



THE RISING ASIA REVIEW OF BOOKS

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INDIA'S GLOBAL RENAISSANCE In an Evolving World Order

S. Jaishankar, *Why Bharat Matters* (New Delhi: Rupa, 2024), 256 pages, INR 695.

Life is rarely a black-and-white choice, and appreciating the complexities of decision-making is an essential part of grasping international relations. A major rising power, however, needs more than just an accurate landscape analysis and the ability to act on it. It must, first of all, be confident of its own values and beliefs and base its policies on those convictions. These will draw from the totality of its culture, heritage and traditions. That is why India can only rise when it is truly Bharat.

-Dr. S.Jaishankar, *Why Bharat Matters* (p.9).

Penned by Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, the distinguished diplomat and current Minister of External Affairs of India, *Why Bharat Matters* stands as a seminal work in the realm of international relations literature. With meticulous attention to detail and a keen understanding

of India's evolving global role, the author navigates the complex landscape of contemporary geopolitics, offering readers a comprehensive analysis of India's strategic significance. The book delves into key initiatives such as Neighbourhood First and Act East, which have redefined India's approach to its immediate and extended neighborhood, respectively. The author provides context and focus, helping readers understand recent developments and strategic decisions shaping India's international relations. Jaishankar also examines India's strategic partnerships with major powers such as the United States, Russia, and China, highlighting the delicate balancing act required to maintain its sovereignty and strategic autonomy. The analysis of contemporary issues such as trade, security, and technology underscores the dynamic and multifaceted nature of India's foreign policy. Through this comprehensive exploration, *Why Bharat Matters* offers invaluable insights into India's ascent on the global stage, making it an essential read for those interested in understanding the current dynamics of international relations.

The author addresses the internal factors that impact India's foreign policy, such as economic priorities, technological advancements, and social dynamics, providing a holistic view of how domestic developments intertwine with global strategies. The book considers future challenges and opportunities for India on the global stage, discussing potential scenarios and strategies that could shape India's trajectory in the coming years, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and foresight in a rapidly changing world.

Lessons from the Epics

At the core of *Why Bharat Matters* resides an in-depth exploration of India's strategic cultural ethos, firmly entrenched in its illustrious



historical legacy. The author adeptly draws parallels between revered Indian epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* (pp. 7-9) and contemporary diplomatic methodologies, thereby illuminating the enduring significance of India's timeless wisdom in shaping its modern foreign policy landscape (p. 29, pp. 45-46).

The parallels between the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and modern-day diplomacy are multifaceted, reflecting timeless strategies and ethical considerations that continue to influence contemporary statecraft. In the *Ramayana*, Hanuman's diplomatic mission to Lanka illustrates principles of effective communication, negotiation, and intelligence gathering, emphasizing respect, strategic thinking, and the delivery of clear messages, akin to modern diplomatic efforts. Similarly, the *Mahabharata* provides insights through Krishna's peace mission to the Kauravas before the Kurukshetra war, underscoring negotiation and conflict resolution while preparing for war, reflecting modern practices of seeking peace while maintaining defense readiness. The *Mahabharata's* focus on dharma (duty and righteousness) aligns with the ethical dimensions of contemporary diplomacy, where moral considerations guide foreign policy decisions. Both epics highlight the significance of alliances and partnerships, such as Rama's alliance with Sugriva in the *Ramayana* and the Pandavas' alliances in the *Mahabharata*, mirroring modern strategic partnerships and coalitions. Additionally, the use of spies and informants in both epics to gather critical information parallels the modern intelligence apparatus underpinning diplomatic and military strategies. The strategic patience and long-term vision demonstrated in these epics are crucial for contemporary diplomacy. The *Ramayana* teaches the value of perseverance through Rama's quest to rescue Sita, highlighting the importance of steadfastness and resilience in diplomatic endeavors. The *Mahabharata*,



through the Pandavas' journey, illustrates the need for adaptability and learning from setbacks, which are essential traits for modern diplomats facing ever-changing global dynamics. Furthermore, both epics underscore the importance of righteous leadership and moral integrity, traits that are highly valued in international relations today. The lessons of humility, justice, and ethical governance from these ancient texts continue to inspire and guide leaders in navigating the complex and often morally ambiguous realm of global diplomacy. These narratives, with their rich diplomatic maneuvers, ethical dilemmas, and strategic alliances, offer invaluable lessons for modern diplomacy, underscoring the enduring relevance of ancient wisdom in shaping contemporary international relations and enhancing the effectiveness of global governance. Through a meticulous examination of the ethical intricacies and moral quandaries portrayed in these epics, the author provides invaluable insights into India's nuanced approach to statecraft and its relentless pursuit of global leadership in today's complex geopolitical arena.

Structured with clarity and precision, the book comprises eleven well-crafted chapters, each offering a comprehensive exploration of India's foreign policy trajectory. From providing an insightful overview of India's worldview to conducting a detailed analysis of its strategic partnerships with major powers, each chapter offers a nuanced perspective on India's evolving role on the global stage.

India in the World Order

In *Why Bharat Matters*, the concise yet exhaustive nature of the text is evident despite its seemingly modest length of 256 pages. The discourse adeptly traverses myriad topics with meticulousness and clarity. Chapter 1, "Presenting a World View: Calculations, Culture, and Clarity," (pp. 1-9)



examines India's strategic positioning in the global order. The chapter tackles several key issues and debates that provide a comprehensive understanding of India's worldview. One central debate is India's ability to balance its national interests with the demands of globalization, including the tension between maintaining sovereignty and participating in international alliances and institutions. Another critical issue is the transparency and clarity of India's strategic intentions, which is essential for building trust with international partners. The chapter further explores India's economic strategies, particularly how it uses its economic growth to enhance geopolitical influence. This involves debates on the effectiveness of India's trade policies, investment approaches, and economic diplomacy in achieving broader strategic goals. Additionally, the chapter highlights challenges in managing regional relationships, especially with neighboring countries, and the impact of these dynamics on India's global ambitions. The chapter also addresses the debate on how India can leverage its soft power, through cultural diplomacy and international outreach, to bolster its strategic position. Moreover, the role of India's military modernization and its impact on regional security dynamics is scrutinized, along with the balancing act between being a responsible nuclear power and a proponent of global disarmament. Overall, Chapter 1 provides a detailed exploration of India's approach to international relations, focusing on the interplay between cultural identity, economic strategy, and geopolitical calculations, setting the stage for deeper analysis in subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 2, "Foreign Policy and You" (pp. 10-27), the author delves into the critical intersections between India's foreign policy and the everyday lives of its citizens. The chapter posits that a robust foreign policy must adeptly read global trends and anticipate their potential



impact on the nation and its people. One of the key issues explored is the necessity for foreign policy to be nimble and responsive, particularly in the face of unexpected global events. This agility ensures that India can navigate crises effectively and protect its national interests. Another significant debate centers on the importance of clear messaging and image projection. A successful foreign policy must communicate India's intentions and project a positive image on the global stage. The chapter argues that these efforts are crucial for garnering international support and fostering beneficial partnerships. The chapter emphasizes that foreign policy should tangibly benefit the populace, addressing their everyday needs and ensuring national security. This involves creating rules, regulations, and mechanisms that safeguard citizens' welfare and prepare for unforeseen contingencies. The chapter also discusses the balance between sounding appealing and being effective, asserting that foreign policy must pass the "smell test" by delivering real results rather than merely sounding good. While addressing bread-and-butter issues is essential, larger nations like India must also tackle bigger questions. Three contemporary examples of urgent global concerns are pandemics, terrorism, and climate change. The real debate is not whether India should be an open or protected economy, but whether it should be employment-centric and capability-driven, or merely a profit-obsessed society content to be a market. By prioritizing the welfare of its citizens and addressing these broader issues, a sensible government can establish a foreign policy that is both practical and protective, ensuring that India's global engagements translate into direct benefits for its people. Thus, the chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of how foreign policy is not just a high-level strategic endeavor but a practical tool for enhancing the daily lives and security of the nation's citizens.

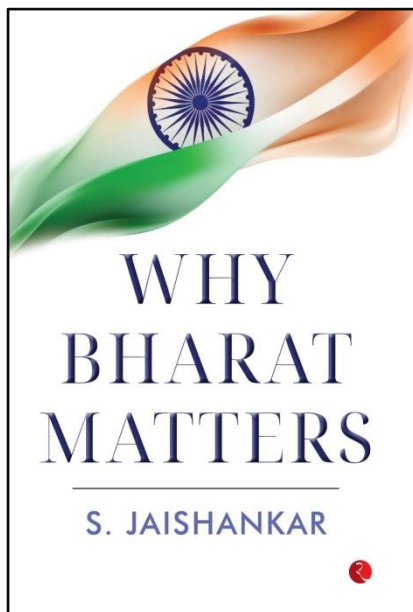


Chapter 3, titled “The State of the World - Understanding the Landscape” (pp. 28-40), examines crucial global dynamics and debates shaping India’s foreign policy in the contemporary era. The chapter underscores that global interactions are not merely about mobility and migration but also about forging strategic partnerships and agreements that benefit all involved parties. It emphasizes the potential of deeper engagement to accelerate national development by accessing new markets, securing resources, and enhancing quality of life through expanded employment opportunities. The chapter highlights foreign policy as a continuous endeavor to build power and exert influence, whether for national interest or collective global objectives. It argues that India, as a rising power, must draw lessons not only from its own history but also from global experiences, adapting its strategies accordingly. Beyond immediate challenges, the chapter discusses structural issues stemming from the post-Second World War international architecture, critiquing the dominance of self-appointed global custodians over democratically elected governments and advocating for a more inclusive global governance framework. It critiques the actions of countries promoting their models abroad, challenging the unilateral imposition of norms and asserting the need for diverse perspectives in global decision-making processes. Moreover, the chapter examines the complexities of contemporary international relations where nations increasingly assert their own models as global examples, influencing global norms and practices. Big issues in the world cannot be solved without India’s contribution or participation. This moment represents an opportunity for India to reset the terms of its engagement with the world, leveraging its growing influence to shape cooperative solutions and contribute significantly to global governance



frameworks that are inclusive and responsive to diverse global challenges.

In Chapter 4, “Back To The Future” (pp. 41-60), the author traces the historical evolution of India’s foreign policy from ancient times to the present day. The author illustrates how India’s civilizational ethos, geographical location, and political experiences have shaped its worldview and diplomatic behavior. He examines key phases and milestones in India’s modern diplomacy, including the freedom struggle, non-alignment during the Cold War, economic reforms, nuclear tests, the Look East policy, the Neighbourhood First policy, and the Act East policy. The author argues that India’s foreign policy has consistently been adaptive and pragmatic, while also remaining rooted in its core values and identity. This chapter underscores the dynamic nature of India’s international relations and its ability to navigate changing global landscapes while staying true to its historical and cultural foundations. By drawing parallels between past and present, the chapter highlights the enduring relevance of India’s strategic principles.





Lending a Hand on the World Stage

As the narrative unfolds, Chapter 5, titled “A Transformational Decade” (pp. 61–83) outlines several key debates within India’s foreign policy and global engagement strategy. First, there is a significant debate about the role of diplomacy in India’s ascent as a global power, particularly in advocating for the interests of the Global South. This discussion intersects with debates on the effectiveness of India’s international cooperation efforts, encompassing lines of credit, grant assistance, and infrastructure projects, and their contribution to India’s expanding global footprint. Another critical debate revolves around India’s evolving relationships with major powers like the United States and China where the strategic implications of these ties are scrutinized, especially in light of the current tensions in India-China relations. Furthermore, the excerpt highlights ongoing discussions regarding the paradigm shift in India’s foreign policy which includes various initiatives and achievements such as the Neighbourhood First policy, the Quad grouping, and engagements through the International Solar Alliance and other global forums.

In Chapter 6, titled “Making Friends, Influencing People” (pp. 84–106), the author delves into the key issues and debates surrounding India’s diplomatic strategies and the importance of expanding its political capital globally. The chapter explores why India should broaden its diplomatic efforts to foster relationships worldwide, emphasizing the strategic value of such engagements. A significant focus is placed on India’s relations with three permanent members of the United Nations Security Council: the United Kingdom, Russia, and France. A discussion of India’s ties with the UK addresses the complex legacy of colonialism and how historical baggage influences contemporary diplomacy. The chapter also examines the enduring, time-tested relationship with



Russia, highlighting the depth of their partnership and mutual interests. In contrast, the partnership with France is presented as a dynamic and evolving relationship, reflecting France's role as a crucial ally in various international arenas. Through these examples, the chapter provides insights into India's broader diplomatic strategies, illustrating its efforts to expand its footprint on the global stage.

The Quad is Not Aimed Against any Country

In Chapter 7, "QUAD: A Grouping Foretold" (pp. 107-132), the author traces the origins, evolution, and strategic importance of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which includes India, the United States, Japan, and Australia. This chapter brings to light the debates surrounding the Quad's role in the Indo-Pacific region and India's strategic maritime alignments. One key debate centers on whether the Quad represents a natural and inevitable response to the shifting geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific or whether it is primarily a strategic counterbalance to China's growing influence. Another significant debate discussed is whether the Quad should be viewed as a military alliance or a multifaceted platform for cooperation on various issues such as maritime security, connectivity, infrastructure, trade, technology, health, climate, and disaster relief. The author argues that the Quad is not intended as a military coalition but rather as a cooperative effort to ensure a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific. This stance leads to further debates about the effectiveness and scope of the Quad's initiatives, as well as the potential for misperceptions and misunderstandings about its purpose. The chapter also addresses misconceptions about the Quad being directed against any specific country, with the author emphasizing its broader goal of promoting stability and collaboration in the region. These debates highlight the



complexities and strategic considerations that underpin the Quad, reflecting its significance in contemporary international relations and regional security dynamics.

Meanwhile Chapter 8, titled “Dealing with China” (pp. 133-157), delves into one of the most complex and consequential aspects of India’s foreign policy: its relationship with China. Central to this chapter are the debates surrounding the boundary dispute, trade imbalance, connectivity projects, and regional and global issues, as well as the recent developments on the Himalayan border and their impact. One significant debate addresses the historical romanticism towards China by previous Indian governments, which is contrasted with the current regime’s more pragmatic approach. This shift is marked by strategic infrastructure developments in border areas, aimed at countering Chinese capabilities. Another critical debate is the balance between competition and cooperation, highlighting the necessity for a realistic and balanced approach towards China based on mutual respect, sensitivity, and interests. The chapter also explores the limited areas of common ground between India and China, such as their cooperation in the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, amidst broader conflicts and confrontations. Additionally, the author critiques past policies and stresses the need for India to reassess its strategies in light of China’s rising influence and assertiveness. This includes debating the effectiveness of India’s current strategies in addressing the trade imbalance and the regional power dynamics influenced by China’s Belt and Road Initiative. The chapter raises pertinent questions about how India can navigate its complex relationship with China, balancing its national interests with the broader geopolitical landscape. These debates



underscore the challenges and strategic decisions involved in managing the bilateral relations between the two powerful neighbors.

Chapter 9, titled “Re-imagining Security” (pp. 158-177), examines the shifting debates about security in the modern world. The chapter’s core idea, “corrosion is the new competition,” suggests that traditional security approaches are outdated. The author highlights “knowledge is power” from post-modernist thought and stresses the importance of psychological operations (psy-ops) as contemporary warfare. A significant debate in the chapter revolves around the importance of image and narratives in borderless politics, asserting their crucial role in legitimizing or delegitimizing state actions. Another key debate is the expansion of security beyond traditional domains like land, sea, and air to new areas such as space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. This raises questions about how to address these new threats and opportunities effectively. The author advocates for a comprehensive and cooperative security strategy that not only defends against threats but also creates opportunities and enhances capabilities. This involves developing India’s defense industry, participating in multilateral forums, and building partnerships with like-minded countries.

Critiquing Past Policies and Moving Ahead

Chapter 10, titled “The Roads Not Taken” (pp. 179-196), explores critical debates surrounding India’s post-independence political and strategic decisions, highlighting divergences among key leaders. Nehru’s idealist approach, particularly his concept of “Asian Solidarity,” comes under sharp criticism for prioritizing internationalism over national interests, which some argue compromised India’s strategic clarity. At the time, there were few who supported Nehru’s foreign policies, particularly his



vision of non-alignment and global cooperation. V.K. Krishna Menon, as Defense Minister, was a strong ally of Nehru and played a key role in promoting the Non-Aligned Movement, aligning closely with Nehru's idealistic approach. K.P.S. Menon, India's first Foreign Secretary, supported Nehru's policies, acknowledging their strategic value in fostering international peace and cooperation. In contrast, the author praises Sardar Patel for his pragmatic and clear-sighted understanding of regional dynamics, especially concerning Pakistan and China. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee's concerns about the potential Balkanization of India underscore the challenges in maintaining national unity amidst diverse cultural and regional identities. An intriguing aspect explored is Mookerjee's advocacy of Buddhist Diplomacy with Southeast Asia, revealing alternative cultural approaches to diplomacy. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's critique focuses on India's non-aligned stance, which he believed alienated potential allies and hindered technological advancements, leading to diplomatic setbacks in international forums like the UN. The chapter also discusses Minoos Masani's perspective that Non-Aligned Movement policies may have left India vulnerable, particularly in repelling external threats. Additionally, the chapter addresses the evolving nature of security paradigms in the contemporary world. Recognizing the limitations of traditional security approaches based solely on policing and military might, it advocates for a reimagining of security that encompasses economic resilience, cultural diplomacy, and broader strategic considerations beyond conventional military strategies. These debates underscore ongoing discussions about the balance between national interests and international acceptance, urging strategic clarity and robust security strategies in shaping India's foreign policy decisions.



Finally, Chapter 11 titled “Why Bharat Matters” (pp. 197-219), serves as a fitting conclusion to the book, delving into India’s trajectory from a newly independent nation to a self-assured global actor (p. 213). The author engages in several key debates surrounding India’s global significance and its internal dynamics. One of the central debates revolves around India’s role in the global order, particularly its advocacy for a rules-based international system exemplified by its adherence to frameworks like United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The author argues that India’s stance on issues of global governance and its championing of causes important to the Global South and multi-polarity are crucial for reshaping global dynamics. Another debate highlighted is India’s national progress and governance efficacy, emphasizing initiatives like digitalization of government services to curb inefficiencies and improve service delivery. The chapter also discusses India’s efforts in enhancing human capital through investments in health, education, and skills development, positioning these as vital for India’s sustainable development and global influence. Furthermore, the author underscores the significance of India’s diaspora, portraying it as a global asset that contributes to India’s soft power and capacity to assist globally in times of crisis.

Moreover, *Why Bharat Matters* offers a thought-provoking and comprehensive analysis of India’s economic diplomacy and its far-reaching implications for global governance. The author articulates India’s economic priorities and strategic imperatives, bringing clarity to the nation’s concerted efforts to leverage its burgeoning economic prowess in order to advance its foreign policy objectives. Through well-considered initiatives, such as abstaining from regional trade agreements like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and prioritizing its influential role within the Group of Twenty



(G20), India strategically positions itself as a pivotal player in the global economic order. These actions reflect India's commitment to advocating for principles of fairness, transparency, and inclusivity in international economic dealings. By opting out of RCEP (p. 78), India underscores its resolve to protect its domestic industries and economic sovereignty, thereby ensuring that its participation in global trade agreements aligns with its national interests and development goals. Simultaneously, India's active and proactive engagement in the G20 (p.6) highlights its dedication to contributing constructively to global economic governance, and promoting policies that are inclusive and beneficial for all member states. This dual approach underscores India's sophisticated economic diplomacy, aimed at not only safeguarding its own economic interests but also shaping a more equitable and balanced global economic framework. Through these strategic economic maneuvers, India not only bolsters its own economic standing but also champions a model of global governance that prioritizes collective prosperity and sustainable development.

Furthermore, *Why Bharat Matters* offers a forward-looking perspective on India's role in shaping the future of international governance and cooperation. The author explores the potential for India to emerge as a global leader in addressing pressing global challenges, from climate change to pandemics. By advocating for greater multilateralism and collaboration, the book underscores India's commitment to promoting a more equitable and interconnected world order. Through initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, India demonstrates its readiness to contribute meaningfully to global efforts aimed at addressing shared challenges and advancing common interests (p. 25). As the world continues to grapple with unprecedented global crises, *Why*



Bharat Matters offers a timely and insightful roadmap for India's engagement with the international community in the years to come.

The Literature on Foreign Relations

Why Bharat Matters represents a distinctive contribution to the literature on international relations and India's foreign policy, setting itself apart through its unique blend of historical insights, cultural analysis, and geopolitical acumen. Unlike traditional texts that often emphasize a purely strategic or economic perspective, Dr. Jaishankar's work integrates India's rich cultural heritage and philosophical traditions into its foreign policy discourse, drawing parallels with epics like the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to provide a deeper understanding of India's statecraft. This approach not only underscores the timeless relevance of India's cultural ethos but also positions the book alongside other seminal works like Shashi Tharoor's *Pax Indica*¹ and C. Raja Mohan's *Samudra Manthan*,² which also explore India's foreign policy but with differing emphases on cultural and maritime strategies, respectively. Dr. Jaishankar's exploration of India's strategic priorities in the Modi era, with initiatives such as 'Neighbourhood First' and 'SAGAR,' provides a contemporary context that aligns well with books like *The Modi Doctrine*³ by Anirban Ganguly and Vijay Chauthaiwale, yet offers a more holistic view by incorporating economic diplomacy and security paradigms. The book's forward-looking perspective on India's role in global governance, advocating for greater multilateralism and addressing global challenges

¹ Shashi Tharoor, *Pax Indica: India and the World of the 21st Century* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2012).

² C. Raja Mohan, *Samudra Manthan: Sino Indian Rivalry in the Indo Pacific* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012).

³ Anirban Ganguly, and Vijay Chauthaiwale, *The Modi Doctrine: New Paradigms in India's Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Wisdom Tree, 2016).



like climate change and pandemics, complements yet contrasts with the more narrowly focused analyses in works like *The India Way*⁴ by the author himself and *India's Foreign Policy: Coping with the Changing World*⁵ by Muchkund Dubey. Furthermore, *Why Bharat Matters* engages with current debates on national identity and international positioning, a discourse that has been less explored in books such as *Choices: Inside the Making of India's Foreign Policy*⁶ by Shivshankar Menon, which offers more of a memoir-like narrative of diplomatic decision-making. By tackling controversies like the use of 'Bharat' in diplomatic contexts, the author not only addresses contemporary political rhetoric but also delves into the deeper implications of cultural symbolism in India's foreign policy, positioning *Why Bharat Matters* as a critical and comprehensive resource in understanding India's ascent on the global stage, thereby providing a unique lens through which to view the nation's future trajectory in international affairs.

Controversy Over the Use of "Bharat"

However, *Why Bharat Matters* is not without its controversies, particularly surrounding India's use of the term 'Bharat' in official G20 communications. This move sparked debate and accusations of ethnic nationalism, with critics questioning its implications for India's secular identity. While the author advocates for grounding India's foreign policy in its cultural values and beliefs, the controversy underscores the complexities of identity politics in contemporary India and its impact on

⁴ S. Jaishankar, *The India Way: Strategies For An Uncertain World* (New Delhi: Harper Collins, 2022).

⁵ Muchkund Dubey, *India's Foreign Policy: Coping with the Changing World* (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2017).

⁶ Shivshankar Menon, *Choices: Inside the Making of India's Foreign Policy* (Penguin Random House, 2016).



international relations. The discourse surrounding the utilization of ‘Bharat’ in diplomatic contexts reflects the ongoing tension between nationalist aspirations and the preservation of India’s pluralistic ethos. Critics argue that privileging the term ‘Bharat’ over ‘India’ risks alienating minority communities and reinforcing divisive narratives, while proponents contend that it reaffirms India’s civilizational heritage and distinct identity on the world stage. This debate underscores the intricate interplay between cultural symbolism, political rhetoric, and diplomatic pragmatism in shaping India’s external engagements and national narrative. As India grapples with the challenges of a rapidly changing global order, the discourse surrounding the use of ‘Bharat’ serves as a microcosm of larger debates surrounding nationalism, secularism, and identity in contemporary India.

In conclusion, *Why Bharat Matters* stands as a seminal work that offers a comprehensive and incisive analysis of India’s evolving global role. Through its meticulous exploration of historical legacies, nuanced examination of geopolitical dynamics, and insightful analysis of cultural influences, the book provides invaluable insights into the complexities of contemporary international relations. Whether policymakers seeking strategic guidance, scholars delving into diplomatic intricacies, or global citizens keen on understanding the dynamics of global politics, readers will find this book to be an indispensable guide to comprehending India’s ascent into international prominence and its potential to foster a more prosperous, peaceful, and interconnected world.

Note on the Reviewer

Aniruddha Babar holds a PhD in Law and Governance, an LLM in International Law and Human Rights, and MA degrees in Political Science and Sociology. With experience as a Trial Advocate and



Constitutional Expert, he currently serves as a Senior Academician at Tetso College, Nagaland, India, in the Department of Political Science. His research focuses on the Eastern Borderlands, particularly the Indo-Myanmar Border, with special interest in Myanmar, Russia, Afghanistan, and Southeast Asia in general. Aniruddha regularly contributes as a columnist for publications such as *Nagaland Post*, *Nagaland Tribune*, *Eastern Mirror*, *Morung Express*, *The Hills Times*, *Sikkim Express* and *Mokokchung Times*. He also regularly contributes his scholarly expertise to the *Indian Defence Review*. He has been invited as a resource person in government training programs, academic workshops, seminars, think tank conferences, and lectures. Additionally, he is the Founder and Director of the public initiative “Project Constitutional Justice” in Tuensang, Nagaland.