

SUBJECT:
Recent Publications from the East-West Center in Washington

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The following are new titles in the Policy Studies series. Ordering information and abstracts of the publications appear after the listing of titles.

- * THE KAREN REVOLUTION IN BURMA: DIVERSE VOICES, UNCERTAIN ENDS, by Ardeth Maung Thawngmung. 2008.
- * ECONOMY OF THE CONFLICT REGION IN SRI LANKA: FROM EMBARGO TO REPRESSION, by Muttukrishna Sarvananthan. 2007.
- * LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD: CENTRALIZATION, MULTIPLE CONFLICTS, AND DEMOCRATIC STATE BUILDING IN NEPAL, by Mahendra Lawoti. 2007.
- * CONFLICT AND PEACE IN INDIA'S NORTHEAST: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY, by Samir Kumar Das. 2007.
- * MUSLIM PERSPECTIVES ON THE SRI LANKAN CONFLICT, by Dennis McGilvray and Mirak Raheem. 2007.

THE KAREN REVOLUTION IN BURMA: DIVERSE VOICES, UNCERTAIN ENDS, by Ardeth Maung Thawngmung. Policy Studies 45. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center in Washington; Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2008. 81 pp. Paper, electronic format; \$10.00.
<http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2718>

This study analyzes the various types and stages of conflict that have been experienced by diverse groups and generations of Karen over the six decades of armed conflict between the Karen National Union (KNU) and successive Burmese governments. Instead of focusing on those who are internally displaced, those in the refugee camps on the Thai-Burma border or living abroad, or those in the KNU, it places particular emphasis on the "other" Karen, or the majority segment of the Karen population living inside Burma, a population that has hitherto received little scholarly and journalistic attention. It also assesses the Karen People's varied attitudes toward a number of political organizations that claim to represent their interests, toward successive Burmese military regimes, and toward the political issues that led to the original divide between the "accommodators" and "rebels."

This study argues that the lifestyles and strategies that the Karens have pursued are diverse and not confined to armed resistance. Acknowledging these multiple voices will not only shed light upon the many positive features of ethnic interactions, including harmonious communal relationships and significant attempts to promote peace and stability by encouraging "normal" activities and routines in both peaceful and war-torn areas; it will also help to identify policy recommendations for future ceasefire negotiations and a possible long-term political settlement within the context of a militarized Burma.

ECONOMY OF THE CONFLICT REGION IN SRI LANKA: FROM EMBARGO TO REPRESSION, by Muttukrishna Sarvananthan. Policy Studies 44. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center in Washington, 2007. xi, 87 pp. Paper, \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2554>

This monograph examines the nature, extent, and causes of economic and social decline in Sri Lanka's Northern and Eastern Provinces--a region that has endured civil war between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil

Eelam (LTTE) for the past quarter century. Based on analysis of primary source data, the study examines the economies of Northern and Eastern Provinces by district and sector; reveals the extent of the economic devastation, social marginalization, and poverty of the conflict region; and explores the challenges of reviving the economy during the recent ceasefire period.

The monograph shows that the single most important cause of the economic and social decline in Northern and Eastern Provinces was the economic embargo imposed by the Sri Lankan government between 1990 and 2001. Following the Ceasefire Agreement signed in February 2002, economic repression by the LTTE, including illegal tolls on vehicle traffic, customs duties, and sales taxes--along with the earlier expulsion of the entrepreneurial Muslim community--seriously impeded economic recovery before renewed hostilities broke out in December 2005 and the formal end of the ceasefire in January 2008.

Due to national and global economic changes since the beginning of the civil war, the study argues against a return to the economic conditions and structure of the pre-war period. Rather, Northern Province has the opportunity to take advantage of the human capital and strong Tamil diaspora to play a significant role in the global knowledge-based economy, and Eastern Province is well-positioned to become a highly productive industrial region with a significant tourism industry.

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD: CENTRALIZATION, MULTIPLE CONFLICTS, AND DEMOCRATIC STATE BUILDING IN NEPAL, by Mahendra Lawoti. Policy Studies 43. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2007. xi, 93 pp. Paper, \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2553>

This study examines the causes of the multiple conflicts and crises in Nepal during the 1990–2002 democratic period and develops guidelines to avoid them in the future. In that democratic period, Nepal was extremely centralized, with power concentrated in the cabinet and accessed primarily by the caste hill Hindu elite males. Overcentralization of the polity resulted in the exclusion of national, ethnic, and caste groups, as well as women, and promoted a culture of impunity. It also contributed to the growth of the Maoist insurgency and facilitated government instability, corruption, and related crises.

The democratic period, however, also witnessed successful sectors. The media flourished; communities reforested the hills; economic liberalization made available more goods and services; decentralization, though limited, took power closer to the people; and social justice movements raised issues of marginalized groups. The successful sectors could perform because the central state withdrew and allowed them space to operate. However, weak accountability limited their success. Devolution or concentration of power in the hands of the central government were the respective common factors underscoring the success or failure of programs.

Based on these findings, and supplemented by global experience, the monograph argues that accountability and inclusion based on identity and class should be significant criteria in restructuring the state. The state needs to devolve power to different levels, branches, and agencies of government, to different national, ethnic, caste groups, and women, and reallocate power among the state, society, and market. Accountability mechanisms must be built into all organizations that wield power. A restructured state would become effective and have a greater chance of consolidating democracy.

CONFLICT AND PEACE IN INDIA'S NORTHEAST: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY, by Samir Kumar Das. Policy Studies 42. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2007. ix, 85 pp. Paper, \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2550>

This monograph examines the role of civil society groups in peace building in three conflict regions in India's Northeast--Assam, Naga Hills/Nagaland, and Mizo Hills/Mizoram. These political conflicts are complex with each conflict representing a cacophony of competing, often zero-sum demands.

In investigating the role of civil society groups, the study distinguishes between "official" (between the Government of India and certain insurgent organizations) and "unofficial" peace processes at the local level that makes coexistence of diverse communities possible despite the continuing violence. These two processes reflect very different ways of addressing conflict and defining the role of civil society groups in peace building.

In the official peace process, the role of civil society groups is to bring warring parties to the negotiating table, set forth potentially agreeable ceasefire terms, and suggest possible settlements. The emphasis is on finding solutions at the macro level in the belief that settlement will also lead to resolution of micro level problems. In contrast the role of civil society groups in the unofficial processes is to constantly negotiate across ethnic boundaries and make it possible for rival communities to live together in the same village, locality, or neighborhood. Compromise is required at every level for conflict resolution. Popular initiatives also help insulate the general population from rebel groups.

The official and unofficial peace processes often proceed on parallel tracks with minimum impact on each other. It is important for the two processes to be connected. For civil society groups to be more effective in peace building, they must be socially integrated and develop synergy with other constituents and stakeholders.

MUSLIM PERSPECTIVES ON THE SRI LANKAN CONFLICT, by Dennis McGilvray and Mirak Raheem. Policy Studies 41. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2007. ix, 83 pp. Paper, \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2315>

The Sri Lankan ethnic conflict is often regarded as a two-way contest between the Sinhala majority and the Tamil minority, ignoring the interests and concerns of the island's 8 percent Muslim (or "Moorish") minority. One-third of Sri Lanka's Muslims are concentrated in towns and districts located within the Tamil-speaking agricultural northeast, a region envisioned as independent "Tamil Eelam" by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

In the postindependence period, the Muslim leadership at the national level abandoned their colonial identity as Arabs ("Moors") and adopted a religious identity as Muslims, clearly defining their ethnicity as neither Sinhala nor Tamil. Muslim politicians emphasized coalition politics with mainstream Sinhala parties until the outbreak of the armed Tamil secessionist campaign in the 1980s. Since then, Muslim communities in the northeast have suffered violence and dispossession at the hands of the LTTE, and they have been harmed by indiscriminate military campaigns conducted by the Sri Lankan armed forces.

A Muslim political party, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, was formed in the 1980s to defend the security of the northeastern Muslims, and it has sought to secure an equal role for the Muslims in peace negotiations following the Ceasefire Agreement of 2002. A narrow Sinhala vs. Tamil mindset, and a complex set of sociological and political factors within the Muslim community, have limited the direct participation of the Muslims in the peace process. However, because of the large Muslim population in the multiethnic northeast, Muslims must be actively involved in any long-term settlement of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict.

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ASSESSING BURMA'S CEASEFIRE ACCORDS, by Zaw Oo and Win Min. Policy Studies 39. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington; Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007. 91 pp. Paper, electronic format; \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2252>

THE UNITED WA STATE PARTY: NARCO-ARMY OR ETHNIC NATIONALIST PARTY? by Tom Kramer. Policy Studies 38. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington; Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007. 99 pp. Paper, electronic format; \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2251>

THE ISLAMIST THREAT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: A REASSESSMENT by John T. Sidel. Policy Studies 37. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington; Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007. 73 pp. Paper, electronic format; \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2213>

STATE OF STRIFE: THE DYNAMICS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN BURMA, by Martin Smith. Policy Studies 36. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington; Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007. 96 pp. Paper, electronic format; \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2216>

REBELLION IN SOUTHERN THAILAND: CONTENDING HISTORIES, by Thanet Aphornsuvan. Policy Studies 35. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington; Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007. 89 pp. Paper, electronic format; \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2211>

CREATING A "NEW NEPAL": THE ETHNIC DIMENSION, by Susan Hangen. Policy Studies 34. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2007. ix, 87 pp. Paper, \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2202>

POSTFRONTIER BLUES: TOWARD A NEW POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR NORTHEAST INDIA, by Sanjib Baruah. Policy Studies 33. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2007. ix, 84 pp. Paper, \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2173>

ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA: CHANGING DYNAMICS, by Jayadeva Uyangoda. Policy Studies 32. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington, 2007. ix, 76 pp. Paper, \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2172>

POLITICAL AUTHORITY IN BURMA'S ETHNIC MINORITY STATES: DEVOLUTION, OCCUPATION, AND COEXISTENCE, by Mary P. Callahan. Policy Studies 31. Washington, D.C.: East-West Center Washington; Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007. 94 pp. Paper, electronic format; \$10.00. <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pubs/2136>

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