



Indian Council of World Affairs
Sapru House, Barakhamba Road
New Delhi

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Press Release

Book Discussion

on

“India’s Foreign Policy: Coping with Changing World”

by

Prof. Muchkund Dubey

former Foreign Secretary

(26 November, 2013)

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) organised a book discussion event on “India’s Foreign Policy: Coping With Changing World”, authored by Prof. Muchkund Dubey, on November 26, 2013. The event was attended by diplomats, research scholars and media persons. Ambassador Rajiv K. Bhatia, Director General of ICWA, commented briefly on the relevance of the book, followed by Prof. Dubey’s enunciation of the major themes covered in his book.

Prof. Dubey maintained that the New Economic Policy (NEP), introduced in 1991, steered by principles of liberalisation, privatization and globalization has made India more ‘status quoist’ instead of a challenger to the existing world order. He stated that in order to address the global challenges, the Indian foreign policy has to adopt a deft mix of realism and idealism. Talking about multilateral forums, he highlighted the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the G-77 to India’s foreign policy.



(L-R) Prof. Muchkund Dubey, former Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Rajiv K. Bhatia, DG, ICWA and Ambassador Jayant Prasad

Ambassador Jayant Prasad, one of the discussants, shared his reminiscences of working with Prof. Dubey at the Ministry of External Affairs and held that the author's USP to his expertise on multilateralism. He disclosed the role played by Prof. Dubey in restructuring of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Second discussant, Amit Baruah said Prof. Dubey's vision of strong India did not preclude good ties with neighbours. He also talked about how, over the decades, political leadership's definition and perceptions of the Indian Diaspora has transformed. Another discussant, Ambassador Deb Mukharji, raised the issue of lack of consensus among the political parties on the foreign policy matters, which is detrimental to the national interests of the country.

In Q&A session Prof. Dubey talked about India's secular credentials projected by the Indian diplomats; and poor socio-economic record which does not augur well for India's future. He identified three key issues to be pondered by scholars and policy makers: (a) the future of nation-states; (b) widening gaps between the State's policies and peoples aspirations; and (c) the growing role of non-state actors.



Discussion in progress
