

A Role for India in the Emerging World Order

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Till very recently, notwithstanding its size, population, military capability, and technological manpower resources, India had relegated to itself only a marginal role in regional and global power politics. Even the sharp rhetorical posturing from time to time as a leader of the so-called non-aligned community and the developing world, could not really conceal the marginal role it played at the international level. The high moral position the country took on many vital issues had little or no relevance in the conduct of international relations. The leadership (presumed or real) of the non-aligned movement (NAM) was a charade played out to some effect for a while, and subsumed by real-politik in due course. If anything India was looked upon as a non-performer by many countries in the developed as well as the developing world.

This perception may have changed somewhat with the outstanding military victory in 1971 that included standing up to threats from the United States of America and the Peoples Republic of China, as also to some extent by the 1974 nuclear test; both of which made the world sit up and take notice of India. However, in my view, the real change in perception of India as a *potential* regional and possibly global player, seems to have emerged with the institution of economic reforms in the early 1990s, the phenomenal capability since displayed in harnessing the potential of information technology, the conduct of nuclear tests in 1998, and most recently, the tremendous capacity displayed in dealing with the Tsunami disaster, both within the affected areas of the country, as also in providing assistance to neighbouring countries.

An analysis of a role that India may play in the region and possibly at the global level merits a brief look at developments at the global and regional levels in recent years to try and determine what is the emerging world order.

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The Global Perspective

The dismantling of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the USSR, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the consequent end of the Cold War, were perceived by the Western World as heralding the emergence of a new world order. A perception that democratic forces and capitalism had triumphed over communism and that the West would now be able to set the rules by which the international system would be ordered. This euphoria was quickly shattered by the conflicts that raged soon thereafter in parts of the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, West Asia and many parts of Africa. As the Western world was trying to come to terms with these developments, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in New York and Washington took place, followed immediately thereafter by the US led operations in Afghanistan, and later, the US led invasion of Iraq.

These events have dramatically transformed the contours of the international system that we were familiar with in the latter half of the 20th Century. The most important element of this transformation is the dominant status of the USA as a global player. It is today a super power in every sense of the term, except maybe in displaying visionary statesmanship and providing credible leadership. Its political, economic, military and technological power is supreme. No other nation or grouping is anywhere close. Not only is the USA a significant player in the Americas and Europe, it is also an Asian power in that it has vital interests in West Asia and on the Pacific seaboard in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. It will without doubt continue to be the dominant economic and military force for much of the 21st Century, unless it degenerates under the contradictions of over-reaching itself by trying to run the world on its own.

Unified Europe will continue to be a significant political and economic player in the international arena. Many of the European nations would very much like to see Europe provide some balance to the overpowering dominance of the USA; but that is unlikely for some time yet. Europe's military clout will be contingent on the continuance of the US forces in the support structure of NATO. Even so, it appears there is a loosening of the trans-Atlantic relationship that seems to be driving Europe towards developing a security architecture of its own. In fact Europe is possibly trying

to reconfigure its relationship with the USA. In some ways it may well be trying to determine where it lies between the USA and a resurgent Asia.

Under the shadow of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation is seen by some as taking on the contours of the Germany that surfaced from the Versailles Treaty following World War 1. A mood of seething anger and economic discontent; a feeling of deprivation; of loss of prestige; and injured ethnic pride. Added to all that is the obsession of the political and military establishment in Russia about the eastward expansion of NATO, and more recently the perception that the Western World led by the USA is seeking to impose political systems inimical to the Russian Federation in its backyard. Given Russia's tremendous material resources, and the pride and resilience of its people, it is more than likely that the nation will re-emerge strong and powerful once again. The speculation can only be how long this will take and whether this process will generate sparks that may ignite conflict.

Japan is becoming increasingly assertive and displaying a willingness to play a greater role in international affairs. Its defence budget may be only 0.5 per cent of the GDP but that translates into a significant amount given its sizeable economy. It has ships and missiles of established capability. Whereas Japan has not gone nuclear, its latent capability is significant. Given the history of what was perceived as brutal Japanese rule in the region, the current developments within Japan are being looked upon with some concern by neighbours like China and the Koreans. The Japanese justification for what it is doing has to be seen in context of a perception that in the medium or long term, US commitment to Japan's security may not necessarily be absolute.

China's role will without doubt be significant. It is already a power of considerable international stature; developing at a fast pace economically, and modernising its military. Given the requirement of oil for economic growth, China is already aggressively bidding for and securing rights for development of oilfields in various parts of the world. It is not inconceivable that it will spare no effort to secure for itself the oil-rich basin of the South China Sea. Equally, China's western flank borders on the known oil-reserves of Central Asia, which it will strive to exploit to

advantage. An objective assessment suggests that China's immediate focus is economic growth. It is, therefore, unlikely to provoke any confrontation beyond posturing and rhetoric. Even with Japan, political moves are driven by expediency as anti-Japanese attitudes help in sustaining Chinese nationalism that is useful in pursuit of domestic policies. The only exception to such a benign policy may be in relation to the Taiwan issue on which the Chinese position tends to be rather paranoid. However, this is unlikely to boil over as even the USA recognizes Chinese sensitivities on the issue and to that end exerts pressure on the Taiwanese authorities to exercise restraint.

In recent years the United Nations has been increasingly marginalised. In my view this process of marginalisation was spurred by the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999 without UN Security Council endorsement, and peaked with the unilateral US-led invasion of Iraq. Ironically, whereas the UN is seen by the USA as a hindrance to the global policies it wishes to pursue, the organisation is perceived by the developing world as dominated by the USA and its Western allies; who are together seen as more than prepared to use the world body as a front for pursuit of goals laid down by the developed world through political, military and economic pressures and sanctions. The latter position indeed has a great deal of merit because of the immense clout the developed world has both in military and economic terms. Recent attempts at organisational reform including that of the UN Security Council have foundered at the altar of political expediency, and there appears to be little hope of any significant change in the manner in which the world body operates for quite some time yet. Its authority and relevance, questionable at the best of times in recent years, seem to be in terminal decline. It will require a display of statesmanship of a very high order indeed to resurrect the United Nations.

The Extended Region

Most analysts seem to believe that in the 21st Century the power balance will shift from Europe to Asia for a number of reasons. The emergence of growing dynamic economies, energy dependencies of some of the larger players like China and India, large militaries, a number of established nuclear capable powers, missile capabilities, and so on. Even so, the situation remains fluid in many parts of Asia.

India's area of strategic interest extends from the Persian Gulf to the Malacca Straits, and from Central Asia to the Southern Indian Ocean including all littorals. West Asia is an area of particular interest and concern to India not only for historical reasons, but because of the large Indian work force deployed in the countries of the region (about 5 million at last count), the fact that India has a Muslim population of over 150 million, including a sizeable Shia population, and of course the fact of dependence on energy resources from the region. The region continues to be extremely volatile; with the ongoing developments in Iraq, the recent developments in Southern Lebanon, the efforts of the new regime in Iran to pursue policies on nuclear capability that are perceived to be in violation of the provisions of the NPT, the ongoing conflict in the West Bank and Gaza, and the moves towards democratisation of societies in the midst of the emergence of radical Islam.

Central Asia has become an arena for power play with the USA, Russia and China trying to assert in one way or another. An interesting development is that of Russia and China trying to get together to elbow out the USA. The Central Asian Region has significance for India in terms of sources of energy supplies, and equally importantly as a stabilising influence against Islamic radicalism.

South East Asia is another area of vital interest to India because of the security of the sea lanes of communication, as also the economic agenda. This is a region that is perceived as generally tranquil but without doubt dominated by China. It is not too far-fetched to presume that the USA, and maybe even some of the SE Asian countries, would like to see India play a more assertive role as a balance against China.

The Immediate Neighbourhood

In discussing the security perspective of the South Asian Region, some unique features of the geography of the region merit particular attention. The most unique aspect is India's sheer size in terms of land mass, population and resources. The second is that, of the seven states that constitute the immediate region, India has common land borders with all except the Maldives, allowing for the fact that the geographical proximity of Sri Lanka with

mainland India makes for almost a land border; none of the other states have common land borders with each other. The third is that, other than between Nepal and Bhutan to some extent, only India has shared ethnic affiliations with populations of the other countries. An appreciation of this unique feature is vital for an understanding of the complex inter-state political and security dynamics of the sub-region.

Recent developments in Nepal have been a matter of concern to India because of the impact they have on the sizeable Nepali migrant population within India and on the Nepali nationals serving in the Indian Armed Forces. Equally there was considerable disquiet at the possibilities of inimical external forces exploiting the uncertain situation within Nepal to promote anti-India activities. In the event, the restoration of political processes and the dialogue between the Seven Party Alliance and the Maoists provide some hope that the country will return to normalcy. The United Nations has been asked to play a role in monitoring control over weapons, and oversight of processes that are to be set in motion for elections. It is not inconceivable that India may be required to take a lead role in such activity. Which it must undertake as a major stake holder in the region and for the stability of Nepal.

The situation in Sri Lanka continues to be very volatile with the peace agreement consigned to the dustbin of history. Any renewal of open conflict on a large scale will have serious repercussions not only for Sri Lanka but also for India. To that extent, it is imperative that while extending full support to the initiatives of the international community, India uses its influence with the Government of Sri Lanka and with Tamil groups (including possibly the LTTE) to defuse the situation and bring about a rapprochement that would restore the peace process. Needless to say, this will require statesmanship and commitment of a high order.

Bangladesh had all the makings of a stable democracy some time back. But that prospect is somewhat dimmed by the course of events in recent years. The unremitting hostility and personal dislike for each other displayed by Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, and translated into political machinations, have resulted in the emergence of fundamentalist elements and their assimilation into the Government apparatus. This disturbing development is

compounded by the spawning and nurturing of terrorists owing allegiance to the Al Qaeda and other terrorist affiliates. Added to this in so far as India is concerned, is the large scale illegal migration from Bangladesh into India; at last count there are apparently between 16 and 20 million illegal migrants from Bangladesh in various parts of India. The consequent stresses on our society need no elaboration.

Pakistan is passing through another crucial period in its brief history. The democratic political processes set in motion after the demise of General Zia-ul-Haq turned out to be a mirage. Perpetuation of the old feudal order, nepotism, corruption, and military adventurism, culminating in the futility of the Kargil misadventure, have inevitably taken their toll. Pakistan is back under direct military rule for some years now, and no end to that is in sight. In all fairness to General Musharraf one must admit that he has managed to restore a semblance of order and effectiveness in the process of governance. He has also played his cards well in terms of support for the war on terrorism launched by the USA and its allies; in fact his support is vital for the US led operations being undertaken in Afghanistan. All that notwithstanding, Pakistan's economy needs attention, internal disorder and sectarian violence fuelled by ready availability of weapons are aspects of concern, and 'talibanisation' of Pakistani society appears a real possibility. Needless to say, developments in Pakistan are a matter of concern to India particularly because of the terrorist activity being undertaken by groups that have their mentors and supporters in Pakistan. Even so, a dialogue process between the two countries has been set in motion and there are serious efforts at addressing the various problems. A ceasefire put in place along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir in November 2003 has held and that is a positive sign. A number of measures to encourage inter-action between the people separated by the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir as also along other areas across the border, like bus and rail services, have been instituted, and have been well received by the people of both countries. There is now greater people-to-people contact that should be a stabilising factor. However, while sincerely hoping that the dialogue and peace process between India and Pakistan is successful, I cannot but express a deep sense of scepticism that the resolution of problems between the two countries is round the corner. (This scepticism is reinforced

by the fact that since the Mumbai train blasts on 11th July 2006, dialogue between the two countries is more or less on hold).

Others' Perception of India's Role

In context of the emerging scenario at the global, regional and sub-regional levels, it is appropriate to reflect on the perceptions of various countries and regional groupings, about the role that India should play.

The USA has begun to look at India through a new prism. Seen as a Soviet surrogate during the Cold War and a non-achiever, there was little interest in India. But things have changed. There is recognition of India as a market for the US industry and products, as also for sale of military equipment; the country's unique position in the field of information technology draws considerable attention; the large, increasingly visible and now influential Indian diaspora in the USA has begun to play a significant role; as a result of some recent increased inter-action there is appreciation of the top class professionalism, capacity and performance of the Indian military. All in all, the US establishment sees possibilities of a role for India -

- (a) As a counter to China in the region.
- (b) As a partner in monitoring and dealing with activities in the Indian Ocean, in regard to terrorism, piracy, and so on.
- (c) As a significant player in the conduct of peace operations for conflict management and resolution at the regional and international levels.

Similarly, Europe looks at India as a market for its products including military equipment and also as an emerging player at the global and regional levels. For all the lack of interest in India in recent years, like the USA, Japan is now looking at India in a fresh perspective. It sees India as a partner in ensuring the security of the sea-lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean area and in dealing with piracy. It probably also looks at India as a partner in countering Chinese hegemony, both economically and militarily.

In so far as other countries are concerned, it may be prudent to state that they look at India as country that has the *potential* of playing a significant role in the developing world, and are no

doubt carefully monitoring the manner in which India is dealing with the evolving scenario.

Internal Dynamics

In the five decades plus after independence, notwithstanding all the rhetoric, India has largely been insular and isolationist. Totally subsumed with the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the insurgencies in the North East, the Indian establishment allowed China and Pakistan to call the shots most of the time. China did so by supporting the insurgencies in the North East in the early years, and using Pakistan as a proxy to keep India totally pre-occupied. Pakistan on its part deftly exploited the situation within Jammu and Kashmir as also in other parts of the country to wage a low intensity proxy war that included support to terrorist groups. The success the two countries achieved in this context is underscored by what had become a paranoid obsession within the Indian establishment about Pakistan; a paranoia that contributed to providing credibility at the international plane to an otherwise untenable Pakistani claim of parity with India.

Notwithstanding the challenges India faces internally, I am of the view that within the international setting at the commencement of the 21st Century, given our size, geo-strategic location straddling the Indian Ocean, the population of over a billion people, our well-established and proven democratic credentials, the significant capability in information technology, space research, a large reservoir of scientific talent, management expertise and so on, proven military capability, and the large market for consumer goods and services, the country has a role to play both regionally and globally. Having stated that however, it would be prudent to remind ourselves that whereas there is much euphoria about India's economic growth potential and its capacity to be a player in the global arena, actual performance will be contingent on getting our act together in terms of absolutely critical issues such as: development of infrastructure (airports, seaports, electricity, roads, railways, water supply, etc); pursuit of policies that promote growth; increased attention to vital aspects like access to primary and secondary education and provision of basic health services particularly to the less privileged sections of society; and most importantly, in ensuring that the benefits of economic growth reach the large percentage of our population, particularly in rural areas, that are at the moment living in conditions of poverty.

There is a view that India is experiencing a couple of silent revolutions. New elites are emerging from the most laudable phenomenon of democratic politics over the years and the more recent one of economic growth. They have new aspirations and energies; not in itself a bad thing. However, there is also the simultaneous phenomenon of the hitherto depressed classes seeking their rightful 'place in the sun'. Provided both these phenomena are managed effectively without social upheaval and violence, India's movement forward on the world stage would be unstoppable.

External Dimensions

There is no gainsaying the fact that India has an inescapable and vital stake in events in the immediate neighbourhood; imposed on us by the fact that whereas we share borders and ethnic affiliations with all our neighbours, they do not share these with each other. Instability and social upheaval in these countries will have inevitable adverse 'spill-over' effects that impact on security and generate stress within our society. Internationally, the situation today is that most countries, including major players like the USA, European Union, Russia, Japan, etc, would no doubt like to see India play a more pro-active role in promoting democratic values and contributing to stability in the region; as much because of the perception that India has such a capability, *as because they would not wish to be physically involved*. The limiting factor in assuming such a responsibility (in my personal view), is perhaps a lack of political will, and the inability to build national consensus in this regard across the political spectrum. In this context, whereas there is little doubt that we need to factor the aspect of the sensitivities of our neighbours into actions that become necessary, there must be a preparedness to use our economic and military clout in pursuance of security in the region. This capacity and intent must be made clear and demonstrated to the extent required.

The fact that India straddles the Indian Ocean imposes on us the responsibility to ensure the security of the sea-lanes of communication from the Persian Gulf to the Malacca Straits. In recent years this has been acknowledged by a number of major international players like the USA, the European Union, Russia, Japan, Australia, and so on. Our spontaneous and most effective response to the Tsunami disaster has reinforced this position. Our

maritime capability must, therefore, be geared to rise to this challenge. The diplomatic challenge is to initiate effective coordination with international players and other littorals in the Indian Ocean.

The Contours of a Possible Role

The role that India could play in the emerging world order will need to be formulated under the broad parameters of economic growth, pro-active diplomacy, demography and security.

On the economic front, India's growth rate, increasing inflow of foreign investment, its own growing investment in the developing world, exploitation of its resources of renewable and non-renewable energy resources, and so on, will be the determinants. Many of the restrictive policies of the past have already been dismantled and further moves are afoot to encourage both domestic entrepreneurs and foreign players to invest in the Indian dream. Domestic opposition to some of these measures on grounds of being against the interests of the Indian work force, etc, must obviously be appropriately addressed. Even so, the manner in which things are moving, it would appear that the Indian economy will continue to grow at an impressive rate and to the advantage of the country, notwithstanding the hurdles and obstacles imposed by some of our politicians and elements in the bureaucracy. The process will, without doubt, be propelled by Indian entrepreneurs and the Indian people.

It would obviously be prudent and most appropriate, that in this process of achieving dynamic economic growth, we draw in our immediate neighbours. Not only by removing trade barriers, but also by encouraging and assisting Indian business houses to invest in these countries, to boost their own economic growth. This will need some imagination, innovation and finesse. Whereas in the case of the rest of the region and indeed the world, economic moves are largely driven by market forces, the immediate region is influenced by a number of local issues that need to be factored into our calculations. As an incentive for positive economic interaction at the regional level, India may well have to make a number of concessions in the initial stages to build confidence.

If we are to play any significant role in regional affairs and be taken seriously at the global level, Indian diplomacy will need to

move into high gear, taking into account the fact that in pursuing international relations there is no place for righteousness and moral posturing; it is guided solely by sovereign national interests. In the immediate region, it may be useful to get off the high pedestal we have placed ourselves on, shed the patronising approach we seem to have mastered over the years, and evolve working relationships with our neighbours. This will need to be set up on two basic planks: one, an appreciation of their needs and sensitivities; and two, a clear enunciation of our security sensitivities and their non-negotiable status. Whereas we should be prepared to bend over backwards to meet their requirements, and genuinely do so, it should be made clear that where our security interests are concerned no compromises will be made. That we will go the distance to ensure this, even to the extent of application of economic and military power. This process will obviously take some effort. Primarily because we have to first undo the present lack of credibility in regard to our determination to use comprehensive national power in pursuit of vital security interests. Not too many countries take us seriously, because we have indulged in rhetoric rather than action all too often in the past. Simultaneously, we shall need to mould international opinion to the fact that we are serious about developments in our region and that we are prepared to act decisively in addressing issues which have an impact on regional peace and security. To that end we may well have to regularly inter-act with the more powerful members of the international community and coordinate initiatives in consultation with them.

In this context it may be relevant to review India's role in the United Nations. As a founder member of the Organisation, India has always played a leading role in its activities, including participation in peacekeeping. Its commitment to the Organisation and its ideals has been total. However in recent times the effectiveness and relevance of the United Nations has increasingly come under scrutiny. The lack of representation of the developing world in many of its organs, particularly the Security Council, is a cause of considerable disquiet. Therefore, whereas India's commitment to the Organisation should remain, it is imperative we continue to strongly advocate the need for reform, particularly of the Security Council. On the latter issue, it may be stressed that, provided we get our economic act together, and complement it

with effective diplomacy, it is inconceivable that a country like India would be excluded from an expanded United Nations Security Council in the permanent membership category. That being so, it would be preferable to indicate our stature at the regional and global levels by continued effective performance in every sphere of activity. In the process we should allow others to espouse our cause, (with some discrete nudging and encouragement where necessary) rather than trying to advocate our case through loud rhetorical positions and grandstanding.

The demographic dimension has to be addressed at two levels. The first relates to the large migrant population from Bangladesh and Nepal, which if not managed properly could impose serious stress on economic and social activity within India. Obviously, if there are effective moves towards an arrangement like a South Asian Union similar to the one that exists in the Europe, this aspect will need to be handled within the parameters worked out under that arrangement. But till that comes about, there would be a need to clearly delineate and implement the framework for controls on illegal movement across borders. The second level relates to the effective management and application of India's emerging youthful working population. It is more than likely that much of this segment of our population particularly in the professional category like scientists, IT qualified personnel, doctors, etc, will be lured by the Western World as also other countries that would be grappling with the problem of aging populations. While fully facilitating and even encouraging such movement of our young people, we will need to invest early in equipping our youth with better education at all levels - primary, secondary, university and post graduate professional, technical and scientific; in order that we have enough such capacity to meet our own requirements and some to spare. This is a task that our political leadership will need to devote their immediate attention to, shedding rhetoric and symbolism.

Our security policy will need to be based on four vital considerations: facilitation of the environment for continued economic growth; maintaining adequate defence capability making optimum use of available resources and technology; managing the nuclear dimension, and development of strategic and technological partnerships.

Enabling our people and the institutions they create to promote their sustenance and well being, to work in an atmosphere free from fear and disruption is the primary security responsibility of the state. Hence the security apparatus and arrangements must provide protection to the population from internal and external threats. In the current scenario the main focus will be that of dealing with terrorism and proxy war. The phenomenon of terrorism is likely to remain with us and indeed the international community, for quite some time yet. In this context, notwithstanding actions in hand at the international level, it may be useful for India to initiate moves for evolving a comprehensive convention on combating terrorism within the SAARC framework in the first instance. Equally, to promote continued economic growth, there is need to ensure that economic institutions, the infrastructure that supports them, resources required from within and without, etc are secured against disruption or attack. This means providing security within the country, at our borders, and also well beyond our borders, on land, sea and space.

To deter and dissuade potential adversaries from undertaking any military adventures against the country, to be able to deal with internal and external security threats should they emerge, to provide a degree of reassurance to our friends and neighbours who look to us for assistance, and to meet international responsibilities that require the deployment and use of military forces, India needs to maintain effective conventional defence forces and a credible deterrent strategic capability. Such a requirement should not impose unbearable strain on the Nation, and to that end should be met by making optimum use of our trained manpower provided with equipment that is indigenous or manufactured under joint venture projects or by transfer of technology.

Perhaps there is no issue between India and Pakistan where there is such a coincidence of interests as in managing the nuclear arsenals in South Asia. The Kargil episode only increased the coincidence of interests. Fortunately, this is an issue on which political parties can have very little variation of views. Agreements arrived at to date indicate that both countries have studied the earlier attempts by the USA and the erstwhile USSR to lay the foundation of trust in deterrence and are amenable to further such suggestions. The list of agreements arrived at so far include exchange of documents on nuclear doctrines and concepts;

advance notification of satellite missile launches; a memorandum of understanding that requires both sides to explain nuclear accidents and incidents; an undertaking by both sides to improve command and control over their respective arsenals; and establishment of a hot line. Unlike the USA-USSR case where the arsenals had already been established, in South Asia the attempt is to limit the size and complexity of the very first arsenal. In this context a number of specifics will need to be addressed. A recognition of asymmetry between the Indian and Pakistani arsenals in context of the fact that the Indian arsenal looks at factors well beyond Pakistan; agreement on verification mechanisms; possible ban on tactical nuclear weapons; and so on.

As things stand today, no country, not even the sole super power, the USA, can manage conflict scenarios that have international dimensions, on its own. There is an imperative need to engage other nations in the shape of strategic arrangements and coalitions of forces. This is an inescapable development that we must factor into our security strategy. To be able to deal with the regional and international security environment as it emerges, and more importantly, to play the security role in the region that many members of the international community expect us to, it is essential that India develop and strengthen partnerships and arrangements at the strategic and technological levels with as many international players as possible; the USA, European Union, Russia, and Japan, as also other littorals in the Indian Ocean. The connotation of such arrangements is that of consultation on developments at the regional or global level, and coordination of efforts at conflict resolution or conflict management where required. This obviously means possible application of elements of the Indian Armed Forces for maintenance of peace and security when it is in our national interests to do so, or in international situations that do not directly affect our security interests but our commitment based on expertise and capability, is sought by the international community represented by the United Nations. It would be useful for us to try and work out such strategic security partnerships with regional organizations like ASEAN, SCO, AU, GCC, etc. This will no doubt fructify when the organisations and the countries that form part of them, begin to realise that India is serious about playing a role in international affairs. That, therefore, is the challenge of our political leadership in coming years.