



## BOOK REVIEW - THE THIRD WORLD WAR

*Cdr Ashok Rai*

The book 'The Third World War' cannot be dismissed as a mere invention of an imaginative writer because Hawksley has researched the book diligently through contacts with high level military and political leadership. He has narrated events, weapon systems, governments and military psyche of nations who consider themselves world players and are observed to be striving hard for their own personal image and Nation's standing in International world order. The novel effectively illustrates the strange mixture of economic interdependence and the ideological opposition that marks relationships between big players such as China, US, Japan and Russia.

The dramatis personae couldn't have been more real. After the absolution which the war threatened and the cataclysmic and cathartic wars which have eupted since, this return to the notion of calculation in war is strangely chilling. The author has also explored how various strategies, revenge, restitution, reparation, restraint, retribution, reconciliation and reconstruction have been used by liberal states not only to defeat their enemies but also to weigh their national interests irrespective of who is right or wrong. The post second world war transformations of Japan, South & North Korea, China's burgeoning economic dominance of the

globe, the US-Russia rivalry to maintain supremacy in the world order and the growing menace of Islamic fundamentalism through-out the world is very clearly elucidated in the narration of events.

The story is set with India in the back drop and its constant fight with terrorists, be it in Kashmir or North Eastern states. India's constant pleading to Pakistan to stop its terrorist training camps is well conducted. The Indian PM, Mr. Vasant Mehta, who is a charismatic tester with liberal education and intellect is less of a politician in the true sense and has the fundamental development of the nation as his agenda. Whereas, in the neighbouring country Pakistan, the fundamentalist have managed to overthrow the democratically elected government by staging a series of events such as the sudden death of the Pakistani PM in a mysterious air-crash and the military assuming charge. The book there after goes ahead to discuss several important issues including obstacles to democracy in Pakistan, fundamental Islamic ideologies, the politics of terrorism and the future of Indo-Pak relations hinging in the covert/overt support by the US, China, Russia and SE Islamic states

The story builds up with development of events as the world has witnessed in real time during the period 1990 -2000. This book could also be used to understand the psyche of US leadership who in many ways derive their analysts by conducting 'war games' by target nation's responses to any particular course of events/outcome of any cross border skirmishes. Though it can be safely assumed that the author may have an American view-point to reactions of Indo-Pak responses to certain stimuli, it can not be entirely ruled out considering the pressures the leadership of both nuclear capable nation feel exerted upon them from world players such as the US, Russia, China, Japan and UK.

This book is a must read by any military officer. It will also be of great interest to those who are interested in the study of domestic politics in Pakistan, Indo-Pak relations, comparative politics, political sociology and influence of economics on national standing in world order.

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR.**

*Cdr Ashok Rai is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy. He was commissioned on 01 Jul 86 and is a Navigation and Direction Specialist. His important command and staff appointments include command of CGS C 01, C-05, INS Bedi, JDNT/NHQ and DD(ND)/INTEG. He is presently Commanding Officer INS Dwarka. The officer is a post graduate from DSSC, Wellington.*

