This is a smart and timely contribution on a key dimension of Asia’s geopolitics. Dr. Panda, one of India’s foremost scholars of East Asia, has assembled an excellent group of analysts to probe the place of the Korean Peninsula in a dynamic and fast-changing region. This volume will make for essential reading for anyone interested in contemporary Asia, and in international relations on the whole.

Michael Kagelman, Deputy Director, Asia Program, Woodrow Wilson Centre for International Scholars, Washington DC

Brings India back in, on Asia-wide issues where its perspective is very much needed. The editor assembles a fine group of scholars from throughout the continent and beyond. Creative, original theme and high-quality papers.

Kent E. Calder, Director, Edwin O. Reischauer Center for East Asian Studies, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Washington DC

The Korean Peninsula have overlooked the space for many potential regional actors for long. However, the changing power dynamics post the DPRK-US bilateral summits has allowed many regional actors to step in and aim to play different roles in the region. This book fills a very interesting research gap, particularly as the Indo-Pacific region has not been addressed as a third-party actor in the Korean Peninsula sufficiently. Therefore, this book makes a very relevant contribution to a dynamic and potentially unstable region of the world.

Niklas Swanstrom, Director, Institute for Security and Development Policy, Sweden

This is a magnificently comprehensive volume on a topic of vital importance. The diverse chapters are accessible to general readers but will also provide unique insights to experts. Highly recommended.

Richard Weitz, Senior Fellow and Director, Center for Political-Military Analysis, Hudson Institute, Washington DC

This volume provides keen insight into the Korean Peninsula’s role in shaping Northeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific’s emerging dynamics. Through linking peninsula security and diplomatic dynamics to broader geopolitical trends in the Indo-Pacific, the contributors to this volume have demonstrated that the Korean Peninsula is an important stakeholder in contributing to stability, security, and a rules-based order in the region.

Stephen R. Nagy, Senior Associate Professor, International Christian University, Japan, & Distinguished Fellow, Asia-Pacific Foundation, Canada

In his edited volume The Korean Peninsula and Indo-Pacific Power Politics: Status Security at Stake, Dr. Jagannath P. Panda has compiled chapters of immediate relevance that are at the same time remarkably diverse in both the geographic spread of focus and authors. The Republic of Korea may remain sceptical about the Indo-Pacific as a construct, however, it is clear from this work that the Indo-Pacific as a region is deeply interested in and important to Korea.

Gordon Flake, CEO, Perth USAsia Centre, The University of Western Australia, Perth
This book assesses the strategic linkages that the Korean Peninsula shares with the Indo-Pacific and provides a succinct picture of issues which will shape the trajectory of the Korean Peninsula in the future.

This book analyses how critical actors such as the United States, China, Russia and Japan are caught in a tightly balanced power struggle affecting the Korean Peninsula. It shows how these countries are exerting control over the Korean Peninsula while also holding on to their status as critical actors in the broader Indo-Pacific. The prospects of peace, stability and unity in the Korean Peninsula and the impact of this on Indo-Pacific power politics are explored as well as the contending and competing interests in the region. Chapters present country-specific positions and approaches as case studies and review the impact of power politics on stakeholders’ relationships in the Indo-Pacific. The book also argues that the Korean Peninsula and the issue of denuclearization is of primary importance to any direction an Indo-Pacific Partnership may take.

Bringing together scholars, journalists and ex-diplomats, this book will be of interest to academics working in the field of international relations, foreign policy, security studies and Asian studies as well as audiences interested in policy and defence in Northeast Asia and Indo-Pacific dynamics.

Jagannath P. Panda is a Research Fellow and Centre Coordinator for East Asia at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, India. An expert on China, Indo-Pacific and East Asian affairs, he is the series editor for Routledge Studies on Think Asia.
Routledge Studies on Think Asia
Edited by Jagannath P. Panda

This series addresses the current strategic complexities of Asia and forecasts how these current complexities will shape Asia’s future. Bringing together empirical and conceptual analysis, the series examines critical aspects of Asian politics, with a particular focus on the current security and strategic complexities. The series includes academic studies from universities, research institutes and think-tanks and policy oriented studies. Focusing on security and strategic analysis on Asia’s current and future trajectory, this series welcomes submissions on relationship patterns (bilateral, trilateral and multilateral) in Indo-Pacific, regional and sub-regional institutions and mechanisms, corridors and connectivity, maritime security, infrastructure politics, trade and economic models and critical frontiers (boundaries, borders, bordering provinces) that are crucial to Asia’s future.

1 India and China in Asia
   Between Equations and Equilibrium
   Edited by Jagannath P. Panda

2 Northeast India and India’s Act East Policy
   Identifying the Priorities
   Edited by M. Amarjeet Singh

3 The Korean Peninsula and Indo-Pacific Power Politics
   Status Security at Stake
   Edited by Jagannath P. Panda

4 Conflict and Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific
   New Geopolitical Realities
   Edited by Ash Rossiter, Brendon J. Cannon

URL: https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Studies-on-Think-Asia/book-series/TA
The Korean Peninsula and Indo-Pacific Power Politics
Status Security at Stake

Edited by
Jagannath P. Panda
In Memory of My Grandfather,
Bapa
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## Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2AD</td>
<td>Anti-Access and Area-Denial</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACCC</td>
<td>ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMM</td>
<td>ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEP</td>
<td>Act East Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Artificial Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIIB</td>
<td>Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN/TPY-2</td>
<td>Army/Navy Transportable Radar Surveillance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARF</td>
<td>ASEAN Regional Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCP</td>
<td>Business Continuity Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMD</td>
<td>Ballistic Missile Defence</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRI</td>
<td>Belt and Road Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILD</td>
<td>Act Better Utilisation of Investment Leading to Development Act of 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBMs</td>
<td>Confidence Building Measures</td>
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<td>CDB</td>
<td>China Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEP</td>
<td>Cultural Exchange Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CKFTA</td>
<td>China-South Korea Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMF</td>
<td>Combined Maritime Forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPC</td>
<td>Communist Party of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPTPP</td>
<td>Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for the Trans-Pacific Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVID</td>
<td>Complete, Verifiable, Irreversible, Denuclearisation (sometimes, Dismantlement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMZ</td>
<td>Demilitarised Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoD</td>
<td>Department of Defence</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPRK</td>
<td>Democratic People’s Republic of Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTT</td>
<td>Defence Trilateral Talks</td>
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<tr>
<td>EANET</td>
<td>Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>EARC</td>
<td>East Asian Railway Community</td>
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<td>EAS</td>
<td>East Asia Summit</td>
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<td>ECNEA</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDD</td>
<td>Extended Deterrence Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDGE</td>
<td>Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPC</td>
<td>Extended Deterrence Policy Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESPO</td>
<td>East Siberian Oil Pipeline project</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EWG</td>
<td>Energy Working Group (of APEC)</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>FE</td>
<td>Foal Eagle</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFVD</td>
<td>Final, Fully Verified Denuclearization</td>
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<tr>
<td>FMCT</td>
<td>Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOIP</td>
<td>Free and Open Indo-Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOIPS</td>
<td>Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA</td>
<td>Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLF</td>
<td>Great Leap Forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPPAC</td>
<td>Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRIPS</td>
<td>National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSOMIA</td>
<td>General Security of Military Information Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAEA</td>
<td>International Atomic Energy Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAS</td>
<td>Institute for Korean [sic] American Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICBM</td>
<td>Intercontinental Ballistic Missile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICCSR</td>
<td>Indian Council of Social Science Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMSS</td>
<td>India's Maritime Security Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>IORA</td>
<td>Indian Ocean Rim Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITAN</td>
<td>Infrastructure Transactional Assistance Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>JADIZ</td>
<td>Japan's Air Defence Identification Zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>JASDF</td>
<td>Japan Air Self-Defence Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>JASSM</td>
<td>Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile</td>
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<tr>
<td>JGSDF</td>
<td>Japan Ground Self-Defence Force</td>
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<td>JMSDF</td>
<td>Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSDF</td>
<td>Japan Self-Defence Forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCNA</td>
<td>Korean Central News Agency</td>
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<td>KEDO</td>
<td>Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>KGB</td>
<td>USSR Committee for State Security</td>
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<td>KIC</td>
<td>Kaesong Industrial Complex</td>
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<td>KOEC</td>
<td>Korea Oil Exploration Corporation</td>
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<td>KPA</td>
<td>Korean People's Army</td>
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<td>KR</td>
<td>Key Resolve</td>
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<td>kt</td>
<td>Kilotons</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWR</td>
<td>Light Water Reactor</td>
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Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MDB</td>
<td>Multilateral Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTCR</td>
<td>Missile Technology Control Regime</td>
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<td>NAM</td>
<td>Non-Alignment Movement</td>
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<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<td>NDRC</td>
<td>National Development and Reform Commission</td>
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<td>NEAC</td>
<td>Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation</td>
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<td>NEASPEC</td>
<td>North-East Asian Sub-regional Programme for Environmental Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEAT</td>
<td>Northwest Pacific Action Plan Eutrophication Assessment Tool</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEO</td>
<td>Non-combatant Evacuation Operation</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NOC</td>
<td>National Oil Company</td>
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<td>NOWPAP</td>
<td>Northwest Pacific Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPT</td>
<td>Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (or Non-Proliferation Treaty)</td>
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<td>NSC</td>
<td>National Security Council</td>
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<td>NSG</td>
<td>Nuclear Suppliers Group</td>
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<td>NSP</td>
<td>New Southern Policy</td>
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<td>NSS</td>
<td>National Security Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWFZ</td>
<td>Nuclear Weapons Free Zone</td>
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<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance</td>
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<td>OPCON</td>
<td>Operational Control</td>
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<td>OPIC</td>
<td>Overseas Private Investment Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAC-3</td>
<td>Patriot Advanced Capability</td>
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<td>PLA</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Army</td>
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<td>PLAN</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Army Navy</td>
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<tr>
<td>POW/MIA</td>
<td>Prisoner of War/Missing in Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMD</td>
<td>Possible Military Dimension</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Purchasing Power Parity</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVA</td>
<td>People’s Volunteers Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>Quadrilateral grouping of Australia, India, Japan, and the US</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAAF</td>
<td>Royal Australian Air Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBIO</td>
<td>Rules-Based International Order</td>
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<td>RCEP</td>
<td>Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>ReCAAP</td>
<td>Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia</td>
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<td>ROK</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
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<td>ROKMC</td>
<td>Republic of Korea Marine Corps</td>
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<td>RSEZ</td>
<td>Rason Special Economic Zone</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAR</td>
<td>Special Administrative Region</td>
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<td>SDF</td>
<td>Self Defence Forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLBM</td>
<td>Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLOCs</td>
<td>Sea Lines of Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>SM-3</td>
<td>Standard Missile-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOEs</td>
<td>State-Owned Enterprises</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSBN</td>
<td>Strategic Submarine Ballistic Nuclear</td>
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<tr>
<td>STOVL</td>
<td>Short Take-Off and Vertical-Landing</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAES</td>
<td>Trans-Asia Energy System</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCS</td>
<td>Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEMM</td>
<td>Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>THAAD</td>
<td>Terminal High Altitude Area Defence</td>
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<tr>
<td>TPNW</td>
<td>Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons</td>
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<td>TPP</td>
<td>Trans-Pacific Partnership</td>
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<td>UFG</td>
<td>Ulchi-Freedom Guardian</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNC</td>
<td>United Nations Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCAP</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>USFK</td>
<td>United States Forces Korea</td>
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<tr>
<td>USIDFC</td>
<td>United States International Development Finance Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>USINDOPACOM</td>
<td>United States Indo-Pacific Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>USMC</td>
<td>United States Marine Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>USPACOM</td>
<td>United State Pacific Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>WPK</td>
<td>Workers’ Party of Korea</td>
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The history of Korean Peninsula was always dominated by numerous invasions by empires. Following the end of Japanese imperial rule over Korea, the Peninsula underwent a partition, dividing the region into two administrative zones along the 38th parallel line. Over the next three years (1945–1948), the Soviet Union set up its communist regime in the northern part, and the United States set up in the southern part of the Peninsula.

Ironically, one of the countries on the Peninsula today poses serious and imminent perils to its surroundings and beyond, while the other advocates peace and stability. North Korea is seen as a threat to international peace and security because of its active nuclear weapons programme, track record of weapons proliferation, and an aggressive ruling regime. South Korea, on the other hand, is trying to play a greater role in regional peace and diplomacy through its economic and technical prowess. The scenario has been further complicated by their alliances with opposing powers during Cold War (the Soviet Union/China and the United States, respectively) as well as post-Cold War (China and the United States, respectively).

In recent years, the region has become the hub of great power rivalry between the United States, China, Russia, and to an extent Japan. Furthermore, since the Peninsula is situated adjacent to the Korea Strait – an important maritime trade passage – it has also become a crucial part of the region of Indo-Pacific. Thus, the Korean Peninsula remains a critical arena for the power politics in Indo-Pacific. Most importantly, no debate is likely to continue to dominate Asia’s strategic spectrum as much as the issue of the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and the prospect of reunification of the two Koreas. The issues are further convoluted by the distinct, and often divergent, perspectives of the critical stakeholders, namely South Korea, the United States, China, Japan, and Russia, on denuclearisation and the potential for Korean reunification.

In this regard, the historic meeting of June 12, 2018, between the American president Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, and the inter-Korean summits in 2018 have heightened the prospects of peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula. Notwithstanding these positive trends, a denuclearised Peninsula still remains far-fetched, owing to the contentious power plays in the region. Further, despite the improved relations between Trump and Kim,
the United States and North Korea continue to disagree on the process and definition of “complete” denuclearisation. While the United States, with a non-incremental approach, persists in treating the issue of denuclearisation through maximum pressure and diplomatic force, North Korea is adamant on a more flexible US approach while intending to denuclearise “when the time is right”. At the same time, resolving historical misunderstandings between the two Koreas requires patience and time. In this context, South Korea has persistently called for resolving the crisis through peace and diplomacy. China is supporting the phased manner desired by North Korea, while Japan, another important actor in North-East Asia, is supporting the US demand for “Complete, Verifiable and Irreversible Dismantlement” (CVID).

Similarly, the inter-Korean summits held in 2018 enhanced the prospects of peaceful reunification of the two Koreas. Both the Koreas have repeatedly professed their commitment towards national unification, and over the last 70 years, countless words have been written and spoken about this commitment. However, the aim to achieve the reunification of the Korean Peninsula remains distant. Moreover, over the years, the political and ideological cleavages between the two Koreas have widened. Nonetheless, the role of the critical stakeholders in the reunification process should not be disregarded.

South Korea has vowed to work towards the reunification of the two Koreas by 2045. North Korea has welcomed such a pledge, but it hopes that the reunification happens without the interference of any external forces. As for the other stakeholders, Russia has been officially supporting peaceful, secure, and stable reunification. Japan, too, officially supports peaceful reunification, and though it may not be able to play a proactive role in the peace process, its long-term ambition to play a role in economic aid assistance after the reunification should not be discounted. China, on the other hand, while supporting Korean reunification, pursues an uncertain approach. It has essentially been supporting a “two Korea policy”, acknowledging that the political, economic, and security threats of reunification would be far greater. No matter what each of these actors’ official pronouncement on reunification appears to be, none of them would like to put their national interests at stake by losing the stamp of being a critical actor in the region. Hence, the genuine template of each of their stances on the reunification of the Koreas is subject to debate.

Nevertheless, a scenario is fast emerging in which world leaders are engaging with Pyongyang in contrast to the earlier stance, where the major powers sought to isolate North Korea and hoped for the collapse of its regime. This has been demonstrated by Kim Jong-un’s regular meetings with the Chinese president Xi Jinping, South Korean president Moon Jae-in, and US president Donald Trump. Russian president Vladimir Putin’s meeting with Kim Jong-un in April 2019 has further strengthened this assertion. Furthermore, the Trump-Kim summits being held in third countries, Singapore and Vietnam, is an indication that the world as a whole, sensing new trading opportunities, is now more receptive to engaging with North Korea. Further, all its neighbours and several other powers appear amicable to remove the UN sanctions on North Korea if its nuclear sites
and stockpiles are completely dismantled. This finely poised dynamic makes it possible for many non-critical actors, such as India, the Association of Northeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the European Union (EU), Australia, and Mongolia, to play a greater role in restoring peace and security while enhancing their strategic interests in the region.

Consequently, the critical issues of denuclearisation and reunification are increasingly being discussed among critical and non-critical stakeholders as well as in the bilateral, trilateral, quadrilateral, and even multilateral discussion forums and mechanisms. In other words, the power rivalries in the Korean Peninsula are no more restricted to the region but have expanded into the Indo-Pacific region, where the United States is a major security provider. It is important to note that the fate of denuclearisation in the Korean Peninsula would act as a litmus test for the legitimacy of US’s economic, political, and strategic influence within and beyond Asia. Further, foreign assistance has so far aided the DPRK’s (this volume uses the nomenclature of DPRK and North Korea, and RoK and South Korea, interchangeably) development of nuclear and missile capabilities. North Korea has had proliferation linkages with nuclear aspirants in West and South Asia, which, if expanded, would pose serious threats to international peace and security.

Undoubtedly, the Indo-Pacific is also likely to witness a similar coalescence or clash of interests. For instance, the United States and China, through their geo-economic strategies – “Indo-Pacific Strategy” and the “Belt and Road Initiative”, respectively – are already turning the Indo-Pacific into a competing economic as well as strategic landscape. Moreover, other major actors are also engaging in the Indo-Pacific with connectivity initiatives, such as Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) by India, “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” vision by Japan, and the New Southern Policy (NSP) by South Korea. Nonetheless, it is in the interest of the littoral and non-littoral states of the Indo-Pacific to prevent miscalculations and misperceptions, especially when it comes to nuclear powers, in order to ensure a free, open, and prosperous international environment.

Surprisingly, literature on the Korean Peninsula has not addressed the complexity of the region from the perspective of the Indo-Pacific power politics. This volume, therefore, examines not only the prospect of peace, stability, and unity in the Korean Peninsula but also the contending and competing interests in the region and its impact on the Indo-Pacific. It further explores the contours and characteristics of major power politics on the Peninsula and the critical and non-critical perspectives of the various stakeholders therein in the larger context of the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region. Moreover, such a volume, involving international subject experts with the lead of an Indian scholar from a prominent think-tank of India, makes it a rare and one of the prelude exercise.

This work is a sincere endeavour and has endured a rigorous review process. Any remaining omissions, mistakes, or unforeseen errors are the sole responsibility of the respective authors. The editor, the institute for which the editor works, and the publisher are not responsible either.

Dr. Jagannath P. Panda
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Introduction
The Korean Peninsula and Indo-Pacific power politics: Status security at stake

Jagannath P. Panda

Debate over the state of affairs in the Korean Peninsula has dictated the strategic spectrum of world affairs for some time now. Much of the debate has transcribed the strategic orientation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) emerging as a nuclear power, the authoritarian conduct of its regime and the behavioural pattern of North Korea surviving as a relevant actor or country amidst the current international sanctions and pressures. Similarly, critical actors in the region such as the United States, China, Russia, and Japan are caught in a tightly balanced power struggle to shape the trajectory of the Korean Peninsula in order to not only exert control over the Peninsula but also hold on to their status as a critical actor in the region.

Amidst the alliance politics, the two Koreas – North and South – are entangled in a complex computation to prevent the Korean Peninsula from losing its indigenous character as a “single Korea”. Hence, reunification of the Koreas has emerged as a dominating subject. Moreover, with North Korea at the forefront, matters pertaining to the Korean Peninsula have emerged to become as the epicentre of North-East Asia for some time. The three Ds – denuclearisation, demand for reunification, and dialogue diplomacy – have been central to many of the political discussions on the region in recent times, making it the most strategically significant hotspot of the world. Therefore, each of the actors in the region is cautiously manoeuvring a range of politics that are key to their status as a critical actor in the region. The following four sections explore the critical facets at stake in the region: namely ‘nuclear security standings’, ‘test for the alliance management status in the region’, ‘the identity of Korea’, and ‘regime survival and the state security of North Korea’. In other words, this volume provides a broad account of the state of affairs in Korean Peninsula by reviewing the critical powers perspectives and their status in the region.

Nuclear security standings at stake

Developments in the Korean Peninsula are indispensably linked to the Indo-Pacific power politics. The reasons are quite explicit. The Korean Peninsula has emerged as a “critical nuclear zone”. Out of all the members of the Six-Party Talks (which abruptly ended with the non-participation of North Korea in
four are nuclear powers at present, while two – South Korea and Japan – hold adequate capabilities to emerge as nuclear powers. It is no secret that South Korea possesses adequate nuclear energy resources and is a leading technology-exporting country at present. Since the 1970s, Seoul has possessed nuclear capability as part of its energy strength. As a national strategic priority, nuclear energy has emerged as one of the important resource facets for the Republic of Korea (ROK), even though President Moon Jae-in has pledged to phase out ROK’s nuclear power gradually. Its current strength of 24 reactors enable almost one-third of the country’s electricity plants. Further, Seoul is currently engaged in building four nuclear reactors in the United Arab Emirates under a US$20 billion contract.

Japan, however, is trying to strike a balance between seeking reliable and affordable power sources and battling the psychological aspects of the nuclear debate. In recent years, the question of possessing nuclear power versus its critical consequences has dictated Japanese public consciousness and revived the debate around the three 3Es: energy security, economy, and environment. The Fukushima nuclear disaster might alarm many in Japan, and the anti-nuclear sentiment might still be prevalent in the country. However, it is unreasonable for Japan to avoid nuclear energy as a resource, since it needs to import 90 per cent of its energy requirement in order to meet its economic needs. The Japanese dependency on nuclear energy resources is aptly reflected in Shinzo Abe’s statement that “Japan cannot do without nuclear power to secure the stability of energy supply while considering what makes economic sense and the issue of climate change”.

The other four nuclear actors – the United States, China, Russia, and North Korea (with its newly acquired nuclear status) – are locked in the complex computation of denuclearisation vis-à-vis complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. And even though South Korea and Japan are somewhat part of these negotiations, the debates over North Korea, its capabilities, and how to make Pyongyang denuclearise have mostly involved the two major actors, the United States and China. The proliferation linkages of North Korea beyond the region of the Korean Peninsula are not clandestine anymore, highlighting that complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula is more complex than it appears to be. In fact, at this juncture, no debate dominates the strategic landscape in Asia as much as the issue of North Korean denuclearisation. The US-DPRK summits, the inter-Korean meetings, and the other actors’ outreach, including China’s, to North Korea in the recent past may have heightened the prospects of peace in the Korean Peninsula, but there will be plenty of tests to come as Asia’s military and strategic landscape is redrawn.

Undoubtedly, denuclearisation is a complex chapter in the history of the Korean Peninsula. As Lami Kim, in one of the chapters of this volume, argues, that the external assistance from both state and non-state actors made debates about a nuclear North Korea an international affair long ago. Further, in spite of the recent overtures, the Americans and North Koreans will continue to differ on the very process and definition of “complete” denuclearisation. China will continue to back North Korea for a phased denuclearised process, while Japan will continue
Introduction

3
to hold on to its stand supporting the demand of its alliance partner, the United States, for “Complete, Verifiable and Irreversible Dismantlement” (CVID). What is, however, important to note is that the current logjam in the negotiations is more in terms of the denuclearisation of North Korea vis-à-vis the Korean Peninsula, rather than the complete denuclearisation of North Korea.

Pyongyang has been quite vocal about the distinction between denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and denuclearisation of North Korea. For the Kim Jong-un administration, complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula will apparently lead to complete denuclearisation in North Korea. The North Korean stance is strongly reiterated in their official statement:

When we talk about the Korean Peninsula, it includes the territory of our republic and also the entire region of (South Korea) where the United States has placed its invasive force, including nuclear weapons. When we talk about the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, it means the removal of all sources of nuclear threat, not only from the South and North but also from areas neighbouring the Korean Peninsula.11

For North Korea, the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula also means a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. In other words, the denuclearisation debate will test the stature and standing of all the major actors in the region, particularly that of the United States, China, and the two Koreas, irrespective of their competing interests, priorities, and modalities for negotiations.12

Further, the debate over complete denuclearisation is not entirely limited to the Korean Peninsula. North Korea’s illegitimate nuclear technological nexus with countries such as Pakistan, Syria, Libya, and Iran have been a matter of international debate and scrutiny. Moreover, India’s consistent efforts, as a non-critical actor, have enabled the international community to take cognisance of the nuclear technological nexus between North Korea and Pakistan, and thus provide the crucial link between North-East Asia and South Asia. More importantly, what makes the Korean Peninsula tactically significant to the Indo-Pacific security calculus is how the mixed nuclear and economic character of wider North-East Asia impacts world politics. Kent Calder and Min Ye in their book The Making of Northeast Asia rightly contend that the converging interests of the three major nuclear and economic actors in North-East Asia make the Korean Peninsula an “unstable pivot”.13 In other words, North-East Asia’s economic significance for the United States, China, Japan, and South Korea makes this region a pivotal point of global geostrategy and a high-status volatile zone in the Indo-Pacific.

Test for the alliance management status

The Korean Peninsula is a critical alliance frontier of the Indo-Pacific. All the alliances – Sino-DPRK, US-ROK, and US-Japan – in the Korean Peninsula have constituted the core of world politics for decades. Yet, the status of each of
these alliances has undergone severe tests and trials amidst the (re)balancing approaches that their respective relationships have taken in recent times.

Take the Sino-DPRK alliance, for instance. This alliance has faced a lot of international scrutiny ahead of North Korea’s emergence as a nuclear power, especially with continuous missile and nuclear testing. The relevance of the historic 1961 “alliance treaty” between China and the DPRK, known as the “Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance”, has been strongly debated, especially keeping in view that its validity is up for renewal in 2021. Formally, it would necessitate China to come to North Korea’s aid in case of attacks, though Beijing had stated clearly in 2017 that this clause is only applicable if Pyongyang does not attack first or provokes the attack. Speculations further abound on whether China would still like to maintain its alliance with North Korea when Pyongyang has emerged as a nuclear power. It is most unlikely that China would like to abandon or make any substantial revision to the 1961 treaty in 2021. This is partly because the Chinese leaders believe that a stronger nuclear North Korea not only strengthens its alliance framework in the region but equally weakens the United States’ alliances in Asia. After all, North Korea’s emergence as a nuclear power was only possible in the past decade with the Chinese consent, assistance, and shield that was provided to counter the mounting international pressure on Pyongyang.

Moreover, Beijing has always been Pyongyang’s best ally, especially after the fall of the Soviet Union. Even with North Korea emerging as a nuclear power and the United Nations (UN) imposing sanctions on it, China continued to conduct trade – of seafood, textiles, and minerals for oil from North Korea – while also routinely condemning the nuclear tests. In fact, if Chinese reports are to be believed, their trade relations were actually improving prior to the imposition of sanctions in the latter half of 2017. It had increased by 37.4 per cent in the beginning of 2017, as compared to 2016.

Further, since the Korean War that began on June 25, 1950, China has played one of the most defining roles not only in promoting alliance politics but also in leading non-Western bloc in global affairs. The Panmunjom and Pyongyang declarations arising out of the inter-Korean summits in 2018 might appear to overlook the Chinese partaking in the peace process: as China’s role is passingly mentioned in the Panmunjom declaration. However, it is futile to think that China, a resident power in the Korean Peninsula, and most importantly, an alliance partner of North Korea and a strong economic partner of South Korea in the region, does not have the same clouts today that it has enjoyed since the Korean War period.

Though many would argue that North Korea has become a “strategic liability” for China, Beijing would like to strengthen its ties with Pyongyang, keeping in view that the security of the Korean Peninsula is in China’s interest. As a country that shares a border with North Korea, China would like to ensure that a nuclear North Korea does not cross its limit and become erratic, affecting the regional security calculus. To Beijing, North Korea’s status as a nuclear power serves the Chinese calculus to check American pressure tactics. Hence, China
would like to renew the China-North Korea Treaty of Friendship in 2021. Articles II and VI of the Treaty guarantee China’s role as a protector of North Korea; the Treaty emphasises China’s role as a key “strategic ally” and, importantly, as a peacemaker in the Peninsula. However, President Xi is also wary of the changing geopolitical scenarios and the importance of military balancing, especially with the United States. Therefore, military-to-military action that was discussed in the four US-China bilateral dialogues at Mar-a-Lago in 2017 was by and large restricted to North Korea. While talks related to trade and economics took much precedence, the urgency of denuclearising North Korea was also highlighted.19 From the North Korean point of view, it appears that Pyongyang would not perhaps move ahead to forge any significant understanding with South Korea or with the United States by breaking away from this historic accord that it still enjoys with China.

Likewise, the US-South Korea and US-Japan partnerships, characterised often as the security alliances in North-East Asia, have faced significant challenges. These two alliances have gone through anxious moments amidst Donald Trump’s bold and unpredictable approach towards both the alliance partners. The United States’ withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Trump administration’s demand for a cost-sharing deal with Japan and South Korea for stationing military troops in their respective territories had put in doubt the United States’ military commitments in the Indo-Pacific.

In fact, despite a long-standing alliance, cracks had started to appear in the US-South Korea ties on the broad aspects of how to deal with a nuclear North Korea when both Moon Jae-in and Donald Trump were new to power in their respective countries. Also, managing China’s role and interest in the Korean Peninsula seems to have emerged as big challenge in their alliance. Seoul, under Moon Jae-in, has been careful in its China policy. In fact, unlike his predecessor, Moon has always appeared to pursue a more balanced approach towards both China and the United States. Importantly, Moon has been quite consistent with his approach towards China. Although he did not reverse the decision on the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) anti-missile system, Moon has been quite categorical about improving relations with China and has acknowledged Beijing’s importance as resident power in North-East Asia. However, Moon’s approach to China was not really seen that positively by the Trump administration.

Further, Trump’s business or corporate-oriented sharing of the security mandate cost in the region has been a new challenge to this alliance. For example, South Korea has shouldered nearly 90 per cent of the US$10.8 billion cost of building the new Pyeongtaek military base, which is being built after formally ending the 73-year-old historical Yongsan Garrison base in Seoul. Even though the Pyeongtaek military base is often seen as a security insurance for the US-RoK alliance, the disagreement over its cost sharing to troops stationing, including the geographical location of the base, seems to be the differing points.20 This development has been a part of the American Global Defence Posture Review, which is essentially a military realignment programme to offer greater flexibility
to the posturing and operations of the United States Forces Korea (USFK). Though this decision to shift the military base was made in 2003, it confirms Donald Trump administration’s selective and business-oriented military strategy towards its alliance partner.

Additionally, the United States and South Korea also signed a one-year “Special Measures Agreement” in February 2019, slated till December 2019, which would divide the cost of keeping the US troops there. The agreement further raised South Korea’s expenses by 8 per cent to $924 million. There are differences between the two countries on policies regarding concessions on North Korea and the need to launch preventive strikes. Relations between the two Koreas have deteriorated recently owing to the US-ROK military activities, and South Korea fears that launching preventive strikes can spark off a North Korean retaliation. Further, though much of the US-ROK alliance is hinged on the existential threat posed by North Korea in the region, balancing China is also crucial for the United States. South Korea, however, is impassive about holding an anti-China rhetoric. Such differences combined with Trump’s repeated pressure for greater contributions have raised apprehensions in South Korea.

Nonetheless, the present US administration’s military approach appears to be more positive towards South Korea than Japan. With Trump coming to power in the United States, there have been doubts over the United States’ commitment towards Japan’s security. Japan’s intention, under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, to revisit the pacifist Constitution, including Article 9, and strengthening of its self-defence capabilities are additional factors that have contributed to these doubts. Tokyo wants to become more independent in military posturing, even though it obviously will continue to rely on the United States. A new uneasiness was noticeable in the US-Japan alliance.

It is important to note that US military assistance to South Korea is to protect US interests in North-East Asia, while to Japan it is intended more towards protecting US interests in the Indo-Pacific region. US troops on the Korean Peninsula roughly number around 28,500. This might decline or increase depending upon the understanding that the US administration has with the ROK. The US military will also like to consider this with its rotational policy. In Japan, around 40,000 troops were stationed as of the end of 2017. The Seventh Fleet of the United States is headquartered in Japan and is the largest sea force with approximately 20,000 sailors, 145 aircraft, and about 60-70 ships and submarines. These large numbers have forced the Trump administration to rethink the cost-sharing mechanisms with Japan, creating distrust between the two alliance partners.

The most pressing concern for the United States now is the denuclearisation of North Korea, for which maintaining the regional stability in North-East Asia is of vital importance. With relations between Japan and South Korea becoming bitter on historical to economic issues, primarily after South Korea deciding to scrap the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) – an intelligence-sharing pact about North Korean missiles it has with Japan – the onus falls somewhat on the US military to facilitate this process. Therefore,
the United States has been emphasising on holding bilateral training activities and trilateral security trainings to strengthen the resilience of their trilateral alliance. Japan and South Korea have been identified as crucial alliance partners by the United States in the Indo-Pacific, not just to deter North Korea but also to keep China and Russia in check. What these countries require now is to de-escalate tension, put forward pragmatic approaches to facilitate denuclearisation negotiations, and come up with a sustainable strategy to strengthen the alliance.

The identity of Korea is at stake

Although both of the Koreas emphasize the significance of a unified Korea, the reality trumps the aspirations by juxtapositioning two contradicting visions for a common home. More ironically, the idea of Korean unification is focussed not on the two Koreas alone but on the major stakeholders, such as the United States, China, Japan, and Russia, whose divergent perceptions towards unification has transformed the region into a hub of power politics. It is in this regard that peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula seems rather infeasible at the moment and a unified Korea so far has been an abstract idea only. While the two sides have committed to “reconnecting the blood relations of the nation and bring forward the future of co-prosperity and independent reunification led by Korean”, the quest for unification remains marred with uncertainties and challenges.

Thus, while the need for unification is recognised, there is yet no consensus on the exact process to achieve it.

One of the most important causes of the unification impasse has been the two totally different perceptions of a unified Korea by Seoul and Pyongyang. While both the Koreas aspire for a unified Korea, it is unlikely that either of them would give up their respective national interests for the cause. While the South is a thriving, democratic market-based economy, the North is impoverished and ruled by a bellicose communist or an authoritarian regime. However, under the circumstances of a peaceful unification of the two Koreas, where the term “unification” defines the integration of the economy, governance, as well as defence, both the Koreas would require striking a compromise by pursuing a two-way approach. In this regard, unification through this approach still seemed possible just after the “Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula” in September last year, in which both the Koreas agreed to cooperate through dialogue and diplomacy. However, in the purview of current developments, unification seems far-fetched as the possibility for South and North Korea to make adjustments to their democratic and juche ideologies respectively seems diminishing. Therefore, a peaceful unification in the Korean Peninsula has not been successful so far; instead, the differences between the two Koreas have made the situation further irreconcilable.

Consequently, while peaceful unification through compromise seems unviable, unification might be considered through conflict. In such a scenario, South Korea might triumph in a battle with the military assistance of the United States
and take control over the Northern side, or North Korea might come out to be victorious through its growing nuclear might and possible intervention by China. However, such a scenario might lead to an occurrence of yet another Korean war, with significantly more destruction on both the sides due to the possible use of nuclear weapons, thus, defeating the purpose of unification.

A third scenario, which is often debated to be the most workable approach to achieve unification, remains the collapse of North Korean regime. Kim Jong-Un's vigour to continue enhancing its nuclear powers irrespective of the UN Security Council (UNSC) economic sanctions has been leading the fate of North Korea towards more sanctions, and hence a blow is expected to an already impoverished economy. Further, Kim's undemocratic executions of not just the commoners but also many high-rank officials and elites have resulted in the waning of Kim's regime popularity. In this regard, a regime collapse might expedite the unification negotiation process and result in a South Korea-led governance in the region. However, while some experts argue that North Korean regime's collapse can lead the way, it is likely to upset most North Korean elites as it would not be sustainable in the long run. Moreover, while the United States might readily support a South Korea-led government in Korea, China, the strongest ally for North Korea, might intervene and even condemn such a move or act.

Moreover, while the negotiation for unification of the two Koreas is still caught in stalemate, the South and the North Koreas are not the only players. It is imperative to understand that unification of the two Koreas cannot be achieved in vacuum and the participation of the stakeholders has become equally significant. In this case, the United States would prefer a South Korean democratic model of governance in the Korean Peninsula, which would not just enhance its market outreach and strategic footprint in the region but also transform the Peninsula as a buffer zone to balance China. China, on the other hand, though it officially supports the Korean unification, approaches the issue through uncertainty. China essentially supports a “Two Korea” policy, acknowledging that a unified Korea might have far more political, economic, and strategic threats. Most importantly, a unified Korea might have the potentials to undermine China's influence in the region and prevent the latter from realizing its “Chinese Dream”. In similar context, the positions of Japan and Russia too deserve scrutiny as none of the stakeholders would be willing to forgo their respective vested interests to ensure the Korean Unification.

Thus, divergent perceptions and major power plays in the region have exacerbated the already convoluted unification scenario in the Korean Peninsula. What is, however, being compromised within this whole scheme of negotiation is the indigenous character of “Korea” – the identity of Korea is compromised amidst major power politics and their vested interests. Korean reunification will have repercussions far beyond its geographical vicinity, but more so for its immediate and more powerful neighbours – China and Japan. In view of the European Union (EU) experience, building trust and a credible institutional arrangement would be more successful than forceful reunification.
Regime survival to state security at stake

For North Korea, regime survival has been one of the more pressing matters in recent times, compared to denuclearisation and alliance management in the Korean Peninsula. Much has been written on the future of the Kim Jong-un regime. The international perception of the North Korean regime has persistently become stronger – a “hermit kingdom” or a “rogue state” that generally prefers possessing nuclear weapons to feeding its population. Even in the face of global condemnation, North Korea has not seemed to comply and is, in fact, engaging in more provocative behaviour. Such behaviour by Pyongyang has led to multidimensional challenges in the region, from the deadlock on denuclearisation to the destabilisation of the region. In such a complex context, a systematic deconstruction of North Korean state’s behaviour or its regime’s bellicose attitude, from its military-first strategy to the self-reliance ideology to parallel development of military and economic growth strategy, has become a strategic necessity.

Besides, the international standpoint of achieving peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula begins with the denuclearisation of North Korea, to which Kim Jong-un has defiantly retorted that the world must discuss the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula as a whole. For North Korea, having a nuclear umbrella is what is going to ensure regime survival, mainly with a hostile United States at its tail. Kim Jong-un can be said to be pursuing the grand strategy of military and economic development concurrently. He has repeatedly focussed on how the Middle East has become a “victim of aggression” due to the absence of “powerful self-defence capabilities”. In Kim’s contestation, therefore, in order to understand and facilitate discussions on denuclearisation, his regime’s actions should not be considered irrational and erratic. Rather, in Kim’s perception, his country should be treated as a rational actor, seeking to leverage diplomacy through Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) capabilities.

As mentioned earlier, North Korea essentially identifies the Korean Peninsula with not just the two Koreas but also the surrounding areas where the external actors have substantial physical presence. It implies that North Korea’s decision to denuclearise depends on the withdrawal of the United States’ extended military services from the region, which are a part of the US nuclear umbrella that covers its regional allies. Such a stance has not gone down well with the US administration. There is a long-standing mistrust between the United States and the North Korean regime – Washington has been insisting that Pyongyang relinquish all weapons of mass destruction (WMD) following a maximum-pressure strategy or engagement; on the other hand, Pyongyang has been striving to obtain security assurances while insisting on giving up its weapons in a gradual manner.

While both Washington and Pyongyang seek continued negotiations, their deliberations have not shown enough flexibility, which is reflective of their inability to arrive at a common diplomatic understanding. There is also much certitude regarding the connotations of the “security guarantees” that Kim is
demanding. For the United States, North Korea’s continued military provocations and repeated violations of the UNSC resolutions have made it into a capricious state which cannot be trusted with security guarantees until it is completely denuclearised. For North Korea, on the other hand, US policies are not very credible – it has already withdrawn from Afghanistan, the Iran nuclear deal, the TPP, and the Paris Climate Agreement. So, North Korea is aware that denuclearising without attaining certain tangible security guarantees might allow the regime to collapse or the state of North Korea to fall at the mercy of other major powers.

The dialogue diplomacy in the region, mainly the Trump-Kim summits and the inter-Korean summits, so far has been more of a spectacle rather than carrying much substance, though it certainly demonstrates progress towards rapprochement. In the absence of a credible multilateral security institution that could address the security impediments in the Korean Peninsula, it is difficult to have any real negotiations. Advancing any scope of cooperation will surely involve navigating between the growing interdependencies between countries, which has been by far quite asymmetrical. North Korea holds much less economic weight than any of the other negotiating partners but holds somewhat more sway in international nuclear talks. Moreover, all of these negotiating partners have vested interests in dealing with North Korea. Therefore, conflict resolution in North Korea should involve surpassing these individual differences; fostering mutual interests; and, most importantly, being willing to compromise.

What is important to note is that actors in the region are yet to find common ground on the North Korean impasse. This could be because the dynamics North Korea shares with its negotiating partners is hinged on various historical and domestic constraints. The economic and geopolitical influence of China on the Korean Peninsula is already very high. All the while, China’s top priority has been to prevent the region from destabilising, which would invariably also have a spillover effect on China’s neighbouring region. As Pyongyang’s military alliance partner, Beijing foresees many opportunities in advancing cooperation, though it has not been very persuasive in helping North Korea denuclearise.

Russia, too, has been advocating “security guarantees for North Korea”, though it is vague about what constitutes such propositions. Further, despite the call for cooperation and unification, the relationship between the two Koreas at present is in a limbo. North Korea’s ICBM launches have worsened the situation. For Kim, South Korea should do away with the THAAD and other joint military exercises with the United States and engage more in coming up with a constructive road map for rapprochement. For South Korea, denuclearisation is the key priority – the issue of unification comes somewhat later. While Moon Jae-in hopes for unification by 2045, there is very little enthusiasm among the general population for a united Korea. Moreover, addressing the issues related to the UNSC sanctions resolutions against North Korea, its ICBM manufacturing capacity and its human rights violations take precedence for South Korea.

Just because the North Korean regime has survived for so long does not mean its survival in the coming years is ensured. Kim Jung-un, being a rational man,
understands that his policies are not sustainable in the long run – they will and already have crippled the economy. While in the past, fanatic Korean nationalism and various forms of repression brought some economic aid, treading along the same route will lead to a systemic crisis. Instead, what multilateral institutions and the international community should strive for is not just denuclearising North Korea but assisting it in the transformation of its decaying economy. If and when North Korea opens to the outside world, the global economy should be receptive enough to accommodate its economic and social change. This receptivity may, in future, help to reunify the Korean Peninsula, achieve peace and stability in the region, and lift the current atmosphere of threat facing North-East Asia.

The book at hand

This volume addresses the strategic linkages that the Korean Peninsula shares with the Indo-Pacific and provides a succinct picture of the critical issues that will shape the trajectory of the Korean Peninsula in times to come. It brings together trained scholars, journalists, and ex-diplomats with substantial policy experiences. Besides, this volume draws on primary sources of materials, particularly language sources, and field experiences, which makes it an invaluable resource for researchers, graduate students, scholars, and policy makers.

This book is divided into three sections. The first section, “Critical Perspectives”, talks about the role of critical actors in Korean Peninsula, highlighting their distinct, and often divergent, views on denuclearisation as well as national reunification. In Chapter 1, Donald Kirk argues that the US strategy on the Korean Peninsula rests on the principle of the status quo and is aimed to preserve the historic alliance between the United States and the ROK. The author explores the United States’ shifting policy on the two Koreas in the last few years and wonders if Trump, first by threatening North Korea and then by pursuing a diplomatic tack, might be getting somewhere. He observes that the lingering threat is that the United States’ patience is wearing thin as North Korea is avoiding “complete denuclearisation”, as promised in the Singapore summit, and that the absolutist CVID no longer dominates the conversation post the summit.

Anurag Viswanath, in Chapter 2, discusses the “great game” that has transformed North-East Asia into a geo-spot riven with politics and polarisation, cooperation and contestation, manoeuvres and maritime disputes, triumvirates and tensions – a mass of entangled relationships that has made it one of the most volatile regions in the world. She argues that China was, is, and shall remain a critical player in the region. However, China has to balance its old responsibilities as a socialist power and new global responsibilities as the second most important power, keeping in view its economic, political, and strategic interests. She contends that the future road map for the region seems elusive because of the divergent interests of all the stakeholders.

In Chapter 3, Kohtaro Ito argues that the confrontation between Japan and China in the Senkaku Islands after the 2000s and the continued military provocations by North Korea have increased the threat perception for Japan.
As a response, Japan has not only fostered military relations with the US and Australian forces but also strengthened formerly weak military relations with other countries, such as Britain, Canada, and France. The author contends that Japan's Korean Peninsula strategy will function as a deterrent for not only North Korea but also China. However, what Japan fears is that the reduction or withdrawal of the USFK will be decided by the United States alone or between the United States and South Korea. In Chapter 4, Georgy Bulychev and Valeriia Gorbacheva argue that Russia’s relationship with North Korea has experienced quite a few highs and lows in the three post-Soviet decades, in keeping with the policy changes. The authors trace the Russia-North Korea relations from 1991 until present times, through seven phases, discussing the prospects of cooperation and the challenges therein.

The second section of the volume, “Contending Perspectives”, talks about how the critical yet contradictory approaches of the important actors have resulted in a power rivalry in the Korean Peninsula. In Chapter 5, Jina Kim explains that the dialogue on denuclearisation, which started as a bilateral issue between the United States and North Korea, has now transformed into a multi-party negotiation. The chapter also asserts that achieving consensus on a denuclearisation road map is impossible because political, technological, and diplomatic issues must be considered together. Nonetheless, it argues that facilitating mutual exchange and cooperation is one of the ways to incentivise North Korea and that maintaining a sustainable peace environment when North Korea renounces its nuclear arsenals requires a holistic approach and institutionalised practices within an agreed framework.

In Chapter 6, Kuyoun Chung argues that the strategic environment in the Indo-Pacific will evolve dramatically over the course of North Korea's denuclearisation. The author also asserts that any endgame of the denuclearisation on the Korean Peninsula is expected to shift the strategic interests of regional powers in the Indo-Pacific, influencing not only regional strategic stability but also the extended deterrence that has long sustained the US strategic dominance in the region. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss the strategic aspects of current denuclearisation negotiations and how they will interact with the Sino-US strategic competition that will define security environment in a foreseeable future.

In Chapter 7, Lami Kim illustrates how foreign assistance has so far aided the DPRK’s development of nuclear and missile capabilities, as well as its rise as a proliferator. The author then discusses, from a global non-proliferation perspective, the implications of the success and failure of ongoing denuclearisation negotiations. In Chapter 8, Archana Upadhyay discusses the fast-changing global strategic environment that requires Russia to reset ties with the two Koreas, keeping in mind the far-reaching historical trajectory. The author analyses how the “Korea factor” in Russia’s foreign policy strategy is crucial for its North-East Asia outreach and overall stability.

The remaining two chapters in this section analyses two non-critical – Mongolian and Indian – perspectives. In Chapter 9, Alicia Campi argues that Mongolia’s multifaceted ties to the DPRK, which stem from its present
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non-threatening status and communist-era commonalities, can be useful in the Korean Peninsula peace process. She also discusses how Mongolia is uniquely placed to not only play the role of a mediator in the North-South Korean dispute, by being an active force in the North-East Asian peace process, but also create new mechanisms that contribute to regional connectivity. In Chapter 10 – the last chapter of the second section – Jagannath P. Panda and Mrittika Guha Sarkar assess India’s approach to the Korean Peninsula keeping in view the current developments in the Indo-Pacific. They argue that India’s dialogue and diplomacy approach is responsible for its enhanced partnership with South Korea and sustained diplomatic relations with North Korea. This very approach, they reason, is key to India being seen as a prospective facilitator or mediator to promote peace in the Korean Peninsula.

The last section of the book, “Competing and Cooperating Perspectives”, discusses power politics in the Korean Peninsula, analysing the critical undercurrents that shape the competing and cooperative perspectives of the Korean Peninsula vis-à-vis Indo-Pacific. In Chapter 11, Jin Shin argues that the divergent political systems of the two Koreas will have serious implications for the global political order. The author further throws light on Kim’s governing philosophy and strategies, as well as his undermined status in North Korea, and looks at the future trajectory of the country’s nuclear policy and how it determines Korean unification.

In Chapter 12, Manpreet Sethi briefly traces the evolution of the various negotiating mechanisms in order to understand what has worked in the past and could be used again to make it work in the future. The chapter also provides an overview of the limited achievements of the negotiating mechanisms at different points of time. It concludes by drawing some inferences from these negotiating mechanisms in the Korean Peninsula for the situation in the Indo-Pacific. In Chapter 13, Seoujou Kang explores how the US Indo-Pacific Strategy, starting as geopolitics, is transforming itself into a geo-economics construct in the face of rising China. The author also compares the two competing economic architectures, led by the United States and China, in the Indo-Pacific region and analyses their effects on the region as a whole, and South Korea in particular.

Finally, in Chapter 14, Atmaja Gohain Baruah argues that North-East Asia is in a critical space in international politics, where resource competition and geostrategic rivalry between the neighbouring countries have stirred more conflict than cooperation. The chapter addresses three areas of growing resource insecurity: namely environmental concerns, maritime disputes, and energy security. The author contends that while resource insecurity has intensified economic and political rivalry between some of Asia’s key economic powers, it has also created the conditions that encourage cooperation. However, the absence of cooperating mechanisms and political motivation is a challenge. Therefore, identifying areas for resource cooperation between these countries will not only achieve energy security and reduce regional tension but also encourage environmentally sustainable policies.

Overall, this volume addresses the critical facets of Korean Peninsula and its undercurrents that will continue to shape the future of the region. Given the
fluidity of the politics in the region, the assessment made in this volume are certainly not constant. Yet, it goes without stating that the assessments made in this volume offer critical judgements on the future directive of the region that will certainly be a referring point for readers, especially policy makers and scholars.

Notes
4 “Nuclear Power in South Korea”, No. 2.
5 Ibid.
8 “Nuclear Power in Japan”, No. 6.
Shifting from its earlier approach, US is utilizing a selective approach keeping its military and strategic interests ahead of anything else under its ‘America First’ policy. The new Pyeongtaek base by US signals the same. However, this development has built a few disagreements between US and ROK. The US, through this approach is establishing a ‘sharing’ model of security mandate; however South Korea covering 90 per cent of the cost of the base has ensured some feuds in the US-ROK alliance, irrespective of the base being a strategic deterrent against China and North Korea. Please see, Jagannath P. Panda, “Pyeongtaek Expounds ‘Corporate’ Military Strategy,” Korean Herald, July 3, 2018, at www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20180703000543 (accessed on September 26, 2019).

The new “Special Measures Agreement” between ROK and US focusses on Seoul’s contributions to hosting of the American troops after several strained negotiations. This step was taken in relation to the US president Trump’s universal desire for allies to pay a greater amount for their defence. In this regard, the Trump administration proposed a 50 per cent increase in the 40 per cent of the amount paid by the Korean side to host American troops in 2018. The negotiation came down to 16 per cent increase in January this year, however not accepted by ROK. The negotiations were finally agreed upon at an 8 per cent increase just before the ‘Trump-Kim meet in Hanoi this year, worth $924 million but with a condition for renegotiation every year by the Trump administration. These developments considerably put the US-ROK partnership into the shadow of a doubt. Please see Kyle Ferrier, “What Does the Signed Cost Sharing Agreement Mean for the US-South Korea Alliance?” The Diplomat, February 15, 2019, at https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/what-does-the-signed-cost-sharing-agreement-mean-for-the-us-south-korea-alliance/ (accessed on September 24, 2019).


Juche is North Korea’s official philosophy, which roughly translates into “self-sufficiency”, “independence”, and “autonomy”. Juche defines the ideology of the communist country which believes that North Korea as a power should remain separate from the rest of the international community, depending solely on the strength of its own and its god-like leader. Please see Zack Beauchamp, “Juche, the State Ideology that Makes North Koreans Revere Kim Jong Un, Explained,” Vox, June 18, 2018, at www.vox.com/world/2018/6/18/17441296/north-korea-propaganda-ideology-juche (accessed on September 24, 2018).


The term “Hermit Kingdom” has increasingly been used in the context of North Korea. A “hermit kingdom” usually implies that a country or a regime willingly tries to wall itself off, by maintaining a communication distance from the rest of the globe, physically or metaphorically. North Korean regime’s behaviour has more or less replicated such a case, inviting many observers to allude to it as a “Hermit Kingdom”. Read, Wilson Strand, “Opening the Hermit Kingdom”, History Today, 54 (1), January 2004, at www.historytoday.com/archive/opening-hermit-kingdom (accessed September 15, 2019).

Some others defy this by stating that it is a myth to call North Korea a “Hermit Kingdom”. Read, Joel S. Wit and Jenny Town, “It’s Not a Hermit Kingdom, and 4 Other Myths About North Korea”, The Atlantic, March 29, 2013, at www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/03/its-not-a-hermit-kingdom-and-4-other-myths-about-north-korea/274488/ (accessed September 15, 2019).

Many in the West, mainly in the United States, have called North Korea a “rogue state”, to which the Kim Jong-un administration has reacted time and again, stating

41 Ibid., p. 271.
48 Ibid., p. 245.
3 Ibid.
4 The author witnessed the press conference as carried on large screens at the International Press Centre set up in Hanoi for the occasion.
5 Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid.


Author’s notes, General Brooks spoke at the Seoul Foreign Correspondents’ Club on August 22, 2018.

Author’s notes, interview, August 22, 2018.

Interview with the author, Sokcho, August 20, 2018.

29 Interview with the author, August 27, 2018.


31 Author’s interview, No. 30.

32 Author’s notes, No. 26.


39 Ibid.


42 Donald Kirk, No. 41.

43 Roberta Rampton, No. 43.


48 Author’s notes, David Ignatius, lecture, Princeton University, October 3, 2018.

49 Joseph Yun, in conversation with CNN anchor Jim Sciutto, Imjin Gak, South Korea;
conversation monitored by the author, June 30, 2019.


This needs some qualification; as Michael J. Seth explains, 676–935 C.E. is the period called United Silla, but the Silla did not control the northern third of the modern boundaries of Korea. Michael J. Seth, A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period through the Nineteenth Century, Rowman & Littlefield, Oxford, 2006, p. 49.


Suk-Young Kim, No. 13, p. 7.


26 China has a huge Korean community in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture (Jilin province), where 40 per cent (of the 2 million population) are Koreans who migrated into China in the late 17th century. Besides, Korean is the official language. Tumen, a city in Yanbian, is connected to Namyang in North Korea across the Tumen River bridge, at http://arabic.china.org.cn/english/travel/53647.htm (accessed September 11 2019).


32 Sung Chull Kim, “North Korea’s Search for a Breakthrough”, East Asian Policy, 7 (1), January–March 2015, p. 156.

33 Min-Hua Chiang, “North Korea’s Economic Prospect after Trump-Kim Summit”, East Asian Institute Background Brief No. 1389, September 20, 2018, p. 11.

34 You Ji, “Dealing with the North Korea Dilemma: China’s Strategic Choices”, No.239, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, June 21, 2011, p. 32.
North Korea committed to turning the former into a processing trade area and to the “One Bridge, Two Islands” development, where the New Yalu Bridge would be built with Chinese collaboration. In addition, MoUs were signed granting Chinese access to ports (North Hamkyung, Ranjin), construction of railways and highways linking Chongjin, Namyang and Tuman, and Rajin and Hunchun. Jaewoo Choo, “Breakdown in China-North Korea Relations: Caused Not by the Third Nuclear Test but by Failed Economic Cooperation”, The Korean Journal of Security Affairs, 21 (1), June 2016, pp. 42–49.


Zhiqun Zhu, No 21, pp. 188–191.


Lye Liang Fook and Chen Juan, No. 48, p. 39.


Scott Synder, No. 8, pp. 31–37.

Samuel S. Kim, No. 23, pp. 113–114


59 Tessa Morris Suzuki, Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan’s Cold War, Rowman & Littlefield, Maryland, 2007, pp. 9, 12, 22.


61 Li Nan, No. 27, p. 19.

62 Zhu Feng and Nathan Beaucamp Mustafaga indicate that four schools of thought contend in China – Nationalists, Realists, Internationalists, and Liberalists, each rationalising China’s policy towards North Korea. According to them, Nationalists still understand China-North Korea relationship in terms of both historical memory and its criticality as buffer; Realists “maintain that Pyongyang is still a strategic asset, so Beijing must protect the DPRK ...(and) regard the regimes nuclear program as a failure of Chinese policy linked to excessively close ties to the United States”; Internationalists focus that China’s globalist reputation is taking a beating because of North Korean provocations and last of all; Liberalists “reject North Korea’s value to China, either as a strategic buffer or for any other strategic purpose”. Instead, they seek a China-focus on the people of North Korea. Zhu Feng and Nathan Beaucamp Mustafaga, “North Korea’s Security Implications for China”, in Carla Freeman (ed.), No. 16, pp. 41–49.


64 You Ji, No. 33, pp. 10–15.

65 Li Nan, No. 26, p. 23.

66 Scott Synder, No. 8, p. 131.

67 Ellen Kim and Victor Cha, “Between a Rock and a Hard Place: South Korea’s Strategic Dilemmas with China and the United States”, Asia Policy, 21, January 2016, p. 111.

68 You Ji, No. 33, pp. 10, 32.

69 Ellen Kim and Victor Cha, No. 66, p. 112.


76 Ming Wan, No. 43, p. 16.

77 According to Seung-chan Boo, the three elements are the Kill Chain pre-emptive attack system, the Korea Air and Missile Defence System (KAMD), and the Korea Massive Punishment and Retaliation Plan (KMPR) (p. 39). Seung-chan Boo, North Korea’s Nuclear Reality, South Korea’s Arms Anxiety. Global Asia, 13 (1), March 20, 2018, p. 39, at www.globalasia.org/v13n1cover/north-koreas-nuclear-reality-south-koreas-arms-anxiety_seung-chan-boo (accessed September 11, 2019).


80 Tae-Hwan Kwak, Ibid., p. 25.

81 Yang Xiyu, “China’s Role and Its Dilemmas in the Six Party Talks”, in Carla P. Freeman (ed.), No. 16, pp. 185–188.


6 Kohtaro Ito, “Botong gugga’leul jihyanghan-eun han-il-yang-gug” [Japan and South Korea
Aiming for a Normal Country], Policy Brief No. 45, Ilmin International Research Institute, Korea University, October 15, 2018, p. 2 (in Korean).

7 Akihiko Tanaka, Yuji Miyamoto and Lee Jong-won, “Rendō suru Higashiajia no samitto gaikō” [Interlocking East Asia Summit Diplomacy], Diplomacy, Tokyo, May 31, 2018, p. 23 (in Japanese).


5 Interviews with former Russian officials.


7 George D. Toloraya, No. 2, p. 89.

8 Ibid.

9 Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Igor Ivanov on an Official Visit to the DPRK, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Moscow, February 10, 2000, at www.mid.ru/ru/maps/kp/-/asset_publisher/VJy7Ig5QaAII/content/id/607264 (accessed May 13, 2019).

10 Ibid.


12 Ibid.


16 Interviews with former Russian officials.


In June 2013, the DPRK argued that its status as a nuclear–weapons state will only be temporary.


“Kim Jong Un’s 2018 New Year’s Address”, National Committee on North Korea (NCNK), January 1, 2018, at www.ncnk.org/node/1427 (accessed August 9, 2019).

Interview with the Bureau of Exchange and Cooperation, Ministry of Unification, June 2018.

Right after the Singapore summit, North Korea said, “President Trump has expressed his intention to lift the sanctions as the relationship improves … If the U.S. takes steps to improve relations first, North Korea can take the next step.”


North Korean Workers’ Party, the Sixth Convention Central Committee Report, Rodong Shinmun, October 11, 1980.


Understanding North Korea: Totalitarian Dictatorship, Highly Centralized Economies, Grand Socialist Family, Institute for Unification Education, Ministry of Unification, Seoul, South Korea, 2015, p. 44.


As of December 15, 2018, among his 115 appearances, 12 were for military, 37 for economy, 25 for diplomacy, and 25 for political events.

31 Annual Reports, KEDO, at www.kedo.org/annual_reports.asp (accessed December 1, 2018).
35 Address by President Moon Jae-in on 100th March First Independence Movement Day, The ROK Cheongwadae Briefings, March 1, 2019.
38 Christine Kim, “South Korea Approves $8 Million Aid to North Korea, Timing to be Decided Later”, Reuters, September 21, 2017.
39 Dae Woo Lee et al., Current Status of Humanitarian Aid to North Korea and Future Challenges, Hyundai Research Institute, Seoul, South Korea, 2018; National Index, at www.index.go.kr/ (accessed December 3, 2018).
41 In September, a new weapon system was displayed during a military parade in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the DPRK. “North Korea to Hold Military Parade to Mark 70th Anniversary”, Voice of America, September 8, 2018.
45 The Korean War Armistice Agreement, July 27, 1953, Article 1, paras. 4–5; Article 2, para. 25 (i).
8 Andrew Scobell, “North Korea’s Strategic Intentions”, Strategic Studies Institute, 2005.
30 Brad Roberts, No. 27.
31 Robert A. Manning, No. 24, p. 6.
11 After India’s 1974 nuclear test, Khan, who was at the time working at a Urenco’s Almelo plant based in the Netherlands as a metallurgist, secretly stole centrifuge designs and a list of potential nuclear suppliers, which contributed to Pakistan’s two centrifuge models, P-1 and P-2. See: Chaim Braun and Christopher F. Chyba, “Proliferation Rings: New Challenges to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime”, International Security, 29 (2), 2004, p. 13.
12 In 2004, Khan confessed on live television that he had illegally proliferated nuclear


14 Walter Clemens Jr., No. 9, pp. 107.


According to the Bank of Korea, North Korea’s nominal Gross National Income in 2016 was approximately ₩ 36.4 trillion, 2.2 per cent of that of South Korea, which was estimated to be ₩ 1,639.1 trillion. “North Korea’s GDP Grew 3.9% in 2016, with $1,300 Per Capita Income”, * Hankyoreh*, July 23, 2017, at http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_northkorea/803901.html (accessed December 20, 2018).


UN Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1987 and 2087 prohibit the DPRK’s all weapons sales.


Quoted in Bruch E. Bechtol, Jr., No. 34, p. 86.

Ibid., p. 91.

Joby Warrick, No. 31.

Bruce E. Bechtol, Jr., No. 34, p. 83.


Bruce E. Bechtol, Jr., No. 34, p. 84.


For this reason, James Acton argued the risk of a military clash between the United States and the DPRK heightened with the beginning of the denuclearisation negotiations in June 2018. See, James Action, Twitter Post, October 16, 2018, at https://twitter.com/james_acton32/status/1052202785486368769 (accessed May 5, 2019).

Pursuant to the 1961 Sino-North Korean Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, the two countries have agreed to defend each other in case either nation is attacked. However, it should be noted that the alliance has been weakened in recent history, which makes it questionable whether China would come to the DPRK’s aid if the United States attacks the DPRK. See, Eleanor Albert, “The China-North Korea Relationship”, Council for Foreign Relations, March 13, 2019, at www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-north-korea-relationship (accessed May 9, 2019).


55 Eleanor Albert, No. 51.


1 The “New Political Thinking” was the doctrine put forth by the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1986 as a part of his reforms for the Soviet Union. Its key component was the de-ideologisation of international politics and the creation of system of mutual security based on the principle of interdependence of the world. It marked a major shift in the principles of Soviet foreign policy.
The development and modernisation of Siberia and the Far East are the key components of Russia’s Asia-Pacific policy. The objective is to develop the local economy, diversify its exports from Europe to Asia, and utilise the potential of the region to enter into the Asia-Pacific market. The vast resources of the region – oil and natural gas, gold, diamond, copper, iron ore, and timber – have largely remained untapped due to lack of adequate investments. China, Japan, and South Korea have been identified as crucial partners.


Inside Russia – the Chechen War and the rising tide of nationalism, in Russia’s near abroad – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and European Union (EU) expansion plans and the creation of a national missile defence system, and on the Korean Peninsula – the idea of four-party talks on Korea (the two Koreas, the United States, and China) with the exclusion of Russia.


In the early years of the post-Soviet period, Russia’s foreign policy was largely influenced by pro-Western idealists, supporting the idea of market, self-determination, and integration with the Western capitalist system. Post-independence in 1991, the first Russian president Boris Yeltsin and his foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev maintained a strongly pro-American foreign policy stance. This phase continued till the dismissal of Kozyrev in 1996.


The “New Northern Policy” was unveiled by South Korean president Moon Jae-in the third Eastern Economic Forum in September 2017 in Vladivostok, Russia. It is a foreign policy strategy aimed at creating sustainable peace in the Korean Peninsula by improving South Korea’s long-term economic prospects. The policy seeks to connect South Korea to the rest of Eurasia through the creation of western and eastern corridors running through North Korea into China and Russia.

Anthony V. Rinna, “Moscow’s “Turn to the East” and Challenges to Russia-South Korea Economic Collaboration Under the New Northern Policy”, Journal of Eurasian Studies, 10 (2), 2019, pp. 159–168.


Through a series of policy pronouncements and legislative initiatives, under the presidencies of Medvedev (2008–2012) and Putin (2000–2008, 2012–present), attempts have been made to make the Russian Far East the centre of large-scale development. In 2012, the Ministry of Far Eastern Development was created specifically for the development of Russia’s Far Eastern region as well as facilitating cooperation with external partners.
17 Anthony V. Rinna, No. 12.
19 In 2007, Russia had the distinction of being the world’s largest exporter of natural gas and the second largest exporter of oil. In recent times, claims have been made that it has surpassed Saudi Arabia in volume of oil exports, making it the largest producer of “Black Gold” in the world.
21 Estimates suggest that about two-thirds of the total natural gas supply of the world goes to North-East Asia, and by 2030, the region will account for 23 per cent of global demand. Steady economic growth, rising standards of living, and increasing urbanisation are all together expected to contribute to this demand. See Potapov 2007.
22 Currently, China, Japan, and Korea import 50, 70, and 80 per cent, respectively, of their oil requirements from the Middle East.
24 The strategic significance of North Korea for Russia is immense. Not only does Russia share a 12-mile border with the DPRK, but it is only through the territory of North Korea that Russia can have any kind of overland connectivity with South Korea, currently the 15th largest economy in the world.
25 Alexander Vorontsov, No. 8.
31 After North Korea’s withdrawal from the NPT and its admission to having a clandestine nuclear programme, the Six-Party Talks were initiated in 2003 to restart negotiations in order to find a solution to the North Korean nuclear crisis. The six members included the United States, China, Russia, Japan, North Korea, and South Korea. The process was held intermittently, achieved a breakthrough in 2005, and in 2009 and 2013, the negotiations broke down over the DRPK’s missile and nuclear tests, leading to harsh UN sanctions.
34 Georgy Toloraya, No. 30.
35 Alexander Vorontsov, No. 8.
36 Anastasia Barannikova, “What Russia Thinks About North Korea’s Nuclear Weap-


1 The six parties are the ROK, the DPRK, Russia, China, the United States, and Japan. Discussions began in 2003 and were suspended in 2009.


7 J. Battur, No. 5, p. 10.


14 Located on the border with Russia, in the north-east corner of the country on the Tumen River, is the Tumangang-Khasan railroad crossing (42.415397 130.641489) in North Hamgyong province. North Korea’s sole railroad crossing with Russia is of great potential importance due to its proximity to the port of Rajin, 33.5 km to the south-east. See Victor Cha, Joseph Bermudez, and Marie DuMond, “Making Solid Tracks: North Korea’s Railway Connections with China and Russia, A CSIS Survey Study of Railway Cooperation and Connections on the Korean Peninsula,” Beyond Parallel, January 7, 2019, at https://beyonddparallel.csis.org/making-solid-tracks-north-koreas-railway-connections-china-russia/ (accessed April 24, 2019).


A term coined by US Secretary of State James Baker when visiting Mongolia in August 1990. The “Third Neighbour” is a powerful nation that politically and economically could balance Mongolia’s ties with its geographical neighbours, Russia and China.


Ts. Batbayar quoted in J. C. Finley, No. 4.

Ibid.


Ts. Batbayar quoted in J.C. Finley, No. 4.


Ibid.

Track 2 diplomacy: non-governmental, informal, and unofficial contacts and activities among private citizens or groups, sometimes called non-state actors. Track 1 diplomacy: official, governmental diplomacy that occurs inside official government channels. Track 1.5: top leadership of one or both conflict parties are engaged in negotiations or conflict transformation activities in an informal setting and/or in their personal capacity, or as a consultation that attempts to generate new insights. The defining element distinguishing Track 1.5 process from a classic Track 2 dialogue is the composition of the participants’ group, especially the involvement of decision makers. See Oliver Wolleh, “Track 1.5 Approaches to Conflict Management: Assessing Good Practice and Areas for Improvement,” Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, May 2007, at http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/Track1.5ApproachestoConflictManagement_BerghofFoundation2007.pdf (accessed May 5, 2019).

“When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.” It is now used throughout the world as an aid to free discussion. See “Chatham House Rule,” Chatham House, at www.chathamhouse.org/about/chatham-house-rule (accessed October 25, 2018).


5B. Misheel, “State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs D. Davaasuren Paid


53 Resolution 55/77D, “Mongolia’s International Security and Nuclear-Weapon-Free Status,” stated that Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free status represented a new international relations approach that constituted an important factor for ensuring Mongolia’s security, which it considered a concrete contribution to strengthening the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.


58 Headquartered in the Netherlands, the network was established in 2005 and consists of 15 regional networks, with priorities and agendas specific to their environment. “Who We Are,” GPPAC, at https://gppac.net/who-we-are (accessed April 29, 2019).

59 Founded by Mongolian ambassador Jargalsaikhan Enkhsaikhan, Mongolia’s leading specialist on nuclear disarmament issues.

60 Tsenkher Suld NGO, established in 2005, is a non-profit organisation aimed at promoting Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free policy and its activities. See No. 55.


2 The Korean Peninsula is situated adjacent to the Korea Strait, which separates South Korea and Japan. This strait further connects the East China Sea, the Yellow Sea, and the Sea of Japan in the Pacific Ocean. Most importantly, several international shipping lanes pass through this strait, which houses a considerable amount of trade. This makes the Korean Peninsula extremely important in terms of security and economics. See, Ji Guoxing, “SLOC Security in the Asia Pacific”, Center Occasional Paper, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Honolulu, Hawaii, February 2000, at https:/ /apcss.org/Publications/Ocasional%20Papers/OPSloc.htm (accessed September 6, 2019); Lakhvinder Singh, ibid.


6 Ibid.


10 Vineet Thakur, No. 8, p. 276.


13 Vineet Thakur, No. 8, p. 281; Nabarun Roy, No. 11.


15 Jagannath Panda, No. 5.


Ibid.


Ibid.


Jagannath P. Panda, “What the Trump-Kim Summit Means for India”, The Diplo-
The meeting between Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un held in Singapore on August 1, 2018, was historic, because it was the first-ever meeting between the leaders of the two nations marred by nuclear tensions. While this meeting did not resolve the denuclearisation impasse, it ended with both sides signing an agreement that included security guarantees for North Korea and terms ensuring new peaceful relations between the two nations as well as denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. However, the purpose of this meeting was defeated, as the United States and North Korea are still locked in nuclear tensions. Nonetheless, the important takeaway of this meeting remains the start of the dialogue diplomacy approach, which India advocates as a measure towards crisis resolution in the Peninsula. See, Max Fisher, “What Happened in the Trump-Kim Meeting and Why It Matters”, The New York Times, July 12, 2018, at www.nytimes.com/2018/06/12/world/asia/trump-kim-meeting-interpreter.html (accessed September 6, 2019).


North Korea has been repeatedly penalised by the UN for flouting international norms, and its undemocratic nuclear behaviour has been condemned by the global community. Amid all the criticisms, India has, however, maintained its independence of approach and sustained diplomatic relations since 1973. Because of this stance, the Western countries, as well as South Korea, have often viewed India-DPRK relations through the lenses of suspicion. See, Rajaram Panda, “India-Republic of Korea Military Diplomacy: Past and Future Projections”, Journal of Defense Studies, 5 (1), January 2011, pp. 16–38.


Jagannath P. Panda, No. 32.

Infrastructure and connectivity remain a significant way to enhance trade relations, encourage foreign direct investment (FDI), facilitate regional integration, and hence lead to economic growth. While the India-South Korea bilateral relations have come a long way, enhancing their relationship to a “special strategic” level, infrastructural connectivity can provide the partnership the much-needed regional approach, important for further growth. Jagannath Panda, “South Korea in India’s Indo-Pacific Vision: Impressions post-Moon Jae-In’s Visit”, JPI PeaceNet, July 14, 2018, at www.jpi.or.kr/eng/regular/policy_view.sky?code=EnOther&id=5341 (accessed September 22, 2019); please read, Jagannath P. Panda, “New Delhi’s ‘Act East’ and the India-ASEAN Engagement: What They Mean for India-Korea Relations in the Indo-Pacific”, KIEP Working Paper, 19:5, August 2019.


Ibid.


Ibid.

Ibid.

This kind of exchange between India and North Korea was a part of an agreement signed between them in 1991 to cooperate in the field of science and technology. See, “India-DPR Korea Relations”, Ministry of External Affairs, October 2017, at www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/2_DPR_Korea_October_2017.pdf (accessed August 26, 2019); Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, ibid.


One of the major reasons for a failed summit in Hanoi was the disagreements between the United States and North Korea, which has led to an impasse. On one hand, the United States, through its approach of maximum pressure, wanted complete denuclearization of North Korea without a phased approach. On the other hand, North Korea demanded sanction reliefs, which were passed by the UNSC in 2016 and 2017. However, according to the US, these sanctions covered sources of revenue worth billions of dollars to the North Korean regime, while the North Korean side could consider denuclearisation only if the “corresponding measures were taken.” Ankit Panda and Vipin Narang, “The Hanoi Summit Was Doomed from the Start,” Foreign Affairs, March 5, 2019, at www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/north-korea/2019-03-05/hanoi-summit-was-doomed-start (accessed September 27, 2019); Joshua Stanton et al., “Getting Tough on North Korea,” Foreign Affairs, May/June 2017, at www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/north-korea/2017-04-17/getting-tough-north-korea (accessed September 22, 2019); please read Andrea Berger, “From paper to practice: The Significance of New UN sanctions on North Korea”, Arms Control, May 2016, pp. 8–15; Kim Jina, “UN Sanctions as the Instrument of Coercive Diplomacy Against North Korea,” The Korean Journal of Defence Analysis, 26 (3), pp. 315–332.


Six-Party Talks were a series of meetings which aimed to find a peaceful solution to the security concerns arising due to North Korea’s nuclear programme. The meeting comprised of six members: North Korea, South Korea, United States, China, Japan, and Russia. These talks were the result of North Korea pulling out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2003 and witnessed considerable progress till 2009. However, the North Korea satellite launch in April 2009 prompted the UNSC to condemn the act and impose sanctions on North Korea. Subsequently, North Korea withdrew from the Six-Party talks and announced that it would continue with the strengthening of the nuclear programme. Please see Jayshree Bajoria and Beina Xu, “The Six Party Talks on North Korea’s Nuclear Program,” Council on Foreign Relations, September 30, 2013, at www.cfr.org/backgrounder/six-party-talks-north-koreas-nuclear-program (accessed September 27, 2019).


Jagannath P. Panda, No. 19.


Jagannath Panda, No. 19.


29 Please see Korean Statistics Bureau, 2017, at http://kosis.kr/bukhan/bukhanStats/bukhanStats_03_02List.jsp?menuId=03&NUM=28&LIST_NM=%EB%8C%80%EC%99%B8%EA%B2%BD%EC%A0%9C&%EC%85%88%ED%85%98%EC%B9%98%EC%9D%80%EC%95%84 (accessed May 21, 2019).
39 Victor Cha and Lisa Collins, No. 20.
1 The chapter uses the nomenclature of DPRK and North Korea interchangeably.
5 For more, see, Leon V. Sigal, “Getting What We Need with North Korea”, Arms Control Today, April 2016.
10 Charles L. Pritchard, No. 6, p. 30.
14 Ibid., p. 28.
17 Parts of this section are derived from an article on the subject by the author in 2018 for the IPSCS website.
8 Shane C. Tayloe, No. 2.
11 Idrees Ali, “In Symbolic Nod to India, U.S. Pacific Command Changes Name”,...
There are diverse estimates of the total cost of the BRI. It is hard to have a single, fixed estimate for the BRI because different assumptions about project numbers and duration lead to different estimates for the BRI's size.


Jeffrey D. Wilson, No. 20. 

Ibid. 


Michael Pompeo, No. 10. 

Ibid. 

The BUILD Act sets up the US International Development Finance Corporation (USIDFC). The USIDFC will be in charge of mobilising private sector investment for low- and lower-middle income countries, giving loans or loan guarantees, providing technical assistance, and administering special projects.


China appears to relegate, if not ignore altogether, such programmes to multi-lateral development banks with which China signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) at the 2017 Belt and Road Forum. 

This could be related with the Trump administration’s foreign aid reform, which has moved such functions from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to the USIDFC. 


Sarah Chan, No. 25.

Robert D. Blackwill, No. 22.
Jeffrey D. Wilson, No. 20.
Jeffrey D. Wilson, No. 20.

These include the IORA Economic Declaration of 2014 (committing members to
3 Jeffrey David Wilson, No. 1.
7 Ibid.
9 Jeffrey David Wilson, No. 1.
18 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
29 Christian Wirth, No. 16, pp. 223–245.
31 Ken Wilkening, No. 23, pp. 433–461.
32 Daewon Ohn and Mason Richey, No. 12.
33 Suk Kyoon Kim, No. 17.
36 Christian Wirth, No. 16, pp. 223–245.
37 Ibid.
38 Jae-Seung Lee, No. 5.
39 Hyun Jin Choi, No. 6.
41 Ibid.
45 Jae-Seung Lee, No. 5.
47 Jae-Seung Lee, No. 5.
48 Thomas J. Schoenbaum (ed.), No. 40.
49 David von Hippel et al., No. 45; Hyun Jin Choi, No. 6.
50 Jae-Seung Lee, No. 5.
51 Daewon Ohn and Mason Richey, No. 12.