

# VANTAGE POINT

*A Newsletter on Non-Traditional Security*



## Contents

Issue Commentary - Narratives from the North-East  
by **Pratyush Pran Sarma**

Building Energy Resilience by **Maaya V**

Border Security - A Non-Traditional Approach by **Lakshitha S**

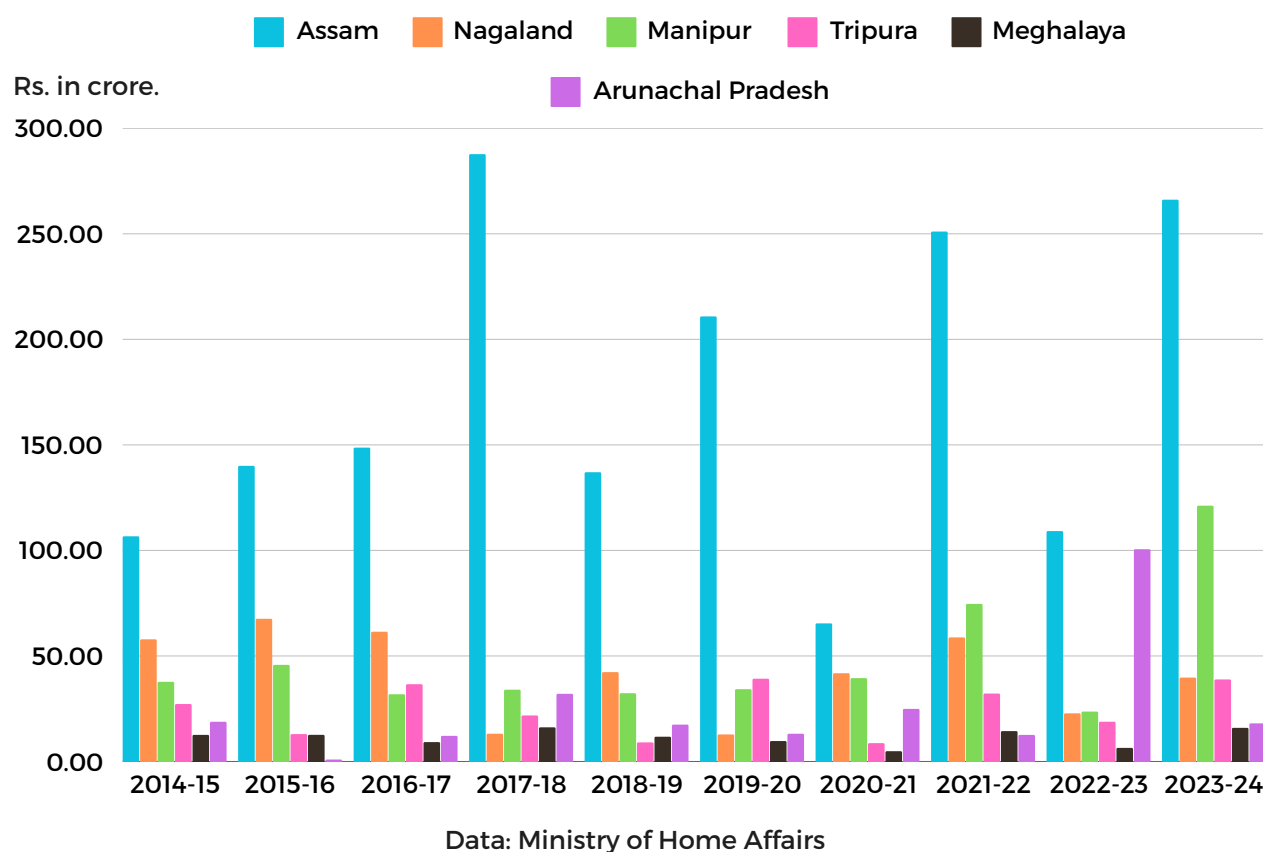
Book Review by **Jaagruthi Adka**

## ISSUE COMMENTARY - NARRATIVES FROM NORTH-EAST

### The Human Security Aspect of the Security Related Expenditure (SRE)

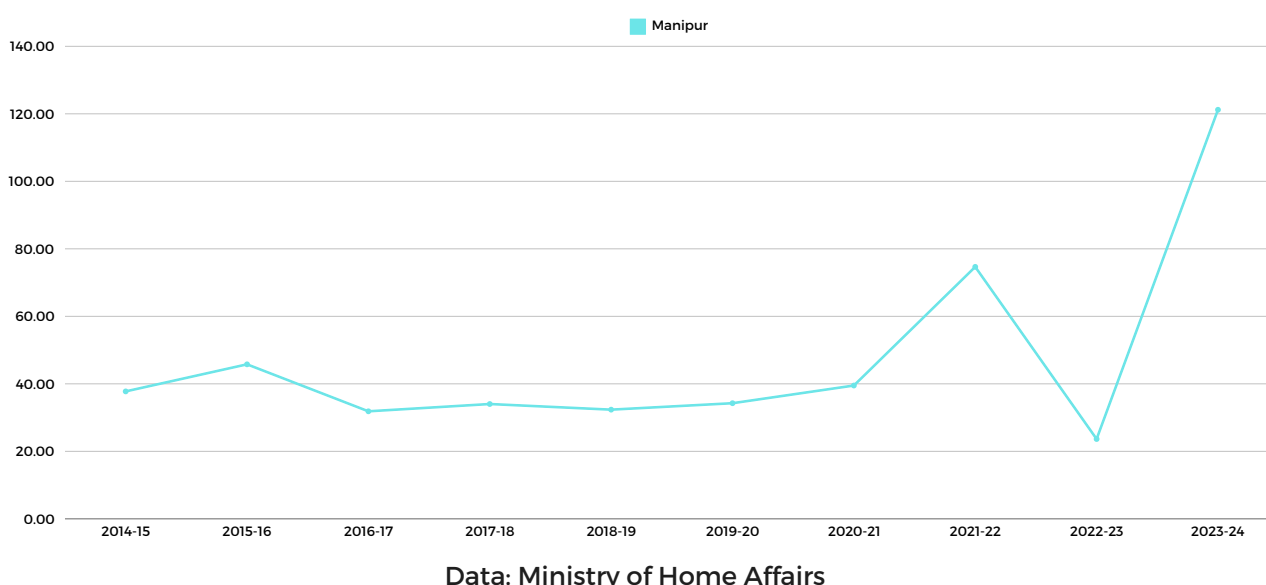
Written By **Pratyush Pran Sarma**

The Security Related Expenditure (SRE) is a scheme through which the Central Government of India funds the training expenditure and operational requirement of the security forces in the conflict areas. Implemented as a sub-scheme of the comprehensive scheme 'Modernisation of Police Forces', the scheme also reimburses the payment to the family of security forces or civilians who are killed or affected in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) violence and North-East Region (NER) of India. The scheme also pays for the rehabilitation of surrendered insurgents, village defence committees and publicity materials. In the case of the LWE-affected States, the SRE Scheme has released Rs. 2568.49 crore since 2017-18. In the NER, apart from Mizoram and Sikkim, all the States are financially compensated through the SRE, as shown in the bar chart.



The table represents the State-wise distribution of the SRE in the NER over the period of 2014-2024. The expenditure in Assam is the highest, followed by Manipur in the recent times.

Considering the growing SRE fundings in Manipur in the line diagram, it becomes important to understand where the money is being brought to use, apart from the obvious reconstruction and rehabilitation of the affected. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has recently sanctioned SRE worth Rs. 28.99 crore to construct two designated 'Peace Camps' for the Pambei-led UNLF-P (United National Liberation Front – Progressive), considered a major step towards establishing positive peace in Manipur. The Peace Camps can house a maximum of 400 cadres each, aimed at engaging them in skill development activities for their rehabilitation and inclusion into their society.



These Peace Camps are a result of the peace accord with the UNLF-P, Government of India and the Manipur State Government on 29 November 2023. As a part of the agreement, the demands of six designated camps were made for the surrendered insurgents. However, two camps at Kakching Khunou and Ingourok have been established so far, leading to the housing of only 800 out of 2,500 registered insurgent cadres. Facing a crucial challenge for space and funding, the long-term rehabilitation and sustainability of such peace agreements come under suspicion, especially during two of the roughest years in the history of Manipur and an ongoing surrender of arms and ammunition.

To curb these issues, first, the attention of the SRE has to be focused on its implementation and planning. Apart from the four Peace Camps for the UNLF-P, the initiative can be expanded throughout the NER for different militant groups. The capacity-building activities is one of way of making the surrendered militants to earn their livelihood and be economically self-sufficient.

---

## BUILDING ENERGY RESILIENCE

### Energy Resilience as a Non-Traditional Security Imperative

Written by **Maaya V**

Energy security is crucial to a nation's security because it involves maintaining access to affordable and lasting energy supplies, especially for developing countries like India. Issues related to energy security are classified as non-traditional security concerns because they extend beyond the traditional understanding of security to focus on the sustainability of the economy, environment, and technological durability. India's industrial advancement, digital development, and energy steadiness depend on energy reliability, thus decreasing dependence on international power sources and other nation-states. National Security depends heavily on energy resilience since an interrupted energy supply creates wide-ranging security issues affecting economic performance, digital infrastructure and military readiness.



As of 2024, India has a capacity of over 180 GW of renewable energy, with a 2030 target of 500 GW. As of today, India has a total of 22 nuclear reactors, with 7.48 GW as total capacity. However, despite the quick expansion of renewable resource production, India still derives 50% of its electricity from coal, resulting in a huge carbon footprint. India also imports around 85% of its crude oil and 50% of its natural gas, thereby relying too much on its geopolitical allies. Despite considerable advancements, multiple states endured blackouts in 2022 because of the coal crisis, which caused severe damage to industrial manufacturing and



national economic equilibrium. The delays in the Bhadla Solar Park expansion project in Rajasthan exemplify pivotal obstacles that disrupt energy security implementation alongside similar problems in renewable energy development. The government of Indian has launched two key infrastructure projects for energy strength, such as Khavda Renewable Energy Park in Gujarat, while offering support to Reliance Jio's 5G/4G expansion, which decreases India's dependency on fossil fuel resources. At present, the project remains delayed because of environmental considerations combined with bureaucratic evaluation procedures. The various challenges faced by India in securing its energy resilience are,



Representative Image

1. Challenges in ensuring the implementation of energy security projects include delays because of bureaucratic obstacles and ministry-state coordination problems. The Bhadla Solar Park and Khavda Renewable Energy Park are the major examples of such a challenge.
2. The widespread use of renewable energy faces difficulties because inadequate transmission networks and storage systems exist throughout the country. The establishment of projects such as the expansion of Jio's 4G/5G services along with the Khavda Park will also ensure adequate communication. Interaction with energy-advanced allies of India is another step towards developing the adequate infrastructure.
3. India remains dependent on foreign energy supplies of oil and gas, which exposes the country to political uncertainties in addition to volatile energy costs. The fuel import expenses for India rose sustainability because of the Russia- Ukraine conflict in 2022, which caused global energy costs to surge dramatically.
4. The execution timelines of renewable energy projects go lower because sustainable measures lead to environmental concerns and land acquisition challenges. The rightful resistance from environmental activists protesting

against environmental destruction and displacement of the people inhabiting proposed development sites. The Vedanta – Foxconn semiconductor plant received opposition from local residents and met polity barriers.

To construct an energy-resilient India, the following points should be discussed and deliberated upon.

1. A designated task force must function to accelerate efficiency in government approvals as it tracks essential energy infrastructure initiatives. Such a task force is also required to look actively into the environmental and humanitarian concerns. For easier bureaucratic processes, a ‘Single Window Clearance System’ template established by the Indian Ministry of Coal to ease bureaucratic obstacles in project development is a right step towards such development.
2. Developments in both energy storage systems and grid improvements require substantial immediate investments. The Kundhah pumped storage project in Tamil Nadu, along with other pumped storage hydropower projects, facilitates reliable backup power during power fluctuations.
3. The development of nuclear power, along with hydroelectric and bioenergy systems, will improve the diversity of available energy sources for the country. The development of nuclear power, together with hydroelectric power and bioenergy resources, represents India’s best option to establish energy diversity in its power grid. The Kovvada Nuclear Power Plant represents an important step because it aims to establish stable energy generation.

India will be able to establish its self-sufficient and resilient future after resolving both structural obstacles and guideline barriers. Long-term national stability together with growth can be achieved through the development of sustainable energy resources.



Representative Image

---

## BORDER SECURITY - A NON-TRADITIONAL APPROACH

### Border Trade and Commerce - India-Myanmar Border Trade

Written by **Lakshitha S**

Myanmar considers India as their fifth-largest trading partner, with a total trade value of 1.74 billion dollars in 2023-2024. The bilateral trade between India and Myanmar has increased due to India's strengthening of its Act East policy, which enhanced border trade between the two nations. Yet, India and Myanmar have a deep-seated, intricate relationship that is influenced by their geography, security matters, and mutual economic benefits. Both countries have a common concern on non-traditional security issues such as arms struggle, drug trafficking, refugee crises and illegal immigrants. To address these issues, a stepwise, holistic and comprehensive view towards security and economic cooperation is essential.

### Border Security and Insurgency Challenges

The India-Myanmar border, stretching up to 1643kms, is highly permeable, making it vulnerable to extensive arms smuggling, insurgency, drug trafficking and illegal trade. Insurgent groups from the North-Eastern Region (NER) of India and Myanmar's Chin State exploit the unchecked area for refuge. Although government initiatives like the fencing project have been implemented, they face heavy opposition from insurgent groups like the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K) and the People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA).



Courtesy: PTI/File Photo



## Strengthening the Connectivity

According to the 2022 Report of the Land Ports Authority of India, adding to this conflict instability are the economic uncertainty and security challenges, including the cross-border crime and disruption of trade and movement in areas such as Moreh and Tamu in Manipur and Zowkhathar and Rih in Mizoram. These are contributing to the delays in the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport projects. To solve this issue, India must stabilise its engagement in these regions by intensifying regional partnerships with ASEAN nations, bolstering regional security, improving infrastructure and ensuring a stable geopolitical presence.



Courtesy: India Today NE

## The Role of Border Trade in Stability

The Enhancing India-Myanmar Border Trade Report (2016) issued by the Department of Commerce (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India) furnishes an extensive analysis of the trade patterns between India and Myanmar. Inefficient formal trade channels, lengthy procedures, inadequate infrastructure, and complex customs drive a section of traders toward informal routes. For example, the absence of food testing facilities alongside warehousing services at Moreh increases trade expenses, thereby prompting them to utilize informal channels for trade.

## Necessary Steps

Since 2010, Indian-Myanmar border trade has increased from US\$15 million to US\$50 million in 2014, while land exports from Myanmar to India surged by 272% and imports from India to Myanmar increased by



300%, which proves the significance of developing official trade frameworks.

To counter illegal trade, improvements made to customs operations, better infrastructure and regulatory streamlines in formal trade channels can enhance the appeal for formal trade routes. The 2016 Report supports that the local traders should receive capacity-building and skill development projects in formal business activities, which will also be consequential in bringing in infrastructural initiatives to improve economic potential, create employment and foster regional growth. The increase of border land trade reached approximately US \$50 million within a few years, illustrating the need for better infrastructure and trade-related assistance, which are essential for enhancing both economic participation and employment numbers. A four-lane upgrade of the Imphal-Moreh road, together with Imphal Airport infrastructure improvements, stand as proposed solutions for enhancing trade efficiency. These investments help decrease business costs as well as enhance the stability of formal trade relationships.

The India-Myanmar border trade serves as a vital element for the development of regional economic activities and security measures. Bilateral progress has occurred, yet important hurdles still exist, such as insurgencies, inadequate infrastructure and inefficient trade policies. Strengthening this will not only enhance bilateral relations but also contribute to the region's long-term economic resilience and stability.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Non-Traditional Security Challenges in Asia

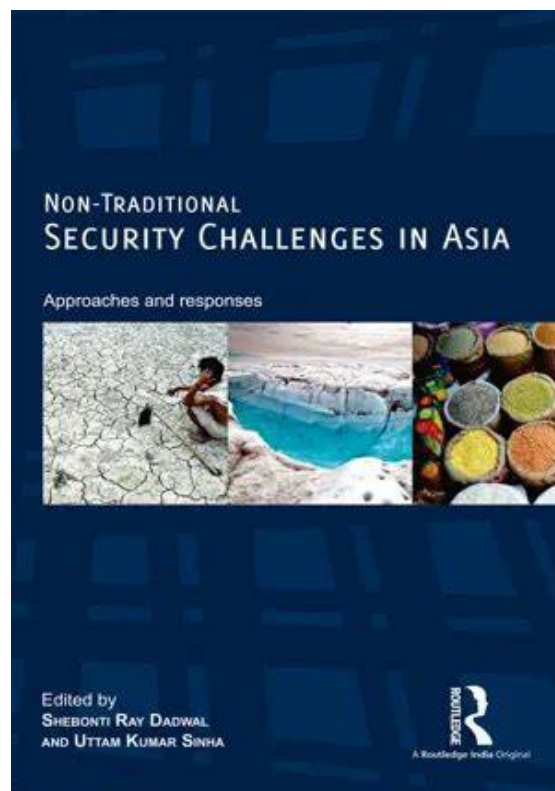
Edited by: Shebonti Ray Dadwal and Uttam Kumar Sinha

Written by **Jaagruthi Adka**

This is a book on the non-traditional security challenges of Asia edited by Shebonti Ray Dadwal and Uttam Kumar Sinha, which provides an in-depth understanding of quite a few complex security threats which have started to emerge in this region. The themes which the book discusses unfold underlying non-traditional security (NTS) issues like environmental degradation, energy security, public health emergencies, cyber-security threats, and trans-border crimes. Looking together through socioeconomic, geopolitical, and policy lenses, it offers a holistic view of how the said challenges threaten traditional concepts of security while emphasizing the need for joint initiatives.

The authors express that, under non-traditional security, the threats should be outside military conflicts, especially issues regarding social stability, economic development, and governance systems. Issues of environmental upheavals, health emergencies related to pandemics, cyber fragility, and cross-border criminal activities require collective action from states. The challenges to Asia are pressing due to the diversity of the political and economic contexts that influence national concerns as well as the regional equilibrium.

The first section provides basic definitions and places non-traditional security in the context of the vastly convoluted geopolitical setting of Asia. The differentiation between traditional military threats and contemporary vulnerabilities is made while emphasizing the consequential need to broaden the conventional scope of safety measures.



The second section seeks to address the impact of climate change in Asian terrains toward mitigation and adaptation strategies. Contributors underscore the importance of government initiatives, international treaties like climate pacts, and regional collaborations in addressing climate risks in conjunction with promoting enhancements to resilience as sustainable practices.

The third section deals with environmental security as connected to the geopolitical tensions surrounding shared water resources throughout Asia. It examines primary areas of concern, such as scarcity crises generated by pollution and effective management strategies for transboundary river systems, while also analyzing existing cooperative mechanisms for addressing these major confrontations.

The next section touches on the issues of human trafficking, drug smuggling, and terrorism- what has come to be known, for short, as "transnational crimes." Those development factors influencing these crimes, boiled down to social and economic conditions, are analyzed, while the international cooperation and legal framework to counter those threats are elaborated out.

The fifth section on energy security addresses Asia's ever-growing energy demand and, thus, the geopolitical consequences of energy source management. The discussed issues include an energy security rationale, protection of energy supplies, transitions to renewables, and the function of international diplomacy in improving energy security.

The last section discusses the vulnerability factors related to the financial system of Asia, including economic crises, cyber threats to financial institutions, and fluctuations in the global economy. It cites policy measures and international partnerships taken for the purposes of building resilient economies.

The book's scope presents an extensive study of the interrelatedness of the various non-traditional security issues of the Asia region. These issues are not so much described as threats but as more complex socioeconomic and political problems calling for a more inclusive solution. The editors also keep a balance between the theoretical insights and real-world case studies for the reader's holistic understanding of NTS demands. However, some of the chapters may call for more defined regional specificity and frameworks of policymaking.



## Editorial Team

Pratyush Pran Sarma

Jairam R Prabhu

Maaya V

Lakshitha S

Jaagruthi Adka

IPR: **Centre for National Security Studies**. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without permission in writing from CNSS, MSRUAS. Written request for permission should be emailed to [cnss@msruas.ac.in](mailto:cnss@msruas.ac.in). The views expressed by the authors are personal and not to be attributed to the Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS) or MS Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (MSRUAS).