

HUMAN SECURITY IN ASIA: INTERROGATING STATE, SOCIETY, AND POLICY, EDITED BY DEBASISH NANDY, AND DEBTANU MAJEE. PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, SINGAPORE, 2024. XXI, 346 PP. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3585-7>.

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Abstract

This book comparatively analyzes the relationship between human security and national security from the theoretical perspective of the transition from traditional security to human security. The different chapters of this book analyze the structured and organized dimensions of human security that shed light on the economic, food, health, community, environment and political security conditions in Asian countries. The authors explore the theoretical foundations and various models of human security to understand the challenges threatening human security of Asian countries. This book also analyzes the different situations of Asian countries where economically vulnerable and politically unstable and sometimes broken political systems are unable to easily address the problems of hunger, poverty, illiteracy, militancy, terrorism and ethno-religious conflicts that pose a real threat to human security. The book discusses the challenges of health policies in Asian countries in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to a major humanitarian crisis, taking into account the limited role of Asian countries in combating COVID-19. It is important to note that this book develops an interdisciplinary discourse on human security among scholars not only in Asian countries but also throughout the world.

Keywords: United Nations, globalization, human security, human insecurity, COVID-19 pandemic, traditional security, economic security, environmental security, political security, armed conflict, corruption, war, terrorism, failed state.

In the modern knowledge society, there is an increased interest in the issues of human, national and public security. Its various aspects are studied, new concepts of human security are developed. A notable feature of modern approaches is: firstly, in giving priority to human interests when considering the problem of security, and secondly, in

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a qualitatively new level of development of research methods (Nandy and Majee 2024).

The relevance of this book is due to the theoretical and practical significance of issues related to the formation of effective legal mechanisms for consolidating the efforts of public authorities of Asian countries, international organizations and citizens of Asian countries in the field of ensuring national and human security (Majee 2024; Pandit 2024).

Human security in Asia has turned out to be one of the most important problems, which is now being dealt with in practical terms by a significant part of humanity, since the aggravation of conflict and crisis situations and global problems threatens, according to the authors of the chapters of this book, planetary catastrophes (Biswas and Murai 2024; Barbieri and Aleksanyan 2024). One of the most serious problems affecting human security in Asia is the environmental problem, which at the end of the last century took a priority position in relation to the totality of other global problems in terms of scale and speed of generation of negative consequences. Another equally important problem for humanity is terrorism. At the turn of the third millennium, the world is closely confronted with an unprecedented rampage of terrorism, which has acquired global proportions, threatening the security of entire nations (). Moreover, if in the past, the victims of terrorist acts, as a rule, were mainly political figures, today, the terrorists mainly target civilians.

The problem of ensuring security, improving and applying this institution in practice is becoming central in Asia as well. In various chapters of this book, the goal and objectives of solving this problem are closely related to the implementation of the concept of national security in Japan, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, East Timor and Papua New Guinea, which is characterized by the organization of protection of the vital interests of the individual, society and the state from internal and external threats (Akon 2024; Nguyen and Le 2024; Benkin 2024; Datta 2024; Mohapatra 2024; Chattopadhyay 2024; Nandy 2024; Devkota and Bagale 2024; Arshed 2024). In this system of national security objects, the individual is dominant, in connection with which the main attention is currently paid not only to protecting his rights, freedoms and interests protected by law, but also to ensuring the personal safety of citizens.

The coverage of security issues in various chapters of this book reflects the Asian specificity of society development. Traditional underestimation of a person and disregard for the value of human life, which, unfortunately, are still inherent in Asian societies, predetermine the discussion of the topic of security, first of all, from the point of view of national/state security (Naha 2024; Rabbani and Panday 2024; Pandit 2024). The problems of personal security are considered in the framework of social security, and social security itself does not always find a worthy place in the complex of national security problems. Some authors of chapters of this book reduce it to economic security, to the provision of income sufficient to meet the urgent needs of a person. However, the realities of today increasingly urgently require the development of public security issues as one of the dimensions of human security. The most important aspect of the quality of life is the freedom and security of a person from various dangers and threats, the degree of his vulnerability to modern risks (Barbieri and Aleksanyan 2024).

The concept of human development defines personal security as the ability to use the right to choose in conditions of freedom and security, as well as complete confidence that these opportunities will remain tomorrow. Specific difficulties of administrative and legal research of security problems in the aspect of public provision of the right of the individual to security are connected first of all with the fact that security in Asia, as one of the main social and legal dimensions, has not yet received legal status. Except Japan, other Asian countries do not mention the right to security of the individual in legislative acts devoted to human rights (Akon 2024.). It seems that the only reason for this situation is that until now the need to protect this right has not been as obvious as at the present stage of development of human civilization. After all, security is a necessary condition for the implementation of all known human rights proclaimed in documents of international law and national constitutions. Without reliable protection of the person himself, his current and future existence and development opportunities, the protection of basic humanitarian rights loses its meaning. This provision, which until now seemed self-evident, in modern conditions requires special legislative consolidation and legal protection. This problem is quite complex and multifaceted. Although this book examines individual dimensions of the right to security, no comprehensive administrative and legal study of the mechanism for public and legal provision of this right has been conducted (Nandy and Majee 2024).

The fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens enshrined in the constitutions of Asian countries will have an effective meaning only if public and administrative structures exercise their powers to observe and protect the rights and duties of citizens. One of the most important places in this process is given to the improvement of administrative and legal regulation of public relations, which is closely connected with the protection and defense of human and civil rights as the main supreme value of democratic and civilizational societies. In the administrative and legal dimension, this direction should be manifested in strengthening the administrative and legal status of a person and citizen. However, at present there are omissions and abuses in the sphere of legal provision of citizen security, which oblige society to develop measures to organize counteraction to them, but until the social and humanitarian sciences have responded to them properly, dangerous deviations take root, threatening the interests of citizens.

The right to personal security is connected with the task of protecting the law from arbitrariness, and therefore meets the interests of each individual citizen and public and legal interests. It is necessary to comprehensively study this right in Asian countries, taking into account the content, conditions of implementation, possibilities of ensuring guarantees of implementation, the position in the system of fundamental rights and freedoms and a number of other issues. These circumstances determine the relevance and practical significance of this book, determine the need to study the essence of the right to security and the conditions for its implementation at the current stage of development of the statehood of Asian countries.

The need for personal security is one of the basic motivational sources of human activity, and social organization is a way to ensure normal living conditions, a means of jointly counteracting natural and social threats. Cooperation of efforts of participants

in social relations subordinated to a single public will allows for counteracting threats that cannot be countered individually. At the same time, the strengthening of people's dominance over nature is accompanied by a deepening differentiation of the threat factor to humanity, an increase in the scale of threats, and an increase in the degree of their danger. As social relations become more complex, the range of social threats expands, and the modification of the threat factor, in turn, reflects the process of social development. The complex interdependence of the threat factor and the state of development of the social system objectively entails the isolation, specialization, and complication of social means of ensuring security, which are an integral attribute of organized social systems.

In the conditions of political and legal organization, the system of ensuring human security of Asian countries takes a specific form, but does not change in its essence. Public power, its institutions and bodies become the most effective means of counteracting internal and external threats of social, natural, man-made nature. In connection with constant changes in the internal and external environment, the state and society have always tried to develop effective means of protection against relevant threats. This problem is especially relevant in the context of global general civilizational changes.

Global changes occurring in the modern world along with positive phenomena entail the emergence of new threats and increase the impact of threats that existed before, the nature and degree of danger of man-made threats are changing (Pandit 2024; Rabbani and Panday 2024). In these conditions, the public authorities of Asian countries are becoming the main actor in ensuring human security, a special role is given to state means of counteracting threats of different nature and degree of danger. The transition to a qualitatively new public policy predetermines the need for appropriate changes in the legal form. That is why the legal dimension of improving the public mechanism for ensuring human and national security has not only theoretical significance, but also a very significant practical significance in the context of the general issue of legal reform of the national security system of Asian countries.

Supplementary material

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2024.3.9.174>

Conflict of interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

Ethical standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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