

Military Situation in East Asia : International Society Amidst Structural Change

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HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION AND CONDITIONAL IGNORANCE OF ARMED ATTACK

When analysing military situation in East Asia, one cannot ignore the status of the international society as a whole. This is so because the latter has a bearing on the regions. International society is undergoing a big transformation. It is because the two major premises of the international society in the post-World War II era are undergoing a change. Such a change is not temporary or superficial but ought to be perceived as the structural change. Frankly speaking, it can be termed the re-emergence of a situation advantageous to military powers.

The first structural change in international society is that humanitarian intervention (intervention in internal politics based on humanitarian grounds) is being approved of in a wide-ranged manner. The “principle of non-intervention in internal politics” was established under the Westphalia system and was continued under the United Nations (UN) system also. There have been opinions, both for and against intervention on humanitarian grounds. With the military intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces in the armed strife between erstwhile Yugoslavia and Kosovo, one can say that prior approval of such intervention by the international society is here to stay. In other words, if a government does something that is anti-humanitarian, it can face armed intervention by foreign countries. However, the criterion for “non-humanitarian act by an enemy” that allows armed intervention is not yet determined; it is left to the arbitrary decision of the nation resorting to such an armed action. Therefore, it is necessary to

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note that there is every possibility of aggression misusing the humanitarian intervention feature.

The second principle, which has undergone change, is in the condition of exercise of the right of self-defence. In the international system, "armed attack" on a country was regarded as the condition for the exercise of armed action. However, the expression in Article 51 of the UN Charter on this armed attack is in the present tense; i.e if "armed attack occurs" is also included in it. However, leading scholars of international law in England and America namely, Professor D W Bowett of England and Professors MS MacDougal and Julius Stone of America have interpreted this as "anticipatory self-defence is allowed under Article 51 of the UN Chapter".¹ However, all the countries have so far maintained the conditionality of Article 51. But Bush administration under its new security policy launched the policy of pre-emptive attack against a rogue state.² Other leading powers are also in the process of following it. In the recent Iraq War, America along with England has carried out such a strategy of pre-emptive attack for the first time. China and Russia opposed the attack on Iraq by America, albeit superficially, with regard to pre-emptive attack strategy, they agreed to its inclusion in the military doctrine. This means that out of the five permanent countries of the UN Security Council, four agreed to the pre-emptive attack strategy. This cannot be avoided from becoming the practice of international law.

The pre-emptive attack strategy launched by the Bush administration transcends the concept of pre-emptive self-defence agreed to by Professors Bowett, MacDougal and Julius Stone. Secondly, there is no objective international criterion for labelling a nation as a "rogue nation". In short, decision about who is the "rogue nation" will be made by the nation that resorts to force based on its own value system. As a result, hereafter there is a strong possibility that use of military force will be more to resolve international issues by the international society.

The third big change is that the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), which has delivered certain amount of results regarding non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has been rendered perfunctory and the trend is towards increase in the number of nuclear-capable

nations. The big premise of the NPT was that "Nuclear-capable nations will not actually use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear nations or use them as a threat and the non-nuclear nations will not go nuclear". However, Russia in its first ever military doctrine, has launched a policy based on the premise that there is a possibility of use of nuclear weapons by the non-nuclear states based on the pretext of compensating the weakening of regular forces. The same was reaffirmed during the revised military doctrine announced in autumn 2003. Certain aspects need to be noted:-

- (a) During the Gulf War and during the recent Iraq War, there has been an obvious use of nuclear threat, although the Secretaries and Ministers of Defence of both America and England have stated that it is to prevent the use of chemical weapons by Iraq.
- (b) China, which is already a nuclear state, is increasing its nuclear war capability in both quality and quantity and America and Russia are also continuing their efforts in increasing the efficiency of their nuclear weapons.
- (c) America was a silent spectator to India and Pakistan going nuclear, because it was preoccupied with attack on terrorist infested Afghanistan. Other countries also may follow suit. The nuclear programme is taking North Korea also towards such a situation.

Due to the above mentioned structural changes in international society, it is felt that the possibility of use of military power including nuclear weapons for the resolution of clash of interests between nations will increase.

TRENDS IN CHINA AS A REGIONAL DISTURBANCE FACTOR

China Aiming at Being a Regional Hegemony in Asia-Pacific

The biggest turbulence factor in East Asia is China. It is necessary to view it seriously from two points. One is the active movement in China to be a regional hegemony in the Asia Pacific region and trends in South East Asian countries as a consequence. The other is intensification of contradictions in China, which is

rapidly growing, based on induction of market economy and the concern regarding split of the Chinese empire as a result.

China is making steady and strategic moves aimed at establishing its regional hegemony in Asia-West Pacific. There are only two concepts among the Chinese race – it will either reach the top of the hierarchical society or it will be forced to yield to another powerful nation. In other words, the concept of rule of the modern international society that all the countries regardless of their size are equal does not exist in China. This, along with increase in her national power with the growth of the economy is driving China to establish its hegemony. The Chinese race has continued to expand its area of control since the pre-Christian era. Majority of the races living in the South East Asian region were driven out from the Chinese continent by such expansion. Consequently, even if the sentiment of "export of revolution" dampens with the growth of the economy, the will to secure hegemony cannot be expected to diminish.

Due to this tendency, China is venturing out to control the vast oceans inspite of possessing vast territory. First it is based on the perception that to become a leading nation in the world, control over oceans is indispensable. Second is the economic reason, namely, the resource and food strategy. China's strategists unanimously emphasise that in addition to nuclear war potential with second strike capability, sea-control capability in leading sea zones of the world and power projection capability to dispatch forces beyond the seas are indispensable.

Here, if one reflects on China's long history, it is pointed out that the dynasties that attached importance to ocean and had a navy to venture out in the outer seas prospered; those who ignored such a capability invited aggression by other countries and perished. The Ming dynasty, which had vast naval power, made several expeditions to places as far as Near and Middle East and Africa. Indonesia's communist revolution, which came quite close to being successful under the instigation of the Chinese Communist Party, could not provide effective military support as it lacked a blue water navy capability and this is often indicated as a lesson. During the Cuban missile crisis, the erstwhile Soviet Union had to abandon

deployment of missiles in Cuba, as it did not have the blue water navy capability to take on the American Navy. Further, the nostalgia of a large navy of yesteryears, during the days of Peter the Great, became a major motive for building the marine navy. In case of erstwhile Soviet Union, Admiral Gorshkov, who served for long as the Navy Commander, tried to build the Navy. A similar role was performed in China by Admiral Sei Ryuka, who after serving for long as the Navy Commander was selected as a member of the Politburo.

The other important point is economic. There are factors like drying up of oil fields at Dakei and China becoming an oil importing country since 1993. It is felt that in the near future there will be scarcity of food due to desertification, devastation of agricultural land and increase in population. The Chinese strategists believe that after the land resources are exhausted, marine resources will assume importance. Moreover, they believe that land territory of the world has already, by and large, got sorted out and the struggle for controlling the oceans will intensify in the future.

There are many hidden oil fields and natural gas reservoirs under the sea. Magnesium deposits under the sea are also quite promising as mineral resources. On the other hand, China's dependence on rich fisheries as the source of food will be more than before, as it is likely to face food crisis. In the light of such circumstances, naval development strategy was formulated in China under the instructions of Deng Xiaoping in 1986. As a result, China's Navy, which till then only had coastal defence capability, has begun acquiring ocean capability in recent years.

Strategic Advance in the Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean and the Sea of Japan

The first stage of strategy of hegemony is to make sea zones (called 'coastal waters' in China) ranging up to three million square kilometres (sq km) in South China Sea, East China Sea, and Yellow Sea, as inland sea. If these sea zones become China's inland sea, passage through them will not be possible unless China permits. This will put Japan and Taiwan at China's mercy. This will also be a step towards controlling South East Asian countries by China. At present, neighbouring countries are occupying the islands

of Nansho and Seisho claiming their possession rights and using them as their air and naval bases.

The second stage is advance in the Pacific, Indian Ocean and the Sea of Japan. "Liberation of Taiwan as the finishing touch to the revolution" often emphasised by China should be viewed as a part of advance into the Pacific. The real intention of China is to ensure "Taiwan is no longer the island where Chang Kai Sheikh Administration took refuge after being uprooted in the revolution" but "is an island that has to be procured for China to become hegemony in Asia-West Pacific". China is not facing the Pacific. For hegemony in Asia-West Pacific, the Chinese must acquire territory facing the Pacific. In other words, China's goal is no longer "conclusion of the revolution" as in the past but "liberation of Taiwan" as a part of the national strategy in the 21st century. It must be noted that China's argument of "liberation of Taiwan" will not wane with time. An armed attack on Taiwan is something that Japan cannot ignore. This is so because Okinawa, which is close to Taiwan, could be the next target of "liberation" by China. This is possible if the American Army base is no longer there and China needs to "make the coastal waters the near sea of China" or procure "territory in the sea zone adjoining the Pacific". Unfortunately, Japan at present does not have the military capability to obstruct such an advance by China to Okinawa.

Myanmar and Pakistan as the Footholds for Advance in the Indian Ocean

At present, China is using Myanmar as the breakthrough for advance into the Indian Ocean. Military rule in Myanmar is isolated internationally. It is only China with which it has normal relations among the leading countries of the world. China, using this opportunity, is building a road that traverses Myanmar from China up to the Indian Ocean in the name of economic assistance. Moreover, as collateral for such economic assistance, China is being allowed to build naval and communication bases in Hainji and Koko Islands in Myanmar. These are the entry points to the Indian Ocean from South China Sea. This is a strategic move for advance into the Indian Ocean.

As a part of its policy to advance into the Indian Ocean, China is extending military support to Pakistan. Pakistan's medium distance ballistic missile, *Ghauri*, is said to have been developed based on technical support from China. This missile has all the main Indian cities within its range. China has been extending military support to Pakistan since the time of the Cold War. The typical instance of this is the handing over of blue print of uranium nuclear warhead for Tofu DF2A by China to Pakistan in the 1980s.³ This support to Pakistan was based on the logic of "an enemy's enemy is an ally", because the Soviet Union, which was confronting China in its interpretation of Marx-Leninism, was supporting India and also because of the border dispute between India and China. However, this is essentially a tactical move to advance into the Indian Ocean.

China has no territory that faces the Sea of Japan. However, China's territory close to North Korean and Russian borders is closest to the Sea of Japan. As a result, China is supporting North Korea under the pretext of building the port for economic development of Tomanko region and has the secret design to use it as a naval base.

Simultaneously, with these activities, aiming at enhancing its influence on other South East Asian Nations, China is strengthening its ties with the ASEAN countries and the approach to the Chinese merchants settled in these countries is also being strengthened. Under such circumstances, it is a point of interest whether these Chinese merchants abroad, who control the economy and majority of the mass media in these countries, support China or a free Taiwan or are loyal solely to the country of domicile.

Securing the Long-Cherished Anti-America Nuclear Deterrence

People's Republic of China that was "born from cannon" is earnestly pursuing reinforcement of military power not only in its Navy but other areas too. China has successfully developed mobile long distance inter continental ballistic missiles (ICBM) like Tofu DF 31 and submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) like Kyoro JL II. If the deployment starts, China will have second strike capability against America – its long-cherished desire ever since it embarked on nuclear armament based on the unfortunate resolve

of the then Foreign Minister that "China will carry out nuclear armament even at the cost of not wearing pants". China's second strike capability means that America will lose its first strike capability against China. This will complete China's "minimum deterrence strategy".

China has already deployed ICBMs like Tofu DF5- it is housed in a fixed silo but the vulnerability against preemptive attack by America is high. Since Tofu 31 uses solid fuel and multiple nuclear warheads and can be moved by road, its invulnerability is high and thus the chances of surviving a pre-emptive attack are also high. At the same time, capability to break through the ballistic defence system is also high. Further, Kyoro II loaded on strategic atomic power submarine too has high rate of invulnerability. As a result, China should be able to effectively restrain a nuclear attack or threat of one by America. Moreover, along with the successful development of "Tofu 31", it has also successfully developed the neutron bombs.

On the other hand, China, in order to have the capability to be a hegemon in the Asia Pacific region, is giving emphasis to improvement in its air and outer space war potential. China's Air Force has been sarcastically referred to as the "War Museum" because of its having many old aircraft. But, of late, high performance aircraft like the SU 27 and SU 30 from Russia and Sengeki 8 II manufactured domestically have been inducted in large numbers. Of these, SU 30 can be loaded with air-to-ship missiles. Moreover, in 1999, Airborne Early Warning aircraft (AEW) Y8 was inducted and even purchase of Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft A 50 from Russia is being considered.

In the autumn of 2003, China launched a manned spaceship *Kamibune* and became the third nation in the world to successfully carry out such a venture. This suggests that China is devoting considerable effort to building of space war potential and that its technical level in this regard is quite high. Spy satellite has been separated from *Kamibune* and successfully launched into the orbit. American and European military specialists regard these technical development efforts as evidence of putting emphasis on possessing

the capability to shoot down America's spy satellite and Global Positioning System (GPS). China already possesses Anti-Satellite (ASAT) attack weapons that can attack America's GPS with laser from earth. Moreover, China's endeavour is to possess indigenous GPS satellite. America's GPS is sufficient for civil demand but the reason behind China trying to develop an indigenous GPS system is none other than for military usage, such as guidance or control of ballistic missiles.

Second Highest Defence Expenditure in the World

China's defence expenditure has been increasing continuously in recent years. The official defence budget announced by China every year shows a rise of two digits for the last 10 years. This only includes training of People's Liberation Army, maintenance and repair of equipment but procurement cost of armaments and research and development expenditure is not included in it. Moreover, the purchase cost of weapons from Russia is also not included. Therefore, the sudden surge in the official defence budget does not directly reflect the increase in weapons and equipment. However, this indirectly suggests that the modernisation of weapons and equipment of the People's Liberation Army is progressing at a rapid pace. As a result, expense on account of training on latest scientific weapons, and their repair and maintenance has increased. This in turn is pushing up the official defence budget.

There are various estimates made by different institutions and scholars regarding China's actual defence expenditure. These projections put it at 1.7 times to 10 times more than the official figure. Mr. Wang Shaoguang puts it at 1.7 times, America's Department of Defence puts it at 3.2 times, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) at 4.5 times, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) puts it at 5.5 times, American Armament Control Disarmament Bureau puts it at 8 times and RAND puts it at 10 times.⁴ RAND's estimation, which happens to be highest, has been calculated based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).

China's actual defence expenditure is next only to America. According to the Department of State in *World Military Expenditure and Army Transfers 1999-2000*⁵, America's defence expenditure

was the highest in 1999 at \$281 billion and China was second with \$88.9 billion. Japan stood third with \$43.2 billion, which is about half of that of China's defence expenditure.

Will the Chinese Empire Collapse?

When viewing China as a disturbance factor, in addition to the scenario when it would enhance its national power and gain hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region, one also needs to consider the possibility of collapse of the Chinese empire due to intensification of various contradictions. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, People's Republic of China became the largest colonial empire. It has the largest area ever in its history and has 55 other races under its control. Collapse of such a vast empire will have an adverse influence on the neighbouring nations, quite different from the emergence of a hegemonic China.

One factor that can be cited for the collapse is that the People's Republic of China exceeds the scale of a nation that can be controlled unilaterally by one political authority. One of the main reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was a huge nation was the same.

The second reason could be intensification of contradictions arising out of induction of market economy system into the communist economy (generally controlled economy). These points are described in details in Gordon Chang's book *The Coming Collapse of China*.⁶ Market economy and capitalist economy are based on the political thought of freedom. It can be said that there is a limit to the use of market forces only for the management of the economy, while maintaining autocracy of the communist party. However, if the autocratic rule of the Communist Party is slackened, the demand for independence by other races will rise. In fact, independence movement by the Uighur race in the Uighur region is already gaining momentum. Terrorist activities too are frequent. Hereafter, there is a possibility that separation and independence movement by the Manchu race (the Manchu Empire), Mongol race (former empire) and others, will strengthen.

The third reason is inherent in the economic system it adopts. A nation at a specific stage of economic development becomes

highly unstable. It is because of factors such as imbalanced growth of economy, rise in the education level of the people, progress of the mass media, clash between native and alien cultures coming in along with foreign technology and management techniques and changes in the socially dominant strata. China too is facing such an unstable phase.

Compared to the erstwhile Soviet Union, China is more flexible in addressing the shortcomings of Communism such as induction of market economy. Moreover, since it is meticulously pursuing the assimilation policies regarding other races, the movement for separation or independence is weak compared to the movements of minorities in the Soviet Union. In any case, China is steadily building its position as a hegemonic nation in Asia-Pacific. At the same time, one cannot ignore the impeding risk of a collapse.

Situation in Taiwan Strait and Japan's Security

China has announced that if the movement for independence strengthens in Taiwan, China would liberate it by force. This was stated in view of the intention of Taiwan to revise its Constitution, change the name of the country, national flag and national anthem. Japan and Taiwan have common economic and security issues at stake. If Taiwan is liberated by China, by force, it will sound the death-knell for the Japanese economy, as the 'near sea' will become inland sea for China.

China's strategy of aggression on Taiwan is believed to be not one of sudden use of force, but to register a victory without any war. China will adopt the method of establishing its control through diplomatic and economic means. Moreover, one needs to take note of the presence of thought or an attitude of "revolutionary optimism" among the Communists. To be more precise, when the situation is bad, they do not try to carry out things by force. As believers of historical materialism, they have no doubt that someday their objective will be fulfilled. Hence they do not do anything unreasonable. Therefore, if America maintains a cooperative relation with Taiwan on security, aggression against Taiwan by China can be restrained.

China continues to make attempts to disassociate Taiwan from America, though with no success. But the strategy on the economic front is delivering results. At present, Taiwan is making large investments in China, which can prove fatal for Taiwan. Economic superiority can bring about disadvantage from political and security points of view. Earlier Nazi Germany carried out a plan to rebuild its national economy, after the defeat in World War I, based on borrowings from East European countries. It was successful in making these countries follow it by using the same loan. What needs caution is that if the situation becomes advantageous for armed aggression against Taiwan, China will not hesitate to use force. In Japan, there is a strong opinion that since China is attaching so much importance to economic growth; it is not likely to resort to armed action, which will invite international criticism. However, one should not forget that even a practical person like Deng attacked Vietnam, a Communist country to "teach it a lesson" and suppressed young students who were demanding democratisation by force at the Tiananmen Square.

Whether China resorts to aggression against Taiwan or not depends on the capability of America to intervene. America's intervention will strongly rely on whether Japan allows the use of Okinawa Base or not. In addition, decline in the capability of sea control by America in Taiwan Strait is also a matter of concern as the retaliation capability of China against the American Seventh Fleet has increased with the induction of high performance anti-ship missile armed Sovremenny missile destroyer and SU 30 armed with air to ship missiles.

In the case of an armed action initiated by China against Taiwan, it will use a pre-emptive attack strategy used by the Bush administration to justify its action. The US Department of Defense in the Cabinet Report of 2003 titled *Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China* mentions that China has adopted 'pre-emptive attack' as a suppression strategy, as well as a military doctrine. It is believed that this is aimed at averting the US criticism as well as keeping in mind the international opinion in general. In case of an attack, the following methods could be

adopted:-

- (a) Simultaneously, with imposition of economic sanctions and freezing and confiscating of Taiwanese assets in mainland, China would block the Taiwan Strait by mining.
- (b) As it did during previous presidential elections, it would shoot ballistic missiles in the vicinity of Taiwan under the garb of carrying out exercises.
- (c) It will occupy islands close to the continent such as Chin Men Tao, Baso Tao and so on.
- (d) It will gather fishing ships in the vicinity of Taiwan so as to deprive American carrier mobile troops of their mobility and weaken American sea control capability in the Taiwan Strait. Simultaneously, it will carry out destructive activities through spies and conspirers already planted in Taiwan.
- (e) It will threaten Japan by nuclear weapons capability so that Japan refuses use of the Okinawa Base by America.

America's "Nuclear Umbrella" and Nuclear Capability of China

If China deploys Tofu 31 and uses atomic power submarine loaded with Kyoro II, China will come to have second-strike capability against America. This will render the "nuclear umbrella" against China, by the US along with allied and friendly nations, meaningless. America's nuclear umbrella is considered as deterrence against China. Japan will have to cope with this challenge.

In Japan, Sato Cabinet adopted "Four Nuclear Policies" at the end of 1960s, which have continued till date. They are :-

- (a) To rely on America for nuclear deterrence.
- (b) Maintain non-nuclear principles i.e., not to make or possess nuclear weapons and not to allow their entry into Japan.
- (c) Adopt a positive stance towards peaceful uses of nuclear technology.
- (d) Promote nuclear disarmament.

The initial understanding was that in case Japan cannot rely on the US nuclear umbrella for some reason, it should review the non-nuclear principles.

In addition to decline of the nuclear NPT setup and increase in the nuclear capability of China, there is a view among many countries that Japan may go nuclear too. However, unfortunately, there is no genuine debate in Japan on nuclear armament either at the government or public level. As a result, there is no debate even on issues such as "the disadvantages if Japan does not go nuclear" and "the mental preparedness Japanese people need if Japan is to adhere to the policy of a nuclear-free Japan". It is so because Japan is the only country to have experienced atomic bombing, and, such issues are beyond debate; a sort of taboo that cannot be criticised.

Based on an examination of Japan's possibility of going nuclear from the political, economic and technical fronts, Captain (now retired General) Endicott of America stated that "Japan will not go nuclear unless Japanese way of life is under threat."⁸ However, even if the nation's existence is at risk, the situation in Japan is such that one cannot expect that there could be a move to go nuclear. Moreover, when China successfully launched its manned spaceship, there was a majority opinion that "If Japan wishes, it can also do it" but in Japan, the peaceful use and military use of rockets is clearly divided, and there has been no research about its military use.

MOVE IN NORTH KOREA TO GO NUCLEAR

North Korea's programme to go nuclear is one of the sources of turbulence in East Asia. Over a period of 40 years, North Korea has devoted all its energies to develop nuclear technology. Like other countries, excluding Japan, there is no distinction in North Korea between peaceful and military use of nuclear technology. As for intent behind the nuclear programme of North Korea, the following can be enumerated:-

- (a) To simultaneously secure absolute military superiority against South Korea by becoming a nuclear nation, as well as restrain America's armed intervention or threat.

- (b) Secure economic assistance and food by using nuclear weapon development as a threat or for trading.
- (c) Overcome problems such as power shortage.

In Japan, the concept of trading for overcoming challenge like power shortage is there but in America, the concept of securing military superiority is quite strong. However, the motive behind a country adopting a particular policy is not necessarily singular; mostly there are multiple motives. In case of North Korea too, all the above-mentioned motives could be there. At one point of time it was being said about North Korea that it is a matter of time before it collapses but Kim Regime, not only evolved the "tactic of a weak person turning defiant", but has also continued the nuclear programme. None of the countries surrounding North Korea want its collapse.

South Korea, while continuing to say that "realisation of a unified Korea is the dream of the Korean people", has great anxiety regarding accepting the people of North Korea in the event of a North Korean collapse. It is because South Korea has seen the sufferings of West Germany, which was a greater power than South Korea, after it embraced East Germany. This will not only bring about decline in the living standards of the South Koreans but may also lead to political confusion as North Koreans are influenced by the communist ideology.

America too does not want the Kim Regime to last long. But if a unified Korea comes into being, reason for continuation of stationing of American forces in South Korea, will be lost. Moreover, if one takes into account the rising anti-American sentiment in present South Korea, as also the historical past of a unified Korea, it is a foregone conclusion that it will become pro-Chinese. As a result, strategic balance in Asia will tilt in favour of China. Thus, even if America expects the collapse of the Kim Regime based on a coup d'état, it does not want North Korea to collapse as a nation.

For China too, collapse of North Korea will mean extinction of a communist country, which has maintained lip and tooth relation with it for long. In direct contrast to the concern of America, China is apprehensive that in the worst case scenario, American forces

stationed in South Korea could advance northwards to the border of a unified Korea. Moreover, if North Korea collapses, the consequent large influx of refugees into China would be unavoidable. Therefore, China continues to support North Korea not only on economic, energy and food fronts but also on the military front. If a unified Korea becomes pro-Chinese, it will become difficult for Russia also to secure influence on the Korean peninsula.

Emergence of a unified Korea is the most undesirable scenario for Japan. If there is political, economic and social confusion in unified Korea, the political leaders will try to achieve internal unity by creating enemies outside. It is not difficult to imagine that Japan becomes an automatic choice then. Moreover, if South Korea injects its science and technology and funds into the nuclear weapons development programme of North Korea, it will become an imposing nuclear nation. Through the merger of North and South Koreas, usual military force will diminish but a unified Korea will undoubtedly become a military superpower. In addition to the emergence of a military superpower next door, economic assistance will be squeezed out of Japan.

The continuation of the nuclear programme is not desirable for Japan. In Japan, there is a high expectation that America will put a stop to North Korea's nuclear programme. However, American policy of economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure have not yielded result. Moreover, American forces are preoccupied with Iraq and Afghanistan. Consequently, it cannot adopt the pre-emptive attack strategy as in Iraq.

In case North Korea goes nuclear, America will be held responsible for it. The USA has yielded the leadership for stopping it to China, which has supported nuclear development of North Korea both implicitly and explicitly. Moreover, Russia too, which has supported the nuclear development of North Korea since the days of the Soviet Union, has been inducted into the group of 'six nation deliberation'. In case this fails to stop North Korea from going nuclear, America's responsibility will be one-sixth. In view of such a situation, the focus is being shifted to prevention of transfer of nuclear, ballistic missiles and related technology.

Nuclear Programme of North Korea

North Korea, does not possess a nuclear weapon system but is making progress. Nuclear weapon system, implies the nuclear warhead and the means of transportation and the command, control, communication and intelligence (C³I). Since North Korea has not been able to successfully make the precise detonator for plutonium bomb and make it small so that it can be loaded on the medium-range ballistic missile No Dong, it can be said to be still at the device stage.

North Korea, announced that it is also carrying out development of an uranium bomb. North Korea has five uranium mines and can produce good quality uranium. Two reasons can be considered for the development of uranium bomb :-

- (a) Since development of detonator for plutonium bomb has not been successful, it has switched to uranium bomb whose detonator is simple to make.
- (b) It has begun development of hydrogen bomb (mature nuclear bomb) and has, therefore, begun efforts for possessing uranium bomb.

However, with limitations pertaining to level of science and technology as well as funds, it will be appropriate to think that it has not yet embarked on the development of the hydrogen bomb.

If North Korea is permitted to pursue its nuclear programme, during the next two or three years, it is likely to be successful in possessing nuclear weapons. If North Korea can extract plutonium from 8000 used nuclear fuel rods, which it possesses, it can obtain weapon grade Pu239 sufficient to make six plutonium bombs.

North Korea and Transfer of Nuclear Technology

There are certain technologies of weapons of mass destruction that are indigenously produced by North Korea but majority of them have been inducted from China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and other countries.⁹ Originally, nuclear related technologies of North Korea were inducted from the erstwhile Soviet Union during the Cold War. Subsequently Russian scientists have individually been involved in North Korea's nuclear weapon development.

Weapon-grade plutonium, Pu 239 from used nuclear fuel rods has reportedly been supplied by China maintaining a façade of export by a private company for profit. But since such an important chemical substance is kept under the strict control of the government, it cannot be done without the government authorities looking the other way.

For the development of uranium bomb that North Korea has just started, it is indispensable to have centrifugal separator that can enrich uranium(U) 235 to about 94 per cent. It is also reported that Pakistan was carrying out education and training of engineers responsible for nuclear weapon manufacturing. In fact, Pakistan's President Musharraf promised American President Bush in June 2003 that Pakistan would discontinue such military support to North Korea.

No-Dong is reportedly the ballistic missile, which was completed under the cooperation of engineers who had developed the former Soviet Union's sea launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) R-13 (NATO Code Name SSN-4) and R-21 (NATO Code Name SSN-5) in the initial phase during the Cold War. It is for this reason that North Korea has many SLBM technologies, in spite of it being based on the Scud technology.

Possession of weapons of mass destruction (such as nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles) and related technology by North Korea is not only casting a dark shadow on the security of East Asia but is also a big threat to the international society through the transfer of such weapons and technologies elsewhere. It is because there is a strong possibility of them being exported not only to countries of South Asia or Middle and Near East, but also sold to terrorist groups across the world.

North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and related technologies are for manufacturing such weapons within the country and at the same time are a means to obtain precious foreign exchange. Production of No-Dong was started in 1997 but soon thereafter it started its export. Pakistan's *Ghauri II* and Iran's *Shehab 3* are the missiles based on North Korea's No-Dong. North Korea seems to have a pact with Pakistan and Iran from where it receives

financial support for development of No-Dong and the results of development are passed on to them as a collateral.

Export of technology is being done not only as collateral for financial assistance but also to earn foreign exchange. In December 2002, naval vessels of America and Spain officially inspected Scud missiles made in North Korea being transported to Yemen through the Indian Ocean. Ultimately, they were released based on protests of the Yemenese government and a promise not to transfer them to any other country. This case is only the tip of the iceberg regarding transfer of weapons of mass destruction or its technology by North Korea. It has been reported by media that Al Qaeda terrorist group in Indonesia and Philippines are buying plutonium from North Korea.¹⁰

Conclusion

A big change is taking place in the vicinity of Japan. America anticipating such a trend seems to have begun re-examination of the mode of presence in East Asia. America is doing so as a part of its measures against international terrorism but more than that, it is based on the grand strategy keeping in mind the China of 21st Century. Its germination is already seen in the reactivation of Guam base. The future of military situation in an uni-polar world needs to be analysed critically.

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10. Also see 'NewsMax.com' in the same source.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Members interested in undertaking research projects under the aegis of the Centre for Research may submit their research proposals for consideration by 31 December each year. **In case of serving officers**, the proposals should be routed through the concerned Service Headquarters. Retired officers may route their proposals through one of the Service Headquarters or send them directly to the Director USI. At present, the Centre awards five fellowships annually, subject to approval by the Board of Management. Copies of the Rules for Award of Fellowship Grants and Conduct of Research may be obtained from the USI or from our website www.usiofindia.org.