

SOUTH ASIA

A publication of the Institute of South Asian Studies

MICA (P) 128/04/2010



A 'New' Japan and Possible Implications for Japan-India Relations

In This Issue

A 'New' Japan and Possible Implications for Japan-India Relations
Indian Newspapers: The Revolution Continues
Afghanistan after the Elections
Nepal: Whither the Peace Process
Counter-Terrorism in Pakistan: The Next Steps

Contents

Cover Story

- A 'New' Japan and Possible Implications for Japan-India Relations

Feature Stories

- Indian Newspapers: The Revolution Continues
- Afghanistan after the Elections
- Nepal: Whither the Peace Process
- Counter-Terrorism in Pakistan: The Next Steps

An Eye on South Asia

- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Maldives
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Sri Lanka

Corporate News

- New Researchers
- New Administrative Staff

Publications & Programmes

- Latest Books
- Publications
- Events

Editorial Information

South Asia is a newsletter of the Institute of South Asian Studies. You may send your comments to:

The Editor
South Asia
Institute of South Asian Studies
469A Bukit Timah Road
#07-01, Tower Block
Singapore 259770
Tel : (65) 6516 4054
Fax : (65) 6776 7505
Email : isasnewsletter@nus.edu.sg

No part of this newsletter should be published without the consent of the Editor, South Asia.

Director's Message



South Asia enters a new decade amidst several opportunities and challenges. Led by India, the largest economy in the region, economic growth in most of the region has rebounded strongly after a year-long economic downturn. There is growing optimism that India will return to its high growth trajectory in the coming quarters. Bangladesh's economic performance has continued to remain satisfactory despite the global financial crisis and, projections regarding the economy are distinctly upbeat. Sri Lanka's near term economic prospects look bright following an end to prolonged ethnic hostilities and reconstruction initiatives.

Most of the region appears to be enjoying the much-desired political stability. The United Progress Alliance (UPA) government in India has hardly encountered any major political challenge since its re-election in May 2009. In more recent months, however, Maoist violence is threatening to emerge as a major threat to internal security. The past one year following the Parliamentary elections in Bangladesh has also witnessed a peaceful political environment. Peaceful conclusion of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Sri Lanka is expected to consolidate the process of economic recovery and ethnic reintegration. The presidential election in Afghanistan has kept Hamid Karzai in office albeit amidst controversies. American military presence in Afghanistan is expected to increase. Whether this will introduce new complexities in the strategic dynamics of the region remains to be seen.

The sharp improvement in India-Bangladesh relations following the Bangladeshi Prime Minister's trip to India augurs well for the region. It is expected that Nepal and Bhutan will also benefit from the wider regional cooperation efforts emanating from the Dhaka-Delhi engagements. India's relationships with key extra-regional actors such as Japan and the United States (US) are also seen to be improving as is noticeable from the positive impressions gathered following the visit of the Japanese Prime Minister to India and the Indian Prime Minister's visit to the US.

South Asia, however, continues to face critical challenges. People in Nepal await the restoration of the peace process and unveiling of a new constitution for guaranteeing democratic rights and a better economic future. The problems in Pakistan continue to remain complex. While the war on terror remains the key focus of the government, the ruling establishment is struggling to cope with internal friction between different stakeholders. The Supreme Court's ruling on the National Reconciliation Ordinance providing legal amnesty to significant political and government personalities on corruption charges has created considerable pressure on the government.

ISAS continues monitoring the developments in the region and those beyond its borders that may have implications for the region. In order to sharpen and streamline its research agenda, the institute has grouped its research efforts into five thematic clusters: Economics and Trade Policy; Multilateral and International Linkages; Politics and Governance; Security; and South Asia and Economic Change.

As in the past, ISAS has also been organising several events highlighting the developments, issues and priorities in the region. The high-profile, 'Singapore Symposium', held in New Delhi in December 2009 explored possibilities of cooperation between India and Singapore in the fields of education, infrastructure and governance. Other notable events in recent months include the ISAS flagship annual conference and a workshop on prospects of greater engagement between China and India organised jointly with the East Asian Institute.

We hope you enjoy the coverage in this issue of the newsletter. As always, we look forward to your comments and suggestions.

Tan Tai Yong

A 'New' Japan and Possible Implications for Japan-India Relations

Sinderpal Singh
Research Fellow
Institute of South Asian Studies

Overall, in the nuclear field, both on the NPT (and consequently on civilian nuclear trade), and the CTBT, bilateral relations have been given a boost in the recent months since the DPJ came to power.

The victory of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in the Japanese elections in August 2009 signalled a potential "revolution" in Japan's domestic and foreign policies.

Much has happened since the DPJ came to power, with some implications for Japan-India relations. The rest of this piece sketches the significance of some of these events within the context of four areas.

Climate Change and Copenhagen

As part of its approach to the Copenhagen Summit, Japan's new government had earlier made a commitment to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 25 per cent by the year 2020 from 1990 levels. This is a considerable increase in comparison to the eight per cent target pledged by the earlier Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government. In real terms, this is a significant pledge for a country which is the fifth largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Before the Copenhagen Summit, Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh



had publicly "agreed to work together in a positive and constructive way on the climate change issue", with India, announcing on the eve of the summit, a pledge to cut its carbon intensity by 25 per cent by 2020, compared to 2005 levels.

India, together with China and the United States (US), played a leading role in formulating the final agreement reached in the Copenhagen Summit in December 2009. Clearly, there is a variation in approach between India and Japan on this issue. India, together with China, has taken the position that major developed economies like Japan should commit to significantly deeper cuts in greenhouse emissions on the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities". Prime Minister Hatoyama, on the other hand, recently rejected a request from the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,

for Japan to act to meet its ambitious greenhouse gas emission target unconditionally, saying "Tokyo needs an international framework covering all major emitters to do so". The next climate change summit is scheduled to take place in Mexico at the end of 2010. But, it is unclear at this moment how much political capital the DPJ government will invest into nudging "major emitters" into making legally binding deeper emission pledges.

The Nuclear Dimension

The nuclear dimension has been a significant factor in relations between Japan and India. Japan suspended all political exchanges with India and froze all economic assistance for a period of close to three years when India conducted its nuclear tests in 1998, and Tokyo publicly condemned India's nuclear tests in the harshest of tones. But, over time, Japan-India relations have

improved, with India's nuclear programme casting less of a shadow on bilateral relations.

The DPJ era, initially at least, seemed to spell new difficulties for bilateral ties in the nuclear field. Significantly for India, the DPJ's policy manifesto represented the US-India civilian nuclear agreement as sending "the wrong message" to states like Iran and North Korea. In this, it seemed to share the US President Barack Obama administration's broad stress on the importance of bringing more countries under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as part of a global pact on nuclear weapon and technology proliferation. Recent developments, however, show a possible softening of Japan's line on the NPT. The report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), co-chaired by Japan with Australia and released in Tokyo on 15 December 2009 recommends the establishment of a parallel nuclear non-proliferation system for non-NPT states like India. In this proposed parallel system, for states that are not signatories to the NPT, "provided they satisfy strong objective criteria demonstrating commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation, and sign up to specific future commitments in this respect, these states should have access to nuclear materials and technology for civilian purposes on the same basis as an NPT member". The ICNND proposals could provide an avenue for Japan to commence civilian nuclear trade with India since the Japanese nuclear industry, with support from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, has been placing significant pressure on the government over the years to allow Japanese companies to participate in India's nuclear programme.

Even the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is gradually becoming less of an obstacle to bilateral relations in light of recent developments. During his recent trip to India, Prime Minister Hatoyama had publicly asked India to sign the CTBT. In response Prime Minister Singh outlined India's position and stated that "should the US and China ratify the CTBT, a new situation will emerge". This effectively defers, into the medium future, the issue of the CTBT in this bilateral relationship by shifting the onus of ratifying the treaty onto the US and China. Overall, in the nuclear field, both on the NPT (and

consequently on civilian nuclear trade) and the CTBT, bilateral relations have been given a boost in the recent months since the DPJ came to power.

Economic Cooperation

Economic relations between Japan and India have been growing steadily in recent years. Bilateral trade has nearly doubled from US\$5.4 billion in 2004-05 to US\$10.9 billion in 2008-09. Direct investment from Japan to India has also grown rapidly from US\$126 million in 2004-05 to more than US\$1 billion during April-November 2009-10. Japan is currently the fifth largest source country for foreign direct investment in India. Additionally, in December 2006, Japan and India agreed to initiate negotiations for a bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Though the EPA has gone through twelve rounds of negotiations, it is yet to be finalised. Negotiations on the EPA are ongoing.

The Japanese government is also a major partner in what would be India's largest infrastructural project, the Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC). The DFC will involve building a 3,300 km railway network exclusively for freight movement, with two freight corridors, from Mumbai to Delhi and West Bengal to Punjab respectively. Prime Minister Hatoyama has indicated that his government places great importance in this project, urging Prime Minister Singh to implement the projects "at the earliest".

In the economic sphere, Japan-India relations do not appear to have deviated in any meaningful fashion. Both sides seem keen to pursue the finalisation of the EPA. The political will on both sides does not seem to be wavering on this count. Similarly, with the DFC, the new Japanese government seems committed to move ahead with pledges made by the earlier government.

Strategic-Political-Military Ties

One of the major symbols of closer relations in recent years was the release of the "Joint Statement on the Advancement of the Strategic and Global Partnership between Japan and India" in 2008. One of the central elements of this joint statement referred to developing common approaches to various regional and global institutions and global issues like terrorism and world trade. In the

security-military sphere, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces (SDF) also participated in the "Malabar 07-2" exercises hosted by India. Coast guards from both countries have also participated in joint anti-piracy exercises since 2000.

Such Japanese efforts appeared to derive from its uneasiness with China's growing economic and consequently, strategic-political power. However, the DPJ's initial position on China appears to be appreciably different. It aims to build closer relations with China, rejecting what it sees as earlier attempts by certain sections, in both Tokyo and Washington, to contain China. It also aims to build a more "equal" association with its traditional military partner, the US. Prime Minister Hatoyama's recent proposal at the East Asian Summit (EAS) of a future East Asian Community (EAC), though, includes India, by virtue of the latter being part of the EAS process.

Prime Minister Hatoyama's summit meeting with Prime Minister Singh in New Delhi in December 2009 has been largely seen as a signal that the DPJ wants to continue and deepen the strategic-political engagement its predecessor governments had forged with India. During his visit – designed to fulfil a 2006 bilateral commitment to hold an annual summit meeting – both sides agreed on action plans to hold regular vice ministerial-level dialogues on foreign policy and defence matters, as well as maritime security dialogues to safeguard the passage of commercial ships in the Indian Ocean. This summit meeting has largely assuaged fears in certain quarters in New Delhi about the commitment of the DPJ government to building on the momentum in strategic-political ties forged with earlier Japanese governments. In this case at least, there is discernible relief that a "revolution" in the Japanese policy is not imminent.

Much of the world has been watching, with anticipation, how the DPJ government will implement its "revolution" in Japanese politics. In terms of Japan-India relations, despite earlier fears, the DPJ government now seems largely very keen to continue with past policy. In that respect, there is now much optimism for the future of this bilateral relationship under a DPJ government. ■

Indian Newspapers: The Revolution Continues

Robin Jeffrey
Visiting Research Professor
Institute of South Asian Studies

India's newspaper revolution continues. But as the rewards become greater and the stakes higher, age-old questions of ethics acquire a new magnitude.

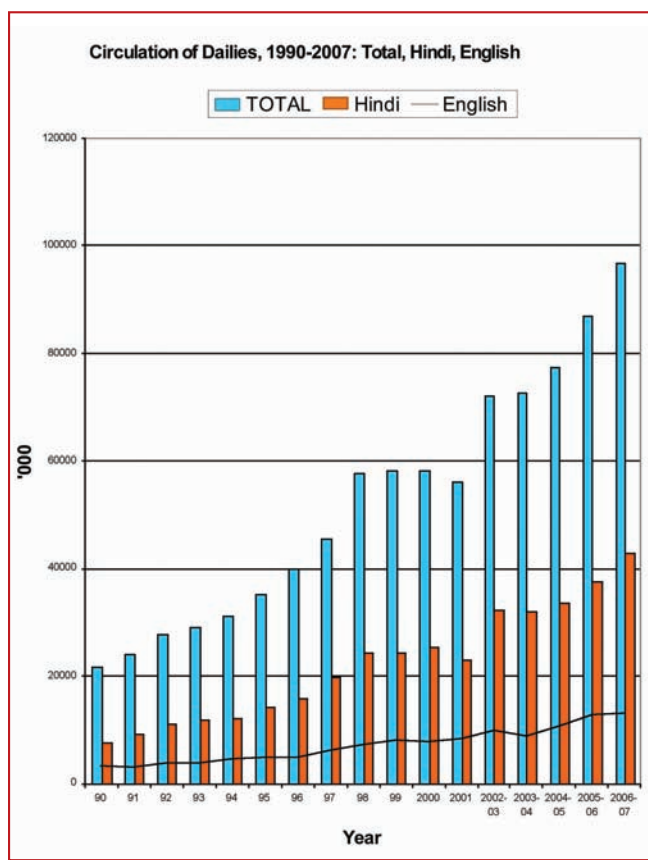
The Parliamentary elections in May 2009 generated a host of charges about the use of newspaper influence to extract large sums of money from desperate candidates and political parties.

the fact that Indian-language newspapers are now regarded as key players in the power-and-influence game. Twenty years earlier that game was chiefly seen as "English only."

Explosive increases in daily newspaper circulations (in 13 major languages and 11 different scripts) are the essence of India's newspaper revolution. Between 2000 and 2007, the figures of the Registrar of Newspapers for India indicate that the circulation of daily newspapers increased by 66 per cent – to more than 95 million copies a day (Figure 1). In the West, daily newspaper circulations fell in the first five years of the twenty-first century – by 10 per cent in the United Kingdom (UK), eight per cent in Europe as a whole and four per cent in the United States (US). In North America and the UK, newspapers close; in India, newspaper chains open centres in smaller towns off the beaten track.

The newspaper revolution began when Mrs Gandhi's "emergency" ended in 1977. Two things happened. First, a thirst for information, pent up after 19 months of censorship, spurred journalists and owners: it was an opportunity to make money or build a career, sometimes both. Second, the arrival of cheap computers liberated Indian scripts. In the days of metal type, it could take 900 individual letter-shapes to do justice to a script like Devanagari (in which the national language, Hindi, is written) or Malayalam (the language of the state of Kerala). Typography was limited; production was slow. But once computer software was married to the offset press the making of a letter was no longer a problem for metallurgy. Words could be composed on a computer, produced in many different fonts and printed in thousands of copies from an offset plate

Figure 1



Source: *Press in India* (New Delhi: Registrar of Newspapers for India, for relevant years).

P. Sainath in *The Hindu* (26 October 2009) summed up many of the charges, which were further explored in *The Hoot* online in November 2009. At the core are allegations that major newspapers, especially in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, sold favourable coverage at a high price – the “advertorial” carried to its logical conclusion. “Their poll-period take,” Sainath wrote, “is estimated to be in hundreds of millions of rupees.”

There is nothing new in journalists being on the take or in newspapers paddling their proprietor's canoes. Newspaper owners

have interests, and their newspapers often reflect those interests. Among those interests is profit, which can be gleaned in many ways, some of which do not necessarily fit with heroic legends of a free press. What is new in India is the magnitude of the sums allegedly changing hands, and

made by photography. Indian scripts were set free.

In 1979, daily newspaper circulations in Hindi, spoken by about 40 per cent of Indians, exceeded those of English dailies (used by no more than five per cent of the population) for the first time. Today, nine of India's 13 big languages have daily newspaper circulations larger than that of Australia (i.e., more than 2.9 million copies a day). Even Assamese, the smallest of the 13 languages, claimed sales of 600,000 papers a day in 2007. Hindi, the national language, was selling more than 40 million copies a day, an increase of 65 per cent in seven years.

Politics and capitalism have propelled the newspaper revolution. As a growing proportion of India's people became caught up in political and social organisations – the “emergency” of 1975-7, for example, dragged many people into political awareness – a desire for information grew. This process was first seen in the state of Kerala, for generations the most literate corner of India, where newspaper

newspaper circulations upward is consumer capitalism and the advertising that is inseparable from it. In the 1980s, as constraints on production of consumer goods diminished, manufacturers sought to push their products into new markets – smaller towns and the countryside. Proprietors of Indian-language newspapers, which until then had received only a paltry share of a small national advertising expenditure, offered ways of reaching new customers who did not use English. To win lucrative national advertisements from major brands, newspaper proprietors looked for new readers in untouched localities. Incentives to do this increased with the “liberalisation” of the Indian economy from 1991.

The spread of television has cut into newspapers' share of the advertising cake. But the cake has grown so mightily that for the past 15 years there has been enough for everyone. Indeed, in the 1990s, the expenditure on advertising in India was estimated to have grown by an average of 30 per cent a year. This growth was propelled by an explosion of commercial

...Indian-language newspapers are transforming India. As the advance guard of capitalism, they have carried consumerism into the countryside, and along with it, a missionary zeal to teach people about the joys of advertising...

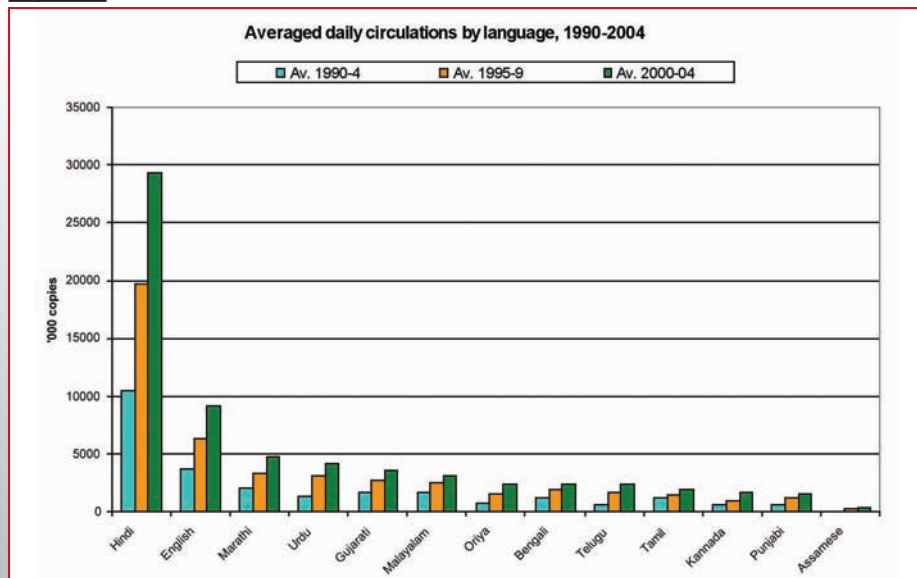
combined. “English” scores so well because it acts as a proxy to identify the wealthiest section of the population, in front of whose eyes the biggest-spending advertisers want to put their products.

There are two views about the social and political consequences of this multi-language newspaper revolution. One contends that the growth of a number of big dailies, publishing in local languages from many different centres, fragments a public sphere that was once nationally focused and broad-viewed. It has been replaced, the argument goes, by fragmented, consumer-oriented public spheres – in the plural – dedicated to petty local events and profits for proprietors.

A different view holds that though the vast growth is driven by consumer capitalism, it nevertheless brings to remote towns and villages the capacity for their people to make themselves heard – to talk back – as never before. Some analysts argue that as well as advertising and consumerism, increasing political and social action in small-town and rural India has been crucial in propelling the spread of newspapers. People buy newspapers because they have political and social interests and want information about those interests.

For now at least, television also appears to aid newspaper sales. Two things may explain this. First, TV is seldom able to cover local news in the way newspapers can. Thus big dailies such as Dainik Jagran and

Figure 2



Source: *Press in India* (New Delhi: Registrar of Newspapers for India, for relevant years).

penetration reached levels in the 1960s that other parts of India are only approaching today. Kerala was home in the twentieth century to profound social change and fierce political rivalry between Communists and anti-Communists; every interest ran a newspaper.

The other bullock in the cart that has pulled

television; today an estimated 120 million Indian households have a television. On such calculations, about half of India sleeps each night in a place with a TV set.

In the twenty-first century, print still secures about half of advertising expenditure, divided roughly 50:50 between English-language print and all 13 of the major Indian languages

Dainik Bhaskar in the Hindi region or Eenadu in Telugu or Malayala Manorama and Mathrubhumi in Malayalam publish from 20 or more centres. This enables them to supply readers with coverage rich in local reports, pictures, entertainment and scandal. Second, fleeting references to an occurrence on television appear to provoke a desire to know more, which newspapers are able to satisfy.

The first indication that this happy relationship for newspaper publishers may be coming to an end is in Tamil Nadu. There, newspaper circulations have grown, but not so strongly as in other regions, and Tamil daily circulations (2.7 million in 2007) are exceeded by every language except

Kannada, Punjabi and Assamese (Figure 2). A reason may lie in the fact that Tamil Nadu has the greatest television penetration of any Indian state, partly a result of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government's promise to put colour television sets in the homes of the poor. It claimed to have distributed 300,000 sets by 2009 with a further 400,000 sets to be distributed in coming months. If global experience is a guide, such wide television penetration – and the habits it generates – ultimately erode the popularity of newspapers.

Journalists who supply Indian-language newspapers are often poorly paid and never made full employees of the newspapers

they work for. Training too is often scant. Yet there are still plenty of stories that uphold legendary newspaper ideals of brave reporters taking risks – sometimes ending even in murder – to get dangerous stories before the public.

Whatever their failings, Indian-language newspapers are transforming India. As the advance guard of capitalism, they have carried consumerism into the countryside, and along with it, a missionary zeal to teach people about the joys of advertising – whether for brides, grooms, real estate, political support or livestock. They have also, at their best, highlighted problems and injustice that in the past would have been ignored. ■

Fifth International Conference on South Asia



Law Minister Shanmugam delivering his keynote address at the conference.

The Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) successfully organised its Fifth International Conference on South Asia on 4 November 2009 in Singapore. Entitled, “*South Asia: Beyond the Global Financial Crisis*”, the conference attracted about 170 participants from the diplomatic community, government agencies, academic institutions, and financial and business communities.

Giving an “outsider’s perspective”, Singapore’s Law Minister K. Shanmugam said that there were political and social realities which had to be recognised in the make-up of the one-billion-strong India. Responding to a member of the audience, Mr Shanmugam said that even though India should not be judged using normal benchmark, New Delhi had to understand that it would be judged by those standards if it wanted to be a global player.

During the plenary sessions, speakers from South Asia and other parts of the world shared their insights and perspectives on socio-economic and political issues in South Asia, including the role of financial institutions; South Asia’s economic integration; South Asia and extra-regional economies; governance; education; environmental challenges; conflicts, extremism and terrorism. The speakers included Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar, Chairman, South Asia Foundation-India, and former Minister of *Panchayati Raj* (Rural Local Self-Government), India; Mr Sartaj Aziz, Vice-Chancellor, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore and former Federal Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Affairs, and Foreign Affairs, Pakistan; Dr Atiq Rahman, Executive Director, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, and Dr Dayan Jayatilaka, former Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the United Nations.

ISAS is in the process of publishing the conference proceedings.



Participants listening attentively to a panel discussion.

Afghanistan after the Elections

Shahid Javed Burki
Visiting Senior Research Fellow
Institute of South Asian Studies



The lesson that elections do not produce democratic systems unless a number of functioning systems are present in a society was learnt once again by the West in Afghanistan. The Afghans went to the polls on 20 August 2009 to elect their president after Mr Hamid Karzai completed his first term. A great deal was expected from the elections. The Americans had hoped that the elections would produce an effective government in Kabul that would be able to cooperate with Washington in beating back the Taliban insurgents. By the time the elections were held, what had come to be called the “counterinsurgency strategy” seemed to have succeeded in Iraq. The level of violence in the country had reduced to the extent that the Americans felt comfortable in initiating

The lesson that elections do not produce democratic systems unless a number of functioning systems are present in a society was learnt once again by the West in Afghanistan.

the process of pulling out their troops. General Stanley McChrystal, who was involved in implementing the strategy in Iraq, was President Barack Obama’s choice for heading the American effort in Afghanistan. The General asked for an additional 40,000 troops from Washington to bolster the 65,000 he already had in the field. This was to be the Afghanistan version of the surge in Iraq. The only other thing that was needed was a

partner in Kabul that had both credibility and legitimacy. It was expected that the elections would provide that.

It did not happen that way. The elections were held on time but were deeply flawed. The official count gave President Karzai more than 54 per cent of the vote, enough to avoid a run-off and reclaim the presidency. However, a commission appointed by the United Nations after a review of the votes cast indicated that perhaps a third of the votes that were claimed to have gone to the incumbent president were fraudulent. Some arm-twisting resulted in President Karzai agreeing to a run-off to be held on 7 November 2009 between him and his main rival Abdullah Abdullah. Abdullah, however, withdrew and Karzai was declared the winner for the second time. This time his election was accepted by the United States (US) and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) partners.

On 1 December 2009, President Obama delivered his long-awaited speech announcing that he would add another 30,000 troops to the American contingent, hoping that the NATO partners would provide another 7,000. But, at the same time, the president said that Washington would begin to pull out troops from July 2011. During this period of 18 months, it was expected that the momentum of insurgency would be checked; Kabul would

be able to extend its control over most of the country, and the Afghan forces would have been built up and trained to start taking over from the Americans and the NATO.

From the reaction to the speech, it became clear to the Administration that some clarification was required on both the speed at which the surge would take place and the pace at which the drawdown would be achieved. The day after the speech, senior officials appeared before various Congress committees to explain what the president had said. The officials described the deployment curve as beginning at a baseline of the 68,000 troops currently in Afghanistan, rising at a 45-degree angle to 100,000, then continue horizontally until July 2011 before beginning to slope down again. The downward sloping curve could be steep if conditions permitted. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, in a prepared statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, explained the meaning of the July 2011 target date as follows, “July 2011, the time at which the president said the United States will begin to drawdown our forces will be the beginning of the process. But the pace and character of that drawdown, which districts and provinces are turned over and when will be determined by conditions on the ground. It will be a gradual but inexorable process.”



Supporters rejoicing in the streets of Kabul on hearing news of President Hamid Karzai's successful re-election.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Secretary-General of NATO, welcomed the American initiative in a newspaper article: "But this is not just President Obama's war", he wrote. "We all face the same threats from what is happening in Afghanistan: threats from terrorism, from drugs, from extremism. This is an alliance effort, and we will finish it together." He went on to discuss in detail the NATO strategy which included the transition of the alliance's troops from "lead role" in the fight against the insurgents to a "supporting role" as the trained and expanded Afghan force moved into the front position. "NATO will also focus on the broader political strategy, which includes what we expect from the new Afghan government. Good governance is the best way to close off oxygen supply to the Taliban. After all that we have committed to this mission, we have the right to insist on it". The NATO was also to pay attention to economic development. An international conference was to be convened in London to assist Afghanistan in its development efforts.

There are a number of questions concerning the likelihood of the success of the strategy which was based on a number of assumptions. Three of these are most important. One, whether resolute action by foreign troops will begin to wean away the youth, not ideologically committed to the cause of the Taliban, from insurgency against the state? Two, whether the new type of corruption that was undermining the Afghan state can be checked? Three, whether the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan can be pacified?

The US military commanders had begun to appreciate the dynamics that was at play in attracting the Afghan youth towards the Taliban which was similar to the one that had worked in Iraq. According to one analyst, "in areas where coalition forces provide effective security and communities respond well" the strategy works. He continues, "But there are not enough of these stable communities, because there are not enough troops on the ground." This was the reason why President Obama had accepted General McChrystal's advice to provide him with additional troops. "In places without security, the Taliban rules by

intimidation. Locals receive 'night letters' threatening harm and death if they work with the coalition or with cooperative mullahs. Delivered in the dead of night, these notes are often effective." This approach worked in Iraq since there was a concentration of insurgents in some areas. But Afghanistan is a larger country with insurgency more widespread.

The second issue is corruption, not of the kind that had deep historical roots in Afghanistan but massive, vertically integrated gangsterism growing in size and reach. Those who lead these criminal associations are selling off the assets of the state and diverting development money into offshore accounts. The pressure on President Karzai to remove some of these people from his administration will be one indication that he is responding to it.

The third issue concerns the concentration of the most committed terrorists in the tribal areas of Pakistan from where they are operating not only against the Pakistani state but also taking the fight into Afghanistan. The US was encouraging Pakistan to act in the area – sometimes this encouragement took the form of threats from Washington that it would be prepared to act unilaterally if Islamabad did not move effectively.

There is no assurance that this strategy will work but it is the only one that has some political support in the US and in Europe. ■

ISAS revamps its website and launches weblog

ISAS has given its website (www.isas.nus.edu.sg) a fresh look. Visitors can now access the institute's publications, and learn about its research and events more easily online. Registration for events is also easy.

As part of the website revamp, ISAS launched its weblog, *South Asian Soundings*, on 17 March 2010. The blog provides a platform for discussions and intellectual sparring of ideas on the rapidly changing dynamics in the South Asian region. The blog also provides a forum for the exchange of views on issues relevant to South Asia, and aims to stimulate and promote constructive debates.

South Asian Soundings has received several postings on a diverse range of issues since its launch. Apart from posts by researchers, the blog also features editorials under "Editor's Pick". For a list of the latest postings on the blog, please visit <http://blog.nus.edu.sg/southasiansoundings/> or simply go to the ISAS website for a direct link. *South Asian Soundings* welcomes comments and contributions from the NUS family.



Nepal: Whither the Peace Process

S.D. Muni
Visiting Research Professor
Institute of South Asian Studies

Nepal is drifting towards chaos. The Maoists concluded a three-day nationwide strike in the latter half of December 2009, paralysing normal life in the capital Kathmandu and other parts of the Republic. They have threatened to continue their agitation in the coming months as well to restore what they call the “civilian supremacy”. There are no signs of the constitution being drafted by the stipulated deadline of 28 May 2010. According to some constitutional experts, in the absence of a new constitution, the government, the presidency and the elected Constituent Assembly (CA) will be rendered illegitimate and the prevailing political order will collapse. This deadline can be extended by six months only in the case of a national emergency, which does not seem likely in the near future. Speculations are rife of a possible presidential takeover supported by the army in that situation. There are political soothsayers who even wish for the return of the monarchy. What becomes of the fate of Nepal’s democracy, its peace, stability and development remains shrouded in the darkness of an uncertain future.

At the root of the present malaise is the breakdown of political consensus among the Maoists, traditional political parties

democratic republic’. The consensus essentially broke down over issues of power sharing. Following the CA elections in April 2008, the Maoists emerged as the largest party claiming to lead the government. This was not palatable to the political parties that had claimed a dominant share of power under the ‘Constitutional Monarchy’. They and sections of the international community, including India, never expected the Maoists to perform as well as they did electorally, securing nearly 40 per cent of the 600-member strong CA. The Maoists tally was larger than that of the Nepali Congress and the CPN-UML put together. The interim government headed by the late Nepali Congress president Girija Prasad Koirala took more than three months to hand over power to the popularly elected Maoists. Even after the transfer of power, while the Maoists suspected that their opponents were scheming to marginalise them, the traditional parties felt that the Maoists were out to capture the whole state and turn the new democratic republic into a totalitarian state. The issue that brought this mutual distrust to a boil was the question of integrating the Maoists armed cadres into the Nepalese army. This was agreed to in principle between the Maoists

and other parties under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, but its specific details had not been worked out. The Maoists on seeing resistance from the army to this integration sacked the Army Chief General Rukmangad Katawal in May 2009, precipitating a crisis. The President intervened on behalf of the other parties, defying the constitutional principles and reinstated the army chief. This led to the resignation of the Maoist-headed government and the installation of a government led by their opponents. The Maoists are opposing the government on the issue of “civilian supremacy” which was violated by the Presidential action. The distrust between the two sides has deepened since then. The parties fear that any prospect of the Maoists heading the government again will create conditions for their political consolidation at the cost of the political parties. The Maoists’ grouse is that though they gave up their ‘people’s war’ and violent struggle, and decided to work within the framework of a multi-party democratic structure, the other parties are conspiring to keep them out of power despite the popular mandate they received. Nepal’s peace process that promised the writing of a new constitution and creating a new Nepal of popular aspirations has become a casualty of this national political trust deficit between the Maoists and the others.

The peace process can move forward and the drafting of the constitution can be resumed seriously and sincerely only if the broken national political consensus can be restored. This is possible only if compromises are made on both sides. The

Unless bold and courageous initiatives are taken on the part of both the Maoists and the main parties to reach a compromise, there is little hope of rebuilding the broken consensus and moving the peace process forward.

traditional political parties have to endorse the Maoists demand of “civilian supremacy” in some form to provide a face saving justification for the Maoists’ withdrawal from power. Besides this, the Maoists have to be brought back to power as a principal component of the national coalition. The parties are internally divided on both these issues and the leadership of these parties have lost much of their élan and influence to present a coherent position. In order to restore the confidence of the political parties, the Maoists also have to move in the direction of dismantling their militant youth wing (the Young Communist League) and give up their aggressive agitation strategies on issues like land grabbing by the landless people and autonomy for the ethnic groups. While the Maoists leadership is in firm command of their party organisation, there are internal divisions on the basic issues of the Maoist approach. There are powerful sections that want to go the “people’s war” way to seize political power while the leadership generally favours a peaceful, incremental and multi-party way to gradually establish their dominance. This organisational hiatus keeps the Maoists leaders inconsistent and unduly radical in their rhetoric. Unless bold and courageous initiatives are taken on the part of both the Maoists and the main parties to reach a compromise, there is little hope of rebuilding the broken consensus and moving the peace process forward.

There surely is an external dimension to Nepal’s internal turbulence. India had played a key role in helping the main political parties come closer to the Maoists on the question of peace and democracy during 2005-2006. A deep distrust between the Maoists and India has also crept in. The Indian policymakers had not expected the Maoists to emerge as the strongest force in Nepal in the 2008 CA elections. They have found Maoists a difficult entity to deal with on issues of strategic significance to India, particularly on

China and the traditional thrust of India-Nepal relations. After the fall of the Maoists’ government, the alternative coalition government could not have been formed without India’s direct and undue involvement, as reported in the Nepalese media. India’s exaggerated fears of the Chinese dominating the Nepalese strategic space with help of the Maoists came at a time when India had got alarmed at the Chinese “assertiveness” in Arunachal Pradesh and the unsettled border. India has also been alarmed at the quicker pace of the Chinese military modernisation and their growing political clout in India’s close neighbourhood. Indian policy, however, has to take cognisance of the hard reality in Nepal, which is that the Maoists have a popular mandate with them, that they are the largest and most well organised political force and therefore cannot be ignored or suppressed for a long time. The socio-economic reality in Nepal also makes it impossible for China

to have significant influence in Nepal. No regime, howsoever radical or powerful, can rely heavily on China and do without India’s support and goodwill. Continuing political uncertainty and the spectre of chaos in Nepal will in no way serve India’s legitimate long term national interests. India and the international community have played a key role in Nepal’s transition and it is obligatory for them to see the process of transition brought to its logical conclusion. They cannot get away from this obligation by alleging foul play on the part of any of the Nepalese players, including the Maoists. Mainstreaming the Maoists was an agenda they all had and the Maoists alone cannot be expected to move on that track.

The hope of the Nepalese peace process being carried forward lies in the realisation by all the principal Nepalese political forces and the international community, including India, that the complete collapse of this process will not serve the long-term interests of any one of them. The Nepalese people are looking desperately for the restoration of the peace process and a timely and smooth drafting of a new constitution that gives all of them democratic rights and an economic future. Anyone who fails them will be severely punished by the Nepalese people. ■

ISAS Research Clusters

In keeping up with the dynamism of the South Asian region and emerging complexities, ISAS continually reviews its research agenda. The institute’s ongoing research is presently categorised into five thematic clusters: Economics and Trade Policy; Multilateralism and International Linkages; Politics and Governance; Security; and South Asia and Economic Change.

The clusters allow ISAS to focus more intensely on key political, economic and strategic developments in the South Asian region whilst projecting the primary developments and issues in the Indian subcontinent in the medium- to long-term.

Led by a research faculty, each cluster forms part of the institute’s efforts to sharpen and intensify its research focus. A detailed research agenda has been drawn up for the clusters for the next couple of years. The deliverables include policy briefs and insights, working papers, monographs and books. The clusters are also engaged in the process of identifying external sources of funding for their programmes. They also play a critical role in expanding the external outreach of ISAS.



Counter-Terrorism in Pakistan: The Next Steps

Syeda Sana Rahman
Research Associate
Institute of South Asian Studies

Since 11 September 2001, the world, including South Asia, has been faced with the apparition of 'terrorism'. Terrorism in itself is not new, but its new global interlinked nature – exemplified by the network of militant Islamist organisations across the world – is unprecedented. Terrorism as a concept also defies clear-cut definitions. What may be labelled rebellion or a nationalist struggle by some may be perceived as terrorism by others. However, one can loosely define terrorism as an act of political violence directed at state and/or civilian targets with the aim of causing widespread fear whilst conveying a political message or to further political goals, whether enacted by individuals, groups or states.

In South Asia, political violence in the form of groups employing terrorist tactics to challenge the state is not new. Since the late 1980s, militant groups in Kashmir have challenged the Indian state's claim on the territory. The Maoist left-wing extremist groups and various insurgent groups in northeast India have also engaged in violence against the Indian state. Similarly, until their recent defeat in May 2009, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) waged a bloody campaign against the Sri Lankan state. However, these movements have generally been confined to the domestic realm, in that they have been directed at single state actors. In a marked difference, Islamist terrorism in South Asia has evolved into

an unstructured movement that threatens to destabilise the entire region. Much of this movement is centred in the tribal region located at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

Lately, Pakistan has found itself increasingly under threat. New Year's Day 2010 saw the latest in a string of deadly attacks in Pakistan – a suicide bomber killed around 105 people and injured another 100 at a volleyball tournament in Lakki Marwat, a pro-government town in the North-West Frontier Province. Just three days earlier, on 28 December 2009, 43 people were killed and another 100 were injured in a suicide attack in Karachi. This article examines the roots of Islamist terrorism in

Islamist terrorism in South Asia has evolved into an unstructured movement that threatens to destabilise the entire region. Much of this movement is centred in the tribal region located at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

Pakistan and its evolution, followed by an assessment of some counter-measures the Pakistani state needs to undertake to mitigate terrorism within its borders.

The beginnings of the current violence can be found in the Afghan War of the 1980s. Then Pakistani President, General Zia-ul Haq, with American backing and funding, set up camps in Pakistan where 'mujahideen' (Islamic warriors) could train to fight out the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979-89). During this time, a number of extremist madrassas (Islamic schools) were also set up in the region to indoctrinate pupils drawn mainly from the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. These madrassas continue to function in the tribal regions, and as they operate at little cost, are often the only source of literacy and education available to the population. Once the Soviet forces withdrew in 1989, the United States (US) also abandoned Afghanistan and its 'mujahideen' to its own devices.

This had two consequences. First, it created a power vacuum in Afghanistan, which various rival tribal groups and warlords struggled to fill in a bloody civil war. Viewing Afghanistan as a strategic asset against each other, India and Pakistan both supported rival factions. India threw its weight behind the Northern Alliance, a group comprising various ethnic groups like the Uzbeks and Tajiks, while Pakistan supported the ultimately victorious Taliban. Second, Pakistan-based militant groups, like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), which had participated in the Afghan War, redirected their attention towards Kashmir and launched a violent struggle against Indian rule there. These two factors set the conditions

for the wave of Islamist terrorism in South Asia, and in Pakistan.

Since the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the erstwhile Taliban regime has found sanctuary in the tribal region along both sides of the Afghan-Pakistan border. At the same time, Pakistan joined the US 'war on terror' and, in 2002, officially banned groups like the LeT. However, these groups continued to operate out of Pakistan and have been associated with various terrorist attacks in Kashmir and other parts of India, including the 2000 attack at Red Fort in New Delhi; the 2001 attack on the Indian parliament; and the 2005 New Delhi bombings that killed over 60 people. India also blamed the LeT for conspiring in the 26 November 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Under increasing US pressure, Pakistan's military also launched operations against the Taliban in Pakistan. In retaliation, the Pakistani Taliban groups commenced an

offensive against Pakistan. Since 2007, these attacks in Pakistan have intensified, reaching major cities like Lahore and Karachi. Under the civilian government that came into power in March 2008, Pakistan has taken a stronger stance against terrorism. Shortly after assuming office, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani declared that "terrorism and extremism are [Pakistan's] greatest problems" and thus it was Pakistan's "first priority to bring peace to the country and fight terrorism".

This has been borne out in the Pakistani military's actions against the Taliban. Since May 2009 it has undertaken an offensive to weed out the militants from their stronghold in South Waziristan. At the same time, the US has increased economic and military aid to Pakistan under the Kerry-Lugar Bill, which pledges aid worth US\$7 billion to be dispersed over five years. While Pakistani forces have intensified their campaign against the militants, the militants too have increased the frequency and deadliness of their attacks. More than half of the attacks in 2009 took place between October and December.

Pakistan's firm stance against terrorism is a welcome development. However, it needs to couple its military offensive with a host of non-military measures to deal with the underlying conditions that enable and fuel the growth of militancy operating within its



Pakistani police escort US militant suspects to court. The men face terror charges for allegedly plotting attacks in Pakistan.

borders. First, major political parties like the Pakistan Peoples Party (or the PPP, which is in power now) and its main opposition, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) need to take a united stance against terrorism and work to consolidate civilian rule in Pakistan. In December 2009, yet another domestic crisis erupted when the Pakistani Supreme Court annulled the amnesty law that had protected many politicians, including current President Asif Ali Zardari, Defence Minister Ahmed Mukhtar, and Interior Minister Rehman Malik, from corruption charges. This latest development could lead to another protracted political battle between the PPP, the PML-N and the judiciary. This creates political space that militant groups can exploit to push their agenda.

Second, the conflict in Pakistan has also resulted in over three million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Efforts must be

made to quickly resettle the IDPs as refugee camps filled with increasingly desperate people can breed resentment and become recruitment grounds for militant groups. Third, development aid is needed in areas like the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), where the Taliban and other militant groups operate. These areas are extremely underdeveloped and, as noted by the International Crisis Group in an October 2009 report, "ideological recruitment (in these areas) is few and far between. Most of the reasons...are related to economic and political marginalisation". Thus, there is a need to create economic opportunities and provide the physical infrastructure to support these opportunities in the tribal areas.

Fourth, it is important to create alternatives to madrassas by not only building more public schools, but running these and the extant schools well by directing more funds towards their maintenance and for compensating the notoriously underpaid

teachers. Finally, as the Pakistani military drives out the militants from these regions, it is important to secure the areas by asserting civilian control over these regions. In this regard, it is crucial the armed tribal lashkars (militias), which have been contracted by the government as security forces, are disbanded, and law and order becomes the sole purview of the Pakistani police force. This is necessary as not only are the militias poorly trained, but they are also prone to abuse of authority and undermine the legitimacy of the Pakistani state.

Pakistan and the Pakistani people have shown a determination to deal with the purveyors of terrorism within. The military offensive launched in May 2009 is a heartening start to its counter-terrorism strategy. As it moves forward, it now needs to incorporate non-military measures to ensure a lasting peace in Pakistan and by extension, in the South Asian region. ■

South Asian Link launched to keep South Asian Diaspora in touch

With three strikes of the dholak, Singapore's President, Mr S R Nathan, launched the South Asian Link (SAL), a South Asian diaspora networking platform under the auspices of the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), on 4 November 2009 in Singapore.

Among world cities, Singapore has one of the largest concentration of overseas South Asians in terms of percentage of its population. People of South Asian descent form around nine per cent of Singapore's population. They are either citizens or permanent residents. There are another 350,000 or so South Asians living, working and studying in Singapore. More than 4,000 Indian companies are based here.

Using Singapore as the base, the SAL aims to become a hub for the global South Asian diaspora. It will develop relations with the diaspora outside of South Asia and maintain a network of active participants among the South Asian communities around the world. Through its regular social and cultural activities, website and newsletter, the SAL promotes the South Asian culture and heritage, and helps South Asians to keep in touch with one another.



(L-R): ISAS Board members Professor Wang Gungwu, Mr S. Chandra Das and ISAS Director, Professor Tan Tai Yong with President S R Nathan and ISAS Chairman Mr Gopinath Pillai.

An Eye on South Asia

Iftikhar A. Lodhi
Research Associate
Institute of South Asian Studies

Bangladesh: Progressing Towards Stability

The Awami League (AL) government under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina completed its first year in office overcoming several challenges. The first year of the new government has witnessed an attempt by Bangladesh towards faster economic growth, strengthening of democratic institutions and better relations with India.

Immediately after coming to power in January 2009, the government faced its biggest challenge in the shape of a mutiny in the paramilitary forces, Bangladesh Rifles, ostensibly protesting over low pays. The saga left some 150 people dead. The mutiny was quelled quickly and miscreants were brought to justice.

Nevertheless, tackling the country's chronic corruption remains a big challenge.

On the economic front, the government seems to be living up to its election pledges. The double-digit inflation in the beginning of 2009 was brought down to half at the close of the year. The country also witnessed a respectable growth in Gross Domestic Product, exports and remittances.

Ms Hasina's visit to India in January 2010 resulted in marked improvement in bilateral ties. A number of agreements were signed including a landmark decision in which India extended a US\$1 billion credit line to Bangladesh for infrastructure development. Reciprocating the Indian gesture, Dhaka allowed India access to its ports and transit facilities.

Bhutan: Mounting Problems with Refugees

Bhutan is facing a major challenge in the shape of growing activism by the so-called dissidents. Some 100,000 ethnic Nepalese from Bhutan were reportedly expelled in the 1980s and 1990s by the then-King Jigmey Singhye Wangchuk on charges of being illegal immigrants. Since then, these people have been living in the United Nations refugee camps in southeastern Nepal. The United States and other developed countries have offered to accept these refugees. With King Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck initiating a transition towards democracy, the ethnic issue was expected to surface strongly. Many groups claiming to represent Bhutanese refugees have been mobilising in India, Nepal and Europe. There have been some violent clashes in the regions bordering Nepal and India where Maoists and militants are fighting for greater Nepal. Bhutanese refugees in Europe have announced formation of Bhutanese Advocacy Forum Europe (BAF Europe) to raise the issue of human rights and democracy in Bhutan. Karma Dupto, Secretary of Druk National Congress, the Bhutanese political movement in exile in New Delhi, has urged the international community and specifically India to stand by the refugees.

Maldives: Staying Above Sea Level

Maldives occupied a considerable space in the deliberations at the United Nations Climate Change Conference at Copenhagen in December 2009. One of the smallest nations in the world with a land area of less than 300 square kilometres and population less than 400,000, the island is threatened by rising sea levels. Some estimates indicate that Maldives may vanish from the face of the earth by the end of this century.

It was this imminent danger of annihilation that took President Mohamed Nasheed to the table where the United States, India, China and other major global powers were negotiating an acceptable action agenda for reducing carbon emissions. President Nasheed is reported to have made an impassioned appeal to the larger countries for framing an acceptable arrangement.

President Nasheed has announced that Maldives will be a carbon-neutral country by 2020. Former President Maumoon Gayoom, however, has questioned his climate activism by alleging that it is putting off potential investors. There have also been criticisms about the wisdom of making Maldives carbon-neutral when the impact of such transformation on the rising sea level is questionable.

Nepal: A Stalled Peace Process

Nepal's peace process remains stalled following Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's (also known as Prachanda)'s resignation in May 2009. His party, the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was voted the single largest party in the 575-seat Constituent Assembly in August 2008. However, major differences surfaced between the CPN and other stakeholders.

The CPN had accused the army chief of not accepting civilian supremacy. The Nepalese Army had shown its defiance to civilian administration on several occasions in the past. The main opposition party, the Nepali Congress (NC) has supported the Army. Mr Prachanda has also accused India for interfering in Nepal's internal affairs. The Maoist campaign in Nepal appears to have shifted from the slogan of civilian supremacy to national independence given their firm belief that Nepal's sovereignty is impaired due to India's overarching influence. In the meanwhile, the targeted date (28 May 2010) for completing the draft constitution is approaching fast. It remains to be seen whether the political parties in Nepal will be able to draft and enact a new constitution for the country in 2010.

Pakistan: Democracy & Terrorism – The Struggle Continues

The year 2009 experienced a sharp increase in loss of human lives in Pakistan following intense fighting in the country's North-West Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Earlier last year, the government decided to take the fight to the militant's home turf where they had been denying encroachment upon the territory and institutions. The two military operations in Swat and South Waziristan in May and October 2009 respectively were by and large successful and put the militants on the run.

Nevertheless, demands from Washington to do more and have stricter conditions on the aid that Islamabad receives continue to generate frictions between the two allies. In December, the Obama administration announced a surge of 30,000 troops in Afghanistan, which would increase the total number of American troops in Afghanistan to 100,000. However, Washington also gave a deadline, July 2011, when its troops will start withdrawing. These mixed signals from Washington have created enormous confusion in the region.

The Supreme Court's (SC) ruling left the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) null and void. The NRO was promulgated by President Pervez Musharraf for giving amnesty to the politicians and for shielding them from corruption charges. The SC ruling highlighted the moral and legal authority of the government.

The passing of the National Finance Commission Award with unanimous consensus was an encouraging development. The award is a mechanism for vertical and horizontal resource sharing between the centre and the provinces, and among provinces.

In the year 2010, Pakistan is expected to face challenges stemming from a deteriorating economy and an ever expanding war on terror. Managing its volatile relationship with the United States as well as bumpy relations with India will also be difficult challenges for Islamabad.

Sri Lanka: President Rajapaksa Triumphs

Mahinda Rajapaksa, the incumbent President of Sri Lanka was re-elected in the sixth presidential election held on 26 January 2010. He secured 57.9 per cent of votes as against 40 per cent by General Sarath Fonseka. The election witnessed an impressive turnout of 72 per cent voters and hardly witnessed any major incidents of violence. General Fonseka, however, rejected the results alleging that the campaign was marred by irregularities, violence, and abuse of state power. In a letter to the Election Commissioner, he accused President Rajapaksa for intimidating his friends and staff. Both Rajapaksa and Fonseka claimed credit for victory against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The LTTE was militarily overpowered last year ending the three-decade-long armed conflict between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil rebels. Fonseka, despite playing a key role in the military operations against the LTTE, was accused by Rajapaksa of being a 'traitor' by entering into a deal with the Tamil National Alliance, a party believed to be projecting the interests of Tamil rebels. The election results revealed the divisions in the Sri Lankan polity with Rajapaksa winning from majority Sinhala areas and Fonseka in Tamil and Muslim-dominated areas.

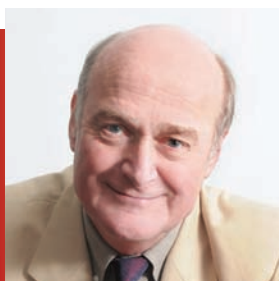
New Researchers



Robin Jeffrey
Visiting Research Professor
(November 2009 to
November 2011)

Robin Jeffrey first lived in India as a school teacher in Chandigarh from 1967 to 1969. He completed a doctorate in Indian history at Sussex University in the United Kingdom in 1973, taught for 25 years in the Politics Program at La Trobe University in Melbourne, worked twice at the Australian National University in Canberra and has lived for six years in India between 1967 and 2009.

Professor Jeffrey has written about Kerala, Punjab and Indian media. A third edition of *India's Newspaper Revolution* will be published in 2010. He is working on a study of mobile phones in India and completing a book called, *Slices of India*, a history of India in the second half of the 20th century based around the years of the great Kumbh Mela in Allahabad.



John Harriss
Visiting Research Professor
(January 2010 to April 2010)

John Harriss is a social anthropologist who has worked for most of his professional life in the inter-disciplinary field of International Development Studies. Following his education at the University of Cambridge and then at the University of East Anglia, he taught in the School of Development Studies at the University of East Anglia from 1976 to 1990, and served as the Dean of the School in 1987-90. Thereafter he moved to the London School of Economics (LSE) as the founding Programme Director of the Development Studies Institute (DESTIN), and directed the Institute from 1990. In 1994-96, on leave from the LSE, he worked as the Head of the Regional Office for South and Central Asia of the Save the Children Fund (United Kingdom-UK). He served again as Director of DESTIN in 2001-04. In 2004-05, he headed a successful bid for the establishment of the Department for International Development-funded Research Programme Consortium on Institutions and Pro-Poor Growth, and directed the Consortium – with members from Africa, Latin America and India, as well as from the UK – in 2005-06.

In 2006, Professor Harriss moved to Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada, as the first Director of the University's new School for International Studies. Professor Harriss has held visiting research fellowships at the Australian National University and at the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris, and he has had a long running affiliation with the Madras Institute of Development Studies. He has undertaken research and advisory work for a number of development agencies including the Department for International Development of the UK government, the International Labour Office, and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.



Dayan Jayatilleka
Visiting Senior Research Fellow
(February 2010 to
February 2012)

Dayan Jayatilleka was Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations (UN) at Geneva; Chairman of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO); Vice President of the Human Rights Council (HRC); Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration; Coordinator of an agenda item of the Conference on Disarmament (CD); Facilitator to negotiate for the Asian Region at the Durban Review Conference and Coordinator of the Asian Group of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN HRC.

Dr Jayatilleka was Minister of Planning & Youth Affairs in the North-East Provincial Council in Sri Lanka, and is a Senior Lecturer in Politics at University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. He obtained a First Class Honours degree in Political Science from the University of Peradeniya, winning the CL Wickremesinghe Prize for best results, an MPhil from the University of

Colombo, and a PhD from Griffith University, Brisbane. His most recent book is titled, *Fidel's Ethics of Violence: The Moral Dimension of the Political Thought of Fidel Castro*, published by Pluto Press (London) and the University of Michigan Press (Ann Arbor). It was reviewed in the January 2009 issue of Chatham House's International Affairs by Professor Clive Foss of Georgetown's History Department, and earlier by the London School of Economics' Professor Emeritus Sebastian Balfour in the Bulletin of Latin American Research. Dr Jayatileka's essay on Che Guevara entitled '*Che's Visage on the Shroud of Time*', was featured in Granma, the official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba in its November 2007 edition.



Shanthie D'Souza
Visiting Research Fellow
(February 2010 -
February 2011)

Shanthie Mariet D'Souza has a PhD in International Relations, American Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has been a Visiting Fulbright Scholar at South Asia Studies, The Paul H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC (2005-2006). She is also affiliated with the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. She has been a Research Associate at Database & Documentation Centre of the Institute for Conflict Management, Guwahati, Assam and Editorial Assistant at the United Service Institution of India, New Delhi, 2001. She has conducted field studies in the United States, Canada, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Jammu and Kashmir and India's North East.

Among Dr D'Souza's most recent published work is a co-edited book, *Saving Afghanistan* (2009) and papers on Talking to the Taliban; Unity of Effort; The missing link in the Afghan Counter Insurgency Campaign; NATO in Afghanistan; Afghanistan in South Asia: Regional Cooperation or Competition; India's Aid to Afghanistan; US-Pakistan Counter-Terrorism Cooperation; Indo-US Counter Terrorism Cooperation; Taking Stock of the Global War on Terrorism; India-US relations; India-Afghan relations; Internal Security Issues; Mumbai Terror Attacks and India-Pakistan Relations; Media and Counter-Terrorism; and others.

New Administrative Staff

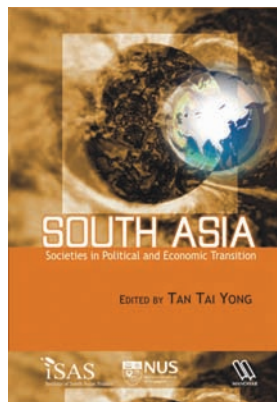


Sithara Doriasamy
Senior Manager

Sithara Doriasamy looks after corporate communications and publications at the Institute. She brings with her more than 14 years of journalistic experience, having worked as a senior correspondent with the Singapore Press Holdings, and news producer with Channel News Asia. During her 20-year career, she has worked in the private and public sectors, overseeing public affairs and corporate communications functions. She is also honed with years of experience in events management, marketing, organising and heading large-scale national events and conferences. Sithara is actively involved in grassroots and community work. She was part of the Singapore government's Remaking Singapore Committee (Beyond Cars Sub-Committee) and Tamil Language Curriculum and Pedagogy Review Resource Panel, Ministry of Education.

Sithara holds an MSc (International Relations) from the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (currently known as the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies), Nanyang Technological University, and BA in Communications and Media Management, from the University of South Australia.

Latest Books



South Asia: Societies in Political and Economic Transition

Edited by Tan Tai Yong, ISAS, January 2010

Published by Manohar India

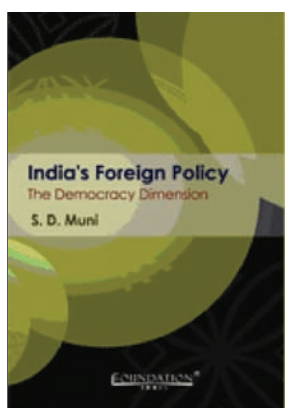
The last few years have been significant for South Asia, with fundamental political and economic transitions in several of the countries.

Bangladesh opted for an interim government followed by the election of a democratic government. Pakistan saw the assassination of a former Prime Minister, followed by peaceful elections and, perhaps, hope for stability. Nepal went through substantial change, with the Maoists initially in power and, subsequently, opting out of the government. In contrast, elections in Bhutan have brought a smooth transition to democracy. On the other hand, economic issues have dominated India, including aggressive responses to the global slowdown, fiscal expansion and an early return to growth from the downturn.

In an attempt to capture these changes in South Asia, this publication falls into two parts. The first deals with political issues in the countries that have witnessed the most change and turbulence, while the second part deals with economic issues that have been of concern to all the South Asian countries, and to India in particular.

In summary, this publication is an eclectic mix that covers a spectrum of current issues in South Asia. It is a melting pot of politics and change, of reforms and stagnation, and of growth and disparity. Most importantly, the publication reflects the dynamism of the region and the fast pace of change in politics as well as in economic policy. The book has been titled, '*South Asia: Societies in Political and Economic Transition*', to reflect this dynamism.

To purchase a copy of the book, please contact Mr Ramesh Jain at sales@manoharbooks.com.



India's Foreign Policy: The Democracy Dimension

S. D. Muni, ISAS, December 2009

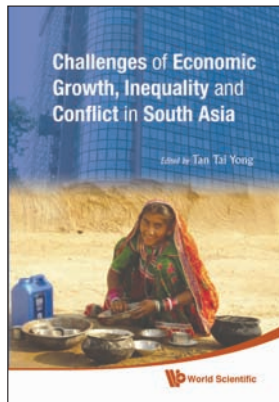
Published by Cambridge University Press India

In the new millennium, India has joined the global initiatives like the Community of Democracies (2000) and the United Nations Democracy Fund (2005) for promoting democracy. This marks a significant shift in India's foreign policy as never earlier had India claimed or committed itself to playing a proactive role in promoting and protecting democracy in other countries. India has always remained engaged with the democracy question, particularly in its immediate neighbourhood.

"*India's Foreign Policy: The Democracy Dimension*", is a study of India's responses to the challenge of democracy in other countries before and after its participation in the global democratic initiatives. India's similar responses in the past have been dictated and defined by its perceived vital strategic and political interests, and this continues to be so. The newly acquired obligations for promoting democracy may have tempered its foreign policy rhetoric and style on the democracy question but it has not, and will not, override India's critical strategic concerns and interests.

To purchase a copy of the book, please visit www.cambridgeindia.org.

Latest Books



Challenges of Economic Growth, Inequality and Conflict in South Asia

Edited by Tan Tai Yong, ISAS, November 2009
Published by World Scientific

South Asia's growing political and economic influence, as well as the dynamism of this rapidly changing region demands careful examination. Drawing on many areas of expertise and a wide range of perspectives, this book analyses how recent developments in the economic, political and social landscapes of South Asia have affected the region itself as well as its relations with the rest of Asia and the world at large.

The book gathers together the papers presented at the 4th International Conference on South Asia held in Singapore in November 2008. It represents the expert knowledge and opinions of prominent academics and world leaders. Whether dealing with issues of trade and investment, soft power and cultural influence, or the reduction of poverty, the chapters in this book are both in-depth and rich in broader implications for the South Asian region and beyond.

To purchase a copy of the book, please contact Mrs Sandhya Venkatesh at sandhya@wspc.com.

Singapore Symposium: A New Chapter in Singapore-India Ties

The Singapore Symposium jointly organised by the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was held at New Delhi on 16 December 2009.

The event highlighted areas for long-term collaboration between Singapore and India with regards to Singapore's expertise, India's developmental priorities and the shared concerns of the two countries. Infrastructure, education and governance were the main themes of the symposium.

Senior Indian Ministers – Mr Kapil Sibal (Minister of Human Resource Development) and Mr Anand Sharma (Minister of Commerce and Industry) delivered keynote addresses. Distinguished experts from Singapore and India spoke on the different aspects of infrastructure, education and governance during the plenary sessions.

The high point of the symposium was a dialogue session with Singapore's Minister Mentor, Lee Kuan Yew. The session was moderated by Mr Ratan Tata, Chairman of Tata Sons, India.

The event was attended by key leaders from the Indian industry and business, academic experts, representatives from India's strategic and diplomatic communities, media and officials from the private and public sectors.

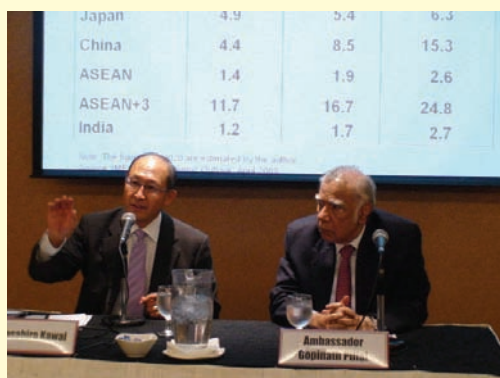


(L-R) Mr Tarun Das, Former Chief Mentor, CII, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, Mr Ratan Tata and Mr Gopinath Pillai, Chairman of ISAS.

Conference looks at linkages between South and East Asia



Dr Amitendu Palit, Head (Development & Programmes) and Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, raises a question during the question-and-answer session.



Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, Chairman of ISAS (R), looks on as Dr Masahiro Kawai delivers his keynote address.

As regional integration between Asian giants - China and India - and the rest of Asia intensifies, the world is witnessing a revival of the process of Asian integration. In order to obtain diverse perspectives on the process, ISAS and the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), Japan, convened a full-day conference entitled, *“Emerging Pan-Asian Integration: Linkages between South Asia and East Asia”*, on 11 February 2010 at the National University of Singapore.

Dr Masahiro Kawai, Dean of the ADBI, delivered the keynote address on Asian economic integration. Three interesting panel discussions comprising ten eminent speakers, notably from Sri Lanka, China, Japan, New Zealand, the United States and Singapore, deliberated the pattern of historical and contemporary linkages between South and East Asia. An interesting exchange of views analysed various factors underlying these linkages and the benefits of greater integration, and made recommendations for moving forward the Pan-Asian integration process.

The speakers included Dr Ellen Frost, Visiting Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics (US); Professor Robert Scollay, Director, New Zealand APEC Study Centre; principal economists from the Asian Development Bank, Dr Douglas Brooks and Dr Ganeshan Wignaraja; Mr Masaki Amma, Head of International Finance, Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC); and other distinguished experts.

Third India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue



Some members of the Third ISSD.

the regional architecture; religious extremism and political violence. It also focused on the impact and role of China in influencing the regional dynamics. This annual event, held alternately in Singapore and India, will be next held in India in 2011.

The Third India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue (ISSD) was held in Singapore during 18-19 February 2010. The two-day conference held at the Shangri-La Hotel was co-chaired by Ambassador Tommy Koh, Ambassador-at-Large, Singapore, and Ambassador S. K. Lambah, Special Envoy to the Prime Minister of India.

The Dialogue deliberated at length on various political, economic and strategic issues pertaining to bilateral ties between Singapore and India. The candid exchanges also included discussions on

Publications

ISAS Briefs

The Kerry-Lugar Bill: Difficult Choices for Pakistan, Sajjad Ashraf, Consultant, ISAS, 5 October 2009.

Suffering Terrorism but Flirting with Populism: Pakistan's Current Predicaments, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 13 October 2009.

South Waziristan: The Beginning of Pakistan's Military Campaign, Shahid Javed Burki, former Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 19 October 2009.

Afghanistan Presidential Elections 2009: The Run-up to the Run-off, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 26 October 2009.

Indian Assembly Elections 2009: Another Blow for the Bharatiya Janata Party, Tridivesh Singh Maini, Research Associate, ISAS, 3 November 2009.

Hillary Clinton's Visit to Pakistan: An Exercise in Trust Deficit Reduction, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 3 November 2009.

Afghanistan Presidential Elections 2009: The 'Run-off' That Never Was, Shahid Javed Burki, former Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 4 November 2009.

President Obama's First Asian Visit, Shahid Javed Burki, former Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 9 November 2009.

A 'New' Japan and Possible Implications for Japan-India Relations, Sinderpal Singh, Research Fellow, ISAS, 17 November 2009.

Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons: How Safe Are They?, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 18 November 2009.

Hamid Karzai's Second Term as Afghanistan's President: Promises, Challenges and Prospects, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow-designate, ISAS, 24 November 2009.

The United States in Afghanistan - President Obama decides to fight the war his way, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow-designate, ISAS, 3 December 2009.

A Tale of Two Visits: The India-US-China Relationship, Sinderpal Singh, Research Fellow, ISAS, 7 December 2009.

Climate Change Challenges: Leading up to Copenhagen, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow-designate, ISAS, 10 December 2009.

Unwinding the Fiscal Stimulus – Dilemmas for India and China, S. Narayan, Head of Research and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 11 December 2009.

The Dubai Debt Debacle: Likely Impact on South Asia, M. Shahidul Islam, Research Associate, ISAS, 11 December 2009.

Pakistan's Supreme Court And The National Reconciliation Ordinance: What Now for Pakistan?, Rajshree Jetly, Research Fellow, ISAS, 22 December 2009.

Sri Lanka's Presidential Election 2010: The Choice before Pluralist Democrats, Dayan Jayatilaka, Visiting Senior Research Fellow-designate, ISAS, 29 December 2009.

Hasina's Visit to India and Emerging Indo-Bangla Relations: Implications for the Region, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 18 January 2010.

Jyoti Basu: A Gentleman and a Communist, Bibek Debroy, Honorary Senior Fellow, ISAS, 18 January 2010.

Rescuing Afghanistan: Let the Region Take Charge, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 22 January 2010.

The 'Free-Market' and 'Social Concerns': 'Asian Values' and 'Walking on Two Legs'!, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 29 January 2010.

Afghanistan: The London Meeting, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 4 February 2010.

Sri Lanka Polls - Incumbency is Endorsed, S. D. Muni, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 4 February 2010.

The Pakistan Military Proves its Mettle, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 8 February 2010.

ISAS Insights

Looking beyond Current Account Imbalances: Imperatives for The United States, Suparna Karmakar, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 15 October 2009.

Sri Lanka's Post-Conflict Transition: Reconstruction, Reconciliation and Aid Effectiveness, Darini Rajasingham Senanayake, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 19 October 2009.

Towards a World without Nuclear Arms: Can 2010 be a Year of Hope?, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 9 December 2009.

The Copenhagen Climate Accord: Half May be Better than Full, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow-designate, ISAS, 22 December 2009.

The Economics and Politics of China's Exchange Rate Adjustment, M. Shahidul Islam, Research Associate, ISAS, 28 December 2009.

India-Pakistan Relations Post-Mumbai Terrorist Attacks, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 7 January 2010.

Re-organising Indian States: What is going on in Telengana?, John Harriss, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 29 January 2010.

South Asian Developments: Moving Towards a Détente or Sowing the Seeds of Discord?, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 24 February 2010.

ISAS Working Papers

Investment and Economic Opportunities: Urbanisation, Infrastructure and Governance in North and South India, Kala Seetharam Sridhar, Senior Research Fellow, Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore, India and A. Venugopala Reddy, Research Officer, Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore, India, 2 October 2009.

Economic Integration in Asia: Trends and Policies, Pradumna Bickram Rana, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 14 October 2009.

Non-Proliferation versus Disarmament: A Destabilising Dichotomy, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 21 October 2009.

India-China Trade: Explaining the Imbalance, Amitendu Palit, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS and Shoungkie Nawani, Research Scholar, Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi, India, 26 October 2009.

Bangladesh-India Relations: Some Recent Trends, Lieutenant General Mohd Aminul Karim, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya, Malaysia, 12 November 2009.

Civil Aviation in India: An Exploration in the Political Economy of Promoting Competition, Rahul Mukherji, Associate Professor, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore and Gaurav Kankanhalli, Student, United World College of Southeast Asia, 18 November 2009.

The Talibanisation of Pakistan's Western Region, Yasub Ali Dogar, Freelance Consultant, 24 November 2009.

Buddhism and the Legitimation of Power: Democracy, Public Religion and Minorities in Sri Lanka, Darini Rajasingham Senanayake, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 26 November 2009.

India and Its South Asian Neighbours, Rajeev Ranjan Chaturvedy, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada and David M. Malone, President, IDRC, Canada, 26 November 2009.

Establishing Foreign Technical Training Facilities in India: The Option of Haryana, Amitendu Palit, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS and Sasidaran Gopalan, Research Associate, ISAS, 26 November 2009.

President Barack Obama in Asia – Searching the Basis for a Partnership, Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow-designate, ISAS, 7 December 2009.

Vocational Education and India's Skills Deficit, Bibek Debroy, Honorary Senior Fellow, ISAS, 8 December 2009.

Events

- Seminar by Y. Reddy, Emeritus Professor, University of Hyderabad, India; and former Governor, Reserve Bank of India, **"The Global Financial Crisis and Challenges for Public Policy"**, 7 October 2009.
- Seminar by Shanthie D'Souza, Associate Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, India, **"Afghanistan and South Asia: Prospects for Regional Cooperation"**, 8 October 2009.
- ISAS Public Lecture by Usha Thorat, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India, **"India and the Economic Crisis: Impact, Policy Responses and Future Prospects"**, 12 October 2009.
- Fifth International Conference on South Asia, **"South Asia: Beyond The Global Financial Crisis"**, 4 November 2009. Keynote speaker: K. Shanmugam, Minister for Law and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Singapore.
- **Official Launch of South Asian Link**, 4 November 2009.
- Seminar by Tughrul Yamin, former Senior Defense Officer, Pakistan Army; and Domain Specialist, Centre for Netcentric Technologies, Pakistan, **"The Security Situation in Pakistan and the South Asian Region"**, 9 November 2009.
- ISAS-Cambridge University Press Book Launch, **"India's Foreign Policy: The Democracy Dimension"** by S. D. Muni, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 15 December 2009.
- Joint Symposium by ISAS-Confederation of Indian Industry – **Singapore Symposium**, 16 December 2009.
- ISAS Book Launch-cum-Panel Discussion, **"India and the Global Financial Crisis: Managing Money and Finance"**, 8 January 2010.
- Seminar by Atiur Rahman, Governor of the Bangladesh Bank, **"Bangladesh's Current Economic Challenges"**, 12 January 2010.
- Seminar by Philip Oldenburg, Adjunct Associate Professor, Political Science, Columbia University; and Research Scholar, Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University, United States, **"India and Pakistan: Solving the Puzzle of Divergent Political Paths"**, 18 January 2010.
- EAI-ISAS Workshop on **"China and India: Towards Greater Engagement?"**, 19 January 2010.
- Conference on **"Emerging Pan-Asian Integration: Linkages between South Asia and East Asia"**, 11 February 2010.
- ADBI-ADB-ISAS Dissemination Seminar on **"Infrastructure for a Seamless Asia"**, 12 February 2010.
- **Third India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue**, Singapore, 18-19 February 2010.

EAI-ISAS Workshop: China and India – Towards Greater Engagement?

The Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) and the East Asian Institute (EAI) organised a one-day workshop titled, *"China and India: Towards Greater Engagement?"*, on 19 January 2010 in Singapore. The workshop attracted more than 100 participants from academic institutions, government agencies, diplomatic community, and the financial and business communities.

The workshop was divided into four plenary sessions, namely, Economic Cooperation and Engagement; Developmental Challenges; Domestic Political Concerns and Strategic and Foreign Policy Concerns. Priorities and concerns of China and India were presented from a comparative perspective.

Distinguished speakers included Dr Zhao Hong, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, EAI; Dr Amitendu Palit, Visiting Research Fellow and Head (Development & Programmes), ISAS; Dr Zhao Litao, Research Fellow, EAI; Professor Bibek Debroy, Research Professor, Centre for Policy Research, India and Honorary Senior Fellow, ISAS; Dr Bo Zhiyue, Senior Research Fellow, EAI; Professor Robin Jeffrey, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS; Dr Chen Gang, Research Fellow, EAI; and Professor S. D. Muni, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS. The papers presented at the workshop will be jointly published by ISAS and EAI.



(L-R) Dr Zhao Litao, Prof John Harriss and Prof Bibek Debroy at a panel discussion.