

**Components of National Security and Synergising  
Them for Envisaged Security Threats in 2025**

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**Introduction**

The planning of National Security based solely on threat perceptions is deeply rooted in the psyche of the Indian security establishment. Independence in 1947 was precious and something to be protected and nurtured. That experience produced an inward feeling full of claustrophobia and devoid of an outward looking psychology of tying up one's security with those of others. The partition did not help in easing the claustrophobia feeling, engendering as it did, a pathology based on 'loss' of territory. The unfinished business of partition as Pakistani leaders have put it brought immediate pressures on Junagadh, Hyderabad and even Travancore. The insecurity over these states was accentuated by the tribal invasion of Kashmir. All these territorial fights and disputes, involving as they did the use of armed forces in Hyderabad, firmly fixed in the National Security consciousness that the use of force by the state could only be for preserving territorial integrity.<sup>1</sup> By territorial, is meant to include only the plains of India and peninsula India. The possible loss of Lakshadweep Islands, it has been brought out in the partition records, were attempted by the departing British Armed Forces, for Imperial defence. The proposal was received without any demur from the Congress High Command.<sup>2</sup> Since then the idea that territory might be 'lost' has been the central theme of National Security Planning. The threat to the state was envisaged to arise solely from loss of territory. The war over Kashmir and the war with China reinforced the idea that 'threats' could only mean loss of territory. The result was a huge infantry heavy army suited to holding ground and a stunted navy and air force.

Mature countries do not plan national security on fearing a loss of national territory. International borders of mature states have been fixed over time and have acquired a sense of permanence - National Security has to look 'beyond' frontiers. To come to an assessment of what and where to look for national security threats one needs a national team to look at energy, traditional enmities, terrorism, climate changes, demographics, space futures and regional geopolitics. It is not enough that a defence minister makes a political statement that our armed forces are employed in some kind of chowkidari, to keep out trespassers - and that amounts to National Security Planning. To bring in some forward planning the forecasting of scenarios to a period of 10-15 years ahead is vital in defence planning. The threats are uncertain and may originate from unknown direction and regions. For these reasons some techniques have been developed that makes it easier to go through this process. The classic method, of course is the Net Assessment, where the external scenario is articulated and combined with internal scenarios to make a holistic Net Assessment. In this paper rather than go through all the areas that should be looked at, some critical subjects are examined as part of the external environment and these include regional geopolitics as well as international issues.

**The Threat from Pakistan**

Many analysts would say that Pakistan is a threat to itself, because it is a dysfunctional state, but that is of no comfort to India, to which Pakistan by its very nature poses a threat to stability on India's western border. The permanence of that threat arises essentially from that country's lack of economic progress and its burgeoning population, which by 2050, may touch 3473 million and could well see that state as the third most populous in the world, with a third world standard of living and possessing nuclear weapons. In this portion of the paper we examine not the existential threat from a poverty stricken Pakistan but the threat that emanates from the centrality of the army and from terrorism. To take the latter first, Pakistan's ISI has close links with the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a largely India oriented organisation that is permitted to flourish, because of the Pakistan Army's permanent strategy of preparing for a threat from India. The LeT made its debut on the international stage when it attacked Mumbai for four days in November 2008 and laid siege to two hotels, a railway station and a Jewish rest house. The LeT was founded in 1989 in Afghanistan by the ISI and began operating against Kashmir in 1990. Until 2008 there is a belief that the US global war on terrorism did not include the LeT as a target, for it was seen as an India specific organisation. The loss of US lives in Mumbai, the subsequent case in a New York court and the role of Headley have converted the LeT from being India specific to a world terrorist organisation.

Headquartered in Muridke, it was started by Hafiz Sayed and Zafar Iqbal with the assistance of the ISI as the Markaz-ud-Dawa-wal-Irshad or MDI. The MDI was until 1983, concentrated mostly on Afghanistan but then it split into the LeT/MDI and shifted its objectives to Kashmir. The LeT was designated a terrorist organisation in the UN but was forewarned by the ISI and was able to withdraw its funds and change its accounts in time.<sup>4</sup> The LeT has created a vast organisation in Pakistan for two purposes. One is to train militants and the other is to convert the people to the Ahle Hadith Islamic theology. It has an office in every major city in Pakistan. It maintains 'secret' training bases throughout Pakistan which in many cases cannot be interfered with by the local police for they are under ISI protection. Most recruits come from the Gujranwala area and are ethnic Punjabis. The New Delhi based South Asia Terrorism portal calculated 750 LeT operatives in J&K, although operations are mounted by upto a dozen fighters. The close link between the ISI and the LeT is because the latter has not so far attacked Pakistani state institutions and is committed to the 'unity' of Pakistan. It declares enemies such as Christians, Jews, Hindus and Kafirs (Unbelievers) outside Pakistan. Their recruiting bases are not the Madrassas, but a more educated lot, often from school leavers. It also does not concentrate recruiting from the Ahl-e-Hadith theology because many Ahl-e-Hadith Ulemas have rejected violence in society and therefore the LeT is partially separated from its roots.<sup>5</sup>

There are other anti-Kashmir groups operating in Pakistan, like the Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) and the Hazkat-ul-Jihadi-Islami (HUJI). Of these, only the HM have ethnic Kashmiris. The others have ambitions beyond Kashmir. The sectarian groups attack mostly Pakistani Muslims of the other Sect, like the Sipahi-e-Saba-Pakistani (SSP) which target Shias and Ahmadiyyas. In addition, there are strong clashes between the Deobandis and the Bareilvi traditions of theology. The attack on the Indian parliament was executed by the JM, and the Kalu Chak attack by the LeT. In 2007

the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JM) split into two, one faction remained loyal to the state while the other targeted State institutions including Musharraf and the Karachi Corps Commander.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand the Deobandi groups have carried out many high profile attacks in Pakistan, including the attack on Benazir Bhutto. The LeT manifesto '*Hum Kyon Jihad Kar Rahen Hain*' explains that the LeT does not wage Jihad inside Pakistan but only in other countries, such as Kashmir, where Muslims are oppressed<sup>7</sup>. LeT is non-sectarian, and although it acknowledges that Pakistan has made mistakes, Pakistanis are all Muslim brothers. So they do not attack Barelvis, Sufi or Shiites. LeT urges all Muslims to turn upon external enemies to prevent internecine warfare. So LeT is the only organisation that opposes Deobandi orthodoxy and explains Jihad in a way that all Pakistanis can understand. In the meanwhile, the LeT has also been active in social causes like the Kashmiri earthquake and the monsoon floods of 2010. But much of the LeT's success in humanitarian activities is really the work of the ISI which simultaneously funds public relations activity for the LeT.

Because of these reasons it is unreasonable to assume that the ISI and the Government will abandon the LeT due to the pressure from India or the USA. The LeT contributes not only to Pakistan's external insecurities but also to domestic cohesion and hence the survival of the state. But the ISI is also aware that the LeT has developed alliances with a number of other militant outfits and the relationship with the LeT is strong enough to preserve the outlying outfits from the Government suppression. This is because the ISI sees the LeT as generously committed to the territorial integrity of Pakistan. For this reason Pakistan has taken only cosmetic actions against the LeT and refused to ban the organisation. So LeT continues to hold high profile meetings in all Pakistan cities, and has even protested the killing of Osama. It has shown support for the killer of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer and the LeT's anti-American stance is seen as a lever to exploit by the ISI.

### **The Threat from the Pakistani Army as an Institution**

The Pakistan Army has ruled the country outright during three periods, and has been in control when not directly ruling the country. Its importance comes from the fact that it is the only state institution that works as it is meant to. This however often leads the generals to believe that the rest of the country can be run like the army, which is a colossal myth, because the army has no other worthwhile institutions to depend on to rule the country. The army, it is conceded has a modern ideology – based on nationalism and, therefore, it is not so easily riven by the kinship alliances that split Pakistan society. The generals are quite aware that the army has to be protected from Pakistani civil society and when civil domination is seen to threaten army interests, the generals react and take over the Government. The Pakistani soldier owes his discipline and sense of military unity to the fact that, as he would have to in civil life, he is not required to show kinship loyalties and bow to the patronage that cripples Pakistani society.<sup>8</sup>

The military does function as a huge meritocracy and is internally quite free of corruption as compared to civil society. A symbol of the meritocracy is that the present army chief General Ashfaq Kayani is the son of an NCO and is at the same time a remarkably well read general. This is unusual as most in the Pakistani Government are heads of class of hereditary landowners or industrialists, with the exception of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Jamaat-e-Islami. So kinship is the central weakness of the Pakistani State and the average Pakistani suffers other weaknesses – including the loyalty to ethnicity. The latter pull can at times be bad enough to pull towards secession, as demands have been made by Balochis and Sindhis. There is also a pull towards worship and when this pull is combined with those of kinship and ethnicity, it can be quite overwhelming. The present rebellions by various ethno-religious groups are a reflection of the pulls of this kind. It is often argued that corruption outside the army in Pakistan is endemic, but this kind of corruption is actually due to pulls created by kinship, class loyalty and ethnicity whose demands cannot be ignored without the institutional support that the army gives to soldiers within the ranks, whereas the kinship pulls are the strongest outside the army.

Politically this is visible in the sense that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) is actually that of the Bhutto family, while the Pakistan Muslim League (N) is controlled tightly by the family of Nawaz Sharif and the Awami National Party by the family of Wali Khan. Most people outside the army in Pakistan obtain their power and position from hereditary beneficence. The pulls of kinship actually weaken the State because the power of the elite and control of local sources of wealth encourage them not to pay central taxes, thereby preventing Central Government expenditure on infrastructure.

The concentration of kinship in the Pakistan Army can be understood by seeing the recruiting base of the army. In 1920s the Punjab, the NWFP and Gurkhas contributed 84 per cent of the soldiers in the fighting arms. After partition almost 80 per cent of the army is drawn from the Potobar region around Rawalpindi and is actually only 15 per cent of the population.<sup>9</sup> This makes the army heavily Punjab oriented and eases the problems of putting down rebellion in Sindh, Balochistan and even some Pashtun areas. The army also ensures that of all the services in the government, the army officer is given a handsome pension and land to build upon so that it is looked upon as an elite service.

Of course, the larger budget of the armed forces makes the army unpopular among other government departments. The feelings of antagonism however come from giving huge government land grants to Services organisations to build private housing on easy terms so that the army is the biggest landlord in Pakistan. The army justifies this grant by pointing out to the soldier's frugal service life and harsh postings while in service, and the benefits he gets are treated as his due. So, there is a vast Service organisation that supports the serviceman or *fauji* through the *fauji* group, which in 2009 was worth \$1.48 billion and the *fauji* foundation was worth \$510 million. The *fauji* group paid a tax of \$380000. These organisations provide health care and education for the dependents of servicemen and widows, and look after disabled soldiers. The army welfare trust has assets worth \$ 590 million and owns 16000 acres of farmland, sugar mills and cement plants.<sup>10</sup>

The army distributes its largesse honestly and without corruption and this helps to build institutional loyalty. Outside the military, nationalism is hopelessly qualified by class and kinship loyalties. For this reason the army is careful to see that soldiers do not pick up any 'extra' loyalties while in service. During General Zia's time the Tablighi Jamaat was allowed to preach within the service but, thereafter, this influence has been rolled back as a compromise on

national identity.

Both military rulers, Ayub Khan and Musharraf, idolised Kemal Ataturk, as the symbol of the kind of head of state that they would like to be – secular and believing in modern nationalism. So they would have liked to have been remembered, but the fact is that Ataturk led his country to victory after victory against the British and the French and others who wished ill for Turkey. There are many reasons why Pakistani generals cannot follow the Ataturk model. Firstly, they have chosen a giant democracy as a possible enemy. India is six times the population of Pakistan and has 10 times the GDP. Secondly, there is no sense of nationalism among the Sindhis and Baloch to compare with their feelings of ethnicity and, thirdly, they have no institutions to work within Pakistan, like the army itself, to strengthen Pakistan. But of all the reasons, the defeat after defeat that the generals have led the army into has been self defeating. However, the generals themselves cannot be seen to be losing hope that they can eventually win over India, which is an impossible task.

### **The Rise of China - Best Case**

The story of China is the story of its economic growth. But for its amazing growth China would not be the serious subject of a study of this kind. There are many projections of how much that growth could be, but the most famous of the early predictions came from Goldman Sachs whose depiction of the GDP towers of the top three economies in 2050 took the world ideas by storm. Since then, there have been many counter-arguments that the pre-eminence of the USA is its own to lose – not China's to claim. That the US will correct its course and remain pre-eminent for some more decades than shown by the GDP towers of Goldman Sachs. Such optimistic calls underestimate the likelihood of China's dominance in 20 years from 2010. The argument is whether the outcome will be decided by the actions of the US, in reinventing itself or by those of China, which will surpass the US, no matter what the latter does. There is a view that economic dominance is the sum of the overall resources a country can muster plus the amount of credit it has with the world.

A study by Arvind Subramaniam<sup>11</sup> recognises that China's population will age during this period, that the Chinese economy is distorted in many areas, that it is over- dependent on exports, that its exchange rate is undervalued, and that the land is increasingly polluted. Despite all these drawbacks, Subramaniam posits that the Chinese economy will grow at 7 per cent on its way to dominance, overtaking that of the US which will be growing at 2.5 per cent, as it has for about 30 years, higher than the 2.2 per cent projected by the congressional budgetary office.

If these projections are true, the world will not be a multipolar world in 2030, but a unipolar world with China being the only pole. At that point China's per capita GDP will be \$ 33000, roughly half of the US, and therefore poor individually. But the major difference will be that the US will be a net debtor to the world while China will be a net creditor. When the Chinese economy reaches that stage the Yuan will be the equivalent of the Dollar as a reserve currency. If these projections are sound, then the gap between China and the US in 2030 will be the same as between the US and the second competitor in 1970. At PPP rates the per capita income of China will be more than half that of the US. There are four reasons why China while being relatively poor may not be able to exert power. These are :-

- (a) Any poor country will be engaged heavily internally on the guns vs butter controversy and domestic compulsions determine foreign policy. Hence, a poor country cannot invest heavily in power projection without disturbing the internal equilibrium.
- (b) Secondly, the taxes a poor country can levy will be less than in a rich country. So although the total GDP may be large, the tax to GDP ratio may not be as large, thereby limiting the options of the government.
- (c) Thirdly, a poor country can only have limited influence abroad as its soft power is bound to be low. Other people can only be inspired to follow the example of a country that has no destitute and disadvantaged people. But even admitting to these inadequacies of China in 2020, the actual wealth that it can muster will influence governments. China, with its present GDP has already coerced African governments into closing down Taiwanese consulates and China has already practically saved Greek, Irish, Portuguese and Spanish economies by buying their debt, as it has done with Iceland.
- (d) Lastly, many manufacturing countries have seen their goods priced out of the market by Chinese goods riding on the back of an undervalued Yuan as China announces huge trade surpluses. None of the countries have had the courage to protest against the undervalued Yuan except for the US which has waged a lone battle against the Yuan.

It is true that the strength of the US lies in its ease of doing business, its '*can-do*' attitude, its centres of innovation and the link between easy money, the universities and centres of excellence. But all this was good in the 1990s when government debt was 42 per cent of the GDP. Today it is near 100 per cent and whereas once foreigners owned only 19 per cent of the US debt, today it is close to 50 per cent and the greatest part of it is held by China.<sup>12</sup> In other words, the US cannot escape the logic of demographics. China is four times more populous than the US, so even if the per capita income of the Chinese is a quarter of the Americans, its GDP can match that of the US. What is more, at a conservative 7.5 per cent growth the Chinese GDP will inexorably overtake that of the US by 2030.

Subramaniam has created a scenario based on that of the Suez crisis of 1956 when the US threatened to sell Sterling in the International market to weaken the English Pound so that Britain was forced to withdraw from its misadventure in Suez. Subramaniam suggests that by 2030, China could exert the same kind of financial pressure on the US to withdraw from the western Pacific, bending to China's pressure, on the threat of dumping US treasury bills and collapsing the Dollar. The Chinese, by that time may be willing to accept a re-evaluation of the Yuan as a result of the Dollar sales. The issue is that such a scenario is plausible.

### **China's Search for Resources and its Consequences**

This part of the paper takes off from the previous portion which has stated that China is headed for a phenomenal economic rise. This portion takes the view that rise cannot take place on China's internal democratic resource base.

China will pursue its resources where and when it can get them. But as an Indian analyst what we are interested in is, which part of the world would China attempt to gather its resources from as a result of which, a clash with Indian interests could take place? The short answer is Africa, for three reasons, which are as under :-

- (a) The route to all resource bases will take Chinese shipping away from the Indian ocean, other than if the resource base was Africa.
- (b) A pursuit of a resource base in Africa has to take Chinese trade past the southern tip of India under all circumstances.
- (c) A military policy to support China's resource base in Africa or its SLOCs from Africa will bring Chinese military assets into close proximity to India's military with unpredictable consequences.

China's pursuit of national resources is so vast that its strategy to obtain them will eventually become its grand strategy.<sup>13</sup> To obtain resources, China will embark upon a massive programme of investment that will change the geopolitics of the affected region. The ravenous appetite for global resources will result in a controversy in Beijing, on whether the resources should be gathered as part of the international system or the search should be supported by military power. If it chooses the latter, as this author believes, it will result in entanglements not seen before. At present the search has taken them into Africa and South America where their capability to project military power is weak. They are, therefore, vulnerable and at the mercy of those powers that can project power in those areas. As its military power grows it will have to live with this period of vulnerability hoping for the best. The manner in which China approaches the need to protect its resource base will indicate much of how China views the world and its attitude to its own phenomenal growth.

It is possible that in the deepest recesses of the politbureau, China has a grand strategy - a plan of how it will actually become the world's number one power. It is just as conceivable that it has no such plan and it is, like so many other countries fire fighting its day to day problems. The truth probably lies somewhere in between. But whatever grand strategy it may evolve, the likelihood is that its first prerogative is 'to avoid conflict' with the USA. Does this avoidance apply to other powers around the periphery? Most likely not, as it does not apply to powers it considers below its status.

So, we have two established facts. One, China's search for resources will, as far as Africa is concerned bring it into proximity with India. Secondly, its grand strategy of avoiding conflict only applies to powers considerably stronger than itself- like the USA and does not apply to countries like India. China believes that the US would like to remain the sole hegemon and will block its rise as a competitor. So, whatever China may do, Beijing believes that the US, will in a time of crisis act against its vulnerabilities, which consists mainly of its resources bases abroad and its SLOCs. Partly this belief stems from watching the result of the competition between the US and USSR and the manner of its ending.<sup>14</sup>

China needs above all - time to build its Comprehensive National Power (CNP). It is convinced that for the present while the US is involved in the war on terror, Iraq and Afghanistan, it has no need to worry about the US looking in its direction. But China does not believe that it has an indefinite amount of time. In the meanwhile, its best strategy is to try and disassociate the US from whichever ally it might gather to its own side and such allies include Japan, India, Korea and Australia. We in India must, therefore, see where we are placed in the Chinese estimate of its grand strategy. While it will play with caution against the main competitor it will be resolute and fierce against any of the smaller ally's attempts to gang up to with the US. The SLOCs from Africa it uses, could be the most likely source of united trouble from the US and India. It is the most vulnerable of all strategic weaknesses and is also the most geographically convenient area for a coalition of the US and India to act against its interests. For these reasons it will sooner, rather than later, seek a base in the Indian ocean from which it has a better chance to stop the two countries - India and the US from acting together.

### **China's Military Rise**

The scope of China's military modernisation has increased recently, enabling that country to use military options to gain diplomatic advantages or resolve disputes in its favour. During the decade, the particular growth of the PLA not only enables it to pursue anti-access strategies as before, but additionally to sustain military power at a distance. China is developing advanced medium range cruise missiles, new attack submarines, increasingly capable air defence systems, electronic warfare equipment, advanced fighter aircraft and counter space systems.

The PLA has the world's most active programme for developing ballistic and cruise missiles and is currently testing new variants of offensive ballistic missiles. It is also developing new methods of ballistic missile defence using active measures like kinetic kill missiles. It has outfitted its new destroyer the Luyang II C class with the YJ 62 anti-ship cruise missile apart from fielding a generation of land based domestically produced long range land attack cruise missiles - the DH 10. It is believed to have retro-engineered the SSN 2 missiles that it received along with the Sovremenny class destroyers as well as retro engineered the supersonic Sizzler SSN 27 B which came with the Kilo class submarines.

It has now upgraded the number of missiles opposite Taiwan from 1050 to 1150 and it is increasing the lethality of these weapons by, for instance introducing terminal homing on the DF-15 missiles. China is developing an anti-ship ballistic missile by modifying one series of the DF-21 which now has a range in excess of 1500 kms and when integrated with the Yao Gan surveillance satellites will give the PLA an anti-carrier capability in the western Pacific. In the meanwhile, more DF-31A increased range missile have entered service with a range of 11,200 kms and it may be developing a road module ICBM with MIRV.<sup>15</sup>

What the world is most interested in is, not in what China can do internally or in its near vicinity, but its growing capacity for power projection, for which we need to study the developments in the PLA Navy (PLAN) and strategic capabilities of the PLA Air Force (PLAAF). The PLAN has now the largest navy in Asia. Its navy includes some 75

principal combatants, more than 60 submarines, 55 amphibious vessels and 85 missile craft. A new PLAN base has been constructed on Hainan Island to accommodate ballistic missile submarines and advanced surface combatants, right next to the international shipping lane. Its first aircraft carrier has commenced trials and an indigenous carrier building programme has commenced. It has trained 50 pilots in carrier operations.

In anti-carrier operations, it has improved its Over the Horizon (OTH) capability using both sky wave and surface wave OTH radars. These are part of a system with surveillance satellites in locating carrier battle groups at long ranges for interdiction by anti-ship ballistic missiles. The Jin class 094 SSBN is continuing in production and has fielded one new SSBN. There are plans for five Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBNs). It has manufactured two Shang class Nuclear Attack Submarines (SSNs) and has plans for a new 095 class of SSNs. Its 13 SONG class Conventional attack Submarines (SSKs) carry YJ 82 Anti-Ship Cruise Missiles (ASCMs). The follow-ons to the Songs are the Yuans of which four are in service. The new SONG may have air-independent propulsion (AIP) system and be capable of launching the new SS-NX-13 ASCM once it completes testing.

Its domestically produced warships of note include the Luyang 11 class with the indigenously produced HHQ-9 long range Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs), two Luzhou class with the SA-N-20 Russian SAMs and the Jiangkai class with the HHQ 16 vertically launch SAMs. As can be seen there is an emphasis on AA destroyers and frigates and these are thought to be the ships that will escort their new carrier. The PLAN has deployed about 60 of its wave piercing catamaran hull Houbei class equipped with the YJ-83 ASCMs.

The PLAAF has 490 combat aircraft within un-refuelled range of Taiwan and many more if air-to-air refuelling is accepted. The PLAAF is transferring from an air force into an air and space force. It is upgrading its B-6 bomber force with a new aircraft with an air-to-surface cruise missile. The PLAAF has probably the largest SAM force in the world, leading which are a number of PM42 battalions of the latest Russian SAMs. The PLAAF is also developing an Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft based on the surveillance aircraft version of the IL-76.

## **Changes in Doctrine**

In 2008, PLA published the revised Outline of Military Training and Evolution (OMTE) which emphasised more realistic conditions for training in complex electromagnetic environments. The PLA is making serious efforts to practice joint operations, which is emphasised in the OMTE. What they seem to follow is to task a number of elements of the three services into a 'task force' (although they do not call it such) and appoint a joint command headquarters. Early attempts were limited to phased and sequencing operations loosely coordinated. Although the Integrated Joint Operations doctrine was published as early as 1999, what was actually practised was a predetermined sequencing of operations. After 2009, it has been recognised that most officers have no training or experience in joint staff work which inhibits their work in integrated headquarters.<sup>16</sup>

## **Space, Counter-Space and Cyber Capabilities**

China is expanding its ability to collect Space intelligence as well as develop Space communications and navigation facilities. It has launched its first navigation satellite and will have a complete network of navigation satellites by 2015. It launched the 6th of the Yaogan satellites in 2009. It continues to test the long march V for lifting heavy loads into Space, supported by a new launch facility in Wenchang on Hainan. In 2008 it was reported that Canadian researchers had uncovered a Chinese attempt to infiltrate major Indian sites in government offices. PLA strategists say that Space assets are central to informationalised warfare. They are aware that it is in Space that communications make it possible to win future wars. So on the one hand, China is improving its Space capabilities and on the other, it is developing capacities to attack the enemy's Space assets, following the US into militarising of Space. PLA writings speak of 'blinding' and 'deafening' the enemy's Space assets and of destroying or capturing satellites and other sensors. PLA writings also emphasise the importance of dominating the electromagnetic spectrum in the early stages and of embarking on kinetic strikes to disrupt the enemy's warfighting and power projection capabilities.<sup>17</sup>

## **The Military Aspects of China's Resource Collection**

Energy independence is no more of an option for China. It has ensured that apart from import of energy it has gone far afield to procure as many oil producing assets as possible. It is estimated that four fifths of its oil will be imported by 2030 despite the fact that 70 per cent of its energy needs are met through coal. A part of its strategy is to avoid sensitive SLOCs by developing land based pipelines. Plans are there to import 800000 b/d by way of the Kazakhstan pipeline. A spur line from the Siberian field worth 300000 b/d is under construction and the Myanmar oil pipeline will eventually supply 400 000 b/d bypassing the straits of Malacca.<sup>18</sup>

Beijing has, however, evaluated that its major oil suppliers will remain the Persian Gulf, Africa, North America, which are the sources from which SLOCs will provide the main supply. So even if all pipelines are constructed, China's reliance on SLOCs will continue. A gas pipeline from Turkmenistan passing across Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is being constructed that will supply 40 bcm of gas per year. Gas pipelines are also being built from Russia and Myanmar that will deliver 68 and 12 bcm respectively. The presence of major oil companies around the world cannot be discounted as foreign policy leverages in the future, as part of Chinese foreign policy.

The economic miracle of China in the last two decades has created the phenomena of Beijing's Ex-IM bank<sup>19</sup>, with a war chest of \$200 billion and the promised patronage of political leaders from the President downwards, to expand China into Africa. But unlike the colonial expansion into Africa, the motives for the Chinese march into the continent are as yet obscure. Among the overarching observations about those motives are:-

- (a) The paranoid fortress mentality of the senior party theoreticians who drive China's foreign and commercial policies overseas. These people have made the partial leap from mercantilism to free trade, but are reluctant to make the same leap into relying on the markets for resources and raw materials. China seeks to own the resources that produce both.

(b) China's energy needs will quadruple in two decades. Beijing has rejected the reliance on the market to drive oil exploration and maintain prices. They have decided to acquire African oil assets, and in that process, have discovered cheaper minerals and agricultural products.

(c) China has studied the pitfalls of the colonial decline and would like to create a different 'model'. The success of the model is, as yet in doubt as the geo-political support to protect resources in another continent begins to look suspiciously like colonialism and gun boat diplomacy.

There is considerable dispute in open literature whether China's drive into Africa is commercial expansion or state sponsored outreach or a mixture, and if so, dominated by commerce or policy. To make a more educated answer for this question, it would be necessary to look more closely at what exactly China is doing in Africa and where. Wrong conclusions could be drawn, unless the sheer size of Chin-Africa is understood. A broad survey of Chinese involvement in Africa is covered in the succeeding paras.

**Sudan.** For many years Sudan was China's flagship scheme for owning and extracting oil from Africa. At the time Beijing could not have chosen a worse regime to depend on. Unfazed by the virtual genocide committed on the southerners by the ethnic Arab northerners, China's political support to Khartoum granted virtual immunity to the Sudanese regime from international action. There are an estimated 30000 Chinese in Sudan working on the drilling sites and there are allegations that many of them are PLA soldiers in plain clothes. Most of the oil is located towards the South and the only port through which the oil is currently exported is Port Sudan in the North. This necessitates long internal pipelines. Almost three quarters of Sudanese oil goes to China. China owns 40 per cent of equity in Sudan's largest oil company, the Greater Nile Petroleum Company.

**Ethiopia.** This country's hydro-power resources, as yet untapped have been harnessed in the last few years, as the Chinese have built seven hydro-power stations. In the latest venture they have earmarked \$ 1.9 billion for a 2000 MW scheme that will supply neighbouring Sudan and the Chinese power requirements for oil extraction.

**Kenya.** Has no oil, but there are an estimated 25000 Chinese settlers in the country. The Chinese floated the idea of building the port of Lamu in Kenya to export Sudanese oil, as the pipeline run would be shorter southwards but the unsettled relations between the two states and the possible religio-ethnic differences have stalled the project. Kenya has offered huge agricultural tracts on lease and Qatar has taken one section. The other is being considered by China.

**Tanzania.** This is a country where Chinese agro-companies have leased thousands of hectares of farmland producing much of the country's agricultural surplus, now being sold in neighbouring countries. An unknown number of Chinese settlers live here.

**Mozambique.** It had the old Portuguese coffee and tea estates, which are now run down. Here again the Chinese have set-up an agricultural research centre and allocated \$ 700 million from state funds to expand agriculture.

**Namibia.** With a population of only two million, the number of Chinese in the country have already attracted unfavourable comments. The number of Chinese actually present are alleged to be many thousands more than those who entered the country legally (2310). Chinese companies have signed mining rights for Uranium, Cobalt and Zinc.

**Zimbabwe.** In the eyes of the world the Chinese entry into Mugabe's Zimbabwe is on parallel with its activity in vetoing strong sanctions against the Cambodian Pol-Pot regime for genocide and against the Khartoum regime for genocide in Darfur. The Chinese explanation is that their presence in Zimbabwe, to invest in mining, transportation, communication and power generation will prevent the total collapse of this country, even if it means Mugabe's continuance.

**Angola.** This state may become the crown jewel of China's oil resources, having displaced Nigeria and Sudan as their biggest suppliers of crude oil. The Chinese investment in Angola has come to be known as the *Angola Model*. China invests in infrastructure projects in return for which its oil companies get oil rights. The actual balance between the two has not been worked out, but Chinese investment into infrastructure has actually doubled the Angolan budget. Taking both infrastructure investments and oil extraction together, whether the Angolans have a good deal or have been cheated is not clear, without the details of the contract. However, there is immense criticism that in spite of the figures published by China the life of the Angolans seems as poverty stricken as before, while tankers take away their oil.

**Gabon.** For the size and population Gabon has a heavy Chinese presence. 30 companies have invested in Gabon in oil, mining, timber and infrastructure.

**Guinea.** Is ruled by another dictator, with whom China has signed a massive \$ 7 billion mining deal. In a country where nothing gets done without pay-off for the dictator there is much speculation on the nature of the contract the Chinese have obtained.

**Ghana.** This country has recently discovered oil and the largest field - the Jubilee is partly owned by China.

**Ivory Coast.** Chinese investment in BHP Billiton, the mining multinational will double the manganese output of the company.

**Congo.** The state of this country, its decline into a failed State, combined with its explosive population growth, and its competing genocides, all constitute a narrative of their own. Propped up by the UN forces for almost a decade, China has entered the Congo in its decrepit condition in a massive way that may well be the model for its investments in Africa. There is a good risk of suffering the consequences arising from investing in countries arbitrarily chosen, irrespective of its political condition. Some of the other implications are:-

(a) In a repetition of the Angola model, China has declared its plan to spend \$ 9 billion on infrastructure. This

investment has spurred international confidence to enter the State in order to conclude more mining deals. All countries are unanimous that the DPR of Congo has an undiscovered treasure of mineral wealth. The biggest mining company, the Gecamines was recapitalised. Chinese infrastructure projects have a couple of flagship schemes, namely the 3200 km railway line from Katanga to Matadi (the farthest upstream port on the Congo river), a total of 4000 kms of road, two hydro-electric dams, a few airports, schools and hospitals. In return, the Chinese have rights to 10.6 million tons of Copper and 626,619 tons of Cobalt.

(b) But in a State where political morality is non-existent, the opposition have been the sole watchdog against many scams. The deals have apparently been negotiated by middlemen, which is the normal method of siphoning off funds by both buyer and seller. Other criticisms includes the absence of any labour regulations, employment of child labour, environmental disregard and accusation of Chinese figureheads over companies financed by illegal Congolese money given to them by the Chinese. The opposition accused the Government of willfully or incompetently managing the negotiation of what they felt was \$ 80 billion worth Congolese mineral assets that would be taken out in the next decade for which the return to the State would be meagre.

### The Long Route to Take Energy Home

For a non-maritime state to firstly, depend on energy routes passing by strategically unfriendly states (India) and secondly, to persevere with acquiring assets instead of the commodity, is again a strategy that is looked askance in the Western countries and India, which have all relied on the international market to spur the search for new oil as well as to obtain it at reasonable cost. The Chinese oil routes are shown on **Map 1**. It is interesting to see that the greater part of African oil now comes from West Africa (Angola, Congo, Guinea, Gabon and Nigeria). If the Malacca dilemma is real, as made out by Chinese scholars, alternate routes could be Gwadar-Xinjiang and Sittwe-Yunnan (Myanmar). But calculations show that these pipelines could only take the load of about 20 per cent of the oil transiting the Indian ocean. Gwadar moreover is a non-starter until Pakistan re-establishes order in Balochistan. The density of oil traffic is set to triple or quadruple between 2010 and 2030 as China's imports also quadruple. Interestingly, Beijing does not have the same vulnerabilities in gas, as almost 90 per cent of the China's gas imports already come overland through pipelines.<sup>21</sup>

### The Strategy to back Resource Gathering

A series of fine papers have already begun to emerge from western thinkers that the strategic challenge from China to the US might well resemble the rise of Imperial Germany between the wars when the Kaiser attempted to build naval power to challenge Britain. In an article entitled 'Will Asia's Rise Resemble Europe's Past' the Authors bring out the writings of Admiral Wegener whose idea of a Maritime Strategy, although discarded by the Kaiser, eventually led to Hitler following precisely what Wegener had recommended. In the first move of WW II the Germans occupied Norway and changed geo-strategy for the rest of the war, by giving Germany a coastline it never possessed. The speculation is that China would need to do something similar to convert its poor geography to a better maritime position. This giant leap whose contours are as yet indeterminate will be discussed in the paper later. The criticism was the same as what it is now-that both Germany and China would probably have been better off adjusting to the prevailing international system, than running a parallel system while still being a challenger.

### Filling the Strategic Gap between China and Africa or Linking China to Africa

Owning assets in Africa and the need to transfer resources to another continent creates two separate problems which will both eventually require mutually supporting solutions. The two separate problems are :-

- (a) Protecting Assets in Africa
- (b) Protecting SLOCs

**The Search for Bases.** The Chinese Navy is not yet prepared to enter the Indian Ocean competitively either against the US Navy or the Indian Navy. There is much speculative literature that the Chinese are building bases in the Indian Ocean. Actually these are ports with some infrastructure which even the Chinese Navy could legitimately use during times of tension is another matter. Most of these countries, especially Seychelles, Mauritius and Madagascar are too small to antagonise the major powers, be it China, India or the USA. *For one of the small countries to transit to becoming a belligerent is a huge leap, and unlikely to be taken. All the same, it would be better to make the laws of war plain to many countries that may not be aware of international law.* President Hu Jintao's visits to Seychelles, Mauritius and Madagascar were not innocent diplomacy by any means. At present there is a huge gap between the capability that the Chinese need to protect their African trade and what is achievable

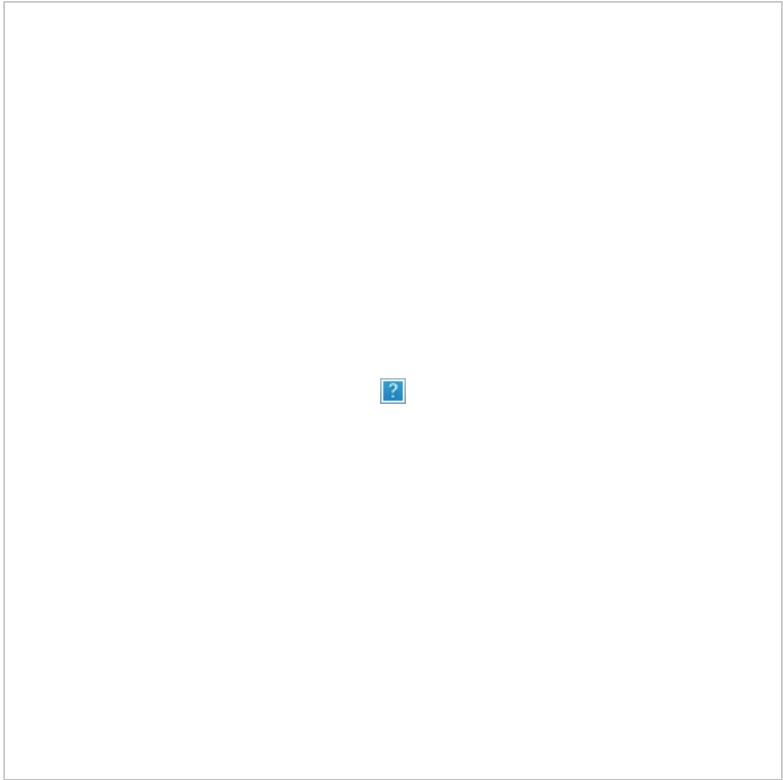
**No Maritime Support.** Whatever the grand strategy of China may be in Africa, eventually the Chinese will have to establish a safe and massive link to Africa, both for the transfer of resources and to defend the route in a world where they attempt to displace the USA as the hegemon. The maritime link is clearly the obvious one where all Africa's resources required by China transit through the Indonesian straits to China apart from what can be sent through Afro-Asian pipelines. The insecurity of their SLOCs in the Indian Ocean is not a mirage in the Chinese mind. All Chinese scholars speak of it consistently without being provoked. Added to what they say is the observation in the US and India that Chinese maritime power is still diffident about blue water operations in the Indian Ocean. The naval hardware to compete with the US or India in the Indian Ocean will be available only 50 or 15 years down the road respectively.

This is a conundrum, and the Chinese solution is still uncertain. But it would appear that if the Central Military Commission (CMC) is still a PLA dominated body with only one naval representative (since 1986 only), the prevailing (but temporary) view in the CMC is likely to be continentalist or Mackinder-ish rather than Mahanian or Maritime. This may explain the many transnational links that they have built towards the Indian Ocean with the latest one connecting their Karakoram Highway to the old Soviet road to Bagram and then through Afghanistan and Iran to Chah-Bahar. So, could the Chinese view of linking China to Africa be a two stage process, consisting of:-

- (a) Dominating the Afro-Asian littoral from the Persian gulf and Suez around the Cape in the first stage.
- (b) Venturing out to sea in the Indian Ocean after the littoral domination is achieved – say in 2025 or 2030?
- (c) There is one scenario where the Chinese become adventurous and jump the gun and establish a base in the Arabian Sea as envisaged by Admiral Yin Zhou in charge of Information Technology (IT) in early Jan 2010 on the Chinese Defence Ministry website.<sup>22</sup>

A pictorial representation is depicted on **Map 1**: While they have succeeded in advancing to the Asian littoral in Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Pakistan and Iran, the continental strategy still has a gap in making the leap to Africa.

**Chinese Oil Routes**

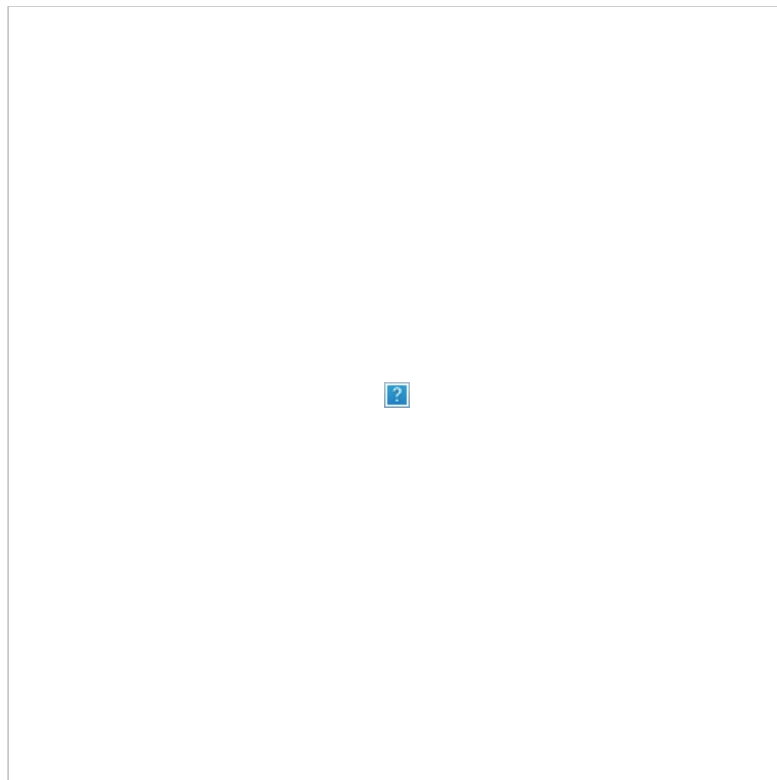


**Map 1**

**Protecting Their Presence in Africa.** There are few instances of nations that came to trade that did not get enmeshed in politics. In what might be called *The East India Company model*, the Chinese will need political support to preserve their investments, particularly as it begins to become huge. With governments being displaced in coups and revolutions it is only a matter of time before a political faction in a country requests the Chinese for support in an internal fight, and that will be the beginning of China becoming an African power. This might have been avoided had they been selective about their African presence. On the contrary they have spread their footprint everywhere and this must lead them into military activity – initially as trainers and suppliers of hardware and eventually more intrusively. They will make a beginning somewhere – probably Tanzania where they have been the longest. Angola is another possibility far away from observation and any Anglophone influence. The conversion of their continental strategy into a maritime one, perhaps when they feel more confident after 2025, is shown pictorially in **Map 2**.

**Chinese Maritime Strategy Phase II**





**Map 2**

### Wild Cards

- (a) The Chinese take up a serious military training mission in two adjacent countries, thereby legitimising the presence of combat vehicles and a large number of Chinese citizens/troops in Africa.
- (b) The Chinese take up a combat flying training mission giving them the toe-hold necessary to introduce tactical aviation onto the Indian Ocean littoral. This might short cut the long gestation Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) building programme.
- (c) The Chinese take on an airborne logistics support mission to an African country thereby, introducing long-range reconnaissance capability operating from Africa.
- (d) They build a new port (probably Lamu in Kenya) which will give them access in all conditions other than hostilities.
- (e) The port, aviation assets and land combat training missions will be close to each other, most likely on the East coast of Africa as mentioned above.

### Myanmar and its Uncertain Future

Myanmar or Burma, as it was then known, was one of the Theatres in which Indian armed forces fought during the Second World War. Although, the Indian General Staff prepared to fight a war on the western front in 1939, eventually they fought the Japanese to a standstill, followed by the reconquest of Burma, which was a land-ward advance, with a major amphibious right hook to Rangoon. The amphibious spearhead found the capital abandoned, when they landed. The psychological effect of the Burma campaign has not gone away. The fear remains that India could be engaged not only on the familiar northern and western fronts, but on a new eastern front by an overlapping Chinese thrust through Myanmar. For this reason, the long term political stability of Myanmar is of political consequence to Indian strategists. The fact that China has penetrated quite far South, in Myanmar and that signs in Chinese have appeared as far South as Mandalay is of concern as to where the Chinese engagement with Myanmar is headed.

Myanmar is a totalitarian state whose future is as uncertain as are all totalitarian states. It is difficult as yet to conjure up a vision of Myanmar as a stable state of some kind, except that the power of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) cannot last over a decade or so. Yet the country is stitched together by the Army with which the minorities have signed agreements on some kind of federalism. What the state has going for it is a high human development index where women's literacy is not much different from that of the males. Life expectancy is higher than in India and the birth rate is as low as the best states in India. Hence, the capacity of the Country's area to support the population of 26.5 million is undoubted from any view point of agriculture or ecology. In fact, from any point of view Myanmar is a strange country where the Country works but the Government does not. Its GDP growth rate is not too low at 6.3 per cent and per capita income is \$1200 per year at PPP rates.

The danger to India from Myanmar comes from its non-functional Government and the extent to which it has allowed the country to become China - dependent during the years that it was a pariah. The huge contradiction of instability comes from the limited longevity of the Junta and the fate of the federal structure after the collapse of the Junta. Which of the minorities will work with the centre and which would not? Which of the minorities will make a break for it and how much will the resultant tumult resemble a civil war? During the civil war like situation the big doubt is, what will the Chinese do, considering their level of investment as far south as Yangon. The Myanmarese leaders are confident they can play both ends against the middle - allow the Chinese every concession, become financially

dependent, permit special privileges and yet when the chips are down, they feel they can retain political independence. In other words, the SLORC feel that there is no price to pay for all the Chinese investment aid and visa free access to Northern Myanmar.<sup>23</sup>

In this they are making a huge blunder, as the regime itself is likely to be short lived and lead to some kind of civil war. In that conflict the Chinese will have to take sides to protect their investments and the choice will be made on the basis of real-politik and not on sentiment. China's investments will become its paramount interest and in underestimating that interest the SLORC is making a grievous error. So the final result of what happens in Myanmar will be a result of, which way the Chinese jump in the post SLORC scene. This may or may not be to India's advantage in the new alignment of power. In that new alignment the strongest single player will be the Army and India's interests require that we keep our contacts with the Army. The problem will be if the Army finds a ready supporter in China during the post SLORC phase, in which case the Indian position in Myanmar becomes weak and the Chinese appear on our eastern flank. *The seriousness of the Chinese appearing on our eastern flank has to motivate our policy towards Myanmar and explains why Myanmar is studied in detail among the limited number of issues in this paper.*

### **The Effect of Afghanistan on Pakistan and Indian Policy**

The Americans and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) are due to start thinning out in 2012 and their withdrawal is due to be completed in some form by 2014, leaving behind their offensive ground and air capability. The Pakistanis have a hope that the Afghan government at that time will include a section of Pashtuns from the current group called the Taliban. As a result of Pakistani intercession, they hope they will have leverage on the eventual Afghan government. Therefore, their interests will be protected by the future government to the extent that India will not be permitted a large presence in Afghanistan, which the Pakistanis may have to worry about as being a 'second' front in their West. The result of Pakistani meddling may well turn out to be entirely different from what was intended. Control or influence of Afghan governments have been tried by various countries with indifferent success, because, as everyone states, the Afghans are independent minded. So it is not clear why the eventual Afghan government should exclusively favour the Pakistan government when all Pakistan has to offer is access to the sea - a facility they would not like to deny anyone.<sup>24</sup>

The scenario that will eventually unfold in Afghanistan and hence in Pakistan may well be different. This is because the problem with the Pakistan Taliban - a fundamentalist group - has not been settled by the Pakistani state. Large numbers of their group are also Pashtuns, interspersed by Punjabis from the South Punjab Madrassas, who demand an Islamic state devoid of 'lawmaking legislatures'. These groups are difficult to pin down because they shelter across the border, over the porous Durand Line in Afghanistan with their ethnic cousins. The settlement of the Afghan government in 2014, does nothing to appease the Pakistan Taliban who are fighting the Pakistani state for ideological reasons. This movement is spreading and targeting the government, Shias, Ahmadiyyas, schools and non-fundamentalist organisations. This group will continue their activity unchecked no matter what happens in 2012 or 2014.

In the worst case, lack of success by the Kabul government in holding down the turbulent South and East could see a coalescing of ethnic Pashtun interests growing into a cross border Pashtun nationalistic entity that wipes out the Durand Line. If, as expected the leadership of the Pashtun nation is again captured by fundamentalists, India could see the opening up of terrorist training camps across the border all over again.<sup>25</sup> How much the Pakistani state will compromise with their fundamentalist entity is difficult to forecast, but they will definitely try and not get engaged on two fronts - the West and the East. It might make sense for the Pakistanis to make peace on the eastern front but sensible choices have not been made by the Pakistanis in the past. So post 2014, India needs to have an Af-Pak policy as this problem is not going away when the Americans leave. The traditional method of allocating a 'front' to a command, as we have hitherto done, as for example, creating a western front, with a Western Command, and an Army Commander, to deal with the front, no longer is good enough when India has to deal with a semi-permanent transborder problem in the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. At present the method followed is that when the Command is overwhelmed by the complexity of a problem that is not a straightforward border transgression, the problem is kicked upstairs to New Delhi which has virtually run Afghan policy as an activity that is well beyond the scope of an Army Commander. In this way, all Commands are suited to deal with border transgressions and just that - with any geo-political complication being passed upwards to New Delhi, including the Ayni airbase in Tajikistan, the training of the Afghan Army, security of Indian construction companies in Afghanistan and any other Afghan activity. This manner of dealing with a local problem is hugely different when the Army Commander's role is converted to that of a Theatre Commander.<sup>26</sup>

### **Maritime Competition in the Indian Ocean**

Chinese maritime power in the South China Sea and in the Indian Ocean are taken together - as one integral whole. The level of maritime security as seen by China in the western Pacific has to be of an assured level, before the CMC's strategists will permit the PLAN to think of deploying 'out of area'. Operating in the Indian Ocean, will initially be an 'out of area' operation that can only be justified when the PLAN has met the strategic fulfillment of operating adequately up to the Second Island chain. All navies seek funding for their warships. The PLAN is no different. Funding is provided against strategic objectives set-out in the argument. Currently, it is unlikely that the PLAN has given to the CMC, any argument for immediate budgetary allocation for an Indian Ocean force. Such an argument undoubtedly exists in the long term perspective planning of the PLAN. Such is the author's speculation, not supported by any first hand information. Adequacy of force to operate up to the Second Island chain is itself likely to produce a formidable list. To contend with, there is the entire Japanese Navy in the Northern theatre, then there is the major portion of the US 7th fleet, and the entire South Korean Navy and the growing Vietnamese Navy to balance. It is only when the PLAN planners feel that forces are 'adequate' against such a combination that they can turn their attention looking beyond the Pacific into the Indian Ocean.<sup>27</sup>

Logistics is another difficulty for sustained operations in the Indian Ocean. With campaigns under their institutional memory, the long term planners of the CMC will never agree to the PLAN making more than a temporary foray into the Indian Ocean unless logistics basis are set-up and the diplomatic effort has gone into supporting a

Chinese presence in a new area. Politico-military-diplomatic coordination is an activity that the Chinese are good at and have some practice in. Their operations in the Indian Ocean as part of the Sumatra patrol from which ships were diverted to the Libyan crisis is a pointer to the fact that the Chinese are learning. They managed a 100 day patrol by getting their ships re-supplied by Chinese companies operating in Africa and showed great flexibility in conducting an extended stay for their ships. This is a one-off operation, but the lessons have probably been learnt that a continued presence of Chinese ships in the Indian Ocean will involve a diplomatic and logistic effort of some magnitude.

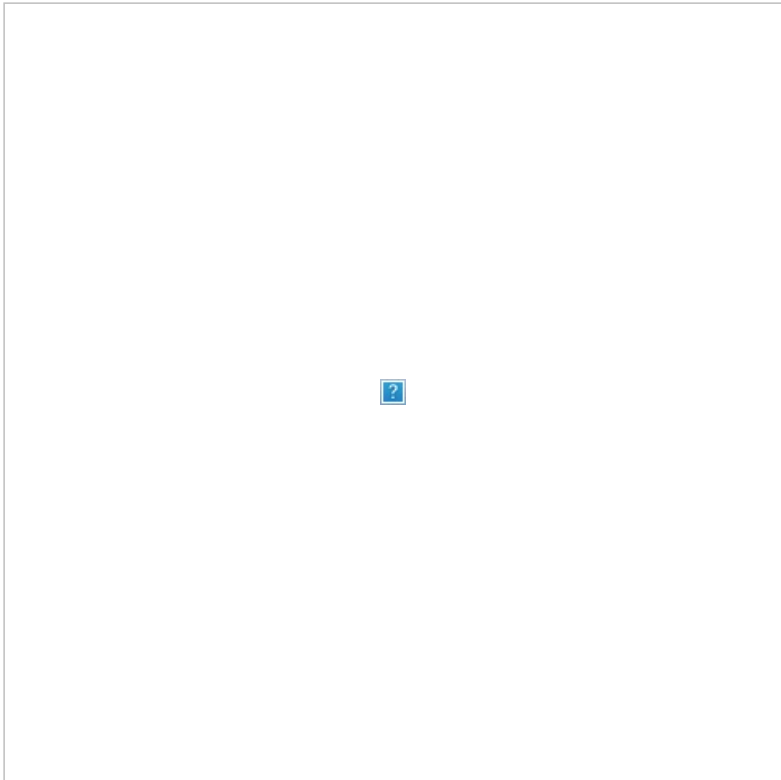
At the same time there must be a bureaucratic push or a desire to operate in the Indian Ocean from all the government departments that are involved in seeking resources from all over the world to push the economy along. It is most unlikely that the presence of the Chinese in every littoral country of Africa, combined with the need for some security of resources and SLOCs will cause the Chinese to rely on the international system for their continued protection. If they did, then there is no push to build a bigger Chinese Navy, which we know there is, and the question of whether flag follows trade is settled once and for all. The Chinese have gone to great pains to describe their foray into Africa as different from colonialism, and the basic motivations are different – but will the effects be different? Can huge state enterprises, their assets, goods and people be left unprotected, dependent totally on the international system for their protection? The Japanese resorted to relying on the international system but they had no choice, constrained as they were by their Constitution. So just as there is caution and reluctance to come into the Indian Ocean until the circumstances are right, there is an enormous push on the PLAN to go and do what navies are meant to do.

For India, the timing of the Chinese push into the ocean overcoming their reluctance not to go is important as the Indian Ocean is not the only front on which India is engaged with China. There is the long Himalayan boundary on the Indo-Tibet border which saw a resurgence of incidents in 2009 before they decreased. There is no explanation for the increase in incidents, pushed as they were by suddenly more aggressive Chinese patrolling. Since then there have been a number of incidents that indicate that the Indian Ocean is not the only place where the two countries are engaged. There were the incidents in the South China Sea followed by the confusion over the Sino-Indian talks clashing with the world Buddhist conference about which the Chinese were upset.<sup>28</sup>

At the background of Indian assessments about Chinese intention is the realisation that the state of Chinese logistics in Tibet has vastly improved over the years and it is the resulting confidence that makes the Chinese more aggressive? The Indian estimates of what forces the Chinese can bring to bear in Tibet are chilling, after the building of the feeder and parallel roads and the Ghormo-Lhasa all weather rail link. The correlation of forces have changed drastically in Tibet and there is a constant Indian fear that all Sino-Indian equations will now react on the new force realities in Tibet. This fear needs to be specifically articulated and should not be left as a mere threat to our territory. After all, we have to be clear that the threat to our territory today is not materially different from the threat in 1962. In that war, the Chinese did capture territory but *returned most of it*. It is, therefore, wrong to assume that a continued threat to Indian territory by conquest still remains. Even today, we do not have a consensus that what the Chinese did to us in 1962 was ‘to teach us a lesson’, successfully or otherwise, as Mao Zedong had ordered the PLA. So territory will not be recovered by China through conquest, but the possibilities of another ‘lesson’ are indeed real. This time the lesson will come from a highly mechanized, airborne and air mobile land force capable of hitting hard at diverse points in quick succession through Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). The old infantry ground holding operations days are over. This is the reason why we must have an offensive Indian Ocean strategy, to retaliate with when taken by surprise in the Himalayas.

**Areas of Strategic Geo-Political Concern for India**

The areas of geo-political concern for India are shown in **Map 3** below:-



**(Source: Author)**

### Map 3

In terms of priority we have the two areas that are closely interlinked – Tibet and the Indian Ocean. In one area geography acts against India's military interests in having to push troops up a formidable 9000 ft and higher mountains to man their posts on the Tibetan border; in the Indian Ocean on the contrary the Chinese have to transit 2400 nautical miles to even step into the eastern limits of the Bay of Bengal. These two geographical advantages and disadvantages to an extent strategically nullify each other in terms of operational leverage.

The area of Myanmar is an offshoot of the Indo-Tibetan border problem in that the southward movement of the Chinese into Myanmar could threaten to turn the eastern flank of India's Tibetan front. The farther the Chinese advance into Myanmar the more the flank remains turned. At the same time the Myanmarees are clear that they are not going to give the Chinese a clear run through their country. They are keen to invite the Indians to participate in the development of their country and exploit the natural resources by building roads, pipelines and oil transit routes. So this area involves more of a cat and mouse game with Indian constraints being mainly one of financial limits to what it can do.

The third area of geo-political tension is the handling of the fundamentalist threat from Pakistan which will spill over into the war against the Indian forces in Kashmir as recently announced by the Jamaat ul-Furqan (JUF) – to convert the whole of Pakistan into a Taliban nation and wage war on the US and India. While the claim may have been fanciful the possibilities are grim, if Afghanistan becomes uncontrollable after 2014 and the Pashtun problem spills over into Pakistan to create a cross border Emirate once again.

Another area of concern is the Middle East for a large number of reasons which normally are associated with the Middle East – the Palestine problem, Hizbollah, Hamas and Fatah, the Iran - Israel rivalry, nuclear weapons and non-proliferation and the ever present attraction of cheap oil in the area. Of immediate concern is the action of Iran in attempting to become a nuclear power and creating a sectarian schism that will split the Middle East. The difficulty for India is that each side will demand an alliance from India and urge the other countries to choose between being enemies and friends. Since the greater part of India's hydrocarbons come from this region, it has to be careful how it plays its cards.

**Other Regions.** The regions mentioned in the paper so far are those with a higher probability of turbulence and will require state organisation to deal with these problems on a semi-permanent basis. Other regions are those that India has lived with for four decades and, although they may have fluctuating levels of stability, can be dealt with by normal state institutions. These include Southeast Asia, Africa, Sri Lanka and the islands of the Indian Ocean.

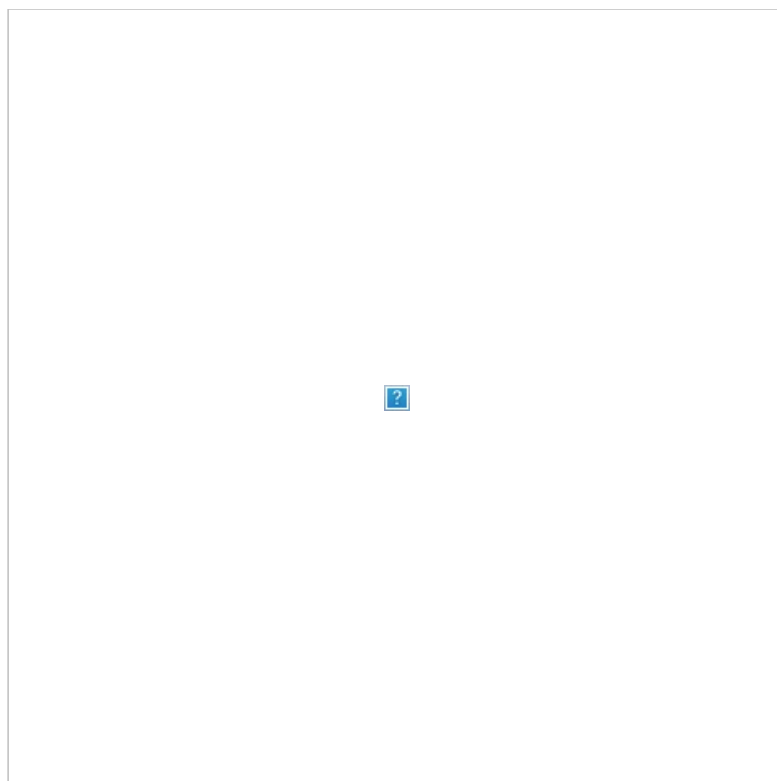
### Other Issues

**Space.** The UN resolution on outer space is clear that it is meant for the use of all mankind and for peaceful purposes, as are celestial bodies.<sup>29</sup> Subsequent resolutions talk of preventing an arms race in outer space (2001). Contradicting these sentiments from the international body are statements from commanders of space commands of the USA who have stated that "one day" the US will hit land based platforms from outer space, for that is the eventual high ground. The commanders did not comment on the explicit provision of the outer space treaty which came into effect in 1967. The fact is that with the use of a huge number of communications, surveillance and observation satellites Space has already been militarized. What remains is the carriage of weapons into Space. On this issue it is well known that the debate is deadlocked in the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva. In 2006, the UN voted almost unanimously (except for Israel and the US) to prevent an arms race in outer Space. However the Bush Administration made it clear that the US was going to militarise Space. The quadrennial Defence Review of 2001 states explicitly "A key objective ... is not only to ensure US ability to exploit space for military purposes, but when, as required to deny an adversary's ability to do so". The Times has reported that, 'the US has already spent trillions in developing Space programmes... with plans to deploy weapons. It continues ... Air force doctrine defines Space superiority as 'freedom to attack as well as freedom from attack', in Space. The Office of Science and Technology (OST) policy statement issued from the Office of the President on 6 October 2006 states that the US will oppose regimes that seek to prohibit US access to the use of Space. Proposed arms control agreements must not impair the rights of the US to conduct research, development, testing and operations or other activities in Space for US national interests.

So it is a matter of speculation whether China's anti-satellite test was an announcement of starting an arms race or joining the arms race started by the US. One of the powers that falls in between is India, which has started Space cooperation with the US and there is a joint mission planned for 2016. So the issue for India is clear. In an escalatory scenario with China, if India's Space assets come under threat- what deterrent power does India possess to ensure the safety of all its Space assets on which it has become hugely dependent?

### The Present Organisation's Historical Background

The historical areas of responsibility of commands are shown in Map 4 below<sup>30</sup>:-



### **Military Commands Pre-World War II**

**(Source: Imperial Gazetteer Atlas of India, Oxford.....Clarendon Press) 1931  
Map 4**

It may be seen that this map is the last one that existed before the Country went into the Second World War and then into Partition resulting in the Commands being subdivided between India and Pakistan. This is the last historic map the British intended for the defence of India, and is taken from the Gazette of India 1931. As can be seen, these areas of responsibility address the issue of ruling India. It does not address the geopolitical issues around India for which the British had other forces not under the C-in-C India. The main component of force not under the C-in-C India was the C-in-C Far East Fleet at Singapore with battleships and aircraft carriers. British military existed otherwise in Mauritius, Colombo, Aden, the Gulf, Diego Garcia, Malaya and Singapore. The map of the defence of India should be compared with **Map 3** which shows areas of concern for India in the next 15 years and it will be seen readily that the two have no bearing on each other. This is the issue to be addressed in this paper.

The current organisation of the Defence of India is a modification of what the British used to rule India - i.e. to keep India from revolting internally with a few cantonments set up at the North West Frontier to deal with the Pathans and Afghanistan.<sup>31</sup> The organisation cannot deal with external threats that do not appear at the borders of India. After 65 years of Independence the threat to the borders of India have disappeared and the old system, no matter how much it renews itself, is withering from disuse and non-functionality. The region around India is one strategic entity. The British recognised this and used the entire land forces in India as one command - India Command, with one C-in-C, i.e. C-in-C India. The rest of the bits and pieces were put together by troops in the Gulf, Africa, Indian Ocean, Malaya and Singapore. As India becomes a regional power it has to use its imagination to realise that it wants to be more than a power merely defending its own territory - as C-in-C India did formerly. These suggestions are contained in the remaining portion of this paper.

### **Reorganisation of Theatre Commands<sup>32</sup>**

In today's scenarios and that of the next decade theatre commands must look at a geo-political problem as a whole and not have the entire problem divided into little portions without one responsible theatre commander dealing with the entire whole. Countries in similar situations normally leave it to a theatre commander of sufficient stature and the wherewithal to deal with it holistically. Assuming that this proposal is agreed to, the theatre and force commander arrangements should be as given below:-

<b>Theatre Command</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Northern Theatre Command	Army	Based on existing Northern and Central

Eastern Theatre Command	Army	Commands Based on Existing Eastern Command
Air Defence Command	Air Force	Responsible for air defence of India
Strike Command	Air Force	Responsible for air strikes in the entire region
Indian Ocean Theatre Command	Navy	Responsible for eastern Indian Ocean Region less Andaman Sea and Malacca Straits
Andaman Command	Navy	Andaman Area and East Bay of Bengal
Peninsula Command	Army	Present Southern Command
Western Theatre Command	Army	Western and South Western Commands.

#### Present **Force Commanders**

Strategic Force Commander	Tri-service
Aerospace Command	Tri-service
Army Training Command	Army
Naval Training Command	Navy
Air Force Training Command	Air Force
Military Air Lift Command	Air Force
Special Operation Command	Army
Expeditionary Forces Command	Navy

### **The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS)**

In a conventional war across defined land frontiers i.e. defence of national territory the system of single service chiefs managing and commanding their respective services is workable, as there are no theatre commands. When the system has to cope with transnational operations there is little doubt that firstly, theatre commands are necessary; secondly, that theatre commanders have to be under a commander like the CDS and thirdly, the PM or the highest political authority needs single point military advice, which can come only from a CDS.

The geo-political scenario being made out for India in the next 15 years is that the chances of a war over territory are remote across the International Boundary Limits (IBLs). But on the other hand, we will have military interests in Tibet, in the Indian Ocean, in Myanmar, in the Andaman Sea and Malacca straits and possibly, in the Middle East. There is no military commander today mandated to handle any of these theatres militarily. For these reasons we have to shift from a 'defence of India' mode to a transnational military mode with theatre commanders and a CDS. The Kargil Review Committee (KRC) has made scathing remarks on the non-effectiveness of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) in providing single point military advice and in resolving disputes between the three Services. As is well known, the Arun Singh committee, set up after the KRC, went only half way in correcting the systemic dysfunctions and stopped short of creating a CDS because of internal opposition from the civil bureaucracy, the Air Force and the politicians. That process cannot remain incomplete forever.

### **Conclusion**

There are many views on what the ideal national security planning process should be, but all processes suggested begin with the writing of a 'setting' or a 'strategic and technological environment' in which the national strategy is to be fitted into. That a territorial threat is a temporary and unreal threat that new found states may have to deal with during the early years of their existence, and that these threats disappear over a period of time. It was with this purpose that the author wrote his book *'The Long View from Delhi'* in the year 2010. That book described the scenarios that India would

find itself facing by the year 2025. In this paper some of the scenarios have been presented in a truncated manner so that the reader is clear as to what scenario is the strategy paper addressing.

In the second half or closing parts of the paper the organisation the country already has to deal with external threats have been amplified, beginning with the present organisation of commands during the British era. It is readily seen that the British left us with commands that grew organically, as the East India Company came to rule larger and larger parts of the country. The system of commands were never rationalised during British rule because the existing organisation fulfilled the requirements of London ruling the Country. On the one occasion when India was actually faced with an external threat, as from the Japanese invasion through Burma, the organisation that was created for the reconquest of Burma was external to the command organisation for India. In the reconquest of Burma, a theatre commander was appointed and he had three force commanders under him for the Army, Navy and Air Force. That organisation was wound up and took over South East Asia before finally being terminated in 1946. So theatre commands is an old and proven concept in the Indian scene and has actually been tried out already.

When one combines both parts of this paper i.e. the first part which describes what scenarios we might have to deal with and then look at what we were left with there is a huge mismatch. It is not enough that Delhi directly deals with Myanmar, Afghanistan, the Indian Ocean and the Middle East, while all that the commands do is worry about cross border threats that fail to emerge. To get rid of the mismatch and introduce the idea of theatre commands, a list of recommended theatre commands has been suggested. After doing so, it is found that many functions of a tri-service nature, like Space and Special Operations are still unaccounted for. So a separate list of tri-service organizations headed by three star officers have been listed in addition to theatre commands. If these two suggestions are implemented, the deficiencies in the present set up will be neutralised and the new organisation will reflect the actual scenarios confronting the Country.

This paper attempts to put out two major ideas – the first is that national security planning must address some specific scenarios and the scenarios must be articulated. It is not enough to say that national security is about safeguarding territorial integrity and merely fending possible threats to territorial integrity. The second postulate is that once the scenario is identified, national institutions assist to create a policy and execute a plan. Both processes are either weak in India or don't exist. Synergy can only be created when institutions are constantly audited to see whether they are functioning as they are meant to be. From that point of view, papers like this one commissioned by the USI perform a useful function to check the health of the system and suggest improvements.

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*Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol. CXLI, No. 587, January-March 2012.