

# South Asian Voices

## *South Asian Voices (SAV) Submission Guidelines*

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### General

1. **Code of Conduct:** SAV seeks to publish *informed* opinion based on analysis of evidence with adherence to the highest editorial standards. The editors welcome critical, controversial, or contrarian opinions. That being said, *every* argument must be substantiated by credible sources and presented in a respectful manner that advances meaningful dialogue on strategic issues in and around South Asia. SAV pieces must be original, topical, and informed by quantitative and qualitative data. We assume that any piece submitted to us is being offered exclusively and that no piece accepted for publication at SAV will be published elsewhere simultaneously in any form without our knowledge. SAV will not publish articles that fail to live up to these standards.
2. **Editors' Goals:** The editors view the review process as an opportunity to improve the persuasiveness of an author's arguments, an article's policy-relevance, and the overall readability of each piece. In this regard, the editors endeavor to help SAV contributors make as convincing a case as possible so that they are "heard" among decisionmakers in Islamabad, New Delhi, Washington, and beyond. The editors reserve the right to request significant edits to achieve these goals. This will improve the reception of the individual article and boost readership of the *South Asian Voices* platform by other scholars.
3. **Plagiarism:** In line with international standards, SAV does not tolerate plagiarism of any kind. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: representing the work of another as one's own; failing to properly credit or paraphrase another author's work; and reusing language from one's previous publications. SAV encourages current and prospective contributors to consult Massachusetts Institute of Technology's plagiarism [guidelines](#) for additional tips on how to avoid it. The editors will not consider submissions from contributors who repeatedly engage in plagiarism.
4. **Op-ed Advice:** Current and prospective SAV contributors should peruse the Harvard Kennedy School's [tips](#) on how to write an op-ed. Note that even tenured professors at leading academic institutions regularly seek advice on how to improve their writing style for op-ed length pieces.
5. **Review Process:**
  - a. Typically, the editors will return a submission with an initial set of comments and suggested edits within a few business days of receiving it, though the process is sometimes delayed by high submission volume. The editorial team expects authors to respond to suggestions within 48 hours of receipt; if no response is received, authors will forfeit their place in the queue.
  - b. The editors will make comments and suggested edits using "Track Changes" in Microsoft Word. Authors should accept/reject changes and respond to editors' comments in "Track Changes" mode ("Track Changes" can be turned on under the "Review" menu in Word) before returning their article to SAV.
  - c. The review process generally requires two-to-three rounds of edits. Maximum turnaround time from submission to publication averages 10 business days. The better shape the article is in *prior* to submission, the faster the timeline to publication.
  - d. When authors have a particularly time-sensitive article they wish to publish on SAV, the editors will attempt to work out an expedited timeline.

### Structure, Format, and Style

6. **Length:** We accept submissions between 800 and 1,100 words. We sometimes solicit pieces longer or shorter than this, but we do not accept unsolicited submissions that fall outside the stated range. The editors may return to the author any article that exceeds the word limit and will not consider it for publication until it has been shortened per SAV requirements.
7. **Intro:** SAV contributors must articulate their main argument in the first few sentences. The editors will return submissions that lack a clear thesis stated upfront.
8. **Citations:** Instead of footnotes or endnotes, SAV uses hyperlinks to cite sources. SAV asks authors to cite all figures, quotes, common as well as lesser known facts, and others' work.
  - a. To embed a hyperlink in Microsoft Word, SAV contributors must: select a maximum of four words in the sentence; right click on the selected words; choose the "Hyperlink" option from the drop-down menu; and insert the hyperlink into the "Address" bar.
  - b. Reputable local and international publications, government and international organizations, academic journals, and policy reports are excellent sources.
  - c. Whenever possible, SAV prefers primary sources instead of secondary or tertiary references. The editors do not consider Wikipedia to be an acceptable source.
9. **SAV Format and Style Basics:**
  - a. **Submission:** Format text to Times New Roman, size 12, line space 1.0, alignment of left-justify, with one space between paragraphs. Use U.S. English. Please bold section heads, with subsections italicized (if any).
  - b. **Abbreviations and Acronyms:** Spell out the full name the first time it appears (e.g. "ballistic missile defense (BMD)") and use the acronym (e.g. "BMD") in subsequent instances.
  - c. **Quotes:** Use double quotation marks (" ") for quotations and single quotation marks ( ' ') for a quotation within a quotation. Avoid using single quotation marks for emphasis.
  - d. **Passive Voice:** Use the active voice at all times. For instance, instead of writing "The prime minister was offended by the foreign minister," write "The foreign minister offended the prime minister."
  - e. **U.S. versus United States:** Write "U.S." when using as an adjective (e.g. "U.S. officials said today...") and "United States" when referring to the proper noun (e.g. "The United States decided to...").
  - f. **Audience:** SAV authors should bear in mind that the forum's readership is international. Contributors should assume readers have a basic familiarity with South Asian issues, but not necessarily in-depth expertise.

## **Distribution**

10. **Promotion:** The editors encourage SAV contributors to provide Twitter handles—personal and institutional—so they can promote exceptional articles via social media.
11. **Title:** The editors reserve the right to change any title and have final say for marketing and promotion purposes, as is standard editorial practice.
12. **Data Visualization:** Studies show articles/op-eds are better consumed by a wider readership if they include graphs, tables, and other data visualizations. Consider submitting these with your article if appropriate to increase readership of your article.

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13. **Engagement:** Referencing, discussing, and debating other *South Asian Voices* articles (in your own submissions, comments, or social media) is highly encouraged as it contributes to the readership of your colleagues. The editors will take notice of and actively promote submissions that engage other SAV writing/content.