

303. Smith, Christopher. *The Diffusion of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Pakistan and Northern India: London Defense Studies No. 20*. London: Centre for Defense Studies, September 1993.

Smith addresses the supply and flow of small arms and light weapons in areas of South Asia. These weapons are exacting a high price in political stability and in human lives. The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan and the resulting American shipment of arms to the area remain the greatest developments in small arms and light weapons proliferation. Smith is critical of both superpowers for sacrificing the long-term stability of the region to their short-term geo-political aims.

Smith presents a series of case studies on the characteristics and history of small arms and light weapons proliferation in the region, focusing on the following: Sind Province; Khalistani movement and terrorism in the Punjab; Kashmir; Bihar; North East India; and, finally, Bombay.

Smith concludes that "...South Asia stands on the brink of being flooded with light weapons which will add a new and alarming dimension to the region's traditional and long-standing problems of nation-building, security and development" (p. 47). In Pakistan, implementing gun control may be impossible since the problem is so far advanced. Gun buy-back programs are not likely to succeed given the pervasive nature of the gun culture. While the widespread availability of light weapons cannot be said to have caused the current unrest, they have most definitely, Smith argues, exacerbated the problem.

For its part, India has tried to create political unity in the face of religious diversity but this goal continues to be elusive. Smith maintains that the "...growing proliferation of small arms and easy access to them is increasing both the communist polarisation and the incidence of violence" (p. 51). In both countries, the root of the problem remains political weakness and the failure to enforce law and order impartially. Simply working to stop the flow of light weapons will not be effective since the area is already saturated with weapons. Similarly, withholding spare parts as an anti-proliferation measure is also doomed to failure since the main weapon, the AK-47, rarely requires maintenance. As a result, Smith emphasizes the need to address the root cause of the recourse to weapons. Social and economic development and good governance must be promoted if the region hopes to reduce its gun problem. An interim solution could involve regulating the access to ammunition which, unlike the weapons themselves, is in short supply.

PART B.2 ITEMS AVAILABLE IN 1994

401. Dikshit, Prashant. "Proliferation of Small Arms and Minor Weapons." *Strategic Analysis*. Vol. 17, No. 2, May 1994, pp. 187-204.

Dikshit defines small arms according to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) definition, which includes "...all crew-portable direct fire weapons of a calibre less than 50 mm and will include a secondary capability to defeat light armour and helicopters" (p. 189). The accuracy and lethality of infantry weapons have increased dramatically since 1945. Estimates of the cost involved in eliminating the current light weapons proliferation problem hover in the \$85 billion (United States currency) range and are complicated by a host of problems:

- 1) the existence of an extensive underground system to ship armaments covertly to clients;
- 2) the huge profits to be made in gun-running;
- 3) for many states, the sale of surplus small arms as a way to secure hard currency.

A survey of the characteristics of light weapons proliferation is offered for several states: Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, the African States, and Bosnia. Dikshit concludes that each state must create and enforce stringent gun control laws. In addition, states should create a register for small arms which includes transfers and procurement through domestic production. In the meantime, the international community must be made aware of the need to control light weapons proliferation.