

Dr. Nishank Motwani

Dr. Nishank Motwani is a distinguished scholar and expert in the fields of international security, political economy, and strategic studies. He was recently a Non-Resident Scholar at the Middle East Institute and an Edward S. Mason Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School. His academic credentials include a PhD in strategic and security studies from the Australian Defence Force Academy at the University of New South Wales, a Master in Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School, Master of Diplomatic Studies and Master of Strategic Studies from The Australian National University, and a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Northeastern University.



Dr. Motwani's professional experience is extensive and includes roles of significant responsibility and impact. He was the Director of Research and Policy at ATR Consulting in Kabul and served as the Deputy Director of the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit in Kabul from 2019 to 2021. His work in Afghanistan involved observing the presidential elections in 2014 and 2019, as well as the parliamentary elections in 2018.

His research focuses on areas such as strategic competition, transnational threats, nuclear strategy, irregular warfare, technology, and the political economy of governance and development. Dr. Motwani has a rich history of working on security, countering violent extremism, and political affairs, especially in Kabul. He has also been actively involved in providing insights and testimonies related to the dynamics of terrorism threats, particularly following the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan.

Dr. Motwani is a prolific writer and researcher, with his work featured in various peer-reviewed journals, edited books, and online channels. These include publications by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, War on the Rocks, Foreign Policy, The Diplomat, The Interpreter, East Asia Forum, Journal of South Asian Studies, Australian Journal of International Affairs, Strategic Analysis, and more. He is the co-editor of the Routledge book "Afghanistan – Challenges and Prospects" and is in the process of finalizing his forthcoming book "Players, Perceptions, and Power," set to be published by Palgrave Macmillan.

In addition to his scholarly and analytical work, Dr. Motwani has contributed to Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs' Technology and Public Policy Project, co-authoring reports on digital platform regulation and the management of big tech. Dr. Motwani also serves on the Board of Directors of Peace of Mind Association, a 501c3 not-for profit that provides specialist mental health care and protection for vulnerable communities to mitigate the effects of war- conflict trauma.

Dr. Motwani's expertise and contributions have been recognized widely, featuring in various media outlets such as ABC, BBC, CNN, The History Channel, The Guardian, Nikkei, Stars and Stripes, South China Morning Post, Straits Times, Reuters, Voice of America, and others.