



# **Avoiding Armageddon: America, India, and Pakistan to the Brink and Back (Brookings FOCUS Book)**

*Bruce Riedel*

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India and Pakistan will be among the most important countries in the twenty-first century. In *Avoiding Armageddon*, Bruce Riedel clearly explains the challenge and the importance of successfully managing America's affairs with these two emerging powers and their toxic relationship.

Born from the British Raj, the two nations share a common heritage, but they are different in many important ways. India is already the world's largest democracy and will soon become the planet's most populous nation. Pakistan, soon to be the fifth most populous country, has a troubled history of military coups, dictators, and harboring terrorists such as Osama bin Laden.

The longtime rivals are nuclear powers, with tested weapons. They have fought four wars with each other and have gone to the brink of war several times. Meanwhile, U.S. presidents since Franklin Roosevelt have been increasingly involved in the region's affairs. In the past two decades alone, the White House has intervened several times to prevent nuclear confrontation on the subcontinent. South Asia clearly is critical to American national security, and the volatile relationship between India and Pakistan is the crucial factor determining whether the region can ever be safe and stable.

Based on extensive research and Riedel's role in advising four U.S. presidents on the region, *Avoiding Armageddon* reviews the history of American diplomacy in South Asia, the crises that have flared in recent years, and the prospects for future crisis. Riedel provides an in-depth look at the Mumbai terrorist attack in 2008, the worst terrorist outrage since 9/11, and he concludes with authoritative analysis on what the future is likely to hold for America and the South Asia puzzle as well as recommendations on how Washington should proceed.

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