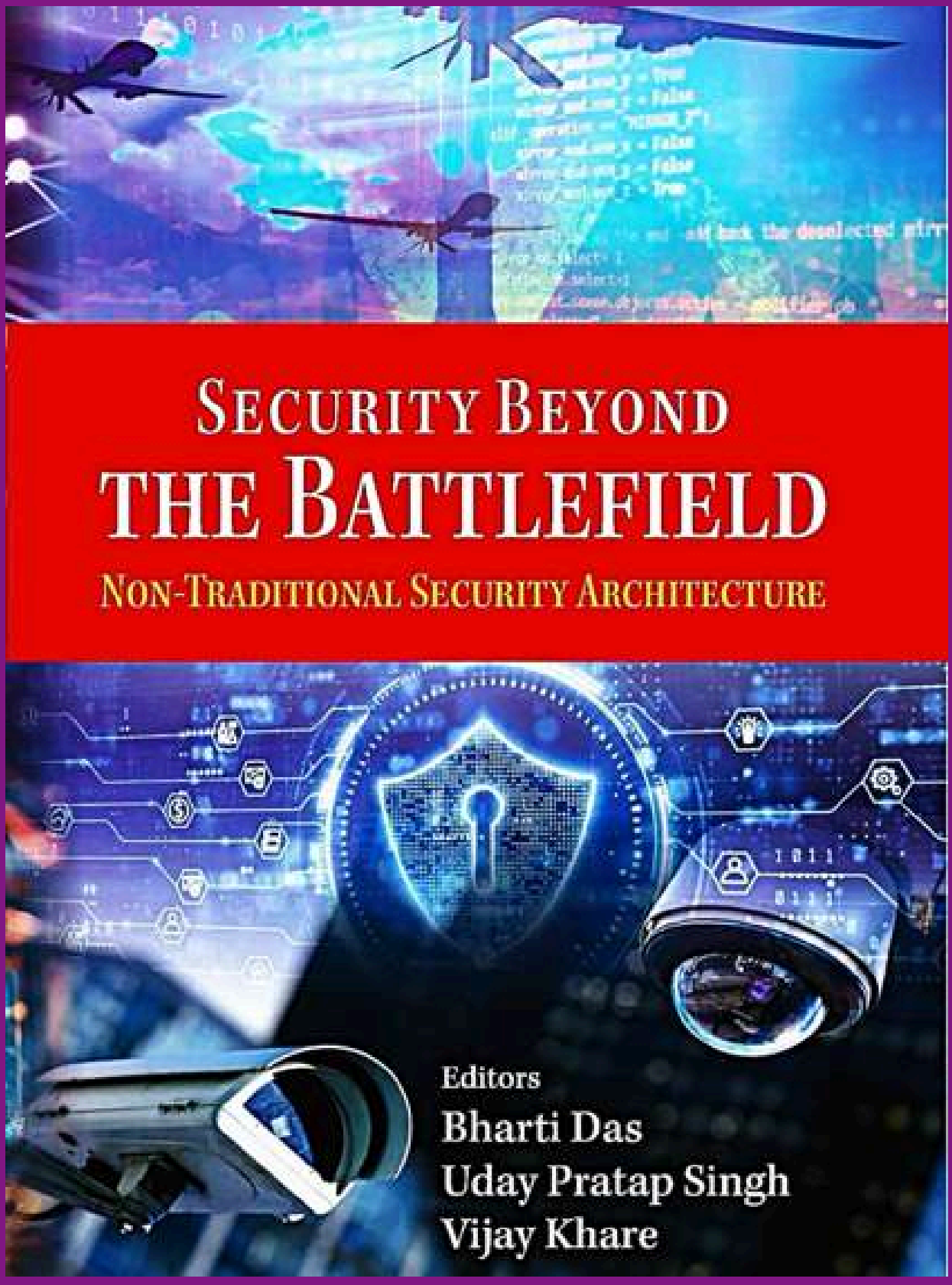
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BOOK REVIEW

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SECURITY BEYOND THE BATTLEFIELD: NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

by Bharti Das, Uday Pratap Singh, and Vijay Khare



What Does It Mean to be Secure?

For a long time, security meant armies, borders and the ability to protect a state and people from an aggressor. The turn of the 21st century has complicated that picture. The most serious threats to a state may now come without a single soldier crossing a frontier: a cyberattack on a power grid, a failed monsoon, a reduction on energy supplies, or a rumour that spreads faster than any official denial. This shift in thinking is the starting point of the book 'Security Beyond the Battlefield: Non-Traditional Security Architecture' edited by Prof Bharti Das, Mr Uday Pratap Singh and Mr Vijay Khare.

These 300 pages approx. book is published by Pentagon Press LLP asks a deceptively simple question: what does it actually mean for a nation to be secure? Its value lies less in cataloguing new dangers than in showing how limited a purely military view of security has become. In that sense it brings attention to a wider debate about how power, vulnerability and preparedness are being perceived and understood.

Security Without Borders

A larger part of the book cover realms like artificial intelligence, cyber warfare, economic coercion, climate change, water and energy security, maritime vulnerabilities, human security, social media manipulation and strategic diplomacy. These may appear to be separate subjects, but the authors treat them as parts of one problem. A shock to the energy sector soon becomes an economic and political one. Environmental degradation increases competition over scarce resources and adds strain to societies that are already under pressure.

What stayed with me is the point that insecurity seldom arrives alone. The old line between military and non-military threats has blurred, and a country can have formidable forces while remaining exposed to threats. Its critical infrastructure may be exposed to attack, its essential resources may be precarious, or its institutions may be unready for a sudden crisis.

This matters a great deal for India, where strategic rivalry, development goals, technological dependence, environmental stress and regional instability all pull at one another. The authors suggest, rightly in my view, that non-traditional threats should not be filed away as secondary concerns. They belong at the centre of long-term strategic thinking.

Strengths and Open Questions

The central argument also made me think about how security relates to ordinary human well-being. It is easy to measure national strength by military capability, technological progress or geopolitical weight. Those measures are real, but they leave something out. . Strategic superiority means little if a state cannot shield its citizens from a flood, protect the systems they rely on, or keep essential services running when things go wrong.

This is where the broader view of security won me over. Security is more than the absence of war. It also depends on how well the systems that sustain daily life hold up under strain. None of this makes conventional defence less important; it simply places it within a larger framework, where economic stability, environmental sustainability, technological resilience and human welfare support one another.

The interdisciplinary approach is among the book's real strengths. No defence establishment can meet these challenges alone. They call for sustained cooperation among policymakers, the armed forces, diplomats, scientists, technologists and civilian agencies. That raises a practical question the book touches on but does not fully settle: how does such cooperation become routine institutional practice? Recognising that threats are connected is only the first step. Someone must set priorities, assign responsibility and be held accountable.

The breadth of the book is also its main limitation. With so many subjects under one roof, some depth is inevitably lost, and I would have welcomed more comparative case studies and more discussion of how these ideas might be put into practice. The tensions between security imperatives, developmental needs and individual freedoms deserve closer attention as well. I raise these points not as objections to the thesis but as questions it naturally provokes.

Conclusion

Security Beyond the Battlefield is a well-timed addition to the literature on national and international security. Its core claim, that a nation's security reaches well beyond the battlefield, is persuasive, and it is supported by a thoughtful look at the technological, economic, environmental, maritime and human dimensions of the problem.

The idea I carried away is that security is never finally achieved through strength or dominance. It has to be worked at continuously, through anticipation, adaptation and resilience. A secure nation can defend its borders, but it can also protect the institutions, resources and people within them.

Students and scholars of international relations and strategic studies will find much of interest here, as will military professionals and policymakers. The book's larger contribution is to nudge its readers from asking which threats a country can defeat to asking which vulnerabilities it must learn to anticipate and withstand. At a time when the edges of conflict are harder to locate, that is a question worth taking seriously.

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