat, not to mention freedom of religion, freedom of movement, and several such basic freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, one has to wonder how India's claims for regional leadership can be seriously considered. In this regard, understanding India as a pretentious regional power, as this seminar highlights, is important both for Pakistan and for the rest of the world. Indeed, it would also bode

well for India and its citizens - after all, it is only by foregoing pretensions and delusions that the gross violations of human rights in the country, and the massive issues of poverty and other concerns will be addressed. It is up to India, and for every other country, to make this choice: whether it wants to develop a false image for itself in the desire to gain supremacy, or if it wants to fulfil its obligations to its people.

For India - and indeed for Pakistan - the answer can only be the latter. And this means that non-traditional security threats that affect people's lives and livelihoods, such as water insecurity, climate change are seriously tackled. It is by regional collaboration and not by regional power struggles that these very real 21st century issues will be solved.

Finally, a few words about traditional security concerns, which of course are also not diminished - for which the context is the changing global scenario including the US closeness to India. As a result of this, and the need to ensure Pakistan is prepared to meet any challenge, Pakistan has embarked on a path of engagement with other powers of the region. Our close and enduring relations with China need no emphasis. Our ties with Russia are also positive and improving in all dimensions including defense. It is always a good sign when long-term commitments are being discussed - such as in purchase of military hardware in addition to discussions on military exercises and intelligence sharing. These developments are also important since Russia remains the most significant provider of defense equipment to India, and thus Pakistan's improving ties are both necessary and beneficial. This then is the significant aspect of regional developments that we need to take note of, as we proceed with understanding India, and with developing engagement with our eastern neighbor.

In the end, I would like to acknowledge once again the efforts of the Institute of Strategic Studies and appreciate conduct of this seminar on a topic of significance and interest for policy makers, academicians and general public alike. I am sure the papers being read during the seminar and the discussions made would enhance awareness on a subject of importance and translate into tangible recommendations which I am sure would be considered at the appropriate fora.



## WORKING SESSION

### India: Standing on Clay Feet



The session was chaired by **Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque** - *Former Foreign Minister of Pakistan*

The speakers in this session included **Mr. Mohammad Waqas Sajjad**, *SRF, ISSI*; **Dr. Ejaz Akram**, *Advisor to President NDU & Former Associate Professor, LUMS*; **Dr. habil. Christian Wagner**, *SF, German Institute for Int'l Security Affairs*; **Ms. Laura Schuurmans**, *Analyst, Jakarta*; **Dr. Muhammad Mujeeb Afzal**, *Assistant Professor, Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU)*.



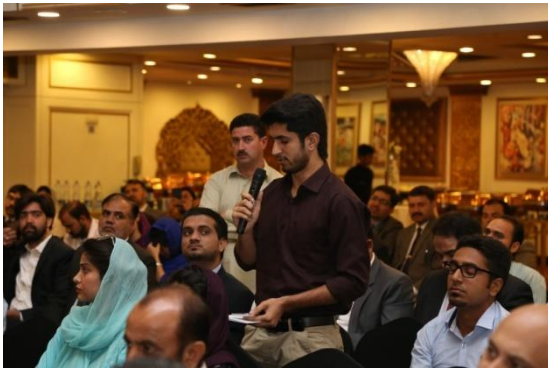


## PICTURES OF THE SESSION











## PRESENTATION

### **Exploring the Social Threats: Declining Human Security, Public Health and Civil Liberties in India**

**Mr. Mohammad Waqas Sajjad**  
*Senior Research Fellow, ISSI*

We are all aware of a general narrative of the West about India, and one that is also pushed by India - these are narratives of shining India, incredible India, the land of mystics and yoga, and color and dance - all orientalist tropes, of course. Certainly, there has been economic growth in India in recent decades, and improvement in certain indicators. However, this is not enough to warrant any notion or illusion of leadership, which requires much more. While India has come a long way, there are many areas - many important areas though ignored by international media - that show a case of one step forward, and two steps back, under the present BJP government of Prime Minister Modi.

I do not mean here to imply that countries that become regional or global leaders do not suffer from challenges - in the developed world, there are after all poverty, pollution, health concerns. India is no different in this regard. But India also professes to be secular, inclusive, even pluralistic, and partly bases its claims to regional leadership on these claims. But if one looks at the facts of everyday life, of structural and institutional discrimination of minorities, of politicians openly challenging democratic and constitutional rights by making controversial statements that have become the norm, and of the rise of right-wing Hindu nationalism that has been working with the de facto support of the state, one can see in India today a special case of violence. That in itself disqualifies it from positions of leadership, since a state and society that is becoming more hostile - not just to ethnic and religious minorities, but also to relatively moderate Hindus who oppose the ideals of Hindutva groups that are supported by the state - cannot be expected to deal fairly with other countries. And yet, despite clear evidence of these discriminations and incidents of violence, blatant violations of human rights, and clear and consistent disavowal of the values of democracy and liberalism, India's crimes curiously go unnoticed in the West. It is this tacit complicity that gives credence to the notion that India should be a regional power.

In this paper, through facts about declining human security and civil liberties in India, I make the case that this narrative is both unjustified and dangerous.

Firstly, let us look at what human security entails. The concept since the 1990s has been part of the human development discourse, and while definitions vary, for our purpose we can look at it broadly as an abstract concept, that has been defined as “freedom from fear and freedom from want”. Thus depending on how one interprets this, we can examine indicators for, say, poverty, education, health, disaster relief, employment opportunities, hunger, sanitation, violence against women, economic growth - really, the list is endless and incorporates multiple disciplines. But the important point in highlighting human security is that the focus is on the individual and not the state - to put it simply, India has been proud of its economic growth, but how has that translated into opportunities for people, or easing the burdens of poverty, or provided better health, or sanitation and clean water - indeed clean breathe-able air, or law and order, or protected them from violence - this is what human security refers to as it takes us directly to the citizen. More importantly, given recent incidents in India, we need to also position human security more literally and ask whether women and ethnic and religious minorities are being targeted by violent groups that have direct or indirect state support. As I show in this presentation, this systematic, structural and institutional violence - and these are the words that are important, and separate India from other countries - has increasingly become the new normal. After all, when Human Rights Watch, an independent body, estimates some 2000 people were killed in Gujarat under Chief Minister Modi, and he then becomes the elected Prime Minister, we can begin to understand the mindset his party represents and engenders.

Now human security - freedom from want and fear - is part of a United Nations discourse about development and social indicators. These partly symbolize criteria for leadership, and while strides have been made in this regard in India, let us look at these briefly and methodically. And let us bring in some comparison with other countries that like India have been emerging economies, to demonstrate that if India has come a long way, there is an even longer way to go.

India has a population of over 1.3 billion. While statistics vary slightly, there is general agreement that life expectancy is 68 years (China 76, America 78), literacy rate is 74% with significant variations in states, urbanization ranges from 33% to 65%, GDP per capita is \$1,700-

2000 (compared to USD 8,000-9000 for China), median age is 28-29 (37 for China). So it is a significantly younger population that will be facing all these challenges in the coming decades. People who live below the poverty line are calculated at 22% - which is 270 million people living with less than \$1.25 a day, 80% of these are rural poor and poverty affects minority communities (such as Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, and minority religions) most heavily. Thus, the communities that are most affected by human rights abuses are also the most vulnerable in social sectors.

With these come other statistics with varying but overall low figures for access to clean drinking water or toilets among the poor populations, even poorer access to education and health. None of this is particularly surprising for a country moving up the ladder - the issue however is of the ambition for supremacy and leadership in spite of these figures, even if one ignores - as the West continues to - all the attacks on civil liberties that are commonplace in the country.

One popular index that comes to mind that brings together some of the most important indicators for human security is the Happiness Index, which comprises GDP per capita, freedom to make choices, health and life expectancy, and perceptions about corruption. In its latest report, India ranks 133 out of 156 countries, which is telling because in 2018 China ranked 86, Turkey 74, Brazil 28, and Russia 59. All of this suggests something in India is amiss, and its ambitious for regional leadership is at best misplaced.

One important area where impressive improvements have been witnessed is poverty, which is perhaps the crux of the human security in terms of development. Official figures tell us that poverty in India declined from over 37% in 2004-5 to 22% in 2011-12, and this was in the context of a new and improved poverty line that was more multidimensional. However, some analysts have suggested this is a gross underestimation, some even going so far as to note that 67% should be counted as poor, basing this one on the population proportion that is distributed heavily subsidized rice and wheat. Indeed, the impressive economic growth of India has not translated into any noticeable distribution of wealth: 50% of the population is without shelter, 70% without decent toilets, 35% without a nearby water source. When one adds how some of the most polluted cities in the world are in India, the magnitude of the human security challenges can be better gauged.

Moreover, there is a poor population overburdened with diseases and healthcare costs - 70% of healthcare expenses in India are met by paying out of pocket, due to which 3-7% of the population (depending on the source) is pushed below the poverty threshold every year - and that is to add to the significant population that is always hovering around the poverty line with years of neglect of public health, which comprises an important part of human security after all, which has been given some 1.3-1.4% over the past decade, which is significantly lower than other countries that India aims to compete with. By adding private sector contribution, the health expenditure goes up to 3.9% of the GDP - compare that to Brazil (46%), China (56%), USA (48%), and one sees the magnitude of the problem. Again, when we talk about the numbers, they must always place the individual and his or her human security at the center, and one can then assess how to categorize India as an emerging economy with ambitions of leadership.

None of these numbers, however, compare to the social threats faced by a multitude of people in Hindutva's India, where their ideals, freedoms, and very lives are under attack. This is perhaps the most important and most ignored issue related to the multidimensional concept of human security, which belies India's pretences to power: declining civil liberties.

Consider some of the news reports emerging from India. Hindutva groups have proudly claimed to have stopped Muslims from saying their Friday prayers in open spaces in several locations in Gurgaon, there has been violence in Aligarh Muslim University over Jinnah's picture, Hindu terrorists attacked Christians in a church and set fire to the pastor's home in a village in Madhya Pradesh, a small Muslim tomb in Delhi turned into a temple. All of this is just over the past few days. And there are several more such stories. The common factor in all of them -Hindutva groups and the support they receive from the ruling government and its politicians.

Now what are civil liberties? Very briefly and simply, we can see them as the right and freedom of individuals and groups in terms of free speech, religion, access to justice, and any other aspect of adult decision-making such as who one can marry. The idea is that the state must guarantee civil liberties, and the state and its institutions and representatives must not arbitrarily interfere in these freedoms. However, when the state itself has religious militant groups working at its behest, civil liberties for groups they oppose are virtually non-existent. Right-wing Hindutva groups have always been a part of Indian social and political life, but it is only in recent decades

that their role has become truly significant and thus traumatic for minorities in the country. This has included physical attacks on members of minority communities for numerous reasons, bans on books and films, rise of extremist politicians, re-working of history, and a general environment of oppression of minorities. Indeed, this is literal attacks on human security as people's very lives and livelihoods are at put on the line.

In all of this, we have to be aware of some qualities to the situation. One, there are incidents from practically all over India. Two, they are systematic and regular. Three, practically all are accompanied by tacit if not declared support for the crimes and violence by local BJP politicians. This then makes them structural and institutional. As the Human Rights Watch notes, "Many senior leaders of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) publicly promoted Hindu supremacy and ultra-nationalism at the expense of fundamental rights for all Indians." What do some of these rights include?

### **Cow Vigilantism**

One of the most serious issues in this regard has been what is called cow vigilantism. While cow protection movements have a longer history, and Indian states have a range of laws regarding the issue, it is since 2014 and the coming to power of the BJP that it has become a heated issue to the extent that cow-related violence has led to mobs and protests. Since 2012, almost 30 individuals - mostly Muslim - have been killed, and numerous others injured in the resulting violence. This is primarily since Hindutva groups have sought to protect the cow as a religious symbol, and even suspicions raised about someone consuming beef have led to riots. These incidents are also rising, with at least 11 murders in 2017, and over time these have also emerged from all parts of the country. Since the BJP assumed power, there have been 76 cow-related hate crimes (when in the three previous years there had been two). Most of the victims have been Muslims followed by Dalits, and amazingly in a third of the cases, the police filed cases against the victims under cow-protection laws.

As the Human Rights Watch has noted, "Extremist Hindu groups, many claiming to be affiliated with the ruling BJP, committed numerous assaults against Muslims and other minority communities in response to rumors that minority group members sold, bought, or killed cows for beef. Instead of taking prompt legal action against the attackers, police frequently filed



complaints against the victims under laws banning cow slaughter. There were at least 38 such attacks in 2017, and 10 people were killed.”

A study by the Center for Study of Society and Secularism & Minority Rights Group International has also highlighted how the Prime Minister has often remained silent in such incidents of hate, and that increasingly cow-protection laws have become more and more stringent, noting that “Anti-cow slaughter legislation and vigilantism have become an increasingly common feature of communal violence since the election of the BJP government.” This has resulted in several incidents, including one in September 2015 in UP when a man was stoned to death by a large crowd with bricks following allegations that he was keeping beef in his home, which was also followed by many senior politicians not condemning the attack adequately, with one BJP lawmaker even calling for the prosecution of the victim’s family. Other attacks have been equally brutal, and the BJP responses equally alarming. Moreover, as the aforementioned report continues, “in almost all of the cases above, vigilantes have gone unpunished, and assault victims and their families have more frequently faced legal action under anti-cow slaughter legislation. Despite widespread acknowledgment of the rising activities of vigilantes, this has not been met with strong legal action or condemnation on the part of state officials. Furthermore, in some cases, vigilantes appear to enjoy degrees of state patronage.” Nothing could be clearer indictment of the state.

### **Love Jihad and Propaganda**

One of the interesting things about this rise of extremism in India is how it is manifested in different regions in particular ways. For instance, a state such as Kerala - otherwise known for its tolerance - has also become known for what has been called “love jihad”. Several incidents of violence against interreligious marriage have been reported, with the idea that Muslim men are converting Hindu women, and in one high-profile case, the Kerala High Court even declared the marriage illegal. While the situation took years to improve, it shows how deeply extremist thought has become embedded in state structures. So much so that there is intrusion in adult decisions of marriage since this has become part of the discourse against minorities. The report from the Center for Study of Society and Secularism & Minority Rights Group International highlights that gender has been a particularly problematic aspect of violence towards minorities,

with communal riots accompanied by systematic rapes of Muslim women, as well as notions of Muslims being a ‘demographic threat’. Again all of this has been part of BJP rhetoric, and one affiliated member has even suggested forced sterilization on Muslim and Christian communities.

### **Bans, Free Speech, and Universities**

Now free speech and affiliated democratic values are an important part of civil liberties. On the national stage, perhaps there is no better indication of the rise of extremism in India than the mob violence, rioting, threats, and bans that have affected the Indian film industry, as well as academia. Books that a few years ago would not have raised any controversies are increasingly becoming some of the most contentious issues in the new India we see today. Prime examples are a book on Hinduism by the prominent scholar Wendy Doniger, and a book on the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb by Audrey Trushke. The former faced bans and led to threats against the author for ostensibly disrespecting Hinduism, while the latter similarly led to protests for apparently depicting the emperor in a positive light. This should not be surprising to anyone who has been observing the rise of Hindutva groups in India. After all, there have been - sometimes successful - calls to re-name the names of major roads in cities such as New Delhi to reflect a more “Hindu” character, and notions such as the Taj Mahal being originally a temple have become popular. Indeed, the “Muslim” nature of the Taj Mahal, one of the most visited sites in the world, has even led to the monument being omitted from a recent official tourism booklet from the state government. Re-writing history in fact has been an important facet of the Modi government’s project, and all this is again part of the state adopting specific positions that go against free speech and expression - the essential civil liberties.

It is not surprising then that since the rise of the BJP, there have been protests and discontent at several universities in India, where students have been attacked and arrested, just for going against the Hindutva narrative of nationalism, with BJP affiliated groups showing their might on campuses. The most recent incident has been at Aligarh. And such shackles on basic freedoms are not just evident in universities. As the Human Rights Watch notes, sedition laws have been used to arrest Muslims, and there have been pressure on journalists writing about Hindu extremism. In the World Press Freedom Index, India’s position is a lowly 138, with the report

noting about India that “hate speech targeting journalists is shared and amplified on social networks, often by troll armies in Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s pay.”

### **Violence Against Minorities**

All of what I have spoken about so far is linked to violence against minorities. But it is clear that with coming to power of the current Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, we get the clearest indication of the mainstreaming of extremism at the highest political levels. The CM, after all, has made several controversial statements about Muslims and other minorities, and this has not harmed his political rise - that too in a state with some 40 million Muslims.

The Human Rights Watch reports that “Vigilante violence aimed at religious minorities, marginalized communities, and critics of the government - often carried out by groups claiming to support the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) - became an increasing threat in India in 2017. The government failed to promptly or credibly investigate the attacks, while many senior BJP leaders publicly promoted Hindu supremacy and ultra-nationalism, which encouraged further violence. Dissent was labelled anti-national, and activists, journalists, and academics were targeted for their views, chilling free expression.”

Again, minorities have been at the center of attacks due to cow vigilantism, and allegations of love jihad. While Muslims have been most readily targeted, Dalits have also faced multiple attacks. Increasingly, Christians have also been facing violence. And again, none of this is sporadic, coincidental, or simply non-state actors. Rather this is structural and systematic violence coming at the hands of state-supported if not sponsored Hindutva groups. Behind this is the ideology of “ghar wapsi” in which forced or coerced conversion is taking place - with minorities attacked for suspicions or allegations of converting Hindus. Christians have faced violence in this regard. According to Open Doors, a global charity which “monitors the treatment of Christians worldwide”, in the first six months of 2017, there were 410 reported incidents of attacks on Indian Christians, almost as many as the total for the whole of 2016 (441).” And India has been called by *The Guardian* as a country “where the practice of the faith (Christianity) is a high-risk activity”. India rose to No. 15 on the 2017 World Watch List, up from 31 in 2013, in the list compiled by Open Doors. Unsurprisingly, this has coincided with the BJP coming to power as well. As the Center for Study of Society and Secularism & Minority Rights Group

International report notes, “Recently, this violence has led to greater insecurity amongst religious minorities, in particular Muslims, some of whom have recently fled areas of Uttar Pradesh on account of rising hostility. Yet, Christians have also recently faced violence at the hands of vigilantes, who have stormed churches, armed with false accusations of forced conversion; reports of minor cases of violence against Sikhs have recently emerged as well.” It adds that in 2016, there were more than 700 incidents of communal violence, 86 killed and 2,321 injured, though the numbers are likely to be higher as many go unreported. In all this, Muslims have been the most affected.

## Conclusion

One of the key findings of the Center for Study of Society and Secularism & Minority Rights Group International report is: “Since the 2014 election victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), under the leadership of Narendra Modi, there has been a climate of rising Hindu nationalism. This has in turn seen the promotion of an increasingly exclusionary environment, reflected in the advancement of policies and legislation - such as more stringent anti-cow slaughter laws - that discriminate against religious minorities. Furthermore, this has been accompanied by an apparent escalation of rhetoric against minorities by many senior officials.”

Thus what is needed, for us and the international community, is to listen to sane voices in India - its protestors and human rights advocates, historians and activists, who have also been raising these concerns as they see their country becoming controlled by extremist elements.

These are not sporadic, coincidental incidents. This is reflective of a society facing multiple problems - problems that may be widespread all over the world. But here, we have several examples of the highest authorities either having committed the crimes, or supporting them, or ignoring them, so that they are directly and indirectly complicit in gross violation of human rights, and undermining human security and civil liberties of its citizens. This is not a state that should be given the right to claim leadership as it is both un-qualified and irresponsible.

## PRESENTATION

### **Makings of a Xenophobic India: Issues of Increasing Religious Radicalism, Political Extremism and Separatism \***

**Dr. Ejaz Akram**

*Advisor to President NDU & Former Associate Professor, LUMS*

It is a massive headache for Pakistan to deal with India. We might have made some mistakes here and there. But in the the general scheme of things, there is this wave of fascism that emanate from India which needs to be understood and tackled. There are two Indias. There are many Indias of course, but for the sake of keeping the discussion within certain parameters, only two Indias will be introduced.

There is an India which is a source of trouble, source of danger, source of violence and it spills that violence across its borders. The violence that is espoused by this element has certain intellectual backing. It has a philosophical world view. And its manifestations are Hindutva movement, Sangh Parivar and BJP, Shiv Sena and people who are hand in glove with the world Zionist elite.

Then there is a second India. This India is a part of humanity, and well-being of the people who are suffering at the hands of same policies of these people who are trying to bring violence across its borders.

These two are linked. Being a Pakistani and Muslim, one has to be loyal to his principles, loyal to entity that brought one to this earth, loyal to himself, loyal to family, to village, loyal to district, loyal to province , to country , state, nation, and also to comity of nations, the spiritual community and then to “*insaniyat*” (humanity) also. One has to be loyal on all these levels - from self to the cosmos. That is a commitment with God. One cannot go against this.

As part of “*insaniyat*”, there are so many people who are suffering from this menace that the policies of the Hindutva state unleashed to the entire region, and so one need to understand how this extremism took root in India and what its current manifestations is linked to?

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\* This is a transcription of his presentation at the seminar.

The types of extremism that are prevalent in India are not only the Hindutva movement. It is also the secular India that was there before this Hindutva movement began. It actually goes back to 1923 to Savarkar who came up with the idea of Hindutva movement, and it coincided with Shuddhi and Sanghathan movements which were started by the Arya Samaj whose foundation was laid by the British from 1857 to 1947. In almost 90 years, something happened to the Hindus. What happened is that Muslims became from rulers to the ruled, and for Hindus it was just a change of rule. It led to the construction of new identities of modernized individuals from South Asia who no longer believed in traditional Hinduism, did away with the concept of caste and sought uniformity of identity amongst the Hindus and eventually all over South Asia, including the Muslims and the Christians and the Sikhs and Jains. Now today, they believe that Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism are part of India but not Islam. This would be like the ostrich burying its head in the sand until its tail is eaten up by the lion. This is simply not true. The Hindu religion did not come from South Asia. Vedas came from Central Asia. Krishna used to sit somewhere in greater Himalaya region and meditate for one thousand years. He did not sit near Ganga and Yamuna (Jumna). Vedas came from mist of time - nobody knows the origin - about six thousand years ago. From the mist of time it came and became a religion in South Asia. The North Indians were actually the Central Asians. If they use the Israeli logic, with whom they are hand in glove with, then they do not need to actually de-Sikhize or de-Christianize India or Pakistan. It should actually go to Central Asia - Afghanistan and above. But it seeks to purify the region where origin of things does not belong to these people.

Aryan invasions from Central Asia into India began for the first time with those people later called Hindu. Then came the Huns. Then other warriors came from Central Asia settling down in India. Then, some thousand years ago, some people came, but they were Muslims. So what is the difference? The Aryan Hindus themselves actually are invaders from the North. They don't have any historical, moral, philosophical or any sort of claim to the land of India as much as the Muslims do or as much as the Christians do.

This extremism going back to Arya Samaj or Shuddhi, Sanghathan and the Hindutva movement has claims to modernism, because it is a movement of uniformity. Several scholars have noted that before the modern age, economic systems were many, including feudalism and tribal economy, but the political system was one based on empires. Today, there are many political

systems including liberal secular state or conservative secular state, but the economic system is one - capitalism, that seeks to uniformize everyone. Muslims don't believe that. Muslims might go with the concept of uniformity and demands of nationalism, but Islamic thought does not support that. Hindutva movement seeks to uniformize all population of India keeping in mind that there is no single Hinduism in India. Krishna came from North India, whereas Rama is popular in South India which actually casts a lot of doubt as to why Babri Masjid was destroyed to build a Ram temple as there is no Ram in North India which is the spiritual constituency of Krishna. And now history is being revised, but we actually know the history.

Today, India is on a very dangerous trend because Hindutva is not a religious movement, nor is it spiritual. It is an exact opposite. It is a political movement that has hurt the religion of Hinduism tremendously. The institution of caste is being practiced for the last six thousand years. For the last three thousand years it has been in a state of perversion. Long before the Muslims came to this area, caste itself had nothing to do with blood. Caste according to Hinduism is temperament of soul - that soul is interested in taking an occupation and that occupation has four stations of wisdom - it has knowledge (Brahmin), valor and honor (Kshatriyas), merchants (Vaishyas) and service providers (Shudras). If caste corresponds to any of these levels of wisdom and accordingly an occupation is taken, that is how caste is considered. A son of a Brahmin is not necessarily a Brahmin unless he proves himself a scholar and practices brahmachariya. There are many Brahmins but they don't practice brahmachariya. They have chalked out their own religion because of this movement of modernism, and modernism itself is linked with extremism because it shuns the human spirit into something narrow than it actually is.

These are some of the observations that when you look at India from much longer historical reality, it appears to be something different. Therefore, for Pakistan, the question is how to deal with this? Pakistan being a smaller country, smaller nation and from birth in a state of often under existential crisis at the hands of the policies of the Indians who are actually the enemies of Pakistan because they do not want this state to remain. They were happy to cut one half of Pakistan in 1971, and they would be jubilant to do the same again. Since 9/11, everyone has seen their policies and what they have done in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and rest of the country by supporting the infiltration from outside.

Here is the definition of the enemy. One has to be loyal to oneself, principles, nation, and humanity. At every level there exists an enemy. The people who brought about this idea of enlightenment values in Europe are now themselves manifested as Zionist elites who are not only Jewish. So there is nothing modern about religion. Religion is a tradition. Only in the last 150 years of modernity, it is seen that Jewish religion entered modern age and became Zionism. Christianity became Christian right fundamentalism; Hinduism entering the modern age from 1857 to 1947 became a monster. Islam entered a modern age and initially there were movements of reform, but very soon there was fundamentalism and very soon somebody else used the name of Islam and spearheads the groups like ISIS. Same is the case with the Buddhist monks in Myanmar. When religion and religious identities entered the modern age, they become subverted and that is why one has to understand the exact nature of modernism. It is not the same thing as modernization. Modernism is a set of ideology and it has destroyed religion in Europe. These hard elements or the stupid religion or evil religion are bending together in groups.

To wrap up, situation of the people is presented who are the enemies of the Indian people and also eventually Hindutva is going to lose. They are up against civilizations. Hindu civilization was also a civilization, but no longer remains so. With the rise of China and rise of Russia, there are now groups building up there. Eurasian Russia has gone back to its orthodox tradition. China is past Confusionism. There are so many movements of reform and resurgence in the Muslim world. China and Russia are busy in building things around the world. The countries that have been infiltrated by Zionist elite, particularly Europe and America, are busy in destroying things. These elite actually use the state power of the nations and their tax money is translated into bombs. So there is a tussle between builders and destroyers. India is part of the latter group and imbibes this ideology. Pakistan needs to play its cards now. The enemy which turned Hindutva into fascism is also present within Pakistan also. If Pakistan sleeps over it, it would be disastrous in the long run.



## PRESENTATION

### **State Failure? Analysing the Growing Economic Insecurity and Issues of Governance in India**

**Dr. Habil Christian Wagner**

*SF, German Institute for International Security Affairs*

According to Government of India, the country sees itself as the fastest growing democracy. Previous speakers have also spoken about the growth rate of Indian government in recent years. There can be a long debate about the reliability of figures, but this is a very common point in many emerging economies. What is a little bit more problematic is that the composition of GDP, which will be discussed later, is dominated heavily by the service sector, but not too much by industry. Agriculture also has a relatively high share. Some of the positive trends that the Indian government like to portray are the rise of foreign direct investment that has been seen in recent years. Many foreign companies are using the programs introduced by the Indian government to increase direct foreign investment in different sectors. One of the most positive things which will be there in the approaching election campaign by the end of this year or next year, is the improvement in the ease of doing business. When Modi government took over in 2014, India was at 130th position. Today, India has jumped thirty places and is now placed at 100th position which signals to the outside world that it has become easier for foreign companies to do business in India in long term. But a more critical view can be taken and debated which has also been going on in India.

Economic challenge is all about employment. It is all about jobs, jobs and jobs. This is not very different from other parts of the region. There was one figure that is found in 2015 that there were 2.3 million job applicants for 350 government jobs, which shows that on one hand government jobs are still very attractive, and on the other hand it shows that there are too many people who are qualified to get these jobs. There is one figure that is found in literature that Indian economy must provide at least one million jobs a month just to bring the labor market into the economy. At the moment, there are estimates that obviously the Indian government has not been able to reach this figure and 350,000 to 400,000 jobs are created which shows great level of unemployment or underemployment.

One of the bigger problem of Indian economy according to official statistics is that 86% of India's workforce is employed in informal sector. This has created lot of problems specially with the demonitization which of course has effected this part of the world to great extent. This brings us to the point where employment in different sectors is looked at. Agriculture which only has 18% of GDP provides jobs for nearly 50% of the population. This shows one big imbalance that is found in India. Industry has 25% jobs and service has only 26%. This shows that the employment question is the most pressing one. There are different movements that one could see in recent years of protests by Other Backward Class (OBC) castes in different states to get entry into state quotas are also connected to the question of employment opportunities. Modi government has launched a program "make in India". A closer look shows that the main focus is building the domestic defense industry and to turn it into a export industry in the long term. Economists can have a debate whether it is useful. What is more problematic is that since the 1990s, despite efforts by the Indian governments, manufacturing sector is stagnant at 20% of GDP. This means that on one hand GDP and economy is growing, but there is no step forward towards industrialized society as clearly indicated by the percentage of the manufacturing sector.

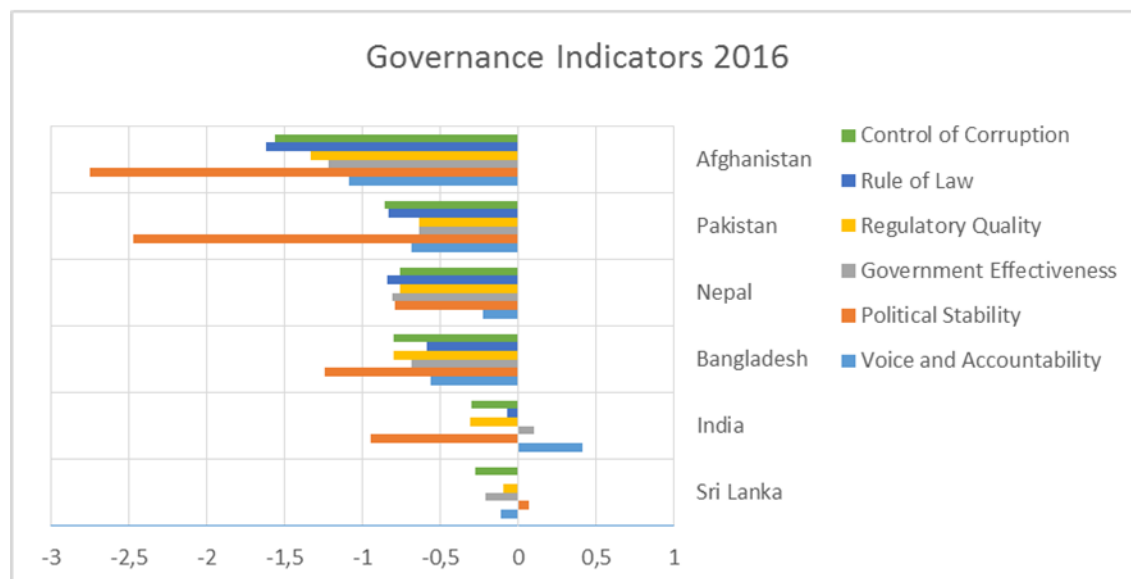
On governance issues, previous speakers have already mentioned all the statistics found in Indian national institute's websites. The main challenge of course is to provide public goods whether it is in health security or education. A point can also be made that Indian state suffers from serious challenges. First, it is underfinanced, and second it is understaffed and overregulated. It is underfinanced because the GDP to tax ratio is very low. It is among the lowest, about 16%. When compared with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), it is observed that OECD has a higher ratio of 34%. Number of people who are paying tax is less than 3%, which of course is not sufficient. There is also a huge size of black economy which is the part of the informal economy. Indian government has tried to address this issue through demonitization. Whether it was successful or not is being debated in the media.

Secondly, Indian state is understaffed, which is astonishing for a country with 1.3 billion people. There is growth in population from 846 million to 1.2 billion in about 20 years. But there is also a decrease in public sector employment, which means there are more people who need public good but less administrative capacity to deliver the goods. The size of Indian administrative service has dropped. There are many vacancies in Indian bureaucracy, though the numbers

differs at the state level and among the states. It shows there is a lack of qualified people as indicated by the educational figures. This is a serious problem in the long term because people have more demands from the political system, but state is not able to provide public goods.

As India is trying to become integrated into the global economy, the government has to pass new laws whether it is on trade, whether it is on environment issue or other things. These laws then have to be implemented. Most of the time there are serious challenges in implementation as new laws become more complicated and ends up in serious challenge in the long term to provide for public goods.

On the final point on governance issues in South Asia, India is still a better governed country in this part of the world.



India is the second country from below. Normally, the more lines on the right side, the better the country is governed. More lines on the left side, worst the situation is. The best governed country is Sri Lanka. These indicators are from the governance indicators from the World Bank . They relate to control of corruption, rule of law, regulatory quality, government effectiveness, political stability and voice and accountability. There are other challenges which are there in India besides the points already raised. There are different challenges at different levels. As the previous

speakers have also spoken about it, it is the national question about secularism and Hindutva which is not only a constant topic in Indian media, but also in the political system. The bigger problem from which every government has suffered are the employment opportunities. It is all about jobs. At the end of the day, the social question is to overcome the levels of poverty and employment opportunities which is always a big challenge.

There may be some other interesting debates on centre-state relations. With the 15th Finance Commission report which will be out in 2019, it will be seen how far those states who have better developed will be punished or will get more benefits by the Centre. This is a very important issue in India and some new cleavages may come up there and will also show the strengths of institutional systems.

## PRESENTATION

### **India's Non-Traditional Nemesis: Environmental Challenges, Issues of Energy, Food and Water Security**

**Ms. Laura Schuurmans**  
*Analyst, Jakarta*

#### **Introduction**

Over the last decade much has been said about India as a rising regional power, representing the face of the world's largest democracy, with a population of more than 1.3 billion people, or one sixth of humanity. Former American President Barack Obama even supported India's wish to bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, which would ultimately satiate the country's thirst for a global power. Some even speak of India as the world's fastest rising new great power, with the third fastest growing (nuclear) arsenal. Television commercials around the world portray the beauty of India's flourishing democracy which is home to some of the world's most beautiful Hindu temples, colorful traditional markets, and scenery's of India's endless beauty home to famous tea. The Taj Mahal is India's pride, attracting millions of tourists. India indeed has a long history of a rich and ancient civilizations where different religions cohabit side by side.

Is India really all milk and honey? Like many other countries around the world, non-traditional challenges related to environment, energy, food and water scarcity remain a challenge. Some of the weaknesses of this giant nation have often been overlooked by the world at large. Let us try to understand why you get to see only one side of the coin.

In my presentation, I will talk about two things. Firstly, I will give a brief overview of India, the wider region, and the shift of the global balance of power. Secondly, I will give some prepositions on a variety non-traditional challenges that India has been facing to meet the challenges of becoming a big power. It is also important to mention that these non-traditional challenges crosscut in myriad ways and impact India's ambition, regional stability, and global order.

## Part 1

### India and the Shift of the Global Balance of Power

Understanding the position of India in today's world order, one has to look at the wider region, its history and grievances, including relations with the United States.

#### *1. India-US Relations*

India claimed non-alignment and it actively participated in the legendary Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung (1955) in Indonesia under then President Sukarno, but it became a staunch ally of the erstwhile Soviet Union during the Cold War. Once the so-called Iron Curtain crumbled, US-India relations have gradually been warming and we witness non-alignment 2.0. The question we can ask whether this is working to the advantage of the United States to pivot or rebalance against the Asian region, and against China's rise? The US has made a wager for India because it thinks that both countries do not have divergent ideologies, and that they share basic principles of secularism. This is also fruit of highly influential Indian diaspora that stands at a staggering number of 3.9 million in the United States only, of which some have ingress in the American policy making circles/elites at different tiers.

#### *2. Sino-US Relations*

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was proclaimed in 1949, diplomatic relations between the United States and China were only restored in 1972. Since then, they have unique competitive-cooperative relations. The United States and China have different ideological underpinnings, different political and social (control) systems that have continued to clash with each other. Moreover, China's rapid rise following the 1978 opening up, and its increasing influence on the international political stage, has been considered a major threat to the United States.

#### *3. Sino-India Relations*

India and China started off cordial relations after the establishment of the two countries in 1947 and 1949 respectively. Indian narrative holds that the short but brutal Sino-India border war in the Himalayas of 1962 was a sheer betrayal of friendship. It is said that China started this war after communist China expanded its control over Tibet and the Dalai Lama fled to Dharamsala in



India where he established the Tibetan government in exile. Although relations have been warming, they remain highly suspicious of each other and both India and China are competing with each other for global power status.

#### ***4. Indo-Pakistan Relations***

After independence from the British Colonial Raj in 1947, the two countries went to war over Kashmir in 1947-48. They fought another war in 1965 and again in 1971, resulting in the Indian abetted secession of East Pakistan, today's Bangladesh. India and Pakistan are one of the world's worst antagonistic neighbors, where India considers Pakistan's appeasement and support for Islamic extremism and Islamic militancy a major threat to regional peace and security.

#### ***5. Sino-Pakistan Relations***

After the 1963 Sino-Pakistan Frontier Agreement that defines the borders in the disputed Kashmir region, relations have gradually transformed into 'all weather friendship'. The two have close relations in the fields of nuclear energy, military hardware and know-how, economic development of which the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is their latest joint project.

Samuel Huntington, in his famous work the '*Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*', has elaborated on the global shift of the balance of power in Post Cold War. China has been the catalyst for this change. Through China's rapid economic development after its reforms and opening up in 1978, it has relatively quickly acquired the status of a global player. Huntington also anticipated on closer cooperation between China and the Muslim world, and where the United States and the West are dealing with the resurgence of Islam, which, besides rapidly growing China, they consider one of the leader threats of the 21st century. Huntington also anticipated an ongoing power rivalry between the two Asian giants where India will strive to emerge, not only as an independent power center in the multipolar world, but as a counterweight to Chinese power and influence. Taking his work into account, this also explains the importance of the relations between the four powers: India, China, Pakistan and the United States.

## Conclusion

Analyzing the geopolitical dynamics in the region, one can conclude that India and the United States apparently share two common threats that both countries aim to tackle. Firstly, India has projected that it has a common goal to contain China as a rising power, and secondly, it shares the objective to curb Islamic extremism, which has been a global threat to peace and security. In this regard, to rebalance the world order, the United States has backed India in all its efforts to becoming a rising regional power. What will happen, however, if India becomes non-aligned again or enters regional alignment after playing on American fears?

## Part 2

**A brief outline of four of India's non-traditional challenges. Let us look at four internal Indian challenges to see if without addressing these, it can punch above its weight:**

### *1. Environmental Challenges*

Environmental challenges in India have a number of causes, but one of them is the rapid growth of the Indian population where an increasing number of people have been relocating to urban areas and big cities like Delhi. An estimated one third of the people are living in slums. A quarter of the total population in India is still living below the poverty line of US \$ 2 per day. Excess waste and sewage are not dealt with properly resulting in the pollution of the environment, including the River Ganges on which many Indians depend not only for a bath, but also for drinking water. The vast majority of Indians depend on the country for its immediate needs, and environmental challenges including pollution brought by the domestic industry (factories) and coal in particular which is used as an energy resource add to this problem. Car emissions in large cities, which are home to millions of people, also add to increasing environmental challenges in the urban areas. Not limited to India only, two of the worst polluted cities in the world are New Delhi and Beijing. In 2018, the total population of New Delhi and the larger metro area exceeds 26 million people. After Tokyo, it is the second largest in the world, which is expected to continue to grow.

Siobhan Heanue, an Australian *ABC News* journalist reported:

“...Before heading off on a foreign assignment, journalists take a course about working in hostile environments, learning about things like trauma first aid, weapons effects, and how to survive earthquakes, floods and civil unrest ... but I had no idea that the most hostile thing I would encounter upon moving to India would be the air I’d have to breathe every day...”

In November 2017, *The Washington Post* reported:

“...New Delhi’s air quality consistently ranks among the worst in the world, but the city’s air pollution last week registered 10 times worse than in Beijing, which is notorious for its smog...”

The *Times of India* reported:

“...According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) these pollutants are known are suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects, such as reproductive effects or birth defects, or adverse environmental effects...”

## **2. Energy Challenges**

To meet the fast growing economic development of its large population, India is the world’s third largest importer of crude oil (9.1%), compared to China who is the world’s largest oil importer (17.3%). As India has been striving to lift millions of people from the poverty levels through economic development, to meet these energy shortages, it highly depends on imported crude oil and gas. Until today, however, at least 300 million people, or one quarter of the population, lives without access to electricity and another estimated 250 million people only have access to electricity for as little as three to four hours a day. Drawing a brief comparison, China has achieved full electrification for its population of 1.4 billion, even in its remotest villages. While Modi’s administration has pledged to increase the electricity supply, this again will have a negative impact on the environment. Presently, India is the world’s third largest emitter of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases (China is the largest emitter of carbon dioxide). To provide electricity to its entire population, besides this energy challenge, India will be faced with increasing environmental challenges to counter climate change, which has also resulted in increasing obstacles for the world at large.

### ***3 & 4. Food and Water Challenges***

A quarter of the Indian population still lives under the poverty line of US \$2 a day. Since China began its market reforms in the 1970s, it has lifted more than 800 million people out of poverty, slashing the rate from nearly 90% in 1981 to under 2% as measured by the World Bank's latest spending benchmark.

The United Nations reported as follows:

“With nearly 195 million undernourished people, India shares a quarter of the global hunger burden. Nearly 47 million or 4 out of 10 children in India are not meeting their full human potential because of chronic under nutrition or stunting. Stunting has consequences such as diminished learning capacity, poor school performance, reduced earnings and increased risks of chronic diseases. The impacts are multi-generational as malnourished girls and women often give birth to low birth-weight infants. There has also been an increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in children and adolescents in India, which has life-long consequences of non-communicable diseases in adulthood.”

The government has large food security and anti-poverty programs, but there are critical gaps in terms of inclusion and exclusion errors. Women and girls are particularly disadvantaged. Despite the achievement of national food self-sufficiency, new challenges have emerged: Slowing agriculture growth, climate change, land degradation and shrinking bio-diversity. Large tracts of farmlands in India have become barren due to imbalanced fertiliser use and excessive use of a single fertiliser, urea. In India, 128 million people still lack safe water. Roughly half of India's population, a staggering 522 million, practice open defecation. The World Bank estimates that 21% of communicable diseases in India are linked to unsafe water and the lack of hygiene practices. Further, more than 500 children under the age of five die each day of diarrhoea in India alone.

### **Conclusion**

Both India and China are competing with each other for regional and global power. While the United States aims to contain China, India, on the other hand, has been favored by all possible means, and the world has often closed its eyes to the internal problems and non-traditional

security issues the country has been faced with. While environmental issues, energy shortages, and food and water scarcity are not limited to India only, but this is a general phenomenon in the developing world, this does not mean that those obstacles should be ignored by the world at large or by India in particular. While India has continued to invest in hard power and its military needs to acquire global and regional power status (worth analyzing but outside the context of this paper), in the twenty first century, India should make ongoing efforts to lift the millions of Indian from the poverty levels. The award-winning movie *Slumdog Millionaire* is one such example portraying the extreme poverty throughout the country. Having said this, Singapore journalist Ravi Vellor, and author of *'Rising India, Fresh Hope New Fears'*, is of the opinion that this movie is made from a western perspective, and that this does not portray the true picture of India. Throughout the years and decades, India has made significant progress to meet some of the needs of the fast growing population. After all, healthcare, education, poverty reduction are indeed actively addressed. Whether or not India will become a rising regional power with ultimately a permanent seat in the UN Security Council to obtain the status of a big power nation, this all depends on which side of the coin you look; the bright side of India and the way it has successfully marketed itself over the past decades that appears to enable them to acquire big power status, or the other side of the coin that portrays a country which has still been faced with plenty of obstacles to overcome in future decades. A further comparative study of China and India, the world's two most populous nations, to determine its successes and failures on a variety of aspects may be worth exploring.

## PRESENTATION

### **A Fragile India: Impact Assessment and Recommendations for Pakistan**

**Dr. Muhammad Mujeeb Afzal**

*Assistant Professor, Quaid-i-Azam University*

After independence, India created itself and the nation-building process on the basis of composite culture, secularism and liberal democracy. In composite cultures, there is unity on the basis of civilization and geography. Secularism was interpreted as spirituality in which the individual and group right were both accepted. And state was not treated as neutral. But whenever there was clash between individual and a group's rights, the state always intervened on the behalf of the individual. In a liberal democracy they have established a ritual of elections in which elite consensus was created and perpetuated. In economics, it was essentially socialism that was converted into mixed economy that combined private property and centralized planning. In 1984, India thought that it had achieved the basic purpose of developing of essential industry. So it started to liberalize itself. Essentially, all these processes of composite culture, secularism and liberal democracy was interpreted and functioned in two major concepts. First was majoritarianism. Whatever was the concept, it was interpreted in the environment of 80% Hindu majority. The second concept was minoritarianism where minority was accepted and its right to promote its own communal right was also recognized. Thus, a dual identity was created. You were not just a Muslim but an Indian Muslim, Indian Sikh, or Indian Punjabi. This dual space was created where on the one hand you were Indian, and on the other hand there was space for your locality. Both identities coexisted.

Hindu nationalism created an alternative myth based on the supremacy of Brahmanical ethos and the fear of the other. It created a hierarchical social order based on communities which protected the privileged social position of the Brahman and created subordinate positions for others. The result was Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that promoted the cause of the Hindutva. Essentially very close to the capitalist system as opposed to the socialist system. They started these movements that would end the influence of the Muslim past.



Now, India has competing definitions for the self - secular composite India and Hindu India, along with regional India and a caste-based India. The secular India identity remained dominant, but is not being challenged by the Hindu nationalism.

India has survived and prospered economically because of three essential strengths it has. One is that the elite that is ethnically diverse, but share class culture and caste that unified them on the basis of fear of socialism and fear of further partition. The elite has created a consensus that reflected in the second strength, that is the creation and sustenance of the post colonial structure of political and bureaucratic model. It was legitimized on the basis of regular election. It is the electoral behavior that sustains the class and caste structure of India. Thirdly, it is the lack of foreign threats or interference. There was a sharp clash between India and China in 1962. Other than that, even China has not shown any interest in exploiting India's internal affairs. So Maoist movement in India never received Chinese support. India has also avoided interference in the Tibet issue. Pakistan does not have the capacity to interfere in India's internal affairs. India has also given up its non-aligned status and is not ready to participate in international game. Example of this are Indo-US strategic deal, the India-US-Japan-Australia alliance which is gearing up against China.

Hindu nationalist view Pakistan linked with its domestic politics. It is the justification for the creation of Hindu India promoting the logic that Pakistan is for Muslims and India is for Hindus. It is a symbol of Hindu India.

Its new South Asian policy is to sustain tension on Kashmir, no talks with Pakistan, but rather demand should be made that Pakistan should accept the new strategic realities and accept its subordinate position in the region. More internal conflicts make more assertive attitudes towards Pakistan. Close to elections, India creates hype at the domestic level and assure the Hindu constituency that India is emerging as a great power.

What should Pakistan do? Pakistan needs to preserve its autonomy and middle power status if it is to sustain its position. It cannot accept its subordinate position, otherwise it will become irrelevant at the international level. As for recommendations for Pakistan, it needs to put its house in order politically and economically. We need to have access to technology. We need to define our principal position, but be ready for a flexible response. We will continue to have

China, Russia and Muslim world for access to modern technology. But we need to be open and be attractive to the US and European Union to have a balanced access to modern technology.

## QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

**Q:** We need to approach the topic of population with sensitivity, maybe we can get some religious scholars on board?

**Q:** Given the terrible state of human rights and civil liberties, why is it still that India, for the outside world, is one of the largest democracies, it is seen as 'India rising' ?

**A:** The outside world sees India's soft power. However, Pakistanis are a little more cognizant of the realities within India. It is through more research and reading that we can be aware of the facts on ground.

**Q:** Is India a pretentious power or a rising power. If so, whether it is an economic power or a military power? Can China play a role in the region vis-a-vis its One Belt One Road (OBOR) concept and China's emerging policy of open arms policy towards building relationships in the neighborhood, towards building peace for development.

**A:** India has aspirations to be a major power. But to be recognized as a major power, it first has to be recognized as a regional power. In order to be recognized as a regional power, it has to overcome the disputes it has with neighboring states. Kashmir is one such dispute that it needs to resolve. India will not be able to emerge from the confines of the region and act as a major power if it cannot resolve its disputes with neighbors.

India did not take part in the Belt and Road Initiative. It was conspicuous in its absence from the meeting that China hosted in May 2017 where more than 60 countries participated. India also has objections to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor on flimsy grounds. It seems at the moment India is not interested in joining China in any regional connectivity projects.

**Q: Why is it that Pakistan has to run to US, Russia or China to save it? Can you please explain?**

**A:** The tone of the question is extremely negative. It is not an accurate description of what is happening that Pakistan is running all over the place to save its tail. It is true that Pakistan is between a rock and a hard place. Pakistan has not even begun to play the cards that it will have to play in the future. So if you compare Pakistan with Sweden, we have a different situation altogether. But if you compare Pakistan with a state like Yugoslavia then it is a very resilient state. With the new outlook that we will have to very soon imbibe, it will be made up of some modern elements, including our Chinese and Russian experience. Secondly, the improvement of our system of thought, the art, culture, knowledge and everything that makes us. Once these two elements are combined, it will put us at a path where we can be confident.

**Q: The Indian political scene, right from its independence has been dominated by the North. Is there any possibility in the future that political leadership comes from the South and it may have a different, less confrontational, dynamics with Pakistan?**

**A:** As far as the identities of Pakistanis and South Indians are concerned, there is not any friction. But the problem is that South Indian Hindus share New Delhi's apparatus of foreign policy making. But if they became large in numbers in political leadership, there is a possibility of a breakthrough in relations with Pakistan.

**Q: There are many paths for India to become a regional power. One such road goes through Tibet. Can China play any role through the Tibet Glacier in the halt to India's rise to power ?**

**A:** As far as water flows of rivers are concerned, India is a lower riparian of China, as Pakistan is lower riparian of India. Denying water to a country is not a good policy. So it is unlikely that China will deny any water supplies to India.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS BY SESSION CHAIR

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador (R) Inam-ul-Haque said that we had discussions on declining human security and civil liberties in India, Hindu religious radicalism and extremism taking hold in the Indian society, separatist uprisings in India including Naxalites, economic deprivation of large minorities of Indian citizens, that was mentioned by the Chairman ISSI and another speaker when talking of the poverty line of India of US\$2 a day or about 190 Rupees. The poverty line is much more. It is that, according to Indian writers, including Arundhati Roy and Pankaj Mishra, more than 800 million people still live below the poverty line. So the UN figures may be different, but the Indian economists and the writers have a different take on this.

We also spoke of governance failures, ecological disasters in the making, food and water issues and energy. The part of this exercise in my view was not to deliberate the achievements of India in the past 70 years, their continuing to remain a democratic country despite difficulties and they are emerging as a power, as an economic power in the world. It was not to score propaganda points or to take pot shots at the mistakes or the miseries of a neighboring country and its people. Nor was it intended, nor was the seminar intended to set in a judgment on state and societal failures in India.

It would not be appropriate to drive any satisfaction from referencing errors of policy or judgment in our neighboring country. Nor do we wish to cast any aspersions or throw cold water on Indian claims of rapid growth and progress which are well-established. We do believe however, that long and premature claims of greatness or world power status should be accepted at face value and need scrutiny and analysis. The intention of this academic discussion has been to identify the problems confronting India, a much larger country than ours, which lays claims to be accepted as a major power to percolate lessons for Pakistan. We may see where India is going wrong so that we do not follow that line or that course of action and avoid the pitfalls into which India might have fallen. That is why the last speaker of the seminar discussed lessons for Pakistan to be learned from this discussion.

This was a seminar limited to discussing developments in our one neighboring country. However, we must also recognize that there are certain trends like xenophobia for example or fascistic tendencies which are emerging in many western countries, including the US. In fact, the

former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has recently written a book called '*Fascism Evolved*' warning that the US might be falling into the trap of fascism. There is also a strong lurch to the right practically every where, particularly in India, and perhaps in Pakistan as well. This is a much wider phenomenon and can impact any societies and perhaps we should think in a larger context and not merely confining it to India and Indian xenophobia or Indian fascist tendencies. Let me note also that both India and Pakistan are developing countries and share economic and social problems faced by Third World countries in general. We would have succeeded in the seminar, in organizing this seminar if we begin to examine the extent of the problems that we discussed today are facing us as well, and could be pushing us in wrong directions.

Now to the questions that whether India is a major power or pretends to be a major power, or to be recognized as a major power, it first of all has to be recognized as a regional power. In order to be recognized as regional power, it has to overcome the disputes that it has with its neighboring states. And as long as it does not resolve those disputes, and Kashmir is amongst those major disputes that India confronts, India will not be able to emerge from the confines of the region and to begin to act on the world stage as a major power. So perhaps India should look towards the region before they aspire to be a major country in the world.

To the second question that what role China can play in bringing together India and Pakistan, and BRI was mentioned in that context. I am sure that India has not participated in the BRI and its absence was conspicuous in the meeting that China had held in which more than 60 countries had participated. Recently, at the Wuhan summit between Mr. Xi Jin Ping and Mr. Modi, there was no mention of BRI by Mr. Modi unlike everyone else. India has also expressed opposition to CPEC on flimsy grounds. So it would appear to me that India is not interested in promoting economic activity in the world, and if it was not interested in promoting any economic activity by China, it would not be interested in China mediating between Pakistan and India, particularly as it regards Pakistan a strategic partner to China.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN ISSI

During the session, the gist of all the discussion is that while India does have the requisites of becoming a major power, but it does not have the prerequisites to be one at the moment. It has a large population, large economy and growing military power. The policies that India has been following domestically and internationally do not portend that India will be a regional or global power anytime soon.



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