

# U.S.I. JOURNAL

**INDIA'S OLDEST JOURNAL ON DEFENCE AFFAIRS**

(Established : 1870)



## **PRINCIPAL CONTENTS**

### *Major General Samir Sinha Memorial Lecture, 2017*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| India's Porous Borders and Coastlines – Meeting the Threats and Challenges       | - Shri Anil Goswami, IAS (Retd)                         |
| Insurgencies of the Northeast and Management of Indo-Myanmar Border              | - Lieutenant General Shokin Chauhan, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM |
| In My Eyes: India, Indians and India-China Relations                             | - Mr Luo Zhaohui  |
| Maintaining International Peace and Security through United Nations Peacekeeping | - Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji, IFS (Retd)                  |
| China-Pakistan Economic Corridor : Connecting the Dots                           | - Lieutenant General PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)        |

**APRIL-JUNE 2017**

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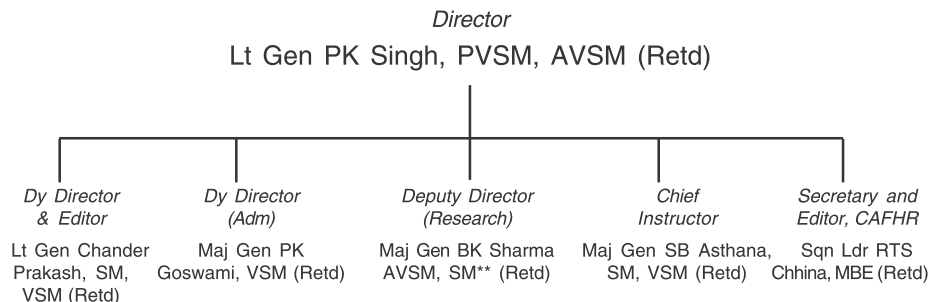
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<sup>1</sup> Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy : A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1988), p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Lina Bolzoni and Pietro Corsi, *The Culture Memory*, (Bologna : Societa editrice il Mulino, 1992), p. 45.

2. Use of *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, and *loc. cit.*

*Ibid.* refers to the immediate preceding reference; *op. cit.* refers to the prior reference by the same author and *loc. cit.* is used instead of *op. cit.* when reference is made to a work previously cited and to the same page in that work. For example :-

<sup>4</sup> R Poirer, *Learning Physics*, (Academic, New York, 1993), p.4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> T Eliot, *Astrophysics*, (Springer, Berlin, 1989), p. 141.

<sup>7</sup> R Millan, *Art of Latin Grammar*, (Academic, New York, 1997), p.23.

<sup>8</sup> Eliot, *op. cit.*, p.148.

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### **Course Members**

During the same period, 377 Officers registered for Course Membership.

# CONTENTS

April-June 2017

<b>Editorial.....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b><i>Major General Samir Sinha Memorial Lecture, 2017</i></b>	
<b>India's Porous Borders and Coastlines – Meeting the Threats and Challenges</b>	
Shri Anil Goswami, IAS (Retd).....	113
<b>Insurgencies of the Northeast and Management of Indo-Myanmar Border</b>	
Lieutenant General Shokin Chauhan, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM.....	126
<b>In My Eyes: India, Indians and India-China Relations</b>	
Mr Luo Zhaohui.....	143
<b>Maintaining International Peace and Security through United Nations Peacekeeping</b>	
Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji, IFS (Retd).....	151
<b>China-Pakistan Economic Corridor : Connecting the Dots</b>	
Lieutenant General PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd).....	160
<b>The Undeclared Power Play behind Belt and Road Forum: May 2017</b>	
Major General SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd).....	176
<b>The China Dream, <i>Tianxia</i> and Belt and Road Initiative : ‘Pax Sinica’ or Middle Power Coalition for Asia-Pacific?</b>	
Major General Rajiv Narayanan, AVSM, VSM (Retd).....	185
<b>Korean Peninsula–Prevailing Imbroglio: Quest for Strategic Equilibrium</b>	
Major General GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM and Bar, PhD (Retd).....	195
<b>Self-Sufficiency in National Security</b>	
General Deepak Kapoor, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd).....	202
<b>Strategy – The Unexplored Frontiers: A New Strategic Direction for India</b>	
Major General PJS Sandhu (Retd).....	209
<b>Technology Requirements for the Indian Navy</b>	
Vice Admiral Satish Soni, PVSM, AVSM, NM (Retd).....	219
<b>Kautilya's <i>Arthashastra</i> and its Relevance to Contemporary Strategic Studies</b>	
Colonel Pradeep Kumar Gautam (Retd).....	226
<b>‘India Remembers’ Project and Other CAFHR Activities : An Update</b>	
Ms Bhanushali Gahlot.....	235
<b>Reviews of Recent Books.....</b>	<b>240</b>

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## Editorial

The issue opens with the edited version of the 15<sup>th</sup> Major General Samir Sinha Memorial Lecture 2017 on “India’s Porous Borders and Coastlines – Meeting Threats and Challenges” which was delivered by Shri Anil Goswami, IAS (Retd) former Home Secretary of India at the United Service Institution of India (USI) on 19 Apr 2017. Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha, PVSM, AVSM, NM and Bar (Retd), former Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command chaired the session. This is followed by somewhat related subject titled “Insurgencies of the Northeast and Management of Indo-Myanmar Border”, which is also an edited version of the talk delivered by Lieutenant General Shokin Chauhan, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, Director General Assam Rifles at the USI on 24 Apr 2017. Both these talks covered a wide canvas of issues of the Northeast such as the historical perspective, cultural and tribal diversities and reasons for insurgencies in the Northeastern Region of India. The nuances, dynamics and challenges to national security due to India’s porous borders, especially in the Northeast have been vividly brought out. These are a good update on the situation prevailing on India’s northeastern borders. Initiatives taken by the Government of India to address the shortcomings and the challenges faced are noteworthy. Both speakers have made some useful and practical recommendations to deal with the prevailing security situation.

21st Century is being projected as the “Asian Century”. India and China are two rising powers in this part of the world. Sino-India relationship is the most challenging relationship as a number of contradictions need to be managed. Therefore, it is all the more important to understand the nuances and dynamics of the relationship between these two emerging powers. There is a need to explore areas of synergy and overcome “trust deficit” that prevails. With this as backdrop, the USI invited His Excellency Mr Luo Zhaohui, the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China in India, to deliver a talk on Sino-Indian relations on 05 May 2017. Text of the talk on the subject “In My Eyes: India, Indians and India-China Relations” is published as the next article for wider circulation amongst the USI members. The article, in a nuanced manner provides the Chinese perspective of Indo-China relations.

It highlights areas of common interest, differences and grievances that exist between India and China. The speaker made out a case for practical cooperation in economic and trade; people-to-people contact and put forward suggestions to manage the differences. The relationship between the two major powers in the region has to be based on mutual trust and understanding of the fundamental interests of the two countries. Unfortunately, currently this is lacking. The message that the Ambassador tried to convey was that China is ready to work with India; align its development strategies and expand mutually beneficial cooperation.

The primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security under the United Nations Charter is that of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Since 1945, the geopolitics has changed drastically, but the Security Council's membership and working methods have not and reflect the bygone era. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), since 1993, has debated the issue of reforms of the UNSC without any agreement being reached. Any agreement in the membership of the UNSC will require amendment to the UN Charter, which is a tall order, being lengthy and onerous process. Unlike the membership changes, the working methods of the UNSC (procedures of the Council) do not require change in the Charter. This is something that can be undertaken by the UNSC itself. The next article "Maintaining International Peace and Security through United Nations Peacekeeping" by Shri Asoke Mukerji, IFS (Retd), former India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, highlights the necessity for increased representation in the Council's decision-making process and for direct consultations between the 15 members of the UNSC and the troop contributing countries not represented in the UNSC so that effectiveness of the UN peacekeeping operations can be improved.

The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was held at Beijing on 14-15 May 2017. It is claimed that it was attended by large number of Heads of States/Governments and representatives from more than 130 countries and 70 international organisations. China's stated objective of the Forum was to "build a more open and international cooperation platform; a closer and stronger partnership network; and to push for a more just,

reasonable and balanced international governance system". Some in media, particularly the western media, referred to it as shaping "China's new World Order". This Issue of the Journal carries three articles related to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)/ One Belt and One Road (OBOR). The first in the series is an article "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor : Connecting the Dots" by Lieutenant General PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd), Director USI which in an incisive manner analyses the CPEC in the light of the master plan revealed by the media in Pakistan. He argues that CPEC skips some of the major connectivity issues in South Asia, with potential for isolation of Pakistan, though it may strengthen China-Pakistan relations. The strategic aspects of CPEC far outweigh the economic aspects according to this article and may not exactly be the 'silver bullet' it is deemed to be. The second in the series is an article "The Undeclared Power Play behind Belt and Road Forum: May 2017" by Major General SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd) which brings out that the largest beneficiary of the One Belt and One Road (OBOR) project is China itself and there are some pressing domestic compulsions on the Chinese leadership to undertake this project. The article analyses the compulsions of 30 countries who have signed up for it. India's non-participation at the Forum is not a case of missed opportunities but a serious "sovereignty issue". CPEC, Gwadar and infrastructural development near Indian borders will also be a strategic and security challenge to India. The author makes a case for India to create military capacity to face this challenge.

Further to the above, Major General Rajiv Narayanan, AVSM, VSM (Retd), in the next article "The China Dream, *Tianxia* and Belt and Road Initiative: '*Pax Sinica*' or Middle Power Coalition for Asia-Pacific?" examines the China Dream and how it follows the concept of '*Tianxia*' (the whole of China or the whole world) as articulated by the Chinese philosopher Zhao Tingyang and how the Belt and Road Initiative relates to this concept. The author suggests formulation of Middle Power Coalition for the Asia-Pacific Region to provide stability to the region and multi-polarity in Asia.

In the next article "Korean Peninsula – Prevailing Imbroglio : Quest for Strategic Equilibrium"; Major General GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM and Bar (Retd) cautions that the Korean Peninsula is under

extreme stress due to geo-political turbulence prevailing in the region and is likely a potential flash point. The article analyses the current state of instability in the region and the factors that have contributed to it. China, the only friend of North Korea that extends political and economic support to the Pyongyang Regime, is in a difficult position. She does not want US-leaning Korea at her borders and the collapse of the North Korean Regime, which may lead to havoc in the region and consequent humanitarian disaster. Notwithstanding China's influence over North Korea, she has often expressed frustration over Pyongyang's irresponsible conduct; to that extent China's influence is limited. Considering the prevailing gravity of the situation only bold initiatives by the US, supported by China, can calm the boiling waters.

National security, apart from security against external and internal threats posed by nation-states and non-state actors, encompasses diverse range of issues such as political, economic, energy etc. However, historically, the concept of national security is principally associated with preserving a nation's sovereignty and the physical integrity of a nation's territory and also the effective control of borders without disruption from outside. Security threats are diverse, uncertain and in the contemporary world, less predictable. Any nation that does not build up its own capabilities to deal with these threats does so at its own peril. In the next article on "Self-sufficiency in National Security" General Deepak Kapoor, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd), former Chief of Army Staff and the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, highlights the importance of self-sufficiency in national security and makes some pertinent recommendations to achieve self-sufficiency in national security related to matters military. These include revamping of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO); greater involvement of the private sector and priority to infrastructural development. He advocates for an increase in annual defence expenditure and creation of efficient Higher Defence Management structures that are overseen by political authorities with sound professional advice from experts.

Grand strategy is a means through which a State ensures its security; and statecraft, the process through which a nation attempts to minimise its weaknesses and limitations, and maximise its

strengths and capabilities in the prevailing international environment. Major General PJS Sandhu (Retd), in the next article “Strategy – The Unexplored Frontiers: A Direction for India” has analysed the unexplored frontiers of strategy as an instrument of statecraft in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with a focus on the prevailing geostrategic environment as it relates to India now and years ahead. Considering the prevailing regional and global environment, there is definitely a case to evolve a grand strategy without forgetting the history and geography, and keeping in mind the emerging Asian landscape and the internal threats.

India, with a coastline of 7516 kms, requires a strong navy to protect India’s national interests. The Indian Navy needs to be provided with the latest technology so that it can provide effective maritime security umbrella. More so, as India’s economy is affected from the import and export of goods over the Sea Lanes of Communication. As the threat grows, so must the Indian Navy, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. To this end, new technologies must be exploited so that the Indian Navy has the required ability to effectively carry out the assigned tasks. In 2016, the Indian Navy had unveiled 15 year prospective plan which calls for acquiring a range of futuristic technologies. These include naval missiles, propulsion and power generation systems, surveillance and detection systems, torpedoes and directed energy weapons, network centric warfare, and command and control management systems etc. The next article “Technology Requirements for the Indian Navy” by Vice Admiral Satish Soni, PVSM, AVSM, NM (Retd) who has been the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern as well as Southern Naval Commands elaborates on the technological requirements and recommends that India collaborates with advanced countries to obtain the technologies required or invest in the research and development. The areas recommended by the author include Advanced Munitions, Unmanned Combat, Space, Network-Centric Warfare, Cyber Warfare and Aircraft Carrier technology. The article also flags some challenges in doing so.

The last issue of the USI Journal (Jan - Mar 2017), had carried an article on “Unique Approach to Comprehensive National Power through the Lens of Kautilya’s Arthashastra” by Lieutenant

Colonel Malay Mishra. Continuing in the same vein, the next article “Kautilya’s Arthashastra and its Relevance to Contemporary Strategic Studies” by Colonel Pradeep Kumar Gautam (Retd) has analysed the concept and vocabulary that exists in Kautilya’s Arthashastra. He has established the relevance of these in contemporary warfare including hybrid warfare. Even in contemporary times the “indigenous concepts and strategic thinking of ancient times” are still of great relevance. “Old” must not be ignored but meshed with “New”. Thoughts on intelligence, foreign policy and military strategy, diplomacy, statecraft and leadership of the times of Kautilya are worth a read.

The USI, CAFHR is going strong in its endeavor to inculcate a culture of remembrance of fallen soldiers in our country through its ‘India Remembers’ project. The last piece is an update on this project and other activities of USI CAFHR by Ms Bhanushali Gahlot, covering the period Apr-Jun 2017.

We have received encouraging response to the initiative taken to digitise the USI Journal and to do our bit towards preserving the environment. Mostly the initiative has been appreciated and feedback positive. However, some members still wish to have a hard copy of the Journal. Not to deny those who are used to the hard copy, we would like to inform the members that those desirous of the hard copy will need to place a firm demand for the same with the Deputy Director (Administration) and cost for same is advertised at Page (iv) of this issue of the Journal.

Read on.....



## **India's Porous Borders and Coastlines – Meeting the Threats and Challenges\***

**Shri Anil Goswami, IAS (Retd)<sup>®</sup>**

### **Introduction**

India shares her 15,106.7 kms long land border with Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and, technically, Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup> India has a coastline of 7516.6 kms, out of which, 5422 kms of the coastline is along the mainland and 2094 kms is along India's islands.<sup>2</sup> Nine states and four Union Territories lie along the coastline. The deployment of border protection forces is based on the principle of *One Border, One Force*. The Border Security Force (BSF) guards the Bangladesh and the Pakistan borders; the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) guards the China border; the Seema Suraksha Bal (SSB) guards the Nepal and the Bhutan Border and the Assam Rifles (AR) guards the Indo-Myanmar Border. The Indian Army is guarding the Line of Control (LC) on the Pakistan border and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on the China border.

### **India-Bangladesh Border**

The India-Bangladesh border is 4096.70 kms long. West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram lie along this border and it is very porous. Bangladeshis entering India illegally is a unique phenomenon which involves huge numbers crossing national boundaries over several decades. It has reduced the local population to a minority in the border districts of Assam and has out-numbered the entire indigenous population in Tripura. It is estimated that there are 1.5 crore Bangladeshis in India with about 3 lakh entering India illegally every year.<sup>3</sup> Illegal migration from

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\*This is an edited version of the 15<sup>th</sup> Major General Samir Sinha Memorial Lecture 2017 on the subject "India's Porous Borders and Coastlines – Meeting the Threats and Challenges" delivered by Shri Anil Goswami, IAS (Retd), former Home Secretary of India at the USI on 19 Apr 2017 with Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha, PVSM, AVSM, NM and Bar (Retd), former Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, in the chair.

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Bangladesh has following serious implications for India:-

(a) **Socio-Economic.** The people of Assam perceive that they will be outnumbered and their culture is being submerged by an alien culture. They fear that in the near future 'Tripurisation' of Assam is imminent.

(b) **Political.** The migration will result in political power being taken away from the locals. According to a report of a Group of Ministers, the Bangladeshi migrants could influence the result of elections in 32 constituencies in Assam.<sup>4</sup> According to another study, out of the 292 Assembly Constituencies in West Bengal, Bangladeshi immigrants can 'determine' the outcome of polls in 52 Constituencies and 'influence' the poll outcome in 100 others.<sup>5</sup>

(c) **Law and Order.**

(i) **Assam.** The agitation against the Bangladeshi 'foreigners' led to the establishment of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA). The Assamese society has become communally polarised due to the presence of Bangladeshi Muslims. The influx of the Bangladeshis into the Bodo areas led the Bodos to raise the demand for an independent Bodoland. Though the situation has quietened down after the Bodoland Territorial Council was granted to the Bodos in 2003, however, the matter has not been completely settled as yet.

(ii) **Tripura.** The tribal population has reduced to 28.44 per cent in 1981 from 50.09 per cent in 1941.<sup>6</sup> Between 1947 and 1971, more than 6 lakh Bangladeshis had entered Tripura which led to tribal mobilisation during the 1960s and 1970s. Tripura witnessed violence during these decades; though the situation has since improved, as in 2015 Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) was removed. A large portion of the border still remains unfenced. Hence, the danger of influx of refugees from Bangladesh continues to hang like the sword of Damocles over Tripura.

(iii) **West Bengal.** Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and Siliguri areas of West Bengal are adversely affected by the Bangladeshi settlers. As a response, Kamtapur Liberation



Organisation (KLO) emerged. Activities of KLO need to be monitored closely as it operates in the 'Chicken neck' area of the Siliguri corridor.

(d) **Environmental Degradation.** Assam's population, boosted by illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, has put incremental pressure on land and forest resources. A study estimated that the annual fire wood requirement for a villager was 153 kg. An additional population of about 12 million illegal immigrants in the Northeast is bound to have a disastrous impact on the natural resources on this account alone. Illegal Bangladeshi migrants have also damaged the ecological conditions of the *chars* (riverine tracts getting inundated during monsoon), *beels* (inland freshwater bodies) and *bathans* (grazing lands) for buffaloes.

(e) **Radicalisation of Bangladeshi Society.** A report in the Far Eastern Economic Review has warned that "A revolution is taking place in Bangladesh... Islamic fundamentalism, religious intolerance, militant Muslim groups with links to international terrorist groups, powerful military with ties to the militants, the mushrooming of Islamic schools ...all are combining to transform the nation."<sup>7</sup> This radicalisation has had its impact on India. The cadres of Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel) of Bangladesh have been active in Manipur. The increase in the Islamic groups in Assam like United Social Reform Army (*USRA*), *Saddam Bahini* (with ISI aid) etc. is directly linked to the illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The mushroom growth of *madrasas* in West Bengal and some of the Northeastern states is also partially attributable to this.

Lieutenant General SK Sinha, the then Governor of Assam, in 1998, had stated that the "demographic invasion of Assam may result in loss of geostrategically vital districts of lower Assam. It will be only a matter of time when a demand for their merger with Bangladesh may be made... International Islamic fundamentalism may provide the driving force". Those who think this possibility as far-fetched may recall the words of a 'pro-India' leader Sheikh Mujibur Rehman who wrote in his book *Eastern Pakistan : Its Population and Economics* that "because East Pakistan must have sufficient land for its expansion... it must include Assam to be financially and economically strong".<sup>8</sup>

The Government of India had taken three initiatives to make the crossing of this border difficult. First, it decided to fence the border; second, it decided to light up the border with floodlights; and third, it decided to construct patrol roads to facilitate patrolling by the BSF. In 2009, there were 802 Border out Posts (BOPs). To reduce the inter-BOP distance to 3.5 kms, another 283 BOPs were sanctioned in 2009, to be completed by 2013-2014, however, 86 BOPs were constructed by 31 Dec 2015 and work is in progress at 96 other BOPs. On 101 BOPs, work is yet to start. As far as fencing of the border is concerned, against 3325 kms that were to be fenced, only 2714 kms were fenced, leaving a shortfall of 611 kms. With respect to floodlighting, against 2840.90 kms, 2042.64 kms has been floodlit, leaving a shortfall of 798.26 kms. There is also a shortfall of 818 kms of patrol roads. The delays have been due to land acquisition, obtaining statutory clearances, public protests, human habitations existing within 150 yards of the border etc.<sup>9</sup> While all these issues can be resolved at the level of the State Governments concerned, vested interest of a few is not allowing to do so. There is a need to evolve a strategy to deal with the situation. Some suggestions are:-

- (a) Government must evolve a comprehensive policy to deal with the problem of illegal migration after nationwide consultations and consensus building. The cut-off date of 24th March, 1971 must not be changed. A detailed survey must be undertaken to identify the illegal migrants. After the survey, each individual case should be investigated to ascertain the citizenship status while ensuring that Indian Muslims do not face harassment. Only one appeal before the District Magistrate (DM) should be allowed. The names of all those who are found to be illegal migrants should be deleted from the electoral rolls.
- (c) India should prepare a legal regime concerning the detection and deportation of migrants. There should be no differentiation between Hindu and Muslim illegal migrants.
- (d) Work on updating the 1950 National Register of citizens in Assam should be expedited.
- (e) India must adopt compulsory registration of births and deaths. There should be disincentives for those who fail to register, such as withholding of ration card etc.

### **India-Pakistan Border**

India shares 3323 kms of its border with Pakistan. The States bordering Pakistan are Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab and J&K. The LC is the most active portion of the border. Against 2071 kms that had to be fenced, 1986.99 kms has been fenced, leaving a shortfall of 84 kms. Against 2030.44 kms that had to be floodlit, 1973.84 kms have been floodlit, leaving a shortfall of 56.60 kms. The incomplete work is mostly in the state of Gujarat. The delay is due to the earthquake in Gujarat in 2001, floods in 2003, 2006, 2011 and 2015 and resultant price escalation and change of specifications.<sup>10</sup>

The real challenge on the India-Pakistan border is on the LC in J&K. The terrain in J&K is extremely rugged. A temporary fence, around 150 yards on our side, has been constructed along the LC over a distance of about 550 kms. It is effective when it is erect but when it snows, it collapses. It also gets washed away in floods and avalanches. Hence, some stretches remain vulnerable to infiltration. Pakistan tries to infiltrate terrorists into J&K regularly to keep the situation unstable.

### **India-Myanmar Border**

India shares 1643 kms long border with Myanmar which is unfenced and porous. It runs along Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. A number of factors make the India-Myanmar border vulnerable. These are:-

- (a) Even though the International Border (IB) between the two countries has been demarcated after the boundary agreement on 10 Mar 1967, the lines separating the two nations have not been marked on the ground, as the boundary cuts through the houses and villages and divides tribes such as Nagas, Kukis, Mizos etc. and forces them to live as citizens of different countries. These tribes have refused to accept this separation.
- (b) This border has an arrangement in place called the Free Movement Regime (FMR). This permits the tribes living along the border to travel 16 kms across the border on either side without visa restrictions. While the FMR has helped tribes to maintain their ancient ties, the Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs)

have been exploiting this to cross over to Myanmar to establish safe havens, get weapons and carry out attacks in India, to smuggle heroin into India and send ephedrine and pseudo-ephedrine drugs into Myanmar. The porous border also enables trafficking of women and children from the northeast of India to Myanmar and other Southeast Asian countries.

(c) The Assam Rifles (AR) is responsible for this border as well as for tackling insurgency in the northeast. They have 46 battalions (bns). 31 bns are kept exclusively for counter insurgency operations. Only 15 bns are deployed for border management. AR operates on Company Operated Bases (COBs) that are located deep inside Indian territory. They are unable to dominate the border effectively as there is lack of troops and infrastructure along this border.

India should strive to resolve the outstanding border issues with the elected government that has come to power in Myanmar recently, to the mutual satisfaction of the two countries. Government of India may also revisit the FMR document and see how to plug the loopholes that are exploited by the IIGs. Also, AR needs to deploy more troops for managing the India-Myanmar border to prevent the IIGs from having a free run on the border region.

### **India-Nepal Border**

India shares 1751 kms long border with Nepal. It lies along Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim. The Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed in 1950 governs the relations between the two countries. The Treaty “binds the two countries through socio-cultural and economic linkages....no impediment is placed on the movement of people crossing the border for availing avenues of livelihood.”<sup>11</sup>

The Nepalese entering India can be put in three categories - those who come on a daily basis to buy goods for domestic needs; seasonal migrants who come during the off-season to find work; and, those who move on a long-term basis and generally settle down in India. Economic migrants from India also go to Nepal for skilled and semi-skilled work. Some also take up teaching jobs or set up small and medium enterprises. The open border works as a “safety valve” for Nepal as the landlocked country cannot absorb a four million strong manpower within the country; however, now

it is a security threat because terrorists, smugglers and traffickers also cross the border freely. Other issues are:-

(a) The border is disputed between India and Nepal at Kalapani (400 sq kms) and Susta (140 sq kms). A Boundary Working Group at the Surveyors-General level was set up in 2014 to resolve the border issues.

(b) Nepal feels threatened with more Indians entering Nepal. Some Nepalese perceive this as India's "demographic invasion of Nepal." The Nepalese also allege that Bangladeshis enter Nepal in the guise of Indians. They estimate that nearly 2.6 per cent of the population of Terai Region of Nepal is Bangladeshi.<sup>12</sup>

(c) Ganja, hashish, herbs, etc. are smuggled from Nepal and urea, sugar, industrial explosives, gutkha etc. are smuggled into Nepal. International terrorists have also misused Nepal's open borders for arms trafficking.

(d) Pakistan has also started conducting its covert operations against India through Nepal. Many Kashmiris who went to Pakistan illegally use this route to return to India. Prior to demonetisation of Rs 1000/- and Rs 500/- currency notes, the ISI was pumping fake currency into India through Nepal.

(e) There is also the problem of trafficking of women and children due to the open border. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimated in 2003 that around 2 lakh Nepali women were in Indian brothels.<sup>13</sup> A voluntary group had mapped around 1268 routes which facilitated human trafficking.<sup>14</sup>

(f) During the Maoist insurgency in Nepal, the Nepali Maoists developed links with Indian revolutionary groups. The Annual Report of the Ministry of Defence, (2003-04) stated that this was a matter of serious concern.<sup>15</sup> According to the Asian Centre for Human Rights, most of the estimated 3.5 to 4 lakh Nepalese who were displaced due to the Maoist conflict settled in northern parts of West Bengal and Sikkim. This resulted in clamour for a "homeland" in the district of Darjeeling. Many Nepalese who have permanently settled in India are holding dual citizenship, which is against both, the Indian law and the Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

Many suggest that the movement of people on the India-Nepal border should be regulated. The matter is, however, very sensitive. Of late, China has been displaying a lot of interest in Nepal. Besides, only recently, issues connected with the New Constitution of Nepal had led to a lot of tensions within Nepal and between certain elements in Nepal and India. We should exercise caution on this issue and refrain from unnecessarily ruffling the feathers.

### **India-Bhutan Border**

India shares 669 kms long border with Bhutan. Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh lie along this border. India and Bhutan signed a treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1949. The two countries have traditionally shared close relations. However, there are two difficulties connected with the India-Bhutan border. The first pertains to the IIGs activity in the northeast. IIGs escape to Bhutan after committing atrocities in India. At India's request, Bhutan destroyed the camps of the IIGs by launching 'Operation All Clear' in 2003-04. Since then, the IIGs are careful while sneaking into Bhutan. The second concerns the Doklam Plateau in eastern Bhutan, which China covets. In an article in the Indian Defence Review (2014) titled 'In Bhutan too, Chinese Grab Land', Claude Arpi has written that the *"PLA...has also built important infrastructure such as the road from Yatung to Phari in the Chumbi Valley which cuts across the Doklam Plateau...By grabbing the Doklam Plateau, Beijing considerably enlarged the Chumbi Valley and its access to Sikkim and Siliguri."*<sup>6</sup>

### **Coastal Security**

India has a coastal border of 7516.60 kms. Nine States and four Union Territories have coastal borders. India's coasts are characterised by a diverse range of topography. The Department of Fisheries has identified 1376 landing points along the coast and most of them are unguarded. Traffic on the Indian coastal waters is very heavy. It is estimated that on a single day these witness the passage of 2115 ships, 690 coastal vessels, 850 dhows, 400 barges, 1000 dredgers and thousands of fishing vessels.<sup>17</sup> India faces a number of threats and challenges from the sea. Some of these are:-

- (a) **Maritime Terrorism.** Major population centers, nuclear power stations, naval bases, industrial complexes, offshore



petroleum complexes like Bombay High, etc. are high value targets for terrorist attacks.

(b) **Piracy and Armed Robbery.** Piracy by definition takes place on the high seas. However, in the case of India, the shallow waters of the Sunderbans have been witnessing 'acts of violence and detention' by gangs of criminals that are akin to piracy. Pirates operating in the Sunderbans usually belong to Bangladesh.<sup>18</sup>

(c) **Smuggling and Trafficking.** As long as the smugglers smuggle petty items, they pose a challenge only for the law enforcement agencies; but once they start networking with terrorist groups, they become a threat to national security e.g. the Dawood Ibrahim group, known as a smuggling gang, perpetrated the 1993 serial bomb blasts in Mumbai by using the same routes for bringing arms and explosives as it had been using to smuggle drugs etc. earlier.

(d) **Infiltration, Illegal Migration and the Refugee Influx.** India's western coast is vulnerable to infiltration by terrorists from Pakistan. The eastern and southern coasts are vulnerable to illegal migration and the influx of refugees.

(e) **Straying of Fishermen beyond the Maritime Boundary.** The arrests of Indian fishermen as well as confiscation of their boats has raised security concerns as the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) could extract information about landing points in India from them and use a confiscated boat to sneak in terrorists into India.

Coastal security did not figure prominently in the national security matrix until the terror attacks of 26 Nov 2008. Thereafter, things changed. Now there are three organisations working to safeguard India's coastal areas. These are the Coastal Police, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Indian Navy. The jurisdiction of the Coastal Police extends up to 12 nautical miles (nm) in the sea (territorial waters). The jurisdiction of the ICG extends from the shoreline to the limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone i.e. from 0 to 200 nm in the sea. The area beyond 200 nm (High Seas) falls within the jurisdiction of the Indian Navy. The Indian Navy has been designated as the authority responsible for the overall maritime security, which includes coastal security and offshore security.

The ICG has been mandated to secure India's interests in all its maritime zones under the Indian Coast Guard Act, 1978. The ICG has been additionally designated as the authority responsible for coastal security in the territorial waters also, including the areas to be patrolled by the Coastal Police. To enable the ICG to perform its duties effectively, it has been empowered under a large number of Acts. These have, in effect, made the ICG the principal organisation for the enforcement of all national legislation in the Maritime Zone of India.

The Director General Coast Guard has been designated as the Commander Coastal Command and is responsible for the overall coordination between the Central and the State Agencies in all matters relating to coastal security. The Coast Guard has been nominated as the lead Intelligence Agency for the coast. It is responsible for coordinating and sharing of intelligence among all the agencies operating on the coast.

### **Coastal Security Scheme**

Phase I of the Coastal Security Scheme was implemented from 2005-06 for a period of five years. 73 coastal police stations, 97 check posts, 58 outposts and 30 barracks were made operational along the coast. In addition, 204 interceptor boats, 153 jeeps and 312 motorcycles were also provided to the Coastal States/UTs for coastal security. The Coastal Security Scheme, Phase II commenced wef 01 April 2011. 131 Marine Police Stations, 60 jetties, 10 Marine Operation Centers, 150 boats (12 tons), 10 boats (5 tons), 20 boats (19 meters), 35 rigid inflatable boats, 10 large vessels (for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands), 131 four wheelers and 242 motorcycles were sanctioned. Andaman and Nicobar Islands have set up four Marine Police Operational Centres.<sup>19</sup>

### **Indian Coast Guard**

The Government of India approved the Coast Guard Development Plan 2012-17 (XII Plan) with an outlay of Rs 16,464 crores (Capital Rs 10,989 crores) to strengthen the ICG. It was envisaged that by the year 2018, the ICG would have 150 surface platforms. This may, however, not happen. Only Rs 4977 crores were spent under the head 'Capital' from 2012-13 to 2015-16. This is short of the targeted amount by Rs 6012 crores. The Ministry of Defence is not likely to allocate this much money to the ICG under the head



'Capital' in 2016-17. So, the ICG may not be able to achieve their desired level of assets.

The Standing Committee on Defence commented on this adversely. In its report tabled in Parliament recently it said, *"It is indeed worrying and dismaying to note that the funds allocated under the capital section for 2015-16 for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is short of the projected requirement by near about 50 per cent."*<sup>20</sup> A number of inadequacies have been detected in the coastal security architecture. Some of these are:-

- (a) **Lack of Coordination.** An estimated 22 different ministries and departments are involved in securing India's coasts. Each agency zealously guards its own turf. They also zealously guard any intelligence gathered, with the objective of scoring brownie points over other agencies.
- (b) **Differing Perceptions.** Various stakeholders such as the Indian Navy, ICG, Coastal Police and the Customs Department have differing perceptions about their roles.
- (c) **Inadequate Resources.** The Coastal Police suffers from shortage of manpower. Schemes to recruit retired naval and coast guard personnel have failed because of low salary, a low designation and a short contract period.
- (d) **Poor Training.** The coastal policemen state that the duration of the training provided by the ICG is too short and the vessels and equipment in which they are trained are more sophisticated than what is made available to them in the Coastal Police. The Customs personnel are hardly imparted any training.

In order to address the shortcomings, the Government has taken a number of initiatives. Noteworthy are:-

- (a) The "National Committee for Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security (NCSMCS)" against threats from the sea has been set up under the Cabinet Secretary to ensure timely implementation of various decisions taken by the Government in respect of coastal security. It includes the Chief of Naval Staff, Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Home Secretary, other Secretaries of the concerned Ministries, Chief Secretaries of the concerned States, DG Coast Guard etc.

(b) The Ministry of Defence has created four Joint Operation Centres (JOCs) at Mumbai, Vishakhapatnam, Kochi and Port Blair. These are jointly manned by the Navy and the ICG with inputs from the concerned central and state agencies. Coastal security exercises like *Sagar Kavach*, coordinated by the ICG with the coastal States/UTs, are held every six months to improve preparedness of all concerned.

(c) The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is providing security at all the major ports. The National Marine Police Training Institute (NMPTI) is being set up at village Pindara, District Dwarka in Gujarat.<sup>21</sup>

To enhance India's Maritime Domain Awareness, the National Command, Control, Communication and Intelligence Network (NC3I) was set up in November 2014. It collates data about all ships, dhows, fishing boats and all other vessels operating near the Indian coast from multiple technical sources and analyses them at the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) at Gurgaon. The compiled Common Operating Picture for Coastal Security is distributed to all 51 nodes of the Navy and Coast Guard.<sup>22</sup>

In the end, I would like to say that although the security of the land borders has always been on the radar of the Government of India; it is also looking very seriously at the aspect of coastal security. Even though the Mumbai terror attacks of 2008 acted as catalyst to more robust coastal security measures, we are well on our way to securing both our land as well as coastal borders. Thank you.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Annual Report 2015-16, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Prakash Singh, ex DG, BSF, '*Bangladeshi Immigrant: Are we headed for Another Partition?*' Dialogue Vol. 3 No. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Dr Rajeev Sharma and Ankita Bhushan, '*Illegal Immigration of Bangladeshis into India.*'

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Available at [Tripura.gov.in/Demographics](http://Tripura.gov.in/Demographics), Tripura State Portal, Demographic features (Accessed on 10 April 2017)

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Rajeev Sharma and Ankita Bhushan: 'Illegal Immigration from Bangladesh into India'.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Annual Report 2015-16, Ministry of Home Affairs.

<sup>10</sup> Annual Report, 2015-16, Ministry of Home Affairs.

<sup>11</sup> Sangeeta Thapliyal 1998: Mutual Security: the case of India and Nepal, Lancers Publishers, New Delhi.

<sup>12</sup> Sangeeta Thapliyal, 1999, *Movement of Population between India and Nepal: Emerging Challenges*, Strategic Analysis, Vol. 23, No. 5, pages 777-89.

<sup>13</sup> Rajeev Kumar, "Broader Implications of Open Border: The Case of India and Nepal.

<sup>14</sup> Hindustan Times, *Eyes Wide Open for Flesh Trade*, February 20, 2008, New Delhi.

<sup>15</sup> Annual Report 2003-04, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, page 12, para 1.19, sourced from scribd.com (Accessed on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2017).

<sup>16</sup> Indian Defence Review, Net Edition, date: 14 June, 2014, 'In Bhutan too, Chinese grab land', by Claude Arpi Available at [indiandefencereview.com](http://indiandefencereview.com) (accessed on April 7, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Pushpita Das, "Coastal Security: The Indian Experience," IDSA Monograph Series, No.22, September 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Annual Report 2015-16, Ministry of Home Affairs.

<sup>20</sup> Sourced from: Government in Choppy Waters as Panel Slams Coast Guard Budget... Indian Defence News, March 6, 2016, Indian Express. Available at [defencenews.in/article/Government-in-Choppy-Waters-as-Panel-Slams](http://defencenews.in/article/Government-in-Choppy-Waters-as-Panel-Slams) (Accessed on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2017).

<sup>21</sup> Annual Report 2015-16, Ministry of Home Affairs.

<sup>22</sup> Available at [indiannavy.nic.in/content/maharashtra-coastal-security-exercise](http://indiannavy.nic.in/content/maharashtra-coastal-security-exercise) (Accessed on 08 April 2017).

# Insurgencies of the Northeast and Management of Indo-Myanmar Border\*

Lieutenant General Shokin Chauhan, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM®

## Introduction

The Northeastern region of India is of immense geo-political importance to the sub-continent due to its terrain, location and peculiar demographic dynamics; and is one of the most challenging regions to govern. The region constitutes about eight per cent of India's landmass. The 40 million population accounts for only 3.1 per cent of the total Indian population. Post-Independence, the history of this region has been dismal – marred with bloodshed, tribal feuds and under-development. Due to insurgency/ widespread violence, several parts of the region were brought under the ambit of Disturbed Area Act (DAA) and the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA).

Protracted deployment and counter-insurgency operations by the Security Forces have been instrumental in abatement of the level of violence and restoring a security situation suitable for civil governance elements to function. At present, a delicate peace prevails in the region. Having realised the futility of violence, several insurgent groups have resorted to Suspension of Operations (SoO)/ Cease Fire (CF), thus, paving the way for negotiations/ resolution of problems.

The aim of the talk is to define the existing myriad insurgencies in the Northeast (NE) and highlight their cultural, linguistic and tribal cross connections; reasons for insurgencies and define a way forward to prevent their resurgence; issues of Indo-Myanmar Border management, as also highlight existing cultural, linguistic and tribal connections with Myanmar and what the future holds.

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\*This is an edited version of the talk delivered by Lieutenant General Shokin Chauhan, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, Director General Assam Rifles, on the subject 'Insurgencies of the Northeast and Management of Indo-Myanmar Border' at the USI on 24 Apr 2017.

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### **The Cross Connects: Genesis/ Historical Perspective, Terrain and Insurgencies in NE Region**

NE India is home to more than 200 separate tribes speaking a wide range of languages. Some groups have migrated over the centuries from places as far as South East Asia. They retain their cultural traditions and values. Its jungles are dense, its rivers powerful and rain and thunderstorms sweep across the hills, valleys and plains during the annual monsoons. The lushness of its landscape, the range of communities and geographical and ecological diversity makes the NE quite different from other parts of the sub-continent. The region has borders with China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh which has a major influence on the socio-economic fabric of the region.

#### **British Influence**

British began establishing themselves from 1818 onwards. In the ensuing First Anglo-Burmese War of 1824, Burmese were defeated and 'Treaty of Yandaboo' was signed. Consequently the Burmese withdrew to Myanmar and Ahom King ceded part of its territory to the British East India Company. The advent of British rendered the Ahom Kingdom extinct by 1838. From 1839 to 1873, the region was administered by the British as part of the Bengal Province. The plan to use NE India as a cushion from Myanmar/China was mooted under the 'Coupland Plan' by earmarking the region as 'Crown Colony'. The British could not exercise direct colonial control over several parts of the region. Thus, the Christian Missionaries were penetrated deep into the remote areas.

Parts of the NE region were classified as 'Excluded Area' or 'Partially Excluded Area' and brought under the ambit of 'Inner Line Regulation', thus serving ulterior British interests of preventing access to outsiders.

Isolation and separation denied the national mainstream to the tribals and inhibited their exposure to modernity. The people in plains considered hill tribes uncivilized/nomadic, while the hill tribes considered them outsiders and looked upon with distrust thus laying the foundation for hostility in the region.

#### **Assam**

In 1947, large parts of Bengal Province were merged into Assam which started slow immigration into Assam, initially of Bengali

Hindus. However, there was a major influx of Bengali Hindus after massacre in East Pakistan. Assam and Tripura bore the brunt of this influx. By 1970s, Bangladeshi Muslims started emigrating as well. Consequently, agitations commenced in 1979 over illegal immigration. Massive strain of additional population could not be borne by Assam and things began to crack. Anti-Foreigner agitation of 1980 and Assamese-Bodo tensions further aggravated the situation.

### **Arunachal Pradesh**

The Arunachali tribes of Tibeto-Burman origin point towards a northern connection in Tibet. Recorded history of this area is available only in the Ahom and Sutiya chronicles. This region then came under the loose control of Tibet and Bhutan, especially in the northern areas. Thus, a Buddhist connect with Lhasa, also the sixth Dalai Lama is believed to be from Tawang. Ahoms held the areas until the annexation of India by the British in 1858. In 1938, the Survey of India published a detailed map showing Tawang as part of North East Frontier Agency (NEFA). Finally, NEFA was created in 1954 and renamed as Arunachal Pradesh on 20 January 1972 and it became a Union Territory, with statehood on 20 Feb 1987.

### **Nagaland**

It is inhabited by 16 major tribes as well as various sub-tribes. The Naga tribes always had socio-economic and political links with tribes in Assam and Myanmar. Following an invasion in 1816, the area along with Assam came under rule of Myanmar. The British East India Company took control of Assam in 1826. By 1892, all of Nagaland except Tuensang area was governed by the British. It was politically amalgamated into Assam, which in turn was for long periods a part of the province of Bengal. In 1957, the Naga Hills became a district of Assam. Statehood was officially granted in 1963 and the first state-level democratic elections were held in 1964.

### **Manipur**

In 1824, King of Manipur, Gambhir Singh asked the British for help and Manipur became a British protectorate. In 1826, peace was concluded with Burma. Manipur became a princely state under British rule in 1891. In 1949, Maharaja Budhachandra was

summoned to Shillong, where he signed a Treaty of Accession merging the kingdom into India. Thereafter, the legislative assembly was dissolved and Manipur became part of the Republic of India in October, 1949 and a full-fledged state in 1972.

### **Mizoram**

The word 'Mizo' means highlander. Maximum population of the state is tribal belonging to seven major tribes. The British military officers in 1850s encountered series of raids in their official jurisdiction in Chittagong Hill Tracts from the neighbouring natives. Punitive British military expeditions in 1871 and 1889 forced the annexation of the entire Lushai Hills. After 1947, the land became Lushai Hills district under the Government of Assam. Inadequate action by the Assam Government, during Mautum Famine of 1959, led to emergence of Mizo National Front (MNF). The district was declared Union Territory in 1972 and a federal state of Indian Union in 1986.

### **Tripura**

It is the third-smallest state in the country, and is bordered by Bangladesh, Assam and Mizoram. The Bengali Hindus form the ethno-linguistic majority in Tripura with indigenous communities (scheduled tribes). In 1970, Tripura suffered major influx of Bangladeshi's leading to population inversion. The princely state of Tripura was merged with the Union of India in 1949. Tripura became a Union Territory on 01 Jul 1963, and attained the status of a full-fledged state on 21 Jan 1972.

### **Indo-Myanmar Linkages**

India-Myanmar relations are rooted in shared historical, ethnic, cultural and religious ties. India shares a 1643 km long border with Myanmar in four Northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram with Myanmar's Sagaing Region and Chin State. The Singrouphos and the Tai groups such as the Ahoms, Khamtis, Phakes, Aitons, Turungs and the Khamyangs moved to NE India from Shan state of Yunnan and Myanmar. In the same way, Nagas, Kukis, Mizos and the Lushais entered NE India from Burma. The people collectively known as Chins by the Burmese live along the border of NE India and Myanmar. Similarly, there are still a good number of Naga tribes inhabiting western



Myanmar adjacent to the Indian state of Nagaland. All these people still maintain their language, traditions, arts, crafts, life style as well as traditional religious practices. The interests are protected by Indo-Burma Treaty of 1951 on Border Affairs which allows free movement of the local ethnic tribals on both sides for the purpose of carrying on local trade and social visits.

### **Genesis and Evolution of Insurgency in Northeast India**

The reasons for insurgency differ from state to state. Several factors like common ethnic stock, similar historical background and comparable geo-politics are responsible for abetting insurgency in the region. In addition, certain other factors specific to states, regions or tribes also acted as abetting factors for insurgency in the NE.

(a) **Assam.** The roots of insurgency in Assam began with the protests/agitations by the All Assam Students Union (AASU) against illegal influx of Bangladeshi immigrants. A break-away faction of the AASU formed the ULFA in 1979 with an objective of creating a 'sovereign socialist Assam'. With signing of the Assam Accord in 1985, the AASU ended its agitation and constituted the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP). This regional political party participated in elections and subsequently formed the government. However, ULFA continued with its struggle, with sovereignty as the prime motive. Apart from ULFA and Bodo insurgents, the Dimasa groups of North Cachar Hills (now Dima Hasao District) had been claiming 'Dimaraji', a Dimasa state based on historical records and presence of Dimasas in majority. These demands were in direct clash with the interests of Nagas who claimed the overlapping areas as parts of 'Greater Nagaland/ Nagalim'. Dimasa insurgency was brought under control with the signing of Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) in 2012 with consequent formation of North Cachar Hill Autonomous Council (NCHAC). However, splinter Dimasa groups continue to venture out and carry out kidnapping and extortion.

(b) **Manipur.** The roots of insurgency in the State date back to 1964 with the creation of United National Liberation Front (UNLF). The discontentment was for the alleged forced merger of Manipur and delay in conferring statehood. Subsequently, groups like People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak



(PREPAK) in 1977, People's Liberation Army (PLA) in 1978, Kangleipak Communist Party in 1980 and Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) in 1994 emerged in Manipur. All insurgent groups propagated the idea of an independent Manipur with minor variation in ideologies. In the Hill districts, contiguity with Nagaland and inhabitation by Naga Tribes enabled spillover of Naga insurgent into the State. Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) (NSCN (IM)) has laid claim over these hill districts in the scheme of 'Nagalim' or Greater Nagaland. Kuki-Naga clashes in the Hill districts of Manipur in early nineties instigated creation of several Kuki groups in the State. The groups which were initially formed to resist oppression by Nagas subsequently started demanding a separate 'Kukiland' state encompassing the Kuki inhabited areas of Manipur, Assam, Mizoram and even parts of Myanmar. However, most of these groups are now under SoO with GoI. Islamist groups like the People's United Liberation Front (PULF) have also been founded to protect the interests of the 'Pangal Muslims'. The insurgents have been broadly divided into Valley Based Insurgent Groups (VBIGs) and others comprising the Nagas, Kukis, Muslims and those representing minor tribes.

**(c) Nagaland.**

(i) The Naga struggle for sovereignty commenced with the formation of Naga National Congress (NNC) in 1946. The alleged forced annexation by India and entry of massive Indian Forces in 1953 resulted in the party forming its armed wing called the Naga Federal Army (NFA). An underground government called Naga Federal Government (NFG) was also formed. The first major effort towards peace was the signing of the Shillong Accord in 1975. However, the peace accord led to rebellion within the NNC which led to the creation of the NSCN in 1980. Difference of ideologies between the top leaders of the NSCN led to the split in the group in 1988 resulting in the formation of NSCN (IM) and Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) (NSCN (K)). NSCN (K) further split in 2011 to form a splinter group called NSCN (Khole- Khitovi (KK)) which further split into NSCN (Khitovi Neokpao) (NSCN (KN)).

(ii) Prolonged violence gave way to hope of peace when NSCN (IM) entered into a CF with Gol in 1997 followed by NSCN (K) in 2001. NSCN (KK), on formation, got into a CF with the Government. In 2012, NSCN (K) also entered into a CF Agreement with Government of Myanmar. Several attempts for peace in the past have not borne the expected results. The progress of talks between UG groups and Gol suffered a setback in 2015 with NSCN (K) unilaterally abrogating the CF Agreement. This decision of the group led to another split and resulted in the formation of NSCN (Reformation). NSCN (K) further went on to join hands with ULFA (I), NDFB (S) and KYKL to form the United National Liberation Front of Western South East Asia (UNLFW). NSCN (IM) meanwhile went on to sign a 'peace accord' with Gol, which apparently lays down the 'framework' for future talks/resolution. Peripheral issues associated with the Naga insurgents include the demand by the Eastern Naga People's Organisation (ENPO) for a separate 'Frontier Nagaland' state and the involvement of the Naga Rengma Hill Protection Force (NRHPF) in ethnic clashes with the Karbis in 2013.

(d) **Tripura.**

(i) Major demographic change in the state is due to unhindered migration from East Pakistan/ Bangladesh. The tribals have been pushed to the hills while the Bengali speaking people took over the plains. Gradually, the political and administrative space was also dominated by the Bengalis. Years of deprivation, lack of opportunities for the ethnic people and government inaction to prevent immigration are the main causes of insurgency in the State.

(ii) Insurgency commenced with formation of National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), the first armed insurgent group in Tripura founded in 1989 by Dhananjoy Reang. All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) was formed in 1990 by Ranjit Debbarman due to difference of ideologies with the NLTF; though both groups perpetuated the objectives of an 'independent' Tripura State and expulsion

of Bengali speaking people. Borok National Council of Tripura (BNCT) was formed in 1997 as a result of split in NLTF.

(iii) Protracted operations by Security Forces, stable governments and reforms in social system have brought the situation in Tripura under control. Most of the insurgent leaders had taken shelter in Bangladesh to evade apprehension. Since 2009, insurgent activities in the State have considerably reduced. This has manifested into development and improvement in living/ economic standards of locals. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) report of 2009 placed Tripura as third lowest in insurgent activities in NE after Mizoram and Meghalaya. Recently, the Government of Tripura has revoked AFSPA in the State.

(e) **Mizoram.**

(i) The genesis of insurgency in the State dates back to the infamous Mautam Famine in the 1960. Inadequate action by the central/state governments was the cause of discontent among the locals, which thereafter graduated to other issues concerning employment opportunities, economy and social reforms. The Mizo National Front (MNF) led the insurgency in Mizoram till the Mizo Peace Accord was signed in 1986. This also resulted in the territory attaining statehood in 1987.

(ii) Insurgency in Mizoram, at present, is peripheral in nature, and comprises agitations by the Brus or Reangs and the Hmars. Brus were forced out of Mizoram in 1997 following atrocities on them. Approximately, 35,000 Bru refugees are presently lodged in temporary camps in Kanchanpur sub-division of North Tripura. Due to delay in settlement of their issues by the Mizoram Government, militant outfits like the Bru Liberation Front of Mizoram (BLFM) and Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) emerged.

(iii) Repatriation of the refugees is presently in progress in a phased manner. Efforts are underway to make the insurgents surrender for peaceful resolution of the issue.

The insurgent movement of Hmars was aimed to defend the rights of their community, having bases in the border areas of Mizoram, Manipur and Assam. Two insurgent outfits were formed in 2007, namely the Hmar People's Convention - Democratic (HPC (D)) and the Singlung People's Liberation Army (SPLA). In 2009, most of the cadres of the SPLA surrendered and the group, thereafter, became dormant.

(f) **Arunachal Pradesh.** The South Western districts of Tirap and Changlang, sharing boundary with Nagaland, have been subjected to Naga insurgency since early nineties. Tribal similarities have favoured sustenance of insurgency by both the factions of NSCN in these two districts. Post abrogation of CF by NSCN (K) in Nagaland, and formation of the UNLFW to jointly fight the Indian state has led to a spurt in insurgent violence in the region. ULFA has been traditionally using these areas for transit to its Saigang Division in Myanmar. Alliances between the NSCN (K) and ULFA (I) have also come to light in this area in the recent past.

### **Current Situation to Include the Rohingya Infiltration**

Protracted efforts by the Security Forces, involvement of interlocutors, participation of social groups and reconciliation by various insurgent groups has ensured the emergence of near normalcy in most parts of the region, in the past two decades. With most groups under CF or SoO and being engaged in negotiations with GoI, the spatial spread of insurgency in the NE is now reduced to few districts/areas. The spectrum of insurgency also varies from intense in certain areas to mild/ dormant in most areas of the NE. The state-wise spread of insurgency is given in the succeeding paras.

### **Assam**

(a) **Dimasa Groups.** Dimasa groups have been decimated, however, minor cases of extortion and kidnapping continue. The ex-cadres resort to such activities to sustain themselves in absence of any rehabilitation programme.

(b) **Transient Presence of NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K).** Cadres from both groups frequent the districts of Dima Hasao and Cachar to carry out extortion/rest and recoup or escape

action by Security Forces in Manipur. However, with reducing support of locals, regular apprehensions are made.

(c) **Islamic Groups.** The radical Islamist groups are demanding security for the Muslims in Assam. Influence of these groups is yet to fructify in districts of Karimganj, Hailakandi and Cachar. However, initial traces of the same are visible. Infiltration of Rohingyas is a matter of concern.

## Manipur

(a) **Valley Based Insurgent Groups (VBIG).** PLA is believed to have formed a 'government in-exile' in Bangladesh. The group enjoys popular support and has established linkages with the NSCN (K) in Myanmar. The group has been named in the ghastly attack on 6 DOGRA on 03 Jun 2015. The group, apart from insurgent activities, is involved in moral policing for weeding out social evils. Other groups like the UPPK, UNPC and KCP are generally dormant. Most of the VBIGs are not under SoO/negotiations with the State Government/Gol and have stuck to their un-constitutional demands, thus continuing unrest in the region. These groups possess immense potential to spread wide-scale violence.

(b) **People's United Liberation Front (PULF).** The only Muslim group of Pangal Muslims is active in Manipur Valley and Thoubal district. The group is active and shares solidarity with Islamic radical groups in Assam. Linkages with the ISI are also suspected. The group possesses potential to flare communal clashes with support from other Islamic groups in the NE.

(c) **Kuki Insurgent Groups.** All 18 Kuki insurgent groups in Manipur are under SoO with the Government and are in negotiations for a separate state encompassing areas inhabited by their tribe. The groups have their influence in parts of Senapati, Tamenglong, Chandel and Churachandpur districts. The dialogue process of these groups is under the banners of United People's Front (UPF) and Kuki National Organisation (KNO).

(d) **Hill Districts.** The region has witnessed sporadic violence in the recent past. With signing of the 'Framework Agreement' by NSCN (IM) with Gol, the region has witnessed

an increase in the influence of the group in the Hill districts. Several defections from other groups to NSCN (IM) have come to light. The same may be in hope for a brighter future and better chances of a resolution. After abrogation of CF by NSCN (K), a reduction in presence of their cadres in the Hill districts has been observed. Most of the cadres are believed to have shifted base to Myanmar.

### **Nagaland**

The current situation is complex and uncertain with each of the major groups tangentially pursuing their agendas. The present day dynamics can be explained as under:-

(a) **NSCN (K).** NSCN (K) unilaterally abrogated the CF in March 2015. This was followed by a series of violence in Kohima, Tuengsang and Manipur. Security Forces retaliated with daring cross-border raids on two camps simultaneously in Myanmar in June 2015. Actions by Security Forces led to neutralisation of several NSCN (K) cadres in Nagaland with a consequent decrease in the combat potential of the groups. The group has shifted base to Myanmar and joined NDFB (S)/ ULFA (I) to form the UNLFW. After the cross-border raids in June 2015, the camps of NSCN (K) have been pushed further in depth, thus creating a geographical buffer and reducing their potential to execute violent actions. Mr SS Khaplang, Chairman of the group is not keeping good health. The viability of NSCN (K) after death of Khaplang is questionable. The group is presently under CF with Myanmar Government and is engaged in a peace process.

(b) **NSCN (IM).** The NSCN (IM) is under CF with the GoI and still remains the most dominant group in Nagaland. The group has signed a 'Framework Agreement' with GoI on 03 Aug 2015 and has emerged as the harbingers of a renewed peace process in Nagaland. Since the signing of this historic agreement, the group has been actively involved in organising meetings with various stakeholders and garnering their consensus for the peace process. Consequently, mass defections from other groups to NSCN (IM) have been witnessed. Although contents of the Agreement have not been de-classified, the same holds a new hope for a permanent solution to the Naga issue which has been lingering on for almost 68 years.

(c) **Other Groups.** With the NSCN (IM) having taken lead in the peace process, the other UG groups like the NSCN (KN), FGN and NNC have criticised the Gol for engaging with only one group. After being fence-sitters for almost one month (since signing of the Framework Agreement), these groups had broken their silence on 09 Sep 2015 through a joint statement, vide which they expressed opposition to the peace initiative by the Gol. The newly created group called NSCN (R) is in the process of establishing itself and has signed CF agreement with Gol.

### **Arunachal Pradesh**

Abrogation of CF by NSCN (K) on 26 Mar 2015 has increased the threat dynamics in these districts. The region has witnessed several violent incidents in the recent past. Most of these incidents are attributable to the UNLFW group. A porous border and unmonitored movement across the IB have been the main hurdles in preventing movement of cadres in the area.

### **Other States of NE India.**

(a) **Tripura.** A stable government with effective governance, civil administration, law and order system, have contributed immensely towards peace in the region. Although, the three major groups of the State i.e. NLFT, ATTF and BNCT still exist, their combat potential has been substantially reduced due to protracted operations by Security Forces, apprehension of top leaders in Bangladesh and mass surrender of its cadres. The subdued limited spatial influence of these groups is confined to Dhalai, West Tripura and North Tripura districts. Situation is in absolute control and threat levels under acceptable limits.

(b) **Mizoram.** The official document entitled Mizoram Accord, 1986: Memorandum of Settlement was the landmark that restored peace and harmony in the State. The Bru insurgent groups are in tripartite talks with the state governments of Mizoram/ Tripura. However, little headway has been made towards return/settlement of Bru families. The Mizo Government has, however, managed to keep the insurgent factions engaged in negotiations and has prevented escalation of the situation. Similarly, the Hmar insurgent groups though



dormant, resort to sporadic acts of violence to voice their concerns about the government inaction towards their demands. Illegal transit of arms through the state is another issue that merits concern.

### **Indo-Myanmar Border**

The Indo-Myanmar Border (IMB) is characterised by the following peculiarities:-

- (a) Hilly terrain with thick forest cover.
- (b) Lack of infrastructure development and poor communication network.
- (c) Porous border with ambiguous demarcation.
- (d) Cross border ethnic, cultural and economic linkages
- (e) Free movement regime.
- (f) Vast gaps in deployment.
- (g) Indian Insurgent Groups camps in Myanmar.

The prevalent issues along the Indo-Myanmar Border are:-

- (a) Presently, approximately 1460.34 km of the border has been demarcated. The un-demarcated portions are in Arunachal Pradesh – 136 Km (BP 186 to Tri Junction) and in Manipur – 35 km of stretch in Kabaw Valley.
- (b) The un-demarcated portion of the border relates to the area of the nine Border Pillars (BP). BP 66 is missing on ground and location of BP 76 and 78 is unresolved. Six new BPs (BPs 89 to 94) are to replace five old BPs numbered 6 to 10. As of now, the old BPs are still intact and have not been renumbered pending joint survey. Other minor issues pertain to village Hoalenphai near BP 76, Govajang land dispute between BP 79 & 80 because of upcoming border fence and Choro Khunao near BP 93 due to establishment of Trade Centre.

Assam Rifles (AR) has been deployed for counter-insurgency and border guarding role along the Indo-Myanmar Border. Out of sanctioned strength of 46 battalions, 31 battalions are mandated for counter-insurgency and 15 are for border guarding role. Presently, all 13 border guarding battalions are deployed along Indo-Myanmar border on Company Operating Base (COB) basis,

and not as per the BOP system. The companies are deployed on all routes of ingress/egress and are checking infiltration, smuggling of arms, ammunition, drugs, fake currency notes etc. AR undertakes contraband resource control, narcotics and trafficking control and also engages with the Myanmar Army

### **Construction of Border Fence**

India commenced work on erecting of border security fence in 2003 but the same stalled, especially in Manipur, due to protests raised by the local Tangkhul, Kuki, and Naga communities. According to them, a huge stretch of land would come under Myanmar territory and foment unrest among people living on both sides of the border as the fence would divide many ethnic communities, including the Lushai, Nagas, Chins, and Kukis whose lands straddle the regions of both the countries. Unlike other borders between countries, Indo-Myanmar Border, due to ethnic linkages and historical factors, is peaceful and devoid of hostilities amongst people of both countries. Erecting a border fence is a costly exercise as it would entail earmarking troops for manning and surveillance, creation of infrastructure including road network and towers etc. which both countries can ill afford at this juncture.

Fencing the border will not only create a physical barrier but will be symbolic to a psychological barrier which is a retrograde step to India's strategic interests and engagement with Myanmar as it assumes importance in our 'Look/Act East Policy'. Most of the local State Governments are not in favour of a fence for fear of alienation of the local population and also an obstacle not manned loses its efficacy.

### **Rohingyas**

Rohingyas are a Muslim minority group settled in Rakhine State of Myanmar. 1.3 million Rohingyas reside in Myanmar. International attention was drawn to the Rohingyas in wake of 2012 Rakhine State riots. Likelihood of the Rohingyas trying to illegally cross over the Indo-Myanmar Border remains a faint possibility due to the geographic and demographic spread in Myanmar. Plight of Rohingyas in Myanmar continues to be bad due to denial of citizenship, forced displacement, forced labour, religious persecution, marriage restrictions and population control. The Rohingyas are a likely security threat as they are turning out to be

easy targets for Muslim Fundamental Organisations (MFOs). ISIS is also known to be reaching out to Rohingyas for recruitment. With countries unwilling to house the Rohingyas, joining ISIS may be an attractive option.

### **Indigenous Approach to Border Guarding**

The nature of border and the prevalent security situation requires an ingenious approach. The conventional methods of population control and military methods of border domination may have to be re-castigated. The design of domination of IMB and means to be followed to achieve the aim could be as under:-

(a) **Population Control by Technologically Advanced Methods.** Use of technologically advanced Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tagged permit, coupled with embedded GPS tracking can go a long way in tracking movement of people on crossing the border.

(b) **Electronic Fence.** The experience of Anti-Infiltration Obstacle System (AIOS) along the LC and the IB fence along Western Border has brought out the challenges in both construction and regular maintenance of the obstacle system. The strain on manpower and resources in erecting and manning such an obstacle system is exponential. The experience of AIOS over the years showcases the importance of surveillance over physical domination. Thus, electronic domination of the border assumes importance. The area of responsibility along the IB should have a number of IR/ thermal sensor cameras and detectors placed at dominating places along the IB, where movement of men and material can be observed. The COBs should be equipped with day-night camera embedded with quadcopter to carry out surveillance of desired locations by remotely operated/software fed from a distant location. A dedicated UAV node equipped with latest technological UAV needs to be created at the Division/IGAR level. Further, compatible secure communication equipment should be procured centrally for all Security Forces including CRPF, BSF, State Police and intelligence agencies for seamless, real time information sharing with counter-insurgency/counter-terrorist grid in depth or neighbouring locations for carrying out joint operations.

## Recommendations

Good neighbourly relations with Myanmar and prosperity amongst people living in border areas on both sides augurs well for the security of India and is in its national interest. India should assist Myanmar in effective border management of Indo-Myanmar Border. Various infrastructure development projects being undertaken in Myanmar should be executed and made functional in the laid down time frame by tackling various security and politico-bureaucratic hurdles. The GoI should also make provisions to provide economic aid for specific projects to governments of bordering Sagaing Region and Chin State to foster close links and gain cooperation on various border issues. Simultaneously, within NE Region, work must continue to develop infrastructure including connectivity (road, rail, air, inland waterways) for an overall development of the region as an economic hub to further India's 'Look East Policy' objectives.

## Crystal Ball Gazing

The Central Government is focussing efforts towards the NE Region and is hoping to address all major issues. The NE Region is likely to fare out as under in the next 10-15 years:-

- (a) **Assam.** The insurgency in Dima Hasao and neighbouring districts is generally under control and subdued, however, resurgence cannot be ruled due to the inter-tribal dynamics. Districts of Karimganj, Hailakandi and Cachar are likely to suffer mainly on communal lines with noticeable increase in Muslim population, seeping in of fundamental ideas and support for Islamic Fundamental Organisations. The sub region will continue to be a transit between Bangladesh and Manipur/Myanmar.
- (b) **Arunachal Pradesh.** The proximity to China, Myanmar and Nagaland is likely to continue to fuel the insurgency due to deep rooted linkages. The three districts of South Arunachal will continue to act as safe havens for transit between Myanmar and China to plains of Assam.
- (c) **Nagaland.** Though a Framework Agreement has been signed, issues will continue to crop up with disagreement amongst various groups, factions and tribal leaders. GoI is unlikely to cede to demands of Nagalim, even within the ambit

of Constitution of India and thus the struggle duly backed by inter-tribal rivalries, religious, political and foreign forces will continue. Leaders of NSCN (IM) may opt to be absorbed into the governmental framework, however, armed struggle may not completely be diminished.

(d) **Manipur.** With large number of tribes and clash of demands between Nagas and Kukis, the issue seems far from any resolution. Influence of Myanmar, a porous border and cultural linkages will keep issues alive. Also, rapid increase in Muslim population, presence of Pangals and proximity to South Assam will bring in fresh variables in the entire equation.

(e) **Mizoram.** The Indo-Myanmar Border is unlikely to form a contentious issue between the two countries, however, efforts towards illegal trade will continue from both sides. Mizoram is likely to develop into a major transit route/alternate transit route for move of men and material from Eastern side to Bangladesh and vice versa. Hmars are likely to continue to back their claims for a Hmar State which might not see the light of the day, thus keeping the paltry activities live. Settlement of Brus is likely to be fully settled soon, however focused efforts must continue.

(f) **Tripura.** The geographical location of the State makes it susceptible to influence from the neighbours to the extent at causing population inversion, if not checked. The hill tracts, unless provided impetus, will continue to house insurgent groups from tribes which feel dejected and ignored. Resurgence of insurgency cannot be ruled out unless the local Security Forces and police are empowered.

## In My Eyes: India, Indians and India-China Relations\*

**Mr Luo Zhaohui, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in India®**

**L**ieutenant General PK Singh, Director USI, Shri Kanwal Sibal, Ambassador and former Foreign Secretary of India and dear friends, Namaste (Good Morning)!

It's my great honor to come to the United Service Institution of India (USI) and meet with friends here. USI is one of the major, most influential Indian think tanks with the longest history. I want to thank General Singh for his invitation and gracious remarks.

Last month, I visited Assam and paid special homage to the Second World War cemetery of Chinese soldiers at Tinsukia district. Among the over 400 soldiers buried there, only one name can be found on the tombstones; and that cemetery is only one of many. From 1942 to 1945, Chinese soldiers fought side by side with the British and the Indian Army and more than 100,000 of them sacrificed their precious lives on foreign soil. Even today, their families, if any, don't know where they are buried. This is what being a soldier is all about.

Being a soldier means devotion, sacrifice and defence of peace. I am a career diplomat, and there is much in common between a diplomat and a soldier. Being a diplomat also means sacrifice, discipline and pursuit of peace. On this occasion, I want to salute all the soldiers.

I am from China, a neighbour of India. Our two countries have thousands of years of friendship and practical common interests, and sometimes, differences and grievances.

First of all, let me share with you how the Chinese look at India and the Indians. First, speaking of India, people in China may immediately think of the long history of exchanges and profound

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\*This is the text of the talk delivered by His Excellency Mr Luo Zhaohui, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in India at the USI on 05 May 2017, with Shri Kanwal Sibal, IFS (Retd), former Foreign Secretary of India, in the chair.

®**Mr Luo Zhaohui** has a Master's Degree in History and started his career as Attaché, then Third Secretary, Department of Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in 1985. He has been an Ambassador to Pakistan, Canada and presently, he is the Ambassador of PRC in India since September 2016.

integration of our two cultures. The Indus River civilization, Buddha and the ancient Silk Road will crop up in mind. In 67 AD, the Ming Emperor of China's Eastern Han Dynasty dreamed of a golden man and was told by his advisor that it was the Buddha. So the Emperor sent envoys to invite the Buddha to his land. On the way, the envoys met two Indian monks carrying Buddhist sutras on the back of a white horse. They returned to the capital city of Luoyang, and built the first Buddhist temple in China – the White Horse Temple. Of course, this episode was not the first record of historical contact between China and India. Our two countries had been in touch for hundreds of years before that.

In 2003, Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee visited the White Horse Temple and donated for the construction of an Indian style Buddhist Hall with good intention, which became a new symbol of China-India friendship. At the time when Golden Gupta Dynasty ruled India, there were Hindu temples in China's Quanzhou city, the starting point of the Maritime Silk Road. They attested to the large presence of Indian merchants in Quanzhou at that time as well as the prosperity Quanzhou enjoyed due to the Maritime Silk Road.

Not long ago, I visited Ajanta Caves, which inspired the Dunhuang Grottoes, Yungang Grottoes and Longmen Grottoes in China, and whose styles of caves, sculptures and frescos had great influence on China. China's history books are full of stories of eminent monks like Xuanzang, Faxian and Bodhidharma travelling through the Silk Road and serving as bridges between Chinese and Indian cultures. Our two countries have jointly produced the film *Kongfu Yoga*, and I'm facilitating the co-production of a new movie, the *Bodhidharma*. Monk Bodhidharma went to China at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. and originated the Zen Buddhism and Shaolin martial arts. Before the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, no country had a larger impact on Chinese culture than India.

Secondly, there is a high degree of similarity between the history of China and India, signaling a special link between the two countries. Both are among the four ancient civilisations. Confucius lived during the Spring and Autumn Period of China, while Buddha emerged in India at about the same time, and Buddha was 10 years older than Confucius. The first Emperor who unified China was Qin Shi Huang, the First Emperor of Qin Dynasty, while the



first Emperor that unified India was Ashoka. They also lived around the same period. When China was enjoying strength and prosperity under the rule of Tang Dynasty, India was experiencing the Golden Age of Gupta Dynasty. And, the Mughal period of Indian history ran in parallel with the heydays of Qing Dynasty. After that, China and India became semi-colony or colony, and then gained Independence and liberation at almost the same time. This degree of similarity of history shows the similarity between our civilisations, and economic development level, as well as the closeness of our exchanges. That's why we put forward the "Panchsheel" together.

Thirdly, there is a well-known tourism promotion slogan about India – Incredible India. For the Chinese people, India is a country with long history and profound civilisation, wonderful landscapes and unique culture. Chinese people believe the Indian people are intelligent, good at math and logical analysis. They think everyone here is an IT genius, good singer and dancer. This is a tradition derived from the ancient *Upanishad*. Almost all the major religions, including Brahmanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Sikhism etc., can trace their origin back to India. There were also many prominent historical figures in India, like Rama, Buddha, Sankaracharya, Akbar, Mahatama Gandhi, Tagore, etc. In recent years, as India promotes Yoga across the world, Yoga is becoming highly popular among Chinese white collar workers. A Yoga college and many Yoga organisations have been established in China. There are many Yoga practitioners among Chinese diplomats in the Chinese Embassy in India. Indian cuisines are popular in China and famous for their spicy, hot and curry taste, particularly Tandoori Chicken and Chapati. In a word, speaking of India, all that comes to mind of a Chinese are the good things.

For me, India is like my second hometown. Before joining the Foreign Service, I was doing research on India in a Chinese think tank. The opportunity to go to India was the only reason inspiring me to become a diplomat. Indeed, under the circumstances in the 1980s, becoming a diplomat seemed to be the only way to come to India. I was first posted in India in the late 1980s, and since then, I personally witnessed and took part in many major events in the China-India relations. My wife Dr. Jiang Yili was the first Chinese to get PhD from Delhi University.

Friends, I would like to share with you the Chinese perspective on India's development and China-India relationship.

The ecological environment is as good as what it was during my first posting in India more than 20 years ago. Delhi has become cleaner with wider streets and new high risings. The subway and highway impressed me with the rapid and tremendous changes taking place in India. I have visited Maharashtra, Assam, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Bihar, where I saw remarkable progress in local infrastructures. According to the latest statistics, India's GDP has reached 2.2 trillion US dollars, ranking the 6<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world. India is also the fastest growing economy. I would like to congratulate you on what India has achieved.

I am also glad to see that China has contributed its share to India's development. The China-India bilateral trade volume is now over 70 billion US dollars. Cumulative Chinese investment in India was nearly 5 billion US dollars. Over 500 Chinese companies have established themselves in India. Over one million people travelled between our two countries last year. There are 80 flights between our two countries every week.

Today, China is the second largest economy in the world, with a GDP of 11 trillion US dollars. China's development also benefited from India's participation.

We sincerely hope that India can become more developed, as it not only benefits Indian people but also creates more opportunities for China's development. Some people in the West misread China and tend to think that the "Dragon" and the "Elephant" are inevitable rivals, and that China would not like to see India developing. This conception is wrong. We hope to see India develop well and we are more than happy to help India develop to achieve common development.

That is why we attach great importance to the China-India relations. Only with sound bilateral relations can we promote development, and create more facilities for our common development. Essentially, the growth of bilateral relations and common development are inseparable.

First, we need to synergise development strategies. As the two largest developing countries, China and India have similar visions and complementary strategies of development. We both support globalisation and free trade. China is at a crucial stage of

comprehensively deepening reform and economic restructuring. We are implementing programmes such as “Made in China 2025”, “Internet Plus”. India is also at a critical juncture of reform and development, and Prime Minister Modi has put forward such initiatives as “Make in India”, “Digital India”, and “Smart Cities”. We need to synergise our development strategies and pursue common development.

Second, we need to continue to deepen practical cooperation in the economic and trade area. We may actively explore building a China-India Free Trade Area or Regional Trading Arrangement, and encourage cooperation on major projects. We look forward to the new industrial cities to be built by Wanda Group and China Fortune Land Development Co. (CFLD) in India. These projects will help create local jobs and boost India’s development. We can work together in new and renewable energy and foster new areas of cooperation.

Third, we need to continue the close exchanges in political, people-to-people and cultural fields. We should give full play to the role of high level exchanges in guiding bilateral relations. President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Modi will have opportunities to meet each other on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit, G20 Summit and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Summit this year. We may also further expand exchanges between youths and local governments. China will receive a 200-member youth delegation from India next month.

Fourth, we need to properly manage differences. As two large neighbours, it is natural that we have some differences. Even family members may have problems. What we need to do is to properly manage the existing issues while actively resolve newly emerged problems. We shall reduce differences by focusing on cooperation and work for a healthier bilateral relationship by addressing differences.

Fifth, we need to set a long term vision for the China-India relations. Here is my suggestion. Firstly, start negotiation on a *China-India Treaty of Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation*. Secondly, restart negotiation of China-India Free Trade Agreement. Thirdly, strive for an early harvest on the border issue. Fourthly, actively explore the feasibility of aligning China’s “One Belt One Road Initiative” (OBOR) and India’s “Act East Policy”.

The OBOR and regional connectivity could provide China and India with fresh opportunities and highlights for the bilateral cooperation. The OBOR is a major public product China has offered to the world. It is a strategic initiative aimed at promoting globalisation and economic integration.

India has initiated a host of attractive reforms and open-up policies, such as “Make in India”. On the diplomatic front, India has put forward the “Act East Policy”, “Spice Route” etc., and a number of regional connectivity initiatives, as well as vigorously pushed forward the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). As close neighbours, China and India could be natural partners in connectivity and the OBOR.

Now the GDP of India is roughly that of China in 2004, some 13 years ago. China leads India by 13 years mainly because we started reforms and opening-up 13 years earlier. India has its advantages, such as a large number of English speaking population, the population dividend, a booming market, a sound legal system, as well as its leading role in IT, bio-pharmaceuticals and Bollywood, to name just a few.

Compared with China, India has a few disadvantages. Globally, the current trend of anti-globalisation and anti-free trade is not in line with India’s open-up efforts. India’s neighbouring environment is different from that of China. China’s reforms and opening-up benefited from its proximity to developed economies like Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore. Shenzhen grew into a major metropolis mainly thanks to its closeness to Hong Kong. China and India differ in political systems and China enjoys stronger policy consistency. India’s political system has its own advantages but sometimes may cause fluctuations in its policies or at least in its pace of development. As soon as China set reforms and opening-up as its center task, the whole nation is in full sail. China’s accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is a typical example where domestic development and reform are boosted through external factors. After I came to India, one of my impressions was that some bureaucrats of India, to a certain extent, could not catch up with the pace of its politicians. Some policies are implemented too slowly. At the same time, Pradeshes are keener on attracting investments and expanding trade relations with foreign countries.

In this context, like the Indian initiatives, China's OBOR focuses on improving regional connectivity and economic cooperation, especially infrastructure building. It can meet the need of the countries along the OBOR and provide India and other regional countries with important opportunities. We have noted that India is relatively positive to the BCIM Economic Corridor, and hosted the third meeting of the BCIM Economic Corridor Joint Study Group not long ago. As a founding member of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), India has appointed the Vice President to the Bank. Just a few days ago, the AIIB granted funds for the projects under India's "Power for All" in Andhra Pradesh.

However, India still has reservations over the OBOR, saying that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passes through the Pakistan-Controlled-Kashmir, raising sovereignty concerns. China has no intention to get involved in the sovereignty and territorial disputes between India and Pakistan. China supports the solution of the disputes through bilateral negotiations between the two countries. The CPEC is for promoting economic cooperation and connectivity. It has no connections to or impact on sovereignty issues. Even we can think about renaming the CPEC. China and India have had successful experience of delinking sovereignty disputes with bilateral relations before. In history, we have had close cooperation along the ancient Silk Road. Why shouldn't we support this kind of cooperation today? In a word, China is sincere in its intention to cooperate with India on the OBOR, as it is good for both of us.

Some Indian media say that China always puts Pakistan first when handling its relations with South Asian countries. I want to tell you this is not true. Simply put, we always put China first and we deal with problems based on their own merits. Take Kashmir issue for example, we supported the relevant UN resolutions before 1990s. Then we supported a settlement through bilateral negotiation in line with the *Simla Agreement*. This is an example of China taking care of India's concerns. Today few Indian friends remember this episode, or they have chosen to forget it. On Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) issue, we do not oppose any country's membership, believing that a standard for admission should be agreed upon first. On promoting India-Pakistan reconciliation, we hope that both sides could live together in peace, because this is conducive to

regional stability and is in the interests of China. The development of China, India, Pakistan and the stability of the whole region call for a stable and friendly environment. Otherwise, how could we open up and develop? That's why we say we are willing to mediate when India and Pakistan have problems. But the precondition is that both India and Pakistan accept it. We do this only out of good will. We do hope that there is no problem at all. When the Mumbai terrorist attacks on November 26, 2008, took place, I was Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, and I did a lot of mediation at that time.

Now I want to move on to the topic of China-India counter-terrorism cooperation. Last November, Mr Meng Jianzhu, Special Envoy of President Xi Jinping and Secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Committee of the CPC Central Committee visited India. He met with Prime Minister Modi and Minister of Home Affairs, Rajnath Singh. The two sides had in-depth communications on counter-terrorism and security cooperation. Before that, the two sides held the High-level Security and Counter-terrorism Meeting, opening a new chapter in law enforcement and security cooperation between our two countries. I attended all the meetings and was greatly encouraged.

China has been a victim of terrorism. In the 1990s, Taliban trained the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) elements. Then the ETIM elements took refuge along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border area, threatening security and stability of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China. As a UN sanctioned terrorist group, ETIM is still creating trouble for us today, and we are ready to step up counter-terrorism cooperation with India and Pakistan. While I was Ambassador to Pakistan, I got to realise that Pakistan also suffered seriously from terrorism. Back then, my 9-year-old daughter was with me in Pakistan. Every time we returned to China for holiday, upon arriving at the Beijing Airport, she would let out a sigh of relief, saying that finally she could hang out freely. What I want to say is, first, China strongly opposes terrorism; second, China is ready to work with India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the international community in fighting terrorism, and believes that terrorism knows no borders; third, countries need to have compatible policies, consensus and actions in fighting terrorism.

Thank you.



# Maintaining International Peace and Security through United Nations Peacekeeping

**Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji, IFS (Retd)**

**B**y the end of 2016, the number of people forcibly displaced by conflicts crossed 65 million, the largest such number since the end of the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> This huge human and material cost is the biggest indictment of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for not fulfilling its primary responsibility, given by the United Nations (UN) Charter, for maintaining international peace and security.<sup>2</sup>

The UN Charter restrains the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) from making any recommendation on issues that are on the agenda of the fifteen-member UNSC.<sup>3</sup> Within the UNSC, decision-making continues to be dominated by the five permanent members (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China) who have the power to veto decisions without giving any reason. This means that effectively, only five out of the 193 UNGA member states determine the UNSC's approach on how to maintain international peace and security. Since 2010, permanent members of the UNSC have assumed the right (which is not given to them by the UN Charter) to take the lead in drafting decisions of the UNSC. This is known as the role of the "pen-holder".<sup>4</sup>

The drafters of UNSC mandates for resolutions on UN peace-keeping operations (PKOs) see PKOs as the UNSC's main platform for both securing and sustaining peace and security. Currently, 16 UN PKOs are in the field under mandates given by the UNSC. These include relatively quiet PKOs like United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), where the number of UN peacekeepers deployed are not large. The bulk of UN peacekeepers are to be found in the PKOs deployed in Africa, which is also the region where the nature and effectiveness of UN

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<sup>1</sup>Shri Asoke Kumar Mukerji, IFS (Retd) served in the Indian Foreign Service for more than 37 years before retiring in December 2015 as India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York. At the United Nations, the Ambassador has collaborated closely with Japan on the G4 attempts to implement the unanimous mandate of world leaders for early reform of the UN Security Council.



PKOs as an instrument of maintaining peace and security faces its biggest test.<sup>5</sup>

Out of the more than 96,000 uniformed troops deployed in UN PKOs in April 2017, the vast majority is contributed by African member states (about 47,000 troops) and Asian member states (about 33,500 troops).<sup>6</sup> Yet, in the decision-making process on how these UN peacekeepers are deployed, Africa is completely unrepresented in the permanent membership of the UNSC, while Asia (which has an equal number of 54 member states as Africa in the UNGA), has only one permanent member – China. So far, China has not played the role of “pen-holder” for UN PKOs.

The lack of any permanent representation from Africa in the UNSC has had a major adverse impact on the approach of the Council in formulating policy to maintaining the peace when confronted with crises in Africa. Although Council resolutions regularly invoke Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which obliges cooperation from member states, the Council has not been able to implement its resolutions due to its lack of representativeness. In turn, the ineffectiveness of the Council impacts negatively on the effectiveness of the PKO.

A look at specific UN PKOs deployed in Africa illustrates this problem, which needs to be addressed on an urgent basis. During the past year, 39 UN peacekeepers of the United Nations Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) have been killed; many due to terrorist attacks.<sup>7</sup> A call to focus on the political aspects of peacemaking has been made with respect to MINUSMA, where clan warfare has fused with terrorism in a volatile manner.<sup>8</sup> However, the UNSC remains indifferent to taking recourse to the provisions of Chapter VI of the UN Charter for peacefully negotiating the resolution of the crisis in Mali, relying instead on the robust provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter to guide MINUSMA’s mandate.

The situation is equally dire in the cluster of UN PKOs in central Africa. The crisis in South Sudan, which hosts the United Nations Mission in the South Sudan (UNMISS), is a good example.

The US, which has arrogated to itself the right to draft UNSC policy on South Sudan as a “pen-holder”, has ignored the provisions of Chapter VI of the UN Charter altogether.<sup>9</sup> It has called for the

use of targeted sanctions and an arms embargo. The US failed to get a resolution, endorsing this approach, passed by the majority of the UNSC in December 2016, despite there being no vetoes on this resolution.<sup>10</sup>

China, which has significant financial and military investments in South Sudan, initiated a bilateral diplomatic effort with the appointment of a Special Envoy in January 2015. This was accompanied by the Chinese Foreign Minister hosting a meeting of the South Sudanese warring factions in Beijing the same month. China also invested significantly in UNMISS, contributing 1000 troops and the Deputy Force Commander.<sup>11</sup> Neither of these strategies adopted by China has had any impact on stopping the growing conflict in South Sudan.

Why is the UNSC unable to succeed in its efforts to use PKOs to maintain peace and security, whether it is in UNMISS, or United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), which all border South Sudan? In the past year, as many as 59 UN peacekeepers have died in these four PKOs alone. The main reason (with the exception of China's failed diplomacy in South Sudan) appears to be the disinclination (and inability) of the UNSC to be active on the ground, preferring instead to outsource peace-making outside the UNSC. This, ironically, substantiates the urgent need to increase representation in the Council's decision-making process, which has to be done by amending the UN Charter to create additional permanent seats in the UNSC.

Another reason for the UNSC's ineffectiveness is the lack of direct consultations between the 15 member states in the UNSC and the troop-contributing member states of the UN who are not represented in the UNSC. Such direct consultations are provided for by Article 44 of the UN Charter.<sup>12</sup> The UNSC has deliberately distorted these provisions by asking troop-contributing non-UNSC member states to consult with the Secretariat of the UN, which does not decide on the contents of UNSC decisions. Consequently, the UNSC does not receive valuable ground-level inputs from non-UNSC member states with UN troops on the ground, which

it could have used to tailor both the deployment of UN peacekeepers, as well as to craft a viable political solution to the problem.

In South Sudan, for example, the UNSC has ignored inputs from UN peacekeepers from non-UNSC member states on the ground pointing out that the origin of many of the initial disputes which have triggered off the current South Sudanese civil war are to be found in disputes over grazing rights for cattle between different ethnic or tribal groups. The lack of any permanent representation in the UNSC from Africa aggravates this problem, since UNSC resolutions drafted to resolve conflicts fail to consider local traditions and customs which can facilitate peace-making solutions and prevent local conflicts from becoming larger crises.

At a time when terrorism is becoming the single biggest threat to the international peace and security, it is important to look at how the UNSC has responded to the impact of terrorism on UN PKOs. The UNSC has adopted over 30 resolutions so far on countering terrorism. The impact of these resolutions on the ground has been minimal, often due to non-cooperation of member states. This is exacerbated by the Council's lack of transparency and accountability in decision-making. When terrorism has targeted the UN PKOs directly, the UNSC has been singularly ineffective. No action appears to have been taken by the UNSC so far to penalise the terrorists who held hostage UN peacekeepers in the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights in 2014.<sup>13</sup> A similar weakness appears to guide the UNSC's approach to investigating, prosecuting and penalising terrorism directed against the MINUSMA PKO in Mali.<sup>14</sup>

These examples show that the solution to making effective use of UN PKOs by the UNSC would have to begin by addressing the ineffectiveness of the UNSC itself. This was recognised unanimously by world leaders more than a decade ago. At the UN World Summit held in 2005 in New York, world leaders committed themselves to *"early reform of the Security Council - an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations - in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thus to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions."*<sup>15</sup>

The mandate given by the world leaders in 2005 has not yet been implemented. Implementation of this mandate has been blocked by a small group of a dozen anti-reform countries in the

UNGA banded together as “Uniting for Consensus”,<sup>16</sup> who oppose any increase in the number of permanent members.

India, with like-minded pro-UNSC reform countries, has taken three initiatives to overcome this opposition. First, it pushed the decision of the UNGA to give formal structure to the mandate by launching inter-governmental negotiations in 2007.<sup>17</sup> Second, it helped catalyse the UNGA decision in 2008 identifying five interlinked parameters for negotiations: categories of membership, viz. the question of the veto; regional representation; size of an enlarged Security Council and working methods of the Council; and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.<sup>18</sup> Third, India led a concerted effort by 122 countries in the UNGA on 14 Sep 2015,<sup>19</sup> to have a negotiating document adopted unanimously.<sup>20</sup> This document, tabled by the Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa, who was the President of the UNGA, has been referred to as the “Kutesa Consensus”.<sup>21</sup>

Currently, momentum on UNSC reforms in the UNGA has faltered. This is due to the “missed opportunities by pro-reform States”<sup>22</sup> and the aggressive diplomacy of the People’s Republic of China<sup>23</sup> which has reportedly used “levers of power and influence, including economic pressure”.<sup>24</sup> The result has seen an abrupt change of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) successful Chairman, a distortion of the agreed parameters of text-based negotiations,<sup>25</sup> and, most significantly, a visible dilution<sup>26</sup> in the rock-solid African Group support for the Kutesa Consensus.

Will the UNSC be able to re-orient its approach to using PKOs for maintaining the peace? A beginning could be made by the UNSC in recognising the approach of the new Secretary General (SG) of the UN, whom it recommended for appointment by the UNGA after a fairly long and transparent selection process. The new SG is committed to restore the core vision of the UN Charter, which is the peaceful settlement of disputes. In his pre-election statement circulated in April 2016, SG António Guterres informed the member states of the UN that he wanted to strengthen the *“nexus between peace and security, sustainable development and human rights policies - a holistic approach to the mutually-reinforcing linkages between its three pillars”* (emphasis added).<sup>27</sup> The SG has set out five priorities to achieve this objective. These are:

First, a surge in diplomacy for peace. Under the guidance of the Security Council and in accordance with the Charter,

he advocated the SG should actively, consistently and tirelessly exercise his good offices and mediation capacity as an honest broker, bridge builder and messenger of peace.

Second, a “peace continuum”. He clarified that this meant developing a comprehensive, modern and effective operational peace architecture, encompassing prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and long-term development. This architecture would be built on the foundation of the recently concluded UN reviews on peacekeeping, peacebuilding and on women, peace and security. The SG emphasised that the UN should ensure the primacy of political solutions at all stages, promote preventive approaches, mainstream human rights, and foster inclusive engagement and empowerment of women and girls.

Third, further investment in capacity and institution-building of States. He saw this as a central element of prevention, promoting inclusive and sustainable development, overcoming fragilities and strengthening the ability of governments to address the needs of their people and respect their rights.

Fourth, the crucial role of prevention in combating terrorism. According to him, the international community has the legal right and the moral duty to act collectively to put an end to terrorism “in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes”.

Fifth, the SG placed importance on the common values which give strength to the UN. To this end, he suggested fostering inclusion, solidarity and the cohesion of multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious societies.<sup>28</sup>

To implement this vision, in February this year the SG initiated structural reforms of the UN Secretariat that directly deals with peacemaking, with the objective of integrating the work of the Departments of UN Peacekeeping and Field Support with that of the Department of Political Affairs. A report commissioned by him is expected to be submitted soon, to be followed by consultations initiated by the SG. It is to be hoped that these consultations will be not only with the five permanent members of the UNSC and the major financial contributors to the UN, but also the major troop

contributing countries like India, who have been significantly involved in the peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities of the UN.

It is evident that the SG's emphasis on a "holistic" approach needs to be implemented by the UNSC. The consequences of conflicts are felt not only by the populations in the zone of such conflicts, but by others in the region and beyond. Conflicts impact on the integrity of the infrastructure on which national, regional and even international socio-economic development processes are based, seriously jeopardising the implementation of Agenda 2030's 'Sustainable Development Agenda'.

Beyond structural reforms and augmentation, it is probably time to bring a broader array of stakeholders to reform the UNSC. The UNGA has already seen the results of such a broader, multi-stakeholder, approach to crafting responses to the challenges of sustainable development, climate change and cyber issues in 2015. There is no reason why a similar approach should not be applied to the way in which the UN responds to challenges to international peace and security. To do this, the closed inter-governmental negotiation process in the UNGA on UNSC reforms should be converted into a multi-stakeholder process. Meetings on UNSC reforms should be globally webcasted to ensure transparency and accountability for positions taken by participating governments.

Such a move would resonate across the wider international community across all continents. It would demonstrate that their stakes in sustaining the peace and security, upholding human rights and making progress on sustainable development, objectives for which approximately 3500 UN peacekeepers so far have laid down their lives, are integral to upholding the common values that imbue the UN.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> "Figures at a Glance", United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

<sup>2</sup> UN Charter, Article 24. Published by the Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York. Available at <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Article 12.

<sup>4</sup> "The Procedure of the UN Security Council", 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Available at <https://www.scprocedure.org/chapter-5-section-6b>



<sup>5</sup> Peacekeeping Fact Sheet, the United Nations. Available at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml>

<sup>6</sup> “Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations”, as of 30 April 2017. Available at the United Nations website at [http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2017/apr17\\_1.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2017/apr17_1.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> “International Day of UN Peacekeepers”, the United Nations. Available at <https://www.un.org/en/events/peacekeepersday/>

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<sup>9</sup> Op. Cit note 4.

<sup>10</sup> “Security Council decides against imposing arms embargo against South Sudan”, Statement No. SC/12653 dated 23 December 2016. Available at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12653.doc.htm>

<sup>11</sup> “Explaining China’s Involvement in the South Sudan peace process”, The Lowry Institute, May 26, 2017. Available at <https://www.lowryinstitute.org/the-interpreter/explaining-chinas-involvement-south-sudan-peace-process>

<sup>12</sup> UN Charter, Article 44. Published by the Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York. Available at <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>

<sup>13</sup> “Syrian Rebels surround Filipino UN peacekeepers in Golan Heights”, The Guardian, 29 August 2014. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/29/syria-rebels-filipino-un-peacekeepers-golan-heights>

<sup>14</sup> Op. Cit. note 7.

<sup>15</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/1 dated 16 September 2005, paragraph 153. Available at [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/60/1](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/60/1)

<sup>16</sup> Italy convenes this group, comprising Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Spain, and Turkey.

<sup>17</sup> This group tabled a draft resolution for inter-governmental negotiations, bearing the number A/61/L.69/Rev.1, because of which it is called the L69 group in the negotiations on UNSC reform in the UNGA. See [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/61/L.69/REV.1&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/61/L.69/REV.1&Lang=E)

<sup>18</sup> “Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters”, UNGA Decision 62/557 dated 15 Sep 2008. Available at <http://www.centerforunreform.org/sites/default/files/62%3A557.pdf>



<sup>19</sup> Press Release by United Nations, “General Assembly adopts, without vote, ‘landmark’ decision on advancing efforts to reform, increase membership of Security Council”, available at <http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/ga11679.doc.htm>

<sup>20</sup> “India’s ‘mission UN’ on track”, India Today, 16 September 2015. Available at <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/india-mission-united-nations-on-track/1/475387.html>

<sup>21</sup> Hardeep S Puri “Why the Kutesa Consensus is a victory for the UN”, The Wire on 16 Sep 2015. Available at <https://thewire.in/10789/vital-reform-the-world-cannot-afford-to-postpone-any-longer/>

<sup>22</sup> E Courtenay Rattray, “A Security Council for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Challenges & Prospects”, IDSA Issue Brief, 20 Jul 2016. [http://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/a-security-council-for-the-21st-century\\_eccrattray\\_200716](http://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/a-security-council-for-the-21st-century_eccrattray_200716)

<sup>23</sup> It is revealing, for example, that while the USA, the UK, France and Russian Federation have endorsed India’s permanent membership of the reformed UNSC, the PRC is the only permanent member not to have endorsed India’s candidacy.

<sup>24</sup> Op. Cit. note 22.

<sup>25</sup> Letter of the PGA to member states, dated 17 May 2016. [http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/17-May\\_Security-Council-Reform-17-May-2016.pdf](http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/17-May_Security-Council-Reform-17-May-2016.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> In October 2015, for example, the common position of India and Africa in favour of additional permanent seats in a reformed Security Council could not find any mention in the Delhi Declaration issued at the end of the India-Africa Summit. See “Delhi Declaration”, available at [http://mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/25980\\_declaration.pdf](http://mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/25980_declaration.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> “Vison Statement of Antonio Gutteres as candidate for position of UN Secretary General”, available at [http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2016/01/4-April\\_Secretary-General-Election-Vision-Statement\\_Portugal-4-April-20161.pdf#page=4](http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2016/01/4-April_Secretary-General-Election-Vision-Statement_Portugal-4-April-20161.pdf#page=4)

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# China-Pakistan Economic Corridor : Connecting the Dots

Lieutenant General PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)<sup>®</sup>

## Introduction

Connectivity is an old game which great nations and empires have played since times immemorial. The Grand Trunk (GT) Road, with a length of over 1,600 miles (2500 km), which has existed from the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, is one of Asia's oldest and longest major roads.<sup>1</sup> It was extended westwards during the Mughal rule. Over two millennia old, the GT Road has linked India with Central and Western Asia and beyond. Today, it coincides with N1, N4 and N405 and N6 in Bangladesh; NH12, NH27, NH19 and NH44 in India; N45 in Pakistan and AH1 in Afghanistan. During the Mauryan Empire in 3rd Century BC, overland trade between India and Western Asia and the Hellenistic world went over this road. But what needs to be remembered is that all these connectivity projects always had commercial as well as strategic security connotations. It will not be any different today. As regards the strategic importance of these roads, it has been rightly stated that, "one can hardly over-estimate its importance from a commercial or military point of view. Troops could easily be moved from one place to another – even from the capital to the far confines of the frontier."<sup>2</sup> It is said that even Alexander the Great in 326 BC followed an almost identical track up to the Beas.<sup>3</sup> Rome too is supposed to have paved 55,000 miles of roads and built aqueducts across Europe. It is China's turn to play this game now.

The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) held by China on 14-15 May 2017 brought its "One Belt, One Road (OBOR)" also called "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) into the limelight. What

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also caught the media glare was the fact that India chose not to participate in the event citing its strategic and sovereignty concerns, stating that “no country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity.” Many voices were heard criticising India’s decision to stay away from OBOR/CPEC which were termed as connectivity projects. Nothing could be further from the truth, as India is all for connectivity – connectivity within the country, regionally and beyond. India also believes that connectivity projects should take the participating countries to higher levels of trust and diffuse national rivalries and not add to regional tensions, which OBOR/ CPEC seem to be doing at present. India further believes that international projects should evolve from a consultative process and not be based on unilateral decisions by any one party. It goes without saying that consultations achieve better results when done prior to launching any multilateral project. But the bottom line for any multi-national project to succeed would be that sovereignty issues cannot be ignored under any circumstances. Discussions on connectivity should address not only the physical infrastructure aspects but also the institutional, financial, commercial, legal and management issues. International collaborative projects demand statecraft and sagacity of a unique order to reconcile different points of view.<sup>4</sup>

As regards connectivity within the Indian sub-continent, attention needs to be drawn to the fact that before partition in 1947, the sub-continent was a single unit and its rail, road, canals, electricity/power were all connected. Partition not only broke this connectivity, but also cut off trade routes to Central and West Asia and beyond. Pakistan further went on to block rail and road connections between India and Pakistan. What needs to be taken note of is that CPEC does not address issues of connectivity in South Asia – on the contrary, it draws Pakistan further away from South Asia towards China.

Today, the China-Pakistan nexus is touted as an all-weather friendship which is deeper than the deepest ocean, so it may be instructive to step back in time and recall some statements made by leaders of Pakistan in the 1950s and 60s. It was on 16 July 1957 that Prime Minister Suhrawardy of Pakistan, declared in Los Angeles that, “We have thrown our lot with you (the you here refers to USA). We are very gravely apprehensive of communist domination, infiltration and aggression..... We have no difficulty

in cooperating with you in helping keep the world safe from communist aggression.”<sup>5</sup> And on the seizure of Tibet by China in 1959, Field Marshal Ayub Khan on 23 October 1959 said, “Events and developments on the Tibet border and Afghanistan would make the sub-continent militarily vulnerable in about five years. This is to say that facilities have been created on either flank of the subcontinent whereby a major invasion could take place.”<sup>6</sup> And two months later Ayub Khan referred to the possibility that “Russia could move across West Pakistan down to the Sea and China towards the Malay peninsula. Not only Pakistan but the entire Indian Ocean littoral would be exposed.”<sup>7</sup> Pakistan’s reaction to Chinese incursions into Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) was also very different then. When Chinese incursions into Ladakh in J&K were discovered and India took up the matter with the Chinese Government, Field Marshal Ayub Khan in an interview with the Daily Telegraph, London, on 27 November 1959 warned India that “without our concurrence any settlement between China and India will be something we will not recognise.” So let us wait and see what the Pakistan narrative would be a decade down the line.

### **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor**

The CPEC is a multi-billion dollar strategic project that connects the Maritime Silk Road and the Silk Road Economic Belt, also known as OBOR. It is an ambitious geo-strategic plan to carve out a combination of continental and maritime geo-strategic realm. The aim of the project is to link North West China with ports in the Arabian Sea via a road and rail corridor. It provides China the shortest and quickest access to the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf. Through CPEC which includes the Gwadar Port, in the restive Balochistan province of Pakistan and construction in the illegally occupied Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) area of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, China will project its power in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). In an exhaustive report on China’s BRI, the UN’s Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has cautioned about the likely geo-political tensions that will be created by CPEC, stating that “the dispute over Kashmir is also of concern, since the crossing of the CPEC in the region might create geo-political tension with India and ignite further political instability.”<sup>8</sup>

Before looking at CPEC in detail, it is desirable to have a broad understanding of the genesis of OBOR. China realised that

when its Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)-Manufacture-Export driven growth model plateaus, it would have an over-capacity, especially in the infrastructure industry; an idle industrial and financial capacity available for deployment; and, an infrastructure hungry Asia waiting to build/upgrade this. This then was the genesis of OBOR.<sup>9</sup> From the projects announced and/or undertaken, it can be surmised that OBOR will help China upgrade its industry by gradually moving its low-end manufacturing to other countries and take pressure off from industries that suffer from an excess capacity problem, thereby, reducing the supply glut at home. In a nutshell, OBOR is less about boosting exports and more about moving excess production capacity out of China. China is very deftly converting its domestic economic liabilities into its foreign economic and diplomatic assets.<sup>10</sup> However, a recent article titled “Why China’s One Belt, One Road plan is doomed to fail” states that, “If Beijing attempts to pursue projects at a pace and in a number sufficient to make a dent in its excess capacity, it will end up building white elephants, wasting money, and encouraging corruption on a scale never before seen.”<sup>11</sup>

Now coming down to CPEC,<sup>12</sup> according to President Xi’s statements, CPEC has four separate sections – energy, infrastructure, Gwadar and industrial cooperation. Surprisingly, Gwadar, which only constitutes about two percent of total investments, has found a mention in Xi’s categorisation. The projects that form part of Gwadar include the port infrastructure, an airport, an expressway, a hospital, water treatment and supply projects etc. The breakdown of the financial allocation for the Gwadar Project, which is an interest free loan is – International airport – US\$ 230 million, Hospital - US\$ 100 million, East Bay Expressway - US\$ 140 million, Water treatment and supply - US\$ 130 million, Port infrastructure - US\$ 32 million, Port dredging - US\$ 27 million and Port breakwater - US\$ 123 million.

It is to be noted that Gwadar, which was sold by Oman to Pakistan in 1958, probably at the behest of UK and/or USA, not only provides direct access to the Indian Ocean but it is also where the land and maritime network of OBOR converge. Although Gwadar’s commercial viability as a transshipment port is suspect considering its distance from the circumequatorial navigation route, low depths and lack of rail connectivity, its administrative control was handed over to China for a period of 40 years in 2013. Is it

mere coincidence that the operational control of Pakistan's Karachi Port is with China Overseas Port Holdings Company and that Sri Lanka's Colombo South Container Terminal is built, run and controlled by China Merchants Holding? Is it also a coincidence that Chinese naval submarines including a Ming-class, diesel-electric nuclear submarine are docked in Karachi and Colombo? The pointers are clear, Gwadar with its proximity to Hormuz, its suitability to accommodate naval warships and submarines, and its capability to serve as a hub for replenishment and weapon logistics make it an ideal naval base. With an airport, as part of the Gwadar Project, it becomes an ideal surveillance and interdiction hub. Recently there were reports that Pakistan has created a special force for the protection of Gwadar port and that two Chinese Warships were pressed into service to enhance Gwadar port's security. Does one use warships and naval security units to protect commercial ports in peace time? The answer is simple – Gwadar is a strategic naval port and that it may well turn out to be China's first overseas naval port, much sooner than expected.<sup>13</sup>

Now let us look at the other end of CPEC which is in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), a part of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) which legally joined India when its Ruler signed the instrument of accession in 1947. As per a report, the British Parliament recently passed a resolution stating that Gilgit-Baltistan is a part of J&K, which is under the illegal occupation of Pakistan.<sup>14</sup> It is not well known that Pakistan has no land borders with China. Its land borders with China are through its illegal occupation of GB. The local population of GB not only resents the forcible changing of its demography by Pakistan but have also opposed the CPEC as they fear exploitation. This does not portend well for China which wants legal cover for its billions of dollars investment in CPEC and is, therefore, pushing Pakistan to elevate the status of GB to that of a province. India objects not only to the illegal occupation of its territories by Pakistan and China but also objects to the construction activities undertaken by China in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir including GB and stationing of PLA personnel there.<sup>15</sup> Today, the strategic role played by GB during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan is overlooked. It was through GB that China sent its arms and equipment to the Mujahideen, who were training in camps in GB. It is believed that not only did Chinese instructors train the Mujahideen but hundreds of Chinese muslims



also joined the fight. It was also rumoured that the US and China had listening posts set up in GB and that the Soviets had even considered military options against the training camps and establishments in GB. So CPEC will remain mired in disputes and tension at its extremities in Gwadar and in Gilgit-Baltistan.<sup>16</sup> This has manifested itself in the form of internal security challenge for which Pakistan has already created and deployed a special force of 15,000 soldiers to protect CPEC in addition to the maritime force to protect Gwadar.<sup>17</sup> The moot question is, who poses the threat and who is being threatened? Obviously, the threat is from within Pakistan and the likely targets will be the Chinese personnel and projects.<sup>18</sup>

Energy projects under the CPEC will eventually add over 16 GW capacity in energy production at a cost of over US \$ 34 bn, which amounts to approximately US \$ 2 bn per GW generated. When completed, the CPEC energy mix will have about 75 per cent power generated by plants using coal. The environmental damage that this will cause in addition to the fact that Pakistan will have to import high grade coal needs to be factored in. Pakistan will be contractually obliged to buy power from Chinese companies building at a pre-negotiated high rate which can lead to a circular-debt problem. The coal fired projects will be a windfall for the Chinese as Pakistan has offered up to 34.5 per cent annual profit on equity invested in these projects.<sup>19</sup> It is often stated that once the energy projects are completed Pakistan will have approximately 11 to 12 GW surplus electricity to export to its neighbouring countries. The moot question is that if India, which was not invited to build these power plants, does not buy this surplus energy, who else will? Therein lies the rub and the invitation to India to join CPEC to make it economically profitable. There is no reason for India to do so.

The numerous Special Economic Zones (SEZ) are another contentious issue mainly because there is no transparency and that only Chinese industrialists will be allowed to set up industries in these SEZ.<sup>20</sup> There is already disquiet amongst the industrialists and trade chambers in Pakistan as the Chinese will be granted long-term leases at concessional rates along with 20-year tax holidays.<sup>21</sup> As an example, Balochistan has already signed a 43 years lease agreement in November 2015, handing over 2281 acres of land that it had acquired for US \$ 62 million to the Chinese



for developing a SEZ, near Gwadar Port. The fishing community in Gwadar fears that it will lose its livelihood because of the Port. This adds to the social tension too.

Presently there are around 19,000 Chinese personnel working on CPEC within Pakistan and this number will swell by thousands more once the projects and SEZ are set up. How will the presence of Chinese in large numbers be viewed specially by the radicalised, unemployed youth in Pakistan? Mohammed Ahsan Chaudhri had observed, "The heart of the matter is that Pakistan's alliances with the West cannot be supported ideologically."<sup>22</sup> So the question that arises is, "can Pakistan's alliances with Communist China be supported ideologically? Can ideological and religious friction be avoided?"

While strategic and other issues have been addressed above, the elephant in the room is the economic/financial implications of CPEC for Pakistan. Some estimates suggest a financial outflow ranging from US \$ 3 to 5 billion per annum.<sup>23</sup> Pakistan is likely to end up paying US \$ 90 billion to China over a span of 30 years against the loan and investment portfolio under CPEC.<sup>24</sup> The worrying question is, what will happen if Pakistan defaults on repayment, as we know that the Chinese are averse to rescheduling or forgiving debts owed by foreign governments?<sup>25</sup> Will Pakistan end up compromising its sovereignty at the projects in Gwadar, GB and in the SEZs by swapping its loan for equity? How will this impact the stability of Pakistan? Studying the Sri Lankan experience with the Chinese projects in Hambantota, where China used financial assistance to advance its strategic interests, may be instructive and also a pointer of things to come.

The Chinese Government is conscious of India's legitimate concerns about CPEC. They were very keen that India participates in the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing and to assuage India's concerns the Chinese Ambassador to India in a speech on 05 May 2017 even suggested that CPEC could be renamed.<sup>26</sup> This tokenism had no takers in India but Pakistan reacted to it and sought China's clarifications on it.<sup>27</sup>

In strategic discussions, when CPEC is discussed, the issue of Pakistan-China nexus invariably comes up. It may be of interest to note how China viewed the "two front challenge." On 16 May

1959, the Chinese Ambassador in Delhi, in a meeting with India's Foreign Secretary had said that, "China will not be so foolish as to antagonise the US in the East and again to antagonise India in the West. We cannot have two centres of attention..... It seems to us that you cannot have two fronts. Is it not so? If it is so, here lies the meeting point of the two sides." It is ironical that despite the slogans of "*Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai*" (Indians and Chinese are brothers), the two sides that met turned out to be China and Pakistan, thereby, trying to create a two-front scenario for India. A hypothetical question that can be tossed around could be, "Is China with its allies and partners today prepared to face the US and its allies and partners in the Western Pacific and at the same time in the Strait of Hormuz and IOR? As China's economic footprints enlarge so will its security challenges grow and the two front dilemma can well become a multi-front dilemma.

### **CPEC Master Plan<sup>28</sup>**

While the media was agog with the goings on at the BRI Forum in Beijing in mid-May 2017, the *Dawn* of Pakistan disclosed the details of the CPEC long term plan from the original documents, which highlights what the Chinese intentions and priorities are in Pakistan for the next decade and a half. The report states that the scope of CPEC "has no precedent in Pakistan's history" as it "envisages a deep and broad-based penetration of most sectors of Pakistan's economy as well as its society by Chinese enterprises and its culture.

Although President Xi had spelt out energy, infrastructure, Gwadar and industrial cooperation as the four separate sections of CPEC, the Master Plan shows that the main thrust of the plan actually lies in agriculture. The importance of the agriculture sector would be relevant as well as sensitive, because it would require millions of hectares of agricultural land to be handed over to the Chinese, across the length and breadth of the country, at subsidised rates, on which a large number of projects and plans will come up. It is worth nothing that the core areas for the agriculture projects include, "most of Islamabad's Capital territory, Punjab and Sindh, and some areas of GB, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa and Balochistan." One can well imagine how the feudal landowners and tribals would react when their land would be taken away for handing it to the

Chinese. Land acquisition could well prove to be the Achilles Heel! The other aspects which merit attention in the Master Plan are:-

(a) The industrial plan for the western and north western zone, "covering most of Balochistan and KP province is marked for mineral extraction, with potential in chrome ore." The possibility of loan defaults being offset through mineral extraction cannot be ruled out though at this stage it is only a hypothetical proposition.

(b) As far as the textile industry is concerned, "China can make the most of the Pakistani market in cheap raw materials to develop the textiles and garments industry and help soak up surplus labour forces in Kashgar." The major beneficiaries would be the Chinese.

(c) Preferences need to be extended to Chinese enterprises in areas such as, "land, tax, logistics and services, as well as land price, enterprise income tax, tariff reduction and exemption and sales tax rate." This suggests a distortion of the level playing field to the disadvantage of Pakistani entrepreneurs.

(d) The aspect of fibre optics and surveillance needs a detailed study, as "the link goes far beyond a simple fibre optic setup." The creation of electronic monitoring and control systems, as for Khunjerab, and how the full system of monitoring and surveillance in cities from Peshawar to Karachi will affect the society at large lies in the grey zone.

(e) The related issues of future cooperation between the media of China and Pakistan and how issues pertaining to dissemination of Chinese culture in Pakistan will play out, is a subject for study by itself. Will this bridge the ideological gap between the Pakistani and Chinese people or accentuate it, is any one's guess.

(f) The plans for developing coastal tourism are laid out in great detail and suggest visa-free entry to Chinese tourists into Pakistan, but are surprisingly silent on the issue of reciprocal visa-free entry for Pakistani nationals visiting China.

(g) The report is "at its most unsentimental when drawing up the risks faced by long term investments in Pakistan's

economy.” The report further goes on to suggest that “Pakistan’s economy cannot absorb FDI much above US\$ 2 billion per year without giving rise to stresses in its economy.”

It further suggests that “China’s maximum annual direct investment in Pakistan should be around US \$ 1 billion.” And as far as financial altruism suggested by many “experts” is concerned, the report unambiguously states, “The cooperation with Pakistan in the monetary and financial areas aims to serve China’s diplomatic strategy.” Does all this not suggest that the Chinese are aware of the financial risk involved in investing in Pakistan, yet are going ahead? Why? What is the hidden agenda, if any? After all CPEC is not a charity project.

The CPEC Master Plan appears to have avoided much mention of the Gwadar Port and projects, so as not to draw attention to its possibility of being a PLA Navy Base and surveillance-cum-interdiction hub. However, the *Dawn* report has flagged that Gwadar could “serve as a port of exit for minerals from Balochistan and Afghanistan”. Importantly, the report also goes on to state that “There is no mention of China’s external trade being routed through Gwadar.” The strategic importance of the Gwadar project, which includes the port and an international airport, and its proximity to the Straits of Hormuz, needs detailed examination by experts looking at the maritime domain in this region. The Gwadar Port is not there to solve the Malacca dilemma, as some naively suggest. Gwadar will be a naval and surveillance base with commercial activity primarily restricted to taking away minerals extracted from Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The strategic importance of GB, though not spelt out in the Report for obvious reasons, needs a fresh look, more so as China has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Pakistan to build two mega dams – Bunji and Bhasha, on the Indus River. How India reacts to the Chinese presence in PoK including Gilgit and Baltistan, as also how it proceeds with the Indus Water Treaty, is something that experts in “scenario building” could work on.

### **CPEC – Reading between the Lines**

To get a somewhat better understanding of the CPEC, we need to create a mosaic that takes into account all that has been written and said about it. By doing so, the salient points of the picture that

emerge are :-

(a) The Chinese and Pakistani establishments very cleverly kept away many details of the CPEC given out in the Master Plan from public scrutiny till the BRF commenced. Similarly, the details of the MoU regarding the five dams forming the North Indus River Cascade, for which an additional loan of US \$ 50 billion was allocated but not revealed till the signing of the MoU at the BRF. Had an Indian delegation been present at the BRF the embarrassment that would have been caused to it can well be understood.

(b) The CPEC will provide China with a strategic gateway to the Indian Ocean through the Gwadar Port. To expand and safeguard its maritime interests in the IOR, Gwadar will be built into a PLA Naval and Surveillance and Interdiction Base. The Gwadar Port will not be a major commercial port to solve the Malacca dilemma, as erroneously suggested by some researchers, but commercially it will serve as an exit point for mineral resources extracted from Pakistan and Afghanistan. The land route from Afghanistan to China is unlikely to be used for this purpose due to cost and security considerations.

(c) GB is of the greatest strategic significance for Pakistan and China, as without this there will be no border and land connectivity between these two countries. CPEC will unravel without GB being a part of it. It is thus imperative for Pakistan to hold on to GB and for China to develop it through various projects including those linked to CPEC. The five dams forming the North Indus River Cascade that China has promised to finance and build are not Run of River (RoR) projects and going ahead with them will be a Himalayas blunder and are likely to raise tensions in the region.<sup>29</sup> The construction of large dams for generation of electricity could lead to review of the Indus Water Treaty by India.

(d) The SEZ and/or industrial parks are crucial for China's plans for upgrading its industry by moving out its idle as well as low-end manufacturing and infrastructure industry. These SEZs and parks will also enable Pakistan to test the local population's reactions to sale of land to the Chinese at concessional rates with other facilities thrown in.

(e) The energy projects will be pushed through as these will not only provide the much needed electricity to Pakistan which will be welcomed by its population but will also cater for the needs of various industrial and agriculture projects which are part of CPEC. During the short to mid-term, there may not be any spare electricity to be exported out of Pakistan.

(f) Security of Chinese projects and personnel will remain a long term challenge. It could be accentuated by the religious-cum-ideological divide that exists. The political, tribal, religious and terrorist linked threats mentioned in the Master Plan need to be factored in.

(g) The agricultural projects mentioned in the Master Plan are ambitious and cover the length and breadth of Pakistan. However, the problems of land acquisition will have to be overcome for its success. One has to wait and watch.

(h) The fibre optics and surveillance projects are of strategic importance. The MoU for the fibre optic link was signed in July 2013 and precedes the ambitious plans for CPEC which have since emerged. This aspect needs further study.

(i) While cooperation between the Pakistani and Chinese media should be welcomed, as it may enhance mutual understanding between people of the two countries involved, the aspect of cultural synergy between the two different ideologies will need deft handling.

(j) The geo-strategic implications of Gwadar turning into a PLA Naval and Surveillance-cum-Interdiction Base, should it so happen, has far reaching consequences. The artificial islands created by China in the South China Sea, and ports such as Hambantota, Karachi, Gwadar and Djibouti need to be viewed as part of one continuum.

(k) So far it appears that the European Union has given the BRI/OBOR a somewhat cautious welcome and is still pondering over how to engage China strategically on this issue. The Western countries and their financial institutions appear to be concerned about commercial feasibility, transparency, sustainability, environmental issues etc. and are unlikely to finance projects in a hurry that haven't been suitably analysed and vetted.



(l) The financial risks involved both for China and Pakistan are genuine and have not been analysed critically. While China will attempt to get other countries and international institutions to partner it for various OBOR projects, what appears worrying is the capacity of Pakistan to repay the loans it is contracting under CPEC. A World Bank Report titled, "Global Economic Prospects 2016", released in January 2016, had cautioned that "Sovereign guarantees associated with CPEC could pose substantial fiscal risks over the medium term." A default is very much on the cards and how this will play out will be crucial for Pakistan's stability. Instability in Pakistan will not only accentuate its internal troubles but will also affect its relations with India, Iran and Afghanistan.

(m) The Chinese would definitely be aware that while ports, power projects, dams, railways etc. can be built in a short span of time, building the human and institutional capacity that allows these projects to operate efficiently and contribute effectively to economic and social progress, takes a much longer time. This may lead to scaling down of some of the ambitions projects.

The *Dawn* has very aptly concluded by stating that, "In fact, CPEC is only the opening of the door. What comes through once that door has been opened is difficult to forecast."<sup>30</sup> This is indeed a very mature, visionary and cautionary statement which needs to be taken note of seriously by some experts, especially in India, who have been asking India to rush headlong into joining BRI/OBOR/CPEC, the future costs notwithstanding.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, what Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during his interaction with Chinese media organisations is worth examining :-

*"Successful revival of the ancient trade routes require not only physical connectivity and requisite infrastructure, but even more important, a climate of peace, support for mutual prosperity and free flow of commerce and ideas."*<sup>31</sup>

While CPEC may have a great effect in Pakistan and on Pakistan-China relations, it does not in any way address issues of connectivity in South Asia. On the contrary, it draws Pakistan further away from South Asia towards China. In Pakistan, there is



a “tendency to treat CPEC like the proverbial gift horse. The gift horse may prove to be a Trojan Horse! There is a need for transparency.”<sup>32</sup> One should also consider what might be the fate of CPEC if relations between Pakistan and China turn sour in the future. This may seem a far-fetched concern at this time but the evolution of the relationship with Iran should provide a reality check.<sup>33</sup>

The CPEC is a strategic project of China and not a silver bullet for Pakistan’s economic woes. Right now it is just the rosy perception about the CPEC, the reality may prove to be quite different. The concerns that India may have succeeded in isolating itself by staying away from the BRF are unfounded, as many nations would have appreciated not just the principled stand but also the fact that India can stand up to China in open international fora. As they say, “the jury is still out”. We have a long wait ahead!

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# The Undeclared Power Play behind Belt and Road Forum: May 2017

**Major General SB Asthana, SM, VSM (Retd)<sup>®</sup>**

## Introduction

President Xi Jinping's dream summit to "Transform the Eurasian and African infrastructure landscape as never before" and "defend and develop an open world economy against threats of trade protectionism emanating from the West"<sup>1</sup> on May 14-15, 2017 may not have as many takers as he expected, but was a mega event with delegates from over 100 countries. In 2013 President Xi Jinping coined the word 'One Belt One Road' (OBOR) to showcase China driven global connectivity model. It was projected as the biggest foreign policy initiative for global connectivity and inclusive growth of everyone partnering it. In Mar 2015, the text of 'Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI) action plan was released by China, followed by release of full text of China's Military Strategy in May 2015,<sup>2</sup> and a comparison of the two clearly indicates that the OBOR/BRI is not purely for inclusive growth and not as benign as it is made out to be. In fact it marks the beginning of a major global strategic power play in the affected regions through connectivity initiatives.

China's OBOR Summit of May 14-15, was to showcase its diplomatic might and ambitious globalisation plan, presuming that the US will still be settling down with new President with 'Protectionist' outlook, and Xi Jinping will be able to project himself as the tallest global leader, with attendance of most global leaders to the Summit. When it became evident that all leaders may not turn up and many countries may send some officials of varying status, it was named as 'Belt and Road Forum' (BRF). Finally out of delegates from over 100 countries, only 29 Heads of States turned up, who were looking for Chinese infrastructure/trade investments for varying reasons on bilateral/multilateral basis. These facts are well known to everyone, as large number of articles have been written on the subject so far. This article attempts to analyse and speculate the type and extent of power play, behind

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these facts, which the affected countries have not commonly spoken/declared with respect to OBOR in general, and BRF in particular.

### **Who Really Needs OBOR?**

While China would like the world to believe that its efforts like OBOR and BRI are purely developmental, initiating inclusive growth in participating regions, seeking common destiny, but the largest beneficiary of OBOR projects is China itself. Some of the Chinese domestic compulsions/stakes are :—

- (a) Politically, to ensure that democratic wind does not flow from Taiwan and Hong Kong to mainland China, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Government has to continue delivering well economically to keep domestic population dreaming of becoming superpower by 2049. With global and Chinese slowdown, it has to innovate methods to continue the same pace of growth to achieve its global ambition.
- (b) President Xi Jinping is a strong and undisputed leader of China, and despite being 64 years old there is hardly any doubt that he will continue to hold all current appointments in 19<sup>th</sup> National People's Congress (NPC) (meeting scheduled later this year), but his anti-corruption drive, and perceived over-centralisation of power, may create some rivals within domestic political community and people who need to be mesmerised before 19<sup>th</sup> NPC Session so that he gets a comfortable hierarchical composition. OBOR Summit was one such occasion, where he has attempted to project himself as tallest leader in the world. This was the right time as President Trump was still settling down, grappling with protectionist agenda, having annoyed a number of allies and leaders of other countries who do not have that kind of economic muscle.
- (c) To refuel/reignite economic growth at the desired pace, China is looking at promoting investments, creating demands, offloading trade surpluses, overcapacities, exploiting resources and integrating itself into world economic system further.
- (d) The Chinese desire to put into effect its 'Western Area Development Plan' dating 2000, and the need to connect globally is not new, but it now needs to seek new areas of investments and infrastructure development. It, therefore, has to explore neighbourhood as well as global opportunities for infrastructure development.

(e) Chinese infrastructure growth within the country aims to rectify the developmental asymmetry between highly developed Eastern seaboard and Western areas including restive Xinjiang and Tibet. The BRI action plan lays substantive emphasis on this aspect, as part of accelerating 'Western Development Plan' and 'Go West' Strategy.

(f) By creating an infrastructure demand internally, regionally and globally, China can help its major construction companies, create jobs and earn more revenue. Chinese efforts are in sync with its economic, logistics and domestic compulsions, shortened lines of communication, warm water access, and smooth flow of oil, raw materials and goods, to improve its economic might as part of its development of 'Comprehensive National Power' (CNP). While this infrastructure development is justified for China's economic, trade and sectoral development, its potential of playing a dual role (civil and military) in future cannot be ruled out.

(g) It is a Chinese model of global connectivity, which will help them in increasing strategic footprints by getting the global deployment capability of PLA to secure her Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC), commercial and strategic interests, as infrastructure is a dual use facility. If the model is globally accepted, China gets a licence to deploy its military to protect its lines of communication, and deploy Chinese labour (including security personnel in the garb of labour) outside China, at crucial strategic points.

(h) China on numerous occasions has been talking about multi-polar world order with a view to emerge as one of the strong poles, especially in Asia. The Chinese Military Strategy lays down protection of its SLOC, and ensuring world peace as role of PLA.<sup>3</sup> To achieve that PLA must have regional and global deployability which needs continental and maritime connectivity, and BRI is a significant step in this direction.

### **Why did 30 Countries Sign-up for it?**

An analysis of countries that have signed-up for OBOR reveals a definite pattern. There are countries, that are falling prey to China's 'Infrastructure Diplomacy' and 'Purse Diplomacy' by allowing the Chinese to invest in their infrastructure, despite knowing that it is pushing them into a debt trap or exploitation of their natural resources, or some strategic compromises. They actually have

no choice because they themselves do not have economic resources and technology to deliver it to their population, necessary for their leaders to remain in power in next election even if it amounts to a long term disadvantage. There is another set of countries, mainly in neighbourhood, who just cannot stand up to economic, strategic and military might of China, hence have no choice but to sign for it. The case of Russia is slightly different, because to bear the economic sanctions from the West, and fast changing diplomacy of President Trump, a convergence of interest with China has taken place. Russia has decided to link the initiative with its own regional economic framework of the Eurasian Economic Union. Russian President's attendance symbolises its current economic linkage with China, besides protecting their interests in Central Asian Republics (CAR).

In this era of economic cooperation together with strategic competition, it is significant to note that China is putting together a policy of engaging its periphery exercising 'Neighbourhood Diplomacy' through a series of infrastructural development projects, that provide China easy access to energy sources, shorter trade routes, and warm waters access from its landlocked part of western region. The development of land and strategic energy corridors through Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and its desire to get into the Bay of Bengal avoiding maritime choke points, are part of the above strategy.

### **What Signal has the US and the EU Sent by Sudden Attendance?**

The last day surprise entry by the US could be attributed to the sudden realisation by the US, that President Donald Trump's protectionist trade agenda and isolationist diplomacy may push the global fulcrum of trade and globalisation in China's favour. Some commercial and economic *quid pro quo*, intense Chinese diplomatic efforts and need to understand Beijing's grand plan for geopolitical domination may have prompted the US to send Matthew Pottinger, the Senior Director for Asia at the National Security Council in the White House.

The attendance also included senior officials from European Union like Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund and UN Secretary General António Guterres. The European Union officials did attend the BRF, but not buy Chinese



narrative of 'Win-Win Situation', because the one sided advantage to Chinese construction companies, and their financial institutions was easily discernible; hence, they did not sign-up for it, and asked for level playing field.

Japan and South Korea, despite serious differences with China on security matters, have strong economic linkages and may have come looking for opportunity for financial investment.<sup>4</sup> Their other intention may have been to understand the plan to work out the counter strategy, if it did not suit them.

### **What does OBOR Encompass in Real Terms?**

OBOR may well be a future blueprint of China-centric infrastructure connectivity model, encompassing variety of infrastructure initiatives, but there is nothing very new in it. These initiatives were earlier being taken up in bits and pieces, on bilateral and multilateral basis, to improve and secure its external connectivity, warm water accessibility, security of its SLOC and to get economic advantages. In connecting the Continental Belt, in most places the road and rail network already exists, although in poor state, which is proposed to be improved through this initiative to meet the specifications required by China to transit its commercial goods to farthest destination. The promises of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) along the route are by-products/fringe benefits to woo the host nations. The mining and energy projects also need to be studied with care, more so after not so good experience of Myitsone Dam in Myanmar and Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka. Many writers in Pakistan are also concerned about getting into debt trap. Production of energy is too costly to be purchased by locals, leading to other economic and strategic compromises.

This also has concealed strategic intentions of extending its strategic space. Besides looking at Chinese intention of leveraging its soft power, there is also need to analyse the hidden intention of improving its hard power through this Chinese model of regional infrastructure development. Regarding 'Maritime Road', the global shipping is already happening in international waters along the same routes, hence, it basically amounts to China being permitted to develop ports and maritime bases to facilitate its shipping, which can be suitably used as military bases, whenever the strategic situation so demands.

### Has BRF Succeeded?

Despite dream-selling speeches by China about ‘inclusive’ globalisation, no worthwhile framework or common plan could be arrived at. Attractive packaging of BRI included Chinese pledge of investing US \$113 billion in extra funding to kick-start the initiative, to build a new network of transcontinental railways, ports and highways. President Xi Jinping announced an import expo to take place next year, at which China will open up its domestic markets.

There is also a long-term plan as revealed by the announcement that Beijing will host another summit in 2019 to promote its globalisation strategy.<sup>5</sup> Beijing also promised to import US \$2 trillion worth of products from “Belt and Road” countries over the next five years. Xi promised a major funding boost for his new Silk Road, with an additional 100 billion Yuan (US \$14.5 billion) going into the Silk Road Fund. The China Development Bank and Export-Import Bank of China will set up special lending schemes, worth 250 billion Yuan and 130 billion Yuan respectively to support infrastructure projects. In addition, China will provide 60 billion Yuan over the next three years for poverty alleviation in developing countries along the new Silk Road. More than 270 cooperation projects or agreements had been signed during the Summit.<sup>6</sup>

China was looking for more capital by selling the inclusive growth benefits of OBOR, as some of its OBOR projects got delayed because of strict capital control by Beijing due to capital shortage; but was possibly disappointed, as no worthwhile commitments were made by most countries. Even the financial institutions are not too sure of funding such costly projects. The excitement and urge of private companies to utilise their over-capacities, and make their trade surpluses commercially profitable is understandable but they will also be doing their cost-benefit analysis.

The much publicised success of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) can also be attributed to the fact that a number of countries joined it to get an alternative/additional source of funding other than IMF and World Bank, on which some economic powers have monopoly, and not because of BRI.

Many countries besides the US, Japan, Australia, several European countries, including Germany, France and Britain also declined to sign a trade statement at the Summit, citing lack of

clarity on a level playing field for private companies in tendering against state-owned enterprises for government contracts, or on social and environmental standards. Scepticism remains among Western countries and many other countries, who may not have expressed it.<sup>7</sup>

Chinese reassurances to its neighbours to dispel the fear of assertiveness, strategic dominance, and its strategic intentions among most industrialised nations did not cut ice with most of them. It left China to rethink that its actions for globalisation and world leadership role are perhaps too premature. China is yet to become a developed nation before thinking of such role.

### **Why India's Non-Participation is not a Case of Missed Opportunities?**

A number of articles have appeared in Indian and Chinese media criticising India's non-participation at the event, without analysing it in the context of India's national interest. The analysis is as under:-

- (a) No other country is confronted with an issue as serious as "sovereignty issue" in context of OBOR as India, with China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) passing through Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), which is sovereign territory of India, hence, India is well justified in skipping the event.
- (b) India has been able to drive home the point that the 'sovereignty issue' of PoK, is extremely sensitive, and cannot be compromised. The 'sovereignty issue' of PoK overrides the isolation threats, commercial concerns, opportunity cost (if any) of skipping it. The Foreign and Defence Ministers of India have already clarified the same many times. This has been well-understood by global community, as well as China, which has indicated its willingness to welcome India even at a later stage. Germany has supported Indian action of skipping it.
- (c) It proves that India follows an independent foreign policy, to protect its core interests, even if it amounts to being absent/insignificant representation in a large summit like OBOR. Participation by Indian scholars (as mentioned by Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mr Geng Shuang) cannot be assumed as Indian participation, unless delegated to represent by Ministry of External Affairs of India.
- (d) In case of Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM), India has already negotiated connectivity through Bangladesh

and work is in progress. The roads in Northeastern states are being developed by India, and connectivity to Myanmar is being negotiated bilaterally, hence China driven BCIM has very little to charm India.

### **Where do India-China Relations Go from Here?**

India and China are two neighbours (a geographical fact which no one can change) and have to deal with each other. Both are fast growing economies, housing largest consumer markets. To maintain their pace of growth, they have to tap each other's consumer market, hence, would continue to do commercial business. The economic cooperation alongside strategic competition is unavoidable, and will continue.

CPEC is going to be a reality even if it amounts to Pakistan becoming an economic colony of China. We thus need to be ready to face a different Pakistan, whose strategic choices are hostage to China. At the same time, the US will not dump Pakistan, because they still feel that for controlling some of the terrorist groups, which may threaten their mainland, they may require help from Pakistan.

Strategically, CPEC, Gwadar, infrastructure development near Indian borders in Tibet, and Indian Ocean will continue to be a strategic and security challenge to India, and there is no alternative but to create military capacity to face it. CPEC and Gwadar will not only bring PLA to Indian backyard, but will also impact our military and strategic options, should proxy war by Pakistan become unbearable to India. Diplomacy and strategic partnerships with other global powers have their benefits, but our own 'Comprehensive National Power', especially the hard power needs to be further developed to address the security concerns. So far in history no country has become a big power without a strong military.

### **Conclusion**

BRF could not showcase a convincing and clear vision of OBOR for global growth, and ended with dream-selling speeches, without worthwhile achievements from global perspective. It could not convince the Western countries to sign-up for it. The main signatories to the communiqué are regional countries, that in any case are dependent on China. Even if Trump Administration with protective outlook may have lost some ground, China could not convince the world to be the architect of globalisation as yet. However, OBOR will continue to draw attention in the context of

connectivity and globalisation. In Indian context, CPEC will go through and keep India concerned about its security. India will have to look for alternatives, especially for connectivity to CAR.

The idea of grouping Chinese investments in Africa and Latin America, under the umbrella of OBOR, indicates China's dream of global dominance, and BRI seems to be the strategy to support it. BRI, therefore, is going to be the centre stage of Chinese strategy and foreign policy for the 21st Century. BRI has some potential of inclusive growth to help some needy countries, but it also has the potential to further destabilise fragile states. Its Chinese commercial bias also adds to the concerns/scepticism of large number of countries. The BRI may well be Xi Jinping's landmark strategy, similar to Hu Jintao's "peaceful rise".<sup>8</sup>

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# The China Dream, *Tianxia* and Belt and Road Initiative: '*Pax Sinica*' or Middle Power Coalition for Asia-Pacific?

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China, today sits on the cusp of a unique position amongst the comity of nations – feared by the small nations, yet needed for its financial muscle (that it has no compunctions in providing to gain long term 'strategic equity' in lieu of short term financial 'gains' for the ruling elites of these nations) while the developed countries are stuck proverbially between the 'Devil and the Deep Sea'. Having financed the economic rise of China through much of the last three decades, thereby converting China into their manufacturing hub, any economic counter to a 'Rising, Revanchist' China thus has its blowback on their own economies.

With the US in a 'strategic retrenchment', first under Obama and now the unpredictable Trump Presidency, the West is in a dilemma as the European Union does not have the heft to fill the rising vacuum in Asia.<sup>1</sup> Neither do the other middle powers of Asia, be it Japan, South Korea or India, on their own. Xi Jinping appears to view the coming decades as a 'strategic opportunity' for China to fill this vacuum and establish a '*Pax Sinica*'<sup>2</sup> in Asia – the fruition of phase one of the China Dream and the great rejuvenation of the nation.

This article analyses the China Dream within the Chinese view of *Tianxia*, and the role that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is likely to play in furthering China's domination and control on Asia – a modern version of '*Pax Sinica*' in Asia, thereby enhancing Xi Jinping's legacy. It looks at a 'Middle Powers Coalition' for the Asia-Pacific to provide stability and counter this cynical push by China for domination, and provide multi-polarity in Asia.

## The China Dream

The term 'China or Chinese Dream' has ancient origins in Chinese literary and intellectual history and has had a revival of sorts in the

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West<sup>3</sup>. To name a recent few from the West, in 2008 architect Neville Mars, Adrian Hornsby and the Dynamic City Foundation published “The Chinese Dream – A Society Under Construction”<sup>4</sup> and the 2010 book by author Helen H Wang *The Chinese Dream*.<sup>5</sup> Both the books looked more at the society than the geo-political and geo-economic spheres that the term Chinese Dream now connotes<sup>6</sup>.

Just after becoming General Secretary of the Communist Party of China in late 2012, Xi announced what would become the hallmark of his administration. “The Chinese Dream”, he said, is “the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.” Xi’s Chinese Dream is described as achieving the “Two 100s”:-

- (a) The material goal of China becoming a “moderately well-off society” by 2021, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party.
- (b) The modernisation goal of China becoming a fully developed nation by about 2049, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic.<sup>7</sup>

The Chinese scholars have spoken of overcoming 100 years of humiliation and the great renewal of the nation, alluding to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century ‘Opium Wars’ with the West that greatly debilitated the nation and the subsequent subjugation during the Japanese War in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It is universally agreed that a ‘Rising China’ flexing its muscles and appearing to be stridently revanchist, revisionist or revolutionist to its neighbours and the world at large, coupled with a growing perception of a ‘retreating West’ is leading to, what the many thinkers term as, ‘a Strategic Age of Uncertainties’.

Xi Jinping is the first Chinese leader who has not hesitated in using terms that the Chinese hardliners, have been proposing - ‘strong nation dream’ (*qiangzhongquomeng*),<sup>8</sup> and the road to renewal or rejuvenation (*fuxingzhilu*), a factor that also underlines the rise of an aggressive Chinese posture under his leadership.

Michael Pillsbury, in his book ‘The Hundred Years Marathon’, opines that the marathon strategy that China’s leaders are pursuing today, and have been pursuing for decades, is largely a product



of lessons derived from the Warring States period by these Hawks. These have never been translated in English and are very popular and extensively studied in China.<sup>9</sup> It is no small wonder that there is such a rise of jingoistic nationalism within the Chinese society.

Xi Jinping perceives the current flux in the global order as an opportunity for China to take the lead. This is a strategic foreign policy goal, almost officially announced by Xi in his statement that the PRC should establish "great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics,"<sup>10</sup> while Deng's 24 character principle is being replaced by phrases such as "active and pressing on"<sup>11</sup> or "forging ahead."<sup>12</sup> It also serves as an effective tool for diverting attention from its internal instabilities.

The push currently is for gaining geopolitical space in Asia with 'Neighbourhood Diplomacy', which appears to be centred on commercial penetration through infrastructure projects and selling a short term 'economic dream' to the underprivileged nations on its periphery. Commercial penetration is the precursor to the 'strategic equity' squeezed out from these nations due to the debt trap caused by these unviable projects, thereby, gaining political, diplomatic and geopolitical space needed to achieve the China Dream of becoming a 'Great Power' by 2049 – a Unipolar Asia centred around China. This appears to be the Phase One of the China Dream – to be the sole Super Power of the World.

### ***Tianxia***

To achieve this Dream, China seems to be assiduously following the concept of '*Tianxia*', as articulated by the philosopher Zhao Tingyang in 2005<sup>13</sup>. The term '*Tianxia*' opens itself to different interpretations since Mandarin has no alphabets but characters and thus the meaning changes based on pronunciation and intonation. Thus, the word could be interpreted as – 'Under-Heaven' or 'Empire' or 'China', thereby implying a 'Unified Global System with China's superior characteristics on top'.<sup>14</sup>

Although Zhao does not clearly or logically lay out its elements, his views in his book, '*Investigations of the Bad World: Political Philosophy as the First Philosophy*', published in 2009 by China Renmin University Press, throws disconcerting light on the Chinese view of securing such a system, which transcends the nation-state. It builds on the ancient system of the vassal/tributary states

'kowtowing' to the 'Celestial Emperor' of China ' and paying tribute to be able to trade with it.

This new system has the two ideas - 'the Strategy of Common Imitation' and 'Confucian Improvement'. The strategy of common imitation is regarded in Game Theory as the key to the formation of a stable institution, since it is argued that a common imitation of the best strategy given by the leader and abided by the players will lead to a stable equilibrium.<sup>15</sup> It implies that these small under-developed nations in the neighbourhood would perforce abide by the 'Strategy of Common Imitation', i.e. follow China's lead and abide by its decisions.

To foster understanding of Confucius, China has embarked on creating Confucius Institutes (CI) all over the world, since 2004, overseen by Hanban (officially the Office of Chinese Language Council International). As of 2014 it had 480 such institutes in dozens of countries in all continents,<sup>16</sup> with the stated aim of establishing 1000 Confucius Institutes by 2020<sup>17</sup>.

While the West has been able to voice its concerns on this issue, the smaller nations on China's periphery do not have the same capacity. Funded and staffed entirely by China, these nations welcome the money and do not interfere in the alleged activities of these teachers. Many foreign scholars have characterised the CI programme as an exercise in soft power, expanding China's economic, cultural, and diplomatic reach through the promotion of Chinese language and culture, while others have suggested a possible role in intelligence collection. The soft power goals also include assuaging concerns of a "China threat" in the context of the country's increasingly powerful economy and military.<sup>18</sup>

China appears to be moving towards 'an integration of the Comprehensive National Power (CNP)' of the 'Neighbourhood' with itself, in a step by step approach – an umbilical connect that would not be easily disrupted, a reshaping of the regional economic and security architecture with 'Chinese Characteristics'. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) appears to be a part of this strategy. It would be a phased peripheral expansion, akin to '*salami slicing*' – a carefully crafted economic push that does not appear provocative, but the accumulated gain would radically alter the geo-economic and geo-commerce balance in its favour.

### The Belt and Road Initiative

Much has been written and discussed on the poor economics and viability of this initiative. The BRI itself is not a new construct, but connecting the old, ongoing and some future projects under one narrative. According to a *People's Daily* commentary by Zhou Hanmin, the BRI is not only an effort to “tell the China story well and spread China’s message properly” but also an attempt to build up a “community of destiny” with nations, particularly those in the developing world. The commentator also noted that the BRI was intimately connected with President Xi’s Chinese Dream, one of whose key goals is that the country would emerge as a superpower by 2049, the centenary of the establishment of the People’s Republic of China.<sup>19</sup> This further underlines the fears of a modern version of ‘*Pax Sinica*’, since economic viability seems to be the least concern for Xi Jinping as compared to China’s visualised geo-strategic gains in the ‘Neighbourhood’.

However, the smaller neighbours are now realising the pitfalls of doing such business with China. Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Cambodia in Asia and Venezuela in South America are facing a severe debt crisis with China. China provides loans with an interest rate of 6.3 per cent, while the interest rates on soft loans from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are only 0.25–3 per cent,<sup>20</sup>. Further the projects have no economic viability, thereby leading to a resource crunch in these small countries and the current debt crisis.

China has also made major economic inroads into Central Asia. It currently holds major stakes in Kazakhstan’s energy industry and Turkmenistan’s gas fields. While Russia continues to pump oil and gas out of these countries, China has diversified its interests by building power plants, refineries and transmission lines, in addition to gas and other infrastructure projects all over Central Asia to the detriment of Russian companies.<sup>21</sup> The Central Asian markets are also flooded with cheap Chinese products, thereby, increasing their dependency on China. It is the Eurasian Economic Union that has held China back till now from sweeping away Russia from Central Asia, but the question is for how long?

While these peripheral smaller nations have resisted mortgaging their sovereignty to the Chinese geo-economic push

to establish the modern version of the '*Tianxia* System' – a new '*Pax Sinica*', the economic cost of such continued resistance would be prohibitive. The size of Chinese loans given/planned is more than 20-25 per cent of the GDP of these countries, which cannot be sustained by them, thus leading to a debt crisis. The 'Middle Powers' in Asia need to step forward and be a 'net security provider to maintain and sustain the CNP' of these and other countries in the Asia-Pacific.

### ***Pax Sinica* and Middle Power Coalition**

The term '*Pax Sinica*' has been used for the periods of Chinese hegemonic domination of East Asia during the periods that China was the dominant civilisation in the region, due to its political, economic, military and cultural power. Throughout most of its history, the 'Middle Kingdom', as China was known, was the regional hegemon in East Asia. It expressed its dominance in the region through a 'tribute' system that required regional states to acknowledge Chinese supremacy and accept their inferior status as 'vassals', which lasted till the Opium Wars of 1840s that resulted in 100 years of subjugation initially by the West and then by Japan.

The tribute system was the ultimate institution of regional order. It defined China's grand strategy, behaviour and its interaction with its neighbours. Asia today is witnessing a similar Chinese push for a '*Pax Sinica*', especially in East Asia, South East Asia, South Asia and Central Asia. Beijing seeks to achieve the following to be able to establish its *Pax Sinica*:-

- (a) Replace the United States as the primary power in Asia;
- (b) Weaken the US alliance system in Asia, and create new security architecture;
- (c) Undermine the confidence of Asian nations in US credibility, reliability, and staying power;
- (d) Use China's economic power to tie smaller Asian nations closer to its geopolitical policy preferences; and
- (e) Increase PRC military capability to strengthen deterrence against US military intervention in the region.<sup>22</sup>

However, this process may hit a road block, as the smaller nations of the region are becoming aware of China's ulterior motives

and designs. This provides space for the 'Middle Powers' of the region – India, Japan, South Korea and Singapore to form a coalition of the like-minded. Such a coalition should provide an alternate geo-economic and geo-commerce model for the Asia-Pacific Region and facilitate economic activities, security, trade, intelligence exchanges, military capacity building, technology sharing, agenda setting for regional forums and coordinated diplomatic initiatives. It would be a truly 'win-win' situation for all countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

It should be a "South-South East-East Asia Forum" or a true Asia-Pacific Association. The reach to the Central Asian Region and beyond could be worked out in conjunction with the Eurasian Economic Union, thereafter.

It would lead to multi-polarity within Asia, act as a succor to the smaller nations and ensure that rule of international law, good governance, equality, transparency and economic prosperity for all is ensured within the region. Such an association would be able to ensure stability, peace and prosperity within the region. The foundation of the association or coalition should not be based just on countering any country's rise but for stability and prosperity, only then would it be self sustaining and long lasting.

### **Conclusion**

The rise of China can be viewed from different angles of perspectives, and is divided into three schools of thought. The 'Confident School' that asserts that China's rise is inevitable and its ascendancy will challenge the US preponderance both regionally and globally. The 'Pessimist School' that argues China is facing both domestic challenges and external constraints which perhaps make it unlikely to compete with or replace the US in this. The 'Not-Yet/Uncertain School', positing that although China has immense potential to be a great power or 'a challenger' to the US, its willingness to take the leadership role as a great power is uncertain or seemingly falls short of expectations.<sup>23</sup>

Xi Jinping sees the current geo-political flux as an opportunity for China to assert itself within Asia and occupy the vacuum due to US's strategic retrenchment. Towards that end, he has clubbed the existing infrastructure projects and added more under the much touted BRI – that started as the Silk Road Economic Belt in

Kazakhstan and the Maritime Silk Road in Indonesia, which were then clubbed as the One Belt One Road to finally being christened as the BRI.

It aims to gain geopolitical space in Asia centred on a phased commercial penetration through infrastructure projects and selling a short term 'economic dream' to the underprivileged nations on its periphery. Commercial penetration would be the precursor to the 'strategic equity', squeezed out from these nations due to the debt trap caused by these unviable projects, thereby gaining political, diplomatic and geopolitical space needed to achieve the China Dream of becoming a 'Great Power' by 2049 – a Unipolar Asia centred around China.

The penetration was supposed to be achieved by the BRI, a conglomeration of past, present and future infrastructure projects cobbled together – not considering economic viability but more to dump its excess capacity and labour, backed by financial muscle. However, the past seems to have come to haunt the Chinese. Having given loans to these small nations at market rates for unviable projects, the countries are facing debt crises and are not amenable to China's arm twisting as yet.

The Middle Powers of Asia must utilise this opportunity to form a 'Middle Power Coalition', an Asia-Pacific Association, to assist these small nations and ensure peace and stability within this region. The time is now for these Middle Powers of Asia to seize the initiative.

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# Korean Peninsula – Prevailing Imbroglio: Quest for Strategic Equilibrium

**Major General GG Dwivedi, SM, VSM and Bar, PhD (Retd)®**

## Introduction

**G**iven the geostrategic location, Korean Peninsula has been the fulcrum in the North East Asia's balance of power dynamics. Post the Korean War 1950-53, due to the existing parity of forces, North and South Korea despite being in possession of massive conventional arsenal and potential to engage in high intensity conflict, remained constrained, thus avoiding any form of misadventure.

The line of Armistice running along the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, one of the most fortified defence lines in the world has held on, in the wake of 'eye ball to eye ball' situation, while the opposing forces technically still remain in a state of war. The strategic equilibrium that had existed in the Peninsula for over last six decades is under extreme stress today, due to intense geopolitical turbulence as the key stakeholders are feverishly engaged in pursuing their strategic national interests.

The Korean Peninsula today is an antidote to its earlier name 'Chosun – the land of morning calm' given by local tribals over two millennium BC. There are numerous factors which have led to current state of instability in the region. The salient ones are; increasing frequency of missile testing by North Korea, recent joint US-South Korea military exercises – unprecedented in scale and intensity which included strategic assets like the B-52 Bombers and Aircraft Carrier USS Carl Vinson, deployment of Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) anti-missile system in South Korea by the US and ouster of South Korean President Park Geun-hye. The Peninsula due to the heightened state of tension has turned into a potential flash point – a tinder box.

State of asymmetry which is manifesting due to North Korea's rapidly growing nuclear-cum-missile capabilities coupled with lack

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of cogent response from the opposite side has encouraged Pyongyang to indulge in the provocative actions. The current crisis situation has almost reached the tipping point. Option of altering aggressive behaviour of the North Korean regime through the use of kinetic force carries a major risk. The challenge before the US and its allies is how to bring about moderation so that the situation does not spin out of control. This demands employment of all the tools of national power by the US and South Korea; including diplomacy, economic, financial, legal and military.

In the succeeding paras, a brief review has been undertaken of the prevailing situation alongside a critical analysis of the moves underway in the quest for restoration of strategic equilibrium by the involved stakeholders.

### **Prevailing Imbroglio – An Overview**

There are two key developments which have led to the present state of imbroglio. First, the rapid rise of People's Republic of China (PRC) and relative decline in clout of the US, Russia and Japan, leading to state of disequilibrium. Second, the persistence of North Korean Regime in development of viable nuclear capability as a security guarantee. Five nuclear tests and series of missile launches it has undertaken offer strong evidence of North Korea's strategy to mitigate the perceived existential threat.

The recent missile launch on 22 May 2017 by North Korea is of enhanced calibre capable of carrying large size nuclear warhead with a range of 3000-4000 km.<sup>1</sup> It signifies quantum leap in Pyongyang's capability. Unchecked nuclear weapons development by Democratic Republic of North Korea (DPRK) poses growing security threat to South Korea, Japan and even to the US mainland, resulting in the possibility of conflict in the region.

The present state of affairs can be largely attributed to US failure to recalibrate its policy to check DPRK's nuclear-missile programme and increasing influence of China in the North East Asia. US's prolonged commitments in West Asia also contributed to the present situation. Sanctions imposed by the UN and the US to cripple North Korean Regime economically have largely proved ineffective. Absence of channels for dialogue has further added to the trust deficit between the belligerents, thus further escalating the tension in the region.

President Trump's policy of 'America First' implies reluctance to be a security guarantor by limiting its global role. At the same time, he has promised to act tough with DPRK, indicating the end of 'strategic patience' era. Even Admiral Harry Harris, Head of the US Pacific Command has called North Korea a 'clear and dangerous threat', stressing the need for greater cooperation amongst the allies and for all countries to implement stronger sanctions against Pyongyang. "Combining nuclear warheads with ballistic missile technology in the hands of volatile leader like Kim Jong-un is a recipe for disaster" added Harris.<sup>2</sup> Glaring dichotomy in Washington's policies of 'sanctions and subsidies' gives an impression of its half-hearted efforts to shape the regional security architecture.

China enjoys considerable leverage with North Korea as it is the only major power that extends political and economic support to Pyongyang's authoritarian regime. 90 per cent of DPRK's trade is with PRC.<sup>3</sup> Beijing has cleverly manipulated Pyongyang to regulate tension in the Peninsula. China is known to have supplied nuclear material and know-how to DPRK including the missile launch vehicles. Over a period of time, its soft approach and unwillingness to apply pressure has emboldened the North Korean leadership. Somehow, the US has always believed that China can rein in DPRK, given its clout with the latter. The recent actions of Kim Jong-un tantamounting to defiance indicate limitations of Chinese influence.

With regard to Republic of Korea (ROK), PRC has two key security concerns. These are : to maintain peace and stability on the Peninsula and prevent South Korea from getting too entrenched into the US security framework. China has come out strongly against South Korea in allowing the US to deploy THAAD System on its soil. China had persistently warned South Korea against agreeing to such a move. Beijing sees it as a provocative act of Seoul crossing the redline; its own policy failure notwithstanding.

There have been reports of China resorting to impose sanctions on South Korea to pressurise Seoul into reversing its decision on THAAD, as a punitive measure. Coercive diplomacy is part of Chinese tactics. The process entails initially integrating neighbours into the ambit of Chinese driven 'East Asian Economic Order' and thereon exploiting them to gain political advantage. South Korea has a trade surplus of US \$ 73 billion with China as

per 2015 figures. Hence, Beijing has the capability to hurt Seoul economically.

Major General Cai Jun from the Joint Staff Department of 'Central Military Commission' PRC commenting upon the impact of THAAD System had recently stated; "This will further tighten the Asia-Pacific anti-missile barrier enclosing China and Russia, weakening their strategic capacities, something we adamantly oppose".<sup>4</sup> Elaborating further, he said that American anti-missile plans seek absolute military advantage which will exacerbate regional tensions, triggering an all-out arms race.

President Putin, given his disillusioned vision of Cold War symmetry marked by 'zero sum' mentality alongside rising Russian nationalism, is unlikely to cooperate with Trump in reduction of tension in the Peninsula. Putin believes that constructive engagement with Pyongyang provides Moscow leverage over the conduct of North Korean Regime at a crucial time when PRC's hold over DPRK is waning and US-North Korean tension is at an unprecedented level. In all probability, Moscow is likely to subtly oppose US designs in the region.

Contrary to the general image of violent brash youngster, Kim Jong-un has been successful in safeguarding regime's legitimacy since he assumed power in December 2011, after the demise of his father Kim Jong-Il. He has consolidated his position without confronting any serious opposition. Kim Junior has gone about methodically strengthening DPRK's defence capability along with economic growth. He has introduced reforms to move away from central planning to market based economy while maintaining tight political control. He is well entrenched for a long haul to carry forward the reign of Kim Dynasty.

### **Quest for Strategic Equilibrium**

It is the disproportionate accretion in the North Korean military potential alongside its nuclear capability which is destabilising the regional strategic balance. Pyongyang is estimated to possess enough nuclear explosive material for at least 10 nuclear warheads. Experts believe that by 2020 it will have enough fissile material for 100 warheads. In all likelihood, DPRK already has capability to deliver some of these weapons by the short and medium range ballistic missiles it has in the arsenal.<sup>5</sup>

The American and Chinese camps are engaged in classic 'balance of power' game. American quest is to maintain the *status quo* as the sole superpower. As a Pacific power, Washington is resolved to maintaining influence in the Asia-Pacific as part of its 'Pivot to Asia' strategy. China as a rising power seeks bipolar world with unipolar Asia. It considers the Asia-Pacific as sphere of influence and is aiming at diminution of US influence in the region alongside containing Japan. The stakes are rather high for the US and its allies. For DPRK, the key issue is survival of the regime.

In early May, US Defence Secretary James Mattis, in pursuant to the directions from President Trump and the Congress, formally announced 'Ballistic Missile Defence Review' which will address wide ranging issues related to defence policy and strategy. The review is expected to be completed by the year end. As a sequel to the above review, number of options could be on the table including deployment of additional ground based interceptors and acceleration of missile defence technology.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the mutual defence treaty, Seoul remains skeptical about Washington's constraints to step in, should there be escalation leading to a military showdown. It has taken strategic review entailing several independent measures to scale up its defence preparedness. A sum of US \$ 550 billion has been allocated towards military modernisation over next 15 years. Its defence budget for 2017 was US \$ 34 billion, marking an increase of four per cent over the previous year.<sup>7</sup> President Moon who recently won the South Korean elections advocating moderate approach towards North Korea has cautioned against high possibility of conflict with hostile neighbour due to recent rapid advances in the nuclear and missile capabilities.

Japan is deeply concerned about China's rapid accretion of military capability and North Korea's nuclear-cum-missile programme. Under Prime Minister Abe's leadership, Tokyo has adopted 'New Defence Policy Guidelines' paving way for re-crafting of its military strategy. It removed one percent GDP cap. Japan's defence budget for the year 2017 registered an increase of 1.4 per cent; pegged at US \$ 43.8 billion.<sup>8</sup> Mr Abe is also proactively pursuing the process to amend the nation's pacifist Constitution. Tokyo has taken pains to develop new strategic partnerships with



the nations in the Asia-Pacific, while strengthen existing security alliances. In the future, trilateral cooperation between the US, Japan and South Korea is likely to witness significant up swing.

China finds itself in quandary, given Kim Jong-un's provocative behaviour and President Trump's threat to act against DPRK with or without PRC's cooperation. Expressing support for dialogue, it has called both the sides to exercise restraint. Chinese Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi approached his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on 15 April 2017, seeking Moscow's help in preventing conflict between the US and North Korea.<sup>9</sup> Historically, cooperation between the two on Korean crisis has been primarily in the form of multilateral framework rather than bilateral. The sudden surge in bilateral cooperation between Beijing and Moscow is driven by two factors: stringent opposition to the US military unilateral action against North Korea's nuclear facilities and to ensure better diplomatic leverage against Pyongyang.

Chinese and Russian policy makers hold a steadfast belief that any US attempt to completely isolate North Korea from the global economic structure creates a sense of paranoia and siege mentality in Pyongyang. Sense of desperation drives Kim Jong-un to raise the pitch of nationalism and adopt provocative and belligerent stance. Since Kim Junior assumed power in 2011, North Korea has conducted 78 ballistic missile tests; the recent ones were the solid-fuelled Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs) capable of reaching the US Military bases on Guam. Hence, the two advocate limited time bound sanctions in consonance with the conduct of DPRK leadership.

Rhetoric and provocative statements notwithstanding, the prudent heads in Washington are strongly in favour of diplomacy and negotiations as the best option to deal with Pyongyang, in order to bring about notion of stability in the region. It may appear unrealistic to set pre-conditions; like US calling for North Korean denuclearisation as Kim Jong-un is not going to give up his nuclear programme and conversely, DPRK seeking embargo on the US-South Korean naval drills is unacceptable to America and its allies. However, during their recent meeting at Mar-a-Lago, President Xi reportedly urged President Trump to accept 'suspension for suspension'; essentially implying Mr Kim's freeze on additional ICBMs tests and in response the US to postpone or modify military



exercises in the region. Mr Xi even proposed that America and China consider new East Asian Security architecture.<sup>10</sup>

Ratcheting up sanctions on North Korea will prove to be an exercise in futility as the regime in Pyongyang is highly skilled at skirting these. Option of pre-emptive military strike against DPRK's nuclear installations and missile test sites will be strongly opposed by even Japan and South Korea. Policy of confrontation over dialogue will only result in adding fuel to the fire.

### Conclusion

The precarious situation in the Peninsula requires deft handling as resorting to failed policies of the past will only mean hitting the wall. This implies going beyond economic sanctions, six party talks and unilateralism. Bold initiatives like direct talks between Washington-Pyongyang coupled with China's willingness to take the call could help avert the crisis. Given the prevailing gravity of the situation, Peninsula imbroglio merits urgent dialogue to obviate imminent conflict situation and restoration of strategic equilibrium; while resolution of this long lingering complex issue in the coming future remains a remote possibility.

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<sup>10</sup> Graham Allison, *Thinking the Unthinkable With North Korea*, New York Times, 30 May 2017.

# Self-Sufficiency in National Security

General Deepak Kapoor, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd)<sup>®</sup>

## Introduction

Donald Trump's election as the President of the USA has highlighted three major aspects currently trending across the globe. First and foremost is an attempt to shun globalisation and safeguard perceived national identity by decrying immigration and preserving employment for 'original inhabitants'. This phenomenon is increasingly mirrored in what is happening across Europe today. Starting with the Brexit referendum, Right Wing inspired opposition to European Union and immigration from the Middle East is manifesting itself in resurgence of support for parties which were nowhere on the scene till a couple of years back. Thus, Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom (PVV) in the Netherlands, AfD in Germany and Finns Party in Finland have gained prominence beyond expectations in a short time. Though others are gaining ground too but the possibility of forthcoming elections in other countries throwing up some surprising results cannot be ruled out.

Secondly, the possibility of a gradual withdrawal by the United States from its role of being the leading super power of the world and a bulwark of democratic values across the globe is creating substantial ripples in the international environment. The US decision to withdraw from Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has, on one hand, resulted in serious apprehensions among nations opposing Chinese expansionism in South and East China Seas, and on the other, we are witnessing increasing Chinese efforts to fill the power vacuum created by the US move. Likewise, in Europe, US insistence on other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) members to spend two per cent of their GDP and take on increased responsibility for the defence of Europe is causing considerable unease and worry among European nations. While the *quid pro quo* approach is seen as not befitting the stature of the US, it nevertheless underlines the basic premise that national security of a nation cannot be leased out.

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Thirdly, the Trump administration has announced a whopping 10 per cent increase in the US military budget. Thus, while on one hand, the US is signaling intent to withdraw from the global trouble spots; on the other it is enhancing its military capabilities to intervene effectively when and where required. On 06 April 2017, it rained 59 Tomahawk missiles on Syria in retaliation to use of chemical warfare. On 13 April, it dropped the Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB *aka* Mother of All Bombs) against the Taliban in Afghanistan. The possibility of a conflict with North Korea in view of its threatening posture against the US is not ruled out in the short term. Obviously, these actions indicate a continued involvement in global affairs thus, underlining an apparent contradiction in words and deeds.

The resultant uncertainty in the security environment reinforces the conviction that nations need to be self sufficient in matters of their national security. Indeed, while it may be good to have alliances and linkages, a surer way of dealing with threats to national security is to develop own national capabilities rather than be dependent on others.

### **Importance of Self-sufficiency in National Security**

We need to look at India's experience since Independence to understand the importance of self-sufficiency in national security requirements. Till the Chinese invaded India in 1962, the defence services were considered a drain on the country's resources. Post-independence, Mr Nehru's idealism led him to believe that India's thrust towards peace in global affairs and a policy of peaceful co-existence with all its neighbours would automatically propel India to a role of natural leadership internationally. Indian military was also viewed as a tool of British imperialism, despite its positive role in attaining Independence. Consequently, there was a concerted effort to clip its wings and assign it to a gradually diminishing role in nation building. Thus, by the time the Chinese invasion came, the Indian military had been reduced to an ill-equipped, poorly-led and ill-clothed force which was hardly capable of stopping the Chinese onslaught. Mr Nehru is on record, having desperately sought the US help to restore India's territorial integrity. To our good luck, while the US was still deliberating on the request, the Chinese declared a unilateral ceasefire and retreated back to their bases in a short span of time. The entire sordid episode left Mr Nehru a thoroughly disillusioned man and was perhaps one of the reasons for his early demise.

1962 acted as a wakeup call and the political leadership started devoting more time, resources and efforts in rebuilding the military. Thus, by 1965, when the Pakistanis thought that the Indian military was still in the same state as in 1962 and they could exploit this weakness to their advantage, they launched large scale operations to wrest Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). However, they were in for a shock and were given a befitting response. Behind our successes lay the efforts at rebuilding the military since 1962. Active Soviet assistance also had a role to play in this rapid transformation.

The process of rebuilding and allocating greater resources to the military continued and found full expression in our magnificent victory and creation of Bangladesh in 1971. Capture of more than 93,000 Pakistani military personnel as prisoners brought Pakistan to its knees, a humiliation they have been smarting under till date. The importance of suitably modernising the military to deliver on the national security front once again got highlighted in the process.

Again in 1999, when Pakistan attempted its misadventure in Kargil, Indian military's crushing response underlined the fact that conventionally, Pakistan is incapable of defeating India. Shifting its strategy and supporting the proxy war in J&K since then has also not borne the desired results for Pakistan.

Throughout this period, Russia provided invaluable support in terms of equipment, weaponry and munitions to the Indian military to acquit itself as it did. Last couple of years has seen India being the largest importer of military hardware globally. However, military hardware is exorbitantly expensive for a country like India to afford on a continuing basis for modernising the military. In an era of diminishing budgets and rising costs this trend cannot be sustained as we would get less and less for the megabucks we may be willing to spend. Most importantly, national security of the country cannot be held hostage to the policies and whims and fancies of the suppliers.

This leaves us with no choice but to develop a degree of self-sufficiency in manufacturing military hardware to meet our security needs. The current dispensation started the 'Make in India' campaign when it came to power in 2014. It indeed is a step in the right direction. However, the progress so far has been regrettably slow with little chance of major projects fructifying in less than 10-15 years.

### **Recommendations to Achieve Self-sufficiency in National Security**

To move towards self sufficiency, the need is for large scale structural reforms to be undertaken on an emergent basis. The usual policy of doing too little too late is inherently faulty and is never likely to succeed in the long run. Some of the areas requiring major changes are enumerated below:-

(a) **Revamp of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).** Rather than working on inventing cutting edge technologies which either the others are not prepared to share with us or would do it at exorbitant cost, DRDO is frittering away its resources on non-essential projects, in the process merely reinventing the wheel. The DRDO has been unable to provide state-of-the-art modern battle tank to the Indian Army despite decades of effort, time and cost overruns. Likewise, for even basic items like rifles and carbines, we still have to depend on costly imports. For the Air Force, it has taken the DRDO decades to provide *Tejas*, a Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) which is being finally inducted. Notwithstanding its induction, the deficiency of fighter squadrons in the Air Force has risen to alarming levels which should be a matter of worry for all of us. With the likely retirement of upgraded MIG 21 (BIS) and MIG 25 shortly, this deficiency will increase further. Similarly for the Indian Navy, the first nuclear submarine, *Arihant*, is likely to finally become operational in the near future after a considerable delay. Our shipyards are unable to provide appropriate conventional ships to replace the aging ships in an acceptable time frame. For maritime surveillance, we are once again dependent on costly imports. This state of affairs hardly does credit to the DRDO. The orientation of DRDO must change in concentrating on state-of-the-art equipment and weapon development for a military of the future. Space and cyber warfare are shining examples of the kind of areas they should be working on.

(b) **Private Sector.** For far too long, a thriving indigenous private sector has been kept away from defence production. The rationale given for this was that defence being national security related, only State-run enterprises should be involved with defence production, a reasoning which appears inherently

flawed. Subsequently, private sector was kept out under pressure from trade unions of the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and the protectionist policies that the government of the day was constrained to follow as a result. Belatedly, we are realising that PSUs have failed to deliver both in terms of quality and quantities required for the country's needs. Quality control being under the same department as production (Department of Defence Production) has not helped matters and has resulted in deterioration of the quality of equipment being produced and supplied to the military. Huge deficiencies in requisite stock levels for the military's needs, especially in ammunition, are indicative of how excessive reliance on PSUs is affecting our operational preparedness. The fact that investments in the defence sector are rather heavy and have a long gestation period without any certainty of specific supply orders also acts as a demotivating factor for potential entrants to the defence production sector. Defence Production Policy 2016 (DPP 2016), issued by the government, has tried to address some of the concerns but once again it is a case of too little too late. DPP 2016 has also left a number of grey areas and unanswered questions which are likely to lead to further confusion. Like the previous policy, it may have to be repeatedly revised to come up to the expectations. A related aspect is our offset policy and framework for its implementation. While conceptually it is a good step to encourage enhanced indigenisation and 'Make in India' concept, suitable structures for absorption of the offsets have not been created indigenously as part of our post-defence contracts action. As a result, billions of dollars worth of offsets are lying unutilised and perhaps would go waste in the long run. This, despite the fact that vendors invariably hike the prices of their equipment when they are asked to provide offsets.

(c) **Joint Venture Route.** Under the circumstances, the best way to encourage indigenous defence production with active involvement of the private sector and without trying to reinvent the wheel is to adopt the joint venture route. Expertise and knowhow of known foreign defence manufacturers need to be combined with prominent private sector players within the country for forming joint ventures and setting up production



bases in India. Of course, this would imply substantial initial outgo of funds as well as precious foreign exchange but this is the only way of achieving self-sufficiency in defence production in a short period of time. It also opens the doors for exporting defence hardware in the long run, thus recouping expenditure incurred.

(d) **Infrastructure Development.** For defending the country's borders, the military needs suitable infrastructure in the border areas to be able to acquit itself as per the nation's expectations. Lack of infrastructure hampers its operational capability and ability for sustained defence. Our vulnerability is greater especially along our northern borders as we have been unable to develop matching infrastructure on our side compared to what the Chinese have achieved in Tibet in a relatively shorter period. Unless we rapidly develop our road, rail and air infrastructure, we may be exposed to a 1962 like situation all over again.

(e) **Annual Defence Expenditure.** At a conservative estimate, the Chinese defence expenditure has been more than three times our expenditure annually for the last two decades. In fact, as a percentage of the GDP, our defence expenditure has been gradually declining for the last 10 years. Today it stands at a paltry 1.63 per cent of the GDP for the Financial Year 2017-18. This points to the ever increasing gap between the two militaries, putting us at a major disadvantage in case of a future conflict. A series of recommendations to the government to enhance annual defence expenditure to at least three per cent of the GDP have not elicited the desired response. With a likely exposure to a two front scenario, this situation does not bode well for national security.

(f) **Higher Defence Management.** At the time of Independence, we inherited the British system of defence management, a system which suited them as a colonial power to run India. Till date, we have continued with the same, having done some tinkering to it to suit our bureaucratic and political needs. Thus, while Britain as well as the rest of the world has moved way ahead in evolving a cohesive, relevant and responsive higher defence management system keeping



the current security environment in focus, we have continued to languish despite a number of our committees recommending requisite changes. Jointness and integration, buzzwords for comprehensive application of national power in the present day scenarios, have not received any more attention than lip service. The route to self sufficiency lies through appropriate and efficient higher defence management structures overseen by the political authority with sound professional advice.

### **Conclusion**

The above are but a few of the areas of immediate concern. The list is exhaustive and we have a long way to go to reach a level of self-sufficiency that is desirable in the long run. A sizable portion of the national resources would have to be set aside which is not an easy option in view of the competing needs in a developing economy like India. The fact that defence is a non-productive white elephant is a universally recognised phenomenon. In the current era of nation states, it is however, a necessity for national security which cannot be overlooked if the country has to progress in a stable environment. A look at leading nations of the globe would clearly indicate that they have reached that level by achieving a degree of self-sufficiency in national security.

The current dispensation at the Centre has a massive mandate from the people. Unlike governments in the past, it cannot be held hostage to coalition dynamics. Further, as recent elections in some of the states have indicated, it continues to enjoy the popularity and support of the masses, notwithstanding the incumbency factor. Thus the present dispensation has the ability and the leadership to push through major reforms despite resistance from entrenched interests. It is a rare opportunity which needs to be exploited in national interest. A strong political will to achieve self -sufficiency in the crucial area of national security is the need of the hour.

# Strategy – The Unexplored Frontiers: A New Strategic Direction for India

Major General PJS Sandhu (Retd)<sup>®</sup>

## Introduction

There is an interesting US document 'NSC 68' which had remained TOP SECRET for nearly five decades and had recently been declassified.<sup>1</sup> The document is a 'Report to the President (of the USA) pursuant to the President's Directive of January 31, 1950' which reads:-

*"That the President direct the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defence to undertake a re-examination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans, in the light of the probable fission bomb capability and possible thermo-nuclear bomb capability of the Soviet Union".*

It is a 47 page document, which after due analysis, recommends a course of action (Course D) which in all probability was the underpinning of the US strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union till the disintegration of the latter in 1989.<sup>2</sup> The intention here is not to go into the details of this document or the attendant strategy but to extrapolate the process (evolution of strategy) to events of the present times. This article aims to analyse the unexplored frontiers (possibilities) of strategy as an instrument of statecraft in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with a focus on geostrategic environment of India as it prevails and in the years to come.

## Relevance of Strategy as an Instrument of Statecraft in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Strategy as a geopolitical instrument gained an overarching importance during the Second World War and the decades that followed, especially the Cold War years. However, with the onset of globalisation and social media, the pace of events quickened and gradually strategic thinking seems to have given way to personality driven policies and crises management. The long drawn out conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and ongoing strife in Syria and

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much of the Middle East are the cases in point. The Americans who could be singled out for strategic thinking during and after the war years seem to have abandoned it, perhaps due to their misplaced confidence in military power and technology to solve geopolitical issues on the world stage.

### **Neglect of History and Geography**

Another perceptible trend the world over has been the neglect of history and geography in dealing with geopolitical issues, which has not only prolonged the conflicts but has inflicted much suffering on the people of the affected regions. History helps us to understand the past, which has led to the present events while Geography acts as a restraint to human endeavors, notwithstanding the military power and technological superiority. The awareness about history and geography of a region imposes a sense of 'realism', which in turn helps the policy makers to evolve an achievable political objective which when linked with 'ways and means' becomes a strategy.

To illustrate the importance of history and geography in formulation of strategy, a few examples from the recent times come to mind. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 is a case in point. The Soviets seemed to have neither taken into account the outcome of historical interventions, nor the limits that geography imposed on military operations. The reality of the Hindu Kush mountains and the North West Frontier cannot be ignored. It is ironic that the Americans have blundered along the same route, perhaps due to their misplaced confidence in military might and technological superiority.

Closer home, the Indian intervention in Sri Lanka in 1987 comes to mind. One may iterate that history and geography of the area of operations, and ground realities of the situation were given a go by before venturing into the situation. To make matters worse, there was an absence of political aim and a sound strategy. However, the redeeming feature was the performance of the Indian Military which was functioning in a strategic vacuum. The memorial to the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) constructed by Sri Lanka stands testimony to the same.<sup>3</sup>

To further reinforce the above point, the success story of the Indo-Pak War of 1971 resulting in creation of Bangladesh merits

a mention. Historical and geographical factors were duly factored in while evolving a grand strategy which played out over the next nine months. The results are obvious. It is a different matter that a decisive military victory gave way to an incomplete peace. The statesmen are not infrequently known to have gone wrong while negotiating peace. The Treaty of Versailles, the peace parleys at the end of the First Gulf War, The Tashkent Agreement etc. being a few cases in point that readily come to mind. Hence, strategy of peace negotiations is as important, if not more, as the military strategy for war.

### **The Asian Landscape**

China and India are the two major Asiatic powers that are destined to not only determine the future of this part of the world but would also impact each other. First, an overview of Chinese geography and its geo-strategic maneuvering, and the upheavals that it may cause. To quote Mackinder:-

*“ \_ \_ \_ \_ the Chinese might constitute the yellow peril to the world’s freedom, just because they would add an oceanic frontage to the resources of the great continent, an advantage as yet denied to the Russian tenant of the pivot region.”<sup>4</sup>*

One cannot help but conclude that nearly a century later, Mackinder’s prediction by and large seems to be coming true. In fact, if we look at the geographic and demographic factors of China, it is obvious that China (and so is India) is destined to be an important player on the world stage. It is quite apparent that there is a kind of grand strategy at play for the last three decades which is not linear but has continuity in all its vectors. China is pursuing long term goals with the ultimate aim of being a world power, possibly of a different character than the United States of America.

The dynamism of Chinese economic growth, technological advancement in various fields, accumulation of military power and spreading of its influence (directly and indirectly in most subtle ways) has given a new meaning to strategic behaviour, i.e. to say ‘the unexplored frontiers of strategy’. The Chinese example is a good sounding board to analyse this phenomenon. *China’s emerging area of influence in Eurasia and Africa is growing, not in a nineteenth century imperialistic sense, but in a more subtle*

*manner better suited to the era of globalisation. Simply by securing its economic needs, China is shifting the balance of power in the Eastern Hemisphere, and that will substantially concern the United States (and India). On land and at sea, abetted by China's favourable location on the map, Beijing's influence is emanating from Central Asia to the Russian Far East and from the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean.*<sup>5</sup> The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are the manifestations of the grand strategy at play.

### **The Indian Scenario**

Taking into account the historical perspective and the ground realities it would be logical to begin at 1947, which determined the shape of the Indian Sub-continent and India, as it exists today. Independent India was quick to consolidate its geopolitical structure through the merger of princely states and in giving itself a workable Constitution, which has stood the test of time. India's role in ending the Korean War, especially its contribution in the 'Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission', and later in Indo-China is a testimony to the Indian prestige on the world stage. It was all the more creditable that such recognition was achieved in less than a decade after having emerged from two centuries of colonial rule.

However, there were two noticeable areas of India's failure as an Independent Nation. One, India did not do enough to secure its frontiers, especially so as the newly created Pakistan emerged a belligerent neighbour on its western flank and India had a new neighbour in Communist China after its annexation of Xinjiang in 1949 and Tibet in 1950-51. These were the geographic realities that had emerged soon after Independence but their contours had been visible in the aftermath of the Second World War.

The second failure which has had long-term effects on India's growth has been the absence of a well-crafted strategy. Mr K Subrahmanyam in his article 'India's Grand Strategy' had called 'non-alignment' as India's grand strategy at Independence and subsequent Cold War years.<sup>16</sup> It would be a misnomer to term non-alignment anything close to a strategy, leave aside 'grand strategy', for the simple reason that it did not fulfill the ingredients of a strategy. While it may have had an objective (to stay away from the two power blocks), but, lacked the 'ways and means' to

achieve the same. In retrospect, it could be viewed as a fair weather foreign policy which came under severe stress in times of national crisis; e.g. in 1962. No doubt, it was idealistic but devoid of pragmatism. Further, it was not evolved institutionally but based on personal whims and fancies of our first Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru who viewed the post-Second World War world as a benign world free from large-scale wars. It also helped him to project himself as a world statesman, albeit at the cost of India's national interests.

### **National Security Strategy**

Since the beginning of the 21st Century, particularly after the nuclear tests of May 1998, there have been a number of attempts by defence related think tanks and HQ Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) to evolve and suggest to the government a National Security Strategy but all these efforts have come to naught, primarily because of lack of political guidance by successive governments which would define national aims and objectives, and terms of reference to achieve the same.

### **National Security Challenges**

It is common knowledge that our northern borders with Pakistan and China are undefined, un-demarcated and disputed. It is also a fact that a large section of the population of the Kashmir Valley stands alienated from the Indian State.

There are some home truths that need to be stated. First, though we maintain and rightly so that the whole of J&K is an unalienable part of India but have done nothing for the last seven decades to get the part vacated that was illegally occupied by Pakistan through aggression in 1947-48. In 1947-48, Major (later Brigadier) Sher Jang Thapa, MVC held on to Skardu (capital of Gilgit-Baltistan) for six months but India could not relieve it for want of a concerted effort. Eventually, after most of his force had been killed and the garrison was near starvation, he had no option but to surrender.<sup>7</sup> Had Skardu been relieved in time, there would have been no problem of Gilgit-Baltistan as Pakistan would not have shared a border with China. In retrospect, it was a failure to appreciate the strategic importance of Gilgit-Baltistan for defence of India.

Secondly, it was a cardinal mistake to have taken the case of J&K to the United Nations in 1948. It was essentially a case of aggression by Pakistan against the Indian State of J&K and India would have been justified to have it vacated by all means at its disposal. Well, it was not to be!

Thirdly, there have been a number of opportunities that have come India's way to solve the J&K problem once and for all. These are the wars or near wars that were initiated or abetted by Pakistan; the last opportunity being the attack on Indian Parliament in Dec 2001 and Operation Parakram that followed. In the last case, it was primarily lack of political will to adopt a hard option. To hide our failure, we chose to call it 'diplomatic coercion.'<sup>8</sup>

Fourthly, and most importantly is the case of Tibet. The way the whole issue has been handled since 1947/49 shows lack of strategy and failure to recognise the ground reality. The saga of 1962 war requires no repetition. No doubt, China was the aggressor but India played no small part in bringing about a war for which it was ill prepared. The net result is that the whole issue of boundary dispute with China has become intractable with no hope of a resolution in the near future. Though there is relative peace and tranquility on the borders, the boundary dispute acts as a limiting factor in overall development of Sino-Indian relations.

The net effect of the above has been the growing nexus between China and Pakistan, which has of late come to impact on geopolitical and geostrategic options for India. That India has to maintain a high degree of military preparedness to face security threats also impacts its economic growth, especially so, as India is still a developing country with almost 22 per cent (as per Indian Government's own estimate) of its population living below poverty line.

### **Relations with Pakistan**

Pakistan continues to illegally occupy large parts of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, i.e. Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) and has been sponsoring proxy war against India since 1989-90. Apart from the ongoing J&K problem, conflicting interests in Afghanistan are a major issue impacting on bilateral relations. Just as India considers its neighbours like Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar as its areas of strategic interest and



influence, Pakistan considers Afghanistan the same way. Notwithstanding the historical ties, it needs to be realised and accepted that Afghanistan is Pakistan's neighbour while India is not; at least till Pakistan continues to occupy the northern territories of Gilgit-Baltistan. The people of Afghanistan consider the presence of the US and NATO troops alien to their culture and do not view their continued presence favourably. Hence, *the US presence in Afghanistan is part of the problem and not solution*. How does it matter which government rules in Kabul as long as the people of Afghanistan accept the same. It is time that India accepts the ground reality and comes to terms with Pakistan's interests in its 'backyard'. In fact, sagacity would demand that India and Pakistan are seen to be on the same page as far as Afghanistan is concerned. This could result in a major reset of bilateral relations and create a degree of trust, which is sorely lacking.

### **Relations with China**

This today is the biggest foreign policy challenge for India. We are neither moving any closer to resolution of the boundary dispute, nor in development of bilateral relations in other fields. As regards the boundary dispute with China, in spite of 19 rounds of talks between the Special Representatives (SRs) of India and China since 2003, we are no closer to a border settlement.<sup>9</sup> If anything, the Chinese stand has not only shifted from the agreed principles but their attitude has also hardened. Of late, a certain amount of chill has crept into bilateral relations. India's opposition to CPEC and not joining the BRI has been the latest points of friction. As a result, not only are the bilateral relations on a downward swing but China-Pakistan nexus gets even stronger to the overall detriment of our geostrategic interests. A major re-orientation of our approach towards China is required. It has to be a multi-pronged strategy, which is outlined, in the succeeding paras.

India could offer to become a partner in CPEC. If accepted, this would establish old linkages with Gilgit-Baltistan and western parts of PoK. This in turn would also address trust deficit with Pakistan. The point to be considered is that geopolitical environment cannot remain frozen for all times to come. It is subject to change based on geographical realities and peoples' aspirations. *Who knows what may be the shape of the Indian sub-continent by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is important for India to play its part in shaping the geopolitics of the region in the years to come.*

India could also join BRI, especially in India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). It would also demonstrate India's confidence in being able to protect its core geostrategic interests.

The presence of His Holiness (HH) the Dalai Lama and his followers, and the Tibetan Government in exile in India are a major irritant in bilateral relations. Even today China feels quite insecure in Tibet. India could facilitate return of HH the Dalai Lama and his followers to their homeland through formal and back channel diplomacy. It is well known that India has no designs over Tibet and has accepted once and for all that Tibet is part of China. If the return of HH the Dalai Lama and his followers can be achieved with India's help, it will be in the interest of both and a great trust building factor. It is only when China feels secure in Tibet that there can be any forward movement on the boundary dispute. The aim should be to achieve free movement of people in the frontier regions of India and the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China, which was so historically.

Lastly, it is important to increase trade and people to people contact. This can happen only if irritants in bilateral relations are removed and there is greater sensitivity by both sides to give due consideration to each other's core interests which in turn would generate trust.

### **Situation in J&K**

The need of the hour is for the Indian Government to introspect and identify the factors, which have led to the present state of affairs. To begin with, the proxy war in J&K was abetted and sponsored from across the Line of Control (LC) but we chose to deal with it internally. Apart from deploying the Army within, we also created Rashtriya Rifles (RR) which is *de facto* Army but deployed for internal security in J&K. RR has been conducting sustained counter insurgency operations for over two decades and is being seen as a face of the Army. In the process, the Army has lost its salutary effect that was its biggest asset when operating in aid to civil authority. So, what needs to be done?

The first step is to start dismantling the RR as a force and hand over its responsibilities to CRPF which stands designated as the main force for counter insurgency (CI) and internal security

(IS). I agree its effectiveness in this role is suspect. The answer lies in inducting army officers into CRPF and other Central Police Organisations (CPOs) involved in CI and border management in place of Indian Police Service (IPS) officers. At least 50 per cent of the officer cadre in such forces, especially company commanders and above, ought to be from the Army on deputation. Over a period of time, this will develop a culture of a para military force in the CPOs, which will obviate the requirement to call in the Army at the first instance and to keep it there in perpetuity. The latest example of the language agitation in Darjeeling is a case in point. The point to remember is that political issues ought to be resolved politically and not by calling in the Army. *The Army may be called in as an instrument of last resort and that too for a short period, to have the desired salutary effect.*

### **Conclusion**

A well-articulated grand strategy is a sine-quo-non for any country in today's world. A strategy once evolved gives a direction along which a country moves to achieve its goals and objectives. However, in formulation of strategy due consideration has to be given to the history, geography and culture of any region or the country. Globalisation and economic power are not sufficient to overcome the restraints imposed by history and geography. The ongoing intervention by the US and their allies in Afghanistan amply prove the same.

India today is at the cross-roads in its journey to becoming a developed country. In the last two decades, there have been many false starts where it was felt that India had finally arrived (on the world stage) but it was not really so. Keeping in view the present state of development and security threats, India needs to re-assess the direction it is taking to meet its aspirations and evolve a strategy, which will be rooted in historical and geographical realities. It must be institutionally driven and should involve all stakeholders. India's geopolitical environment requires a reset of its various policies to be able to address the challenges that it faces and create fresh opportunities. A new strategic direction has been suggested in the paper. It is deliberately provocative and departs from the standard Indian narrative so that it could generate a debate and consequently a strategy that would serve India well during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm>. Accessed on 10 Jun 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Course D involved – A rapid build-up of political economic and military strength in the free world. This was to be the core of American strategy during the Cold War.

<sup>3</sup> The fact that the IPKF while withdrawing from Sri Lanka was not even allowed to land in Tamil Nadu goes only to prove that the intervention was undertaken without due thought being given to historical, geographical and cultural factors.

<sup>4</sup> HJ Mackinder, “The Geographical Pivot of History”, The Geographical Journal, London, April 1904.

<sup>5</sup> Robert D Kaplan, The Revenge of Geography, Random House, New York, First Edition, 2012, pp.12014. p.200.

<sup>6</sup> Mr K Subrahmanyam passed away on Feb 2, 2011. This article was adapted by Dhruva Jaishankar from four of Subrahmanyam’s unpublished essays on grand strategy, Indian foreign relations, defence policy and nuclear deterrence. It was published in the Indian Express on 02 and 04 Feb 2012. It can be accessed at <http://www.Indianexpress.com/news/Indies-grand-strategy1907157/0>.

<sup>7</sup> Lieutenant General MS Shergill, PVSM, AVSM, VrC (retd), A Hero Forgotten-Brigadier Sher Jang Thapa, MVC, USI Journal, Jul-Sep 2007, Vol.cxxxvii, No.569, p.419.

<sup>8</sup> Major General PJS Sandhu (Retd), Operation Parakram Revisited, Purple Beret, January 2012, Vol.3, Issue 1, p.18.

<sup>9</sup> The last round of SR parleys was held in Beijing on 20 Apr 2016.

# Technology Requirements for the Indian Navy

**Vice Admiral Satish Soni, PVSM, AVSM, NM (Retd)<sup>®</sup>**

## Introduction

Indo-Pacific is now an arena of geopolitical contest and the Indian Ocean is witnessing an increased presence of International warships and submarines, in particular of the Chinese, ostensibly to protect their commercial interests. Increased focus on Blue Economy, presence of offshore oil and gas reserves, dividends from seabed mining, requirement to preserve depleting fish stock and a renewed focus on Maritime Security is encouraging littorals to build naval capacities and capabilities, with the assistance of more powerful navies, both regional and extra regional.

The Indian peninsula flanked by the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the East and the Lakshadweep in the West dominates the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC) through which over 70,000 ships transit every year. The Indian Navy has the sea legs and the mobility to reach distant choke points that provide access to the Indian Ocean. Given the mandate to be a net provider of security to the many island nations, the Indian Navy needs to balance threats, inherent risks and rising challenges in the maritime environment against the ability to monitor, contain and counter them. Needless to add that creation of such conditions would support our maritime interests as well.

In order to achieve this, the Indian Navy must not only improve its force levels, fill in the capability gaps but also harness and exploit disruptive technologies. A robust ship and submarine design organisation, 48 Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) laboratories and other facilities supported by a fledgling military Industrial complex have so far met some of our aspirations towards self-reliance.

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In 2015, the Indian Navy redefined the Indian Naval Indigenisation Plan (INIP 2015-2030), outlining projects for a new phase of self-reliance. This is in consonance with the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) Technology Perspective and Capability Roadmap (TPCR 2013).

The Indian Navy and DRDO have an overarching policy agreement to enhance cooperation. To this end, regular "Synergy Meetings" are held to review the 93 critical technologies being pursued. The Technical Development Fund (TDF) and Integrated Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM) initiatives taken recently should give impetus to the 'Make in India' drive. There have been some collaborative efforts which have made a significant impact in improving our capabilities. *Arihant SSBN*, BRAHMOS supersonic missile and the Medium Range Surface- to-Air Missile *Barak-8* have been path breaking. Huge investments have been made in many other projects but dividends have not been commensurate.

The technologies that Indian Navy would want to exploit in the near future are either already available with advanced countries or are being researched by them. We would need to either collaborate with them or invest in research and development to find suitable answers. These are discussed in this article under the following broad heads: -

- (a) Advanced Munitions.
- (b) Unmanned Combat.
- (c) Space.
- (d) Network-Centric Warfare.
- (e) Cyber Warfare.
- (f) Air Craft Carrier Technology.
- (g) Challenges.

### **Advanced Munitions**

Our successes in development of long range missiles i.e. from the *Prithvi* to *Agni* series have been creditable but we still have to make any headway in advanced munitions. The cruise missile programme "Nirbhay" is extremely important to us for the options

that become available in littoral warfare. Smart munitions such as Drone Launched Guided Missiles and Loitering Missiles, which can limit collateral damage and have the flexibility of being launched by a variety of platforms, have several advantages for the sheer versatility and flexibility of usage.

Directed Energy Weapons (DEWS) i.e. beams of concentrated Electromagnetic energy or subatomic particles are going to be the weapons of choice in future on account of the advantages of safety, high accuracy, unlimited use and cost effectiveness. DRDO has claimed initial success with a 10kw beam effective up to 800 metres and is working on an array of systems from chemical oxygen iodine lasers to high power fibre lasers.

The challenge lies in developing solid state laser DEWs which can destroy enemy missiles in the booster phase, somewhat akin to Laser Weapon System (LAWS) being tested by the US. The US Navy is also testing a quick response Electromagnetic Railgun that fires projectiles using electricity instead of chemical propellants. With its increased velocity and extended range (greater than 100 miles), the electromagnetic Railgun will provide ships with a multi-mission capability. Acquisition of this capability with or without foreign collaboration will give us a force multiplier at sea.

### **Unmanned Combat**

Autonomous unmanned combat vehicles that can operate in the air, on the surface and under the surface are of great interest to all navies because of their ability to remain on task for extended periods of time and extend combat operations into the adversary's anti-access/area denial zone. The Indian Navy operates the Heron and Searcher class of Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs) and has a programme for arming the UAVs and developing a bigger and more capable platform i.e. Rustom. DRDO is also developing an Autonomous Sea Vehicle akin to a submarine drone.

Precision guidance to avoid collateral damage, advanced artificial intelligence to enable decision making, a good collision avoidance system, exploitation of Internet of Everything (IOE) technology and better satellite coverage are some of the pre-requisites for success.

India should explore the feasibility of co-developing with the United States the technologies of their on-going projects such as,



Anti-Submarine Warfare Continuous Trail Unmanned Vessel (ACTUV) that looks for submarines in a given area and reports detection to the fleet, SHARK – an underwater submarine hunting probe; “Upward falling Loads” which remain dormant on the sea bed and rise on demand; X-47 unmanned aircraft and the vertical take-off and landing naval drone; the Tactically Exploited Reconnaissance Drone (TERN).

It is learnt that the research on Boeing’s Solar Eagle, a self-sustaining UAV, powered by solar energy with an endurance of five years has been stopped but we could expect development of such capabilities in the future and explore the possibility of co-development in this project too.

### **Space**

George Friedman, the founder and CEO of the think tank Stratfor till 2015, in his book *‘The Next Hundred Years’*, published in 2010, predicts the First Space War in 2050. A war, in which pre-emptive strikes will be launched from lunar bases at the Spatial Command and Control stations with an aim to achieve superiority in space.

In this first space war, the author has visualised extensive use of Unmanned Hypersonic Aircraft, Anti- Satellite Missiles, High Energy Lasers, Armoured Infantry Men, Robotic Logistics, Unmanned Air Vehicles, and Precision Guided Missiles etc. Whilst the scenario is fictional, space is certainly the new dimension that aspiring powers are looking at to boost their capabilities.

Currently, there is only one International Space Station being managed by five participating agencies (US, Russia, Canada, Europe and Japan). Chinese have plans to man another one by 2020. There could be as many as 500 military satellites in geostationary and low elliptical orbits, being used for reconnaissance, communications (including for Electro Magnetic Support Measures (ESM)) and navigation. Anti-satellite systems have been tested by the Chinese, US and Russia.

The Indian Space Research Organisation launched a lunar probe in 2008, sent an unmanned rocket to orbit Mars in 2013. It has established a world record of launching 104 satellites into orbit in one go and has demonstrated a capability to put humans in space. But our capabilities for exploiting space for military applications remain limited to the *Cartosat* series, the first Naval

satellite *Rukmani* and a few spinoffs from the Indian Regional Satellite System (IRNSS) programme.

*Rukmani* has changed the way Naval Forces operate at sea. The ability to exchange positional information and communicate on a real time has enabled widely dispersed task forces to operate all over the Indian Ocean. We must plan for additional military satellites for reconnaissance and communication with advanced space based sensors, launch of on demand mini-satellites, instant imaging, Anti Satellite (ASAT) weapons, Anti-Ballistic Missile system, Electro-magnetic Pulse (EMP) hardening of satellites to protect against ASAT weapons and a launch of ESM constellation of satellites to determine position of units at sea. The Integrated Space Cell must grow into a Space Command to shortlist and follow up specific initiatives.

### **Network-centric Warfare**

The Indian Navy aims to achieve full spectrum dominance at sea from peacetime operations to application of military power by having credible information superiority. Our efforts include putting *Rukmani* in space, development of UHF, KU, C and S band transponders, indigenous development of Software Defined Radios, a common Combat Management System, commissioning of the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) and the IRNSS programme.

Indigenous software defined radios will give us the ability to communicate over longer ranges in complete secrecy. Auto modulation and change of frequency will enable jam-proof communication. Exploitation of Multi Input Multi Output (MIMO) technology will reduce requirement of more sets and antennae. But there are some technology gaps. We continue to depend on the GPS and haven't been able to integrate information from all the available sources for a perfect situational awareness on individual units at sea. Also, we need to have a global footprint. Launch of more satellites and early conclusion of our efforts at information integration is recommended.

### **Cyber Warfare**

Whilst Stuxnet that sabotaged Iran's Natanz Uranium enrichment plant in Nov 2007 was an isolated example of cyber warfare, today, exploitation of this dimension is rampant. In the first fortnight

of April this year, there were 40 reported cases of cyber-attacks on economic and military targets. Last month, the hacking group 'Shadow Brokers' infected 2,00,000 systems all over the world for a ransom of \$300 per rectification. A cyber-attack essentially exploits weaknesses in a software programme and injects malware to disable systems. It is manpower intensive. The US Cyber Command is expected to have 6200 military and civilian contractors divided into 13 teams by 2018 to hunt down online intruders.

The Indian Navy is becoming increasingly dependent on data processing and Network Centricity, which makes it extremely vulnerable to Information Warfare campaigns. Capabilities with the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO), Defence Information Assurance and Research Agency (DIARA), Service Headquarters, DRDO and other government agencies need to be integrated and grouped under one organisation. Commissioning of a dedicated and integrated cyber organisation is recommended.

### **Aircraft Carrier Technology**

Sanctioned in 2001, the keel for the first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-1) was laid in 2009 and the ship was launched in 2013. Sea trials are expected to commence in 2018, which is a fairly long timeline. There is certainly a need to build more and bigger aircraft carriers in quicker timeframes and the Navy has ambitions to assimilate and integrate several advanced technologies such as the Electro Magnetic Launch System (EMALs), Advanced Arrestor Gear (AAG) and Integrated Full Electrical Propulsion (IFEP)/ Nuclear Propulsion. In order to condense the time lines and monitor indigenisation of new technologies, we could examine setting up Advanced Technology Project (ATV) type of structures which oversees construction of the SSBNs.

### **Challenges**

The Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) aimed at simplifying acquisition processes has gone through eight iterations and yet no big-ticket acquisition barring the P-8I has been concluded for the Indian Navy. The acquisition of 16 Multi Role Helicopters has taken over 15 years of processing without any positive results and could serve as a case-study to identify shortcomings in our system. If we can't resolve the bureaucratic maze of the acquisition process, we will never be able to imbibe technology.

Whilst the wish list of the Navy and the Technology Perspective and Capability Road map (TPCR) issued by the MOD is elaborate, it is extremely ambitious to be met by our defence industrial establishment, which neither has the infrastructure nor the resources for Research and Development. Foreign companies are willing to collaborate but resist transfer of technology. Hopefully, the new 'Strategic Partnership' guidelines will overcome this lacuna.

The DRDO laboratories have done well in spurts only to lag behind. Initial gains have not been consolidated and the claims are often exaggerated. There is a need for stringent performance audits. User interface needs improvement. The present strength of 39 naval officers in DRDO is clearly inadequate.

### **Conclusion**

Technology superiority is going to be a decisive factor in future battles. The capabilities of our military industrial base and DRDO are somewhat modest in terms of trained human resource, capital outlays and facilities available for Research and Development. The disruptive technologies discussed here may appear to be distant dreams but can be realised by a strategy of leap frogging development and active collaboration on Government-to-Government contracts or Strategic Partnerships. The high costs should be offset by developing ecosystems that facilitate exports.

Exploitation of space, capabilities to network at sea to achieve battle space transparency, unarmed combat, specialised munitions and cyber warfare are the core areas we must focus on. Setting up an ATV type structure to facilitate assimilation and integration of advanced technologies for building modern aircraft carriers is recommended.

# Kautilya's *Arthashastra* and its Relevance to Contemporary Strategic Studies

Colonel Pradeep Kumar Gautam (Retd)<sup>®</sup>

## Introduction

The normative setting of Kautilya's *Arthasashastra* is the political unification of common cultural Indian subcontinent. Within this, the *Arthashastra* has a twofold aim. First, it seeks to show how the ruler should protect his territory. Second, is how territory should be acquired. The end or primary goal in the *Arthashastra* is *Yogakshema* – protection, security and stability of the State. Today, political unification of common cultural Indian subcontinent as in the text is no more applicable as India is a sovereign nation-state less parts of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. However, many theoretical concepts and ideas in the text can be applied in internal and external matters related to strategic studies and also contribute to strengthen the Global International Studies from enduring Indian traditions. The concepts that need to be realised, are not only for waging war/application of force, but can also be used in strategic vocabulary in all disciplines of social science including peace research - a task yet to be undertaken by contemporary scholars.

In recent times, there has been a steady growth in literature on the defence, security, and international related aspects of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*.<sup>1</sup> This trend has now made it possible to go beyond the primary stage of just introduction to the various basic concepts and vocabulary in the text. The topic of Comprehensive National Power also has been analysed by many scholars satisfactorily.<sup>2</sup> As the study, debate and scholarship on revisiting and reinterpreting Indian heritage gains momentum, other levels of analysis emerge, which now need to be examined. In this regard, strategic thinking and 'how to think' assumes importance and this paper attempts to introduce this aspect related to contemporary strategic studies. It explains issues and concepts on learning, the intellectual part of strategic thinking, warcraft and

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hybrid warfare, and understanding strategy and how it resides in the dynamic *Mandala* theory.

### **Learning, Training and Education**

Kautilya begins by explaining the necessary conditions which must be met in learning and education. The student must also have a desire for learning or spirit of inquiry. Four subjects to be studied in progression are : (a) *Anvikshiki*, (b) the three Vedas (theology), *trayi*, (c) economics, production, manufacture (*vartha*) and (d) science of politics, *danda-niti*. While today there seems to be clear understanding of the second, third and fourth sub- disciplines, not much enquiry has taken place on the first or the 'preamble' or the 'mother of intellectual training' called *Anvikshiki*.

*Anvikshiki* or 'the Science of Enquiry' is based on the Indian schools of philosophy of *Samkhya*, *Yoga* and *Lokayata*. The third sub-discipline listed by Kautilya is *Lokayata* which is heterodox, that is, it is not purely based on the Vedas and is materialistic. It is also called *Charvaka*. This demonstrates that in prescribing the syllabus, Kautilya was not influenced by any ideology of the moment. He was thoroughly liberal and unbiased and did not reject any knowledge tradition that was then extant. Today, any good teacher in his reading list to his students cannot be selective, and so was Kautilya. This is a continuity of Indian tradition. *Anvikshiki* is similar to what we now term 'how to think' or 'theory of reason' (*hetu- shastra/hetu - vidya*). It is important to remember that *Anvikshiki* got bifurcated and was treated as two subjects, viz. the soul and the theory of reason. Kautilya focused only on *hetu*, or theory of reason, and did not incorporate the soul or *Atma- vidya*, which is now part of Indian philosophy called *Darshan*.<sup>3</sup>

Kautilya is very clear on the need for philosophy (*Anvikshiki*) and explains that (philosophy) confers benefit on the people, keeps the mind steady in adversity and in prosperity and brings about proficiency in thought, speech and action. Philosophy is ever thought as the lamp of all sciences, as the means of all actions (and) as the support of all laws (and duties).<sup>4</sup>

### **Intellectual Aspects of Strategic Thinking**

Kautilya's main argument is that the leaders must be steeped in the above four disciplines and only then can they be successful leaders, managers and commanders. A study of the text reveals

that there are latent meanings which guide how to think and carry out appreciations including intelligence appreciations. These are also grounded in Indian philosophy and ethics. Some of the important ones can now be summarised briefly as under :-

(a) **Self-Development and Self Discipline.** Kautilya's *Arthashastra* gives guidance on morals, including the most fundamental and enduring aspect of morals in human affairs, that is, abstaining from injury, non-violence or *Ahimsa* and control over senses.<sup>5</sup> The text says:-

(i) Duties common to all are: abstaining from injury (to living creatures), truthfulness, uprightness, freedom from malice, compassionateness and forbearance.<sup>6</sup>

(ii) Control over the senses, which is motivated by training in the sciences, should be secured by giving up lust, anger, greed, pride, arrogance and fool-hardiness. Absence of improper indulgence in (the pleasure of) sound, touch, colour, taste and smell by the senses of hearing, touch and sight, the tongue and sense of smell, means of control over senses; or, the practice of (this) science (gives such control). For, the whole of this science means control over senses.<sup>7</sup>

The above help in preparing the leader to weigh up right from wrong and have the capacity to do clear thinking not encumbered by fatigue, hubris, and anger. It is clear that one has to be in command over oneself with self-control and self-discipline before one can think of commanding and controlling troops and engage with the enemy in dialectical mind game. Notions of victory or defeat, it is common military knowledge, lies in the mind of the commander. Thus, the three sub-disciplines of *Anvikshiki* helps the leader to acquire and understand the dual (*Samkhya* and *Yoga*), and materialistic (*Lokayata* or *Charvaka*) aspects of reality.

(b) **Intellectual Honesty Derived from Scientific Thinking.** Kautilya seems aware of the desire of the governments to expect intelligence to support their policies and the intelligence to be supportive. He, thus, ensures that only objective intelligence is provided and nothing subjective or a-priori



intelligence gets generated and only 'scientific' methods are employed.<sup>8</sup> Today, this central argument of intellectual honesty assumes great importance. Theoretically, this is not new. Field Marshal FM Slim who defeated the Japanese Army in India's Eastern Front during the Second World War had likewise argued to give due importance to the moral courage and its spiritual and intellectual aspects.

(c) **Power (*Shakti*) the Currency of Statecraft in Three Categories and Priorities.** Kautilya defines and prioritises power and insists that all three must exist but ideally they need to be in the following priority :-

- (i) **Priority 1 - *Mantra-shakti* or *Mantri-shakti*** (power of counsel and diplomacy). Kautilya is cognizant that war is not the top priority and is the last resort and thus has this dictum as the top priority.
- (ii) **Priority 2 - *Prabhav-shakti*** (power of treasury and army). This is clearly what we understand today as economic might and military capacity.
- (iii) **Priority 3 - *Uttisah-skakti*** (power of personal energy). This is what may be now given in any leadership and management manual.

(d) **Perception and Knowledge.** Kautilya divides perception into three categories – directly perceived or immediate knowledge, unperceived or mediated, indirect knowledge as reported by human intelligence, experts etc., and inferred.<sup>9</sup> 'This statement about the three variants of knowledge in statecraft in the *Arthashastra* is the most significant with respect to the methodology of intelligence analysis, assessment and estimates as well as strategic planning.'<sup>10</sup> Kautilya further recommends that any information must be deliberated by a group and must not be left to one individual who may be biased towards intuitive knowledge and hunches. In other words, the need for collective deliberation.<sup>11</sup> These time tested concepts or should we say maxims are applicable today as they were in the past, and are considered to be the most important tool for strategic thinking.

(e) **Learning from the Others.** Liberal education and wide ranging inquiring mind is a perquisite. It needs to be

appreciated that since ancient Indian traditions, much can be learnt from an adversary or any other culture or civilisation. In this regard, Indian philosophy as expounded by Kautilya, has this important idea embedded :-

*“Learning from the enemy or the asuras (demons) is an interesting ancient concept. The preceptor of the asuras is Sukra and that of devas, Brahspati. Kautilya’s Arthashastra begins with a mangala: ‘Om, Salutation to Sukra and Brahspati.’ In combat, the best teacher is the enemy. Likely adversaries and belligerents also interact in a way of structuration. In other words, it is not only the Chinese who may read Sun Tzu but so could others. One does not have to be a German to understand what Clausewitz wrote about the fog, friction and role of chance in war.”<sup>12</sup>*

### **Warcraft**

Unlike in the Sinic traditions of *Seven Military Classics* which include Sun Tzu’s *Art of War*, there is : ‘Hardly any literature dealing exclusively with military science or the art of war during ancient and medieval periods. But it has to be remembered that warcraft was then regarded as of statecraft and so the various works on statecraft deal also with the art of war.’<sup>13</sup>

Covert wars are seldom declared and continue to be part of statecraft in terms such as hybrid warfare, generations of warfare (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> generation etc.), asymmetrical warfare, proxy war and so on. What is important to note is that unlike in the case of these modern terminologies which are rooted in historical narratives, Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* does not refer to any historical episodes or it is a-historical. It deals with concepts and a vocabulary. There seems to be continuity in the ancient with the modern.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, interestingly the context of what Kautilya wrote for his times now assumes importance as the very character of war has changed to war amongst the people and emergence of non-state actors and so on, and cyber wars. Surely war-craft, statecraft and diplomacy are now conjoined as was in the time of Kautilya in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BCE. Yet, as India has ongoing territorial disputes it may be dangerous to assume that capture or defence of territory will not be expected. We need to understand that this

is an ongoing issue of janapada/*rastra* or territorial integrity and sovereignty.

### **Hybrid Warfare or Matching Old with the New**

Today the international buzz words are hybrid war, new generation war, war amongst the people etc., where there is an overlap of military and non- military means. According to General Gerasimov of Russia, 'non-military measures are occurring at a ratio of 4:1 over military operations'.<sup>14</sup> It is very interesting to see that a similar concept exists in the *Artha* text which has an origin thousands of years ago.

In a recent research, Kautilya's core concepts about war are analysed to be a mixture of warfare and diplomacy. The foreign policy operations discussed seem not to refer to a classical war. Rather it appears that Kautilya has a combination of diplomatic pressure, political subversion, covert operations and military threats in mind. Such an approach for achieving foreign policy objectives is clearly favoured by Kautilya. Key for the successful conduct of foreign policy are (a) adequate intelligence on the adversary state, (b) rapid information about the execution of one's own operations and (c) collective deliberation and the ruler's decision-making based upon (a) and (b).<sup>15</sup>

In the above, three principles stand out. The first and central is intelligence. It is not only its collection but analyses in an era of 'humungous' overload of data. The second is akin to the well know OODA (Observe, Orient, Decide and Act) loop – theorised by a fighter pilot in the Korean War in the 1950s. The third, there is a need for a feedback and collective deliberation. Kautilya likewise presses for a similar proactive argument and his famous *sutras* at the conclusion of his Book VIII on The Six Measures of Foreign Policy as : 'He, who is well-versed in the science of politics, should employ all the means, viz., advancement , decline, and stable conditions as well weakening and extermination. He who sees the six measures of policy as being interdependent in this manner, plays, as he pleases, with kings tied by the chains of his intellect.' <sup>16</sup>

### **Understanding Strategy and Mandala Theory**

James L Cook defines strategy, like that in Kautilya's aphorism or *sutras* : 'strategy is designed to link *ends* (national interests), *ways*

(concepts that describe how something might be done) and *means* (resources that are employed as capabilities)'.<sup>17</sup> Lukas Milevski argues that the primary source of character of war is strategy and strategy's two main relationships are that between military power and political consequences, and between interacting adversaries.<sup>18</sup> Lawrence Freedman in his book *Strategy* (2013) argues that strategy remains the best word for expressing our attempts to think about actions in advance, in the light of our goals and our capacities. What these authors are explaining is interestingly embedded in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*.

In the Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, the entire process of a strategic and intelligence appreciation has been made into discreet and logical parts in a 'scientific' manner to be thought through. This is a comprehensive *Mandala* theory. In the ultimate analysis, the end state in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is *Yogakshema*. Historically most disaster happen when final aim is not clear and states get sucked or dragged into enduring conflicts. Kautilya advises that this needs to be avoided. In the circle of competing states which Kautilya constructs as a *Mandala*, there is the need to know, establish and measure one's own capability and also that of the adversary or adversaries including what is the state of 'power' or *Shakti*. This capability is the measure of the constituent elements of a state – seven in number, also called *Saptanga* (seven limbs) or the seven *Prakrits* or constituent elements of a state : (a) *Svamin* (king or ruler), (b) *Amatya* (body of ministers and structure of administration), (c) *Janapada/Rastra* (territory being agriculturally fertile with mines, forest and pastures, water resources and communication system for trade and people), (d) *Durga/Pura* (fort), (e) *Kosha* (treasury), (f) *Danda/Bala* (army), and (g) *Mitra* (ally).

We can relate this to Chapter 3 (Attack by Stratagem) of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* which is about intelligence and knowledge. In its first sentence it counsels, '*Hence the saying: If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.*'<sup>19</sup> In contemporary intelligence studies, this is a function of professionalism in having the capacity and capability of gaining proper knowledge and assessment by way of academic rigour, regional and cultural studies, diplomatic means, open source literature and a combination of intelligence of various types like diplomatic, military, and technical.

All the above intellectual aspects have to be practiced. What policy or ways and means that are to be applied are given in the four *Upayas* or methods that is : *sama-dana- bheda-danda* or conciliation, gifts, rupture and force. These have to be integrated with the six measures of foreign policy called *Sadgunya* which are (a) *Samdhi*, making a treaty containing conditions or terms, that is, the policy of peace, (b) *Vigraha*, the policy of hostility, (c) *Asana*, the policy of remaining quiet (and not planning to march on an expedition), (d) *Yana*, marching on an expedition, (e) *Samsraya*, seeking shelter with another king or in a fort, and (f) *Dvaidhibhava*, the double policy of *Samdhi* with one king and *Vigraha* with another at the same time. In sum, one of the six measures or its variation combined with the application of any of the four *upâyas* has to be thought through; issues of morality, justice, and legitimacy (*dharma*) have to be catered for as well. The text tells us repeatedly that, serious issues of war and peace and application of force or *danda* has to be legitimate and in contemporary understanding, it cannot be outsourced to artificial intelligence and robots. In short, the text has guidelines on strategic thinking on how to think, what to know or measure and what to do.

## Conclusion

This article has summarised some enduring aspects of strategic studies from Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. It is a good manual for leadership development, education and training. Foremost is its rich repertoire of the 'science of enquiry' or how to think. It shows that intellectual honesty is derived from scientific thinking. Its focus on warcraft is relevant today seeing the blurring changes in the character of war where both use of military force with diplomacy overlap. Its most unique contribution is the concept of a *Mandala* Theory which needs to be dynamically applied to issues of politics, diplomacy, statecraft, and even business and management. This theory is not just only 'India-centric' but has universal application.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.idsa.in/history/publications>. Accessed on 28 May 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Malay Mishra, 'Unique Approach to Comprehensive Power through the Lens of Kautilya's *Arthashastra*', *Journal of the USI of India*, Vol. CXLVII, No. 607, January- March 2017, pp. 60-73.

<sup>3</sup> Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, *A History of Indian Logic : Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, (first published in 1920), 1971, reprint 2010, pp.5-7.

<sup>4</sup> RP Kangle, *The Kautiliya Arthasastra, Part II: Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Second Edition, Bombay University, 1972, 7<sup>th</sup> Reprint, 2010, as extracted from Sutra 1.3.11-12, pp. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, (Sutra 1.3.13 and 1.6.1-3), p.8, p.12.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.8.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.12.

<sup>8</sup> Dany Shoham and Michael Liebig, '*The intelligence dimensions of Kautilyan statecraft and its implication for the present*', Journal of Intelligence History, 2016, p.13, p.15.

<sup>9</sup> RP Kangle, op cit, 1.9. 4-8, p.17.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Liebig, '*Statecraft and Intelligence Analysis in Kautilya's Arthasastra*', in Pradeep Kumar Gautam, Saurabh Mishra and Arvind Gupta (eds.), *Indigenous Historical Knowledge : Kautilya and His Vocabulary (Volume III)*, New Delhi, IDSA/Pentagon Press, 2016, p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Pradeep Kumar Gautam, *Understanding Dharma and Artha in Statecraft through Kautilya's Arthshastra*, IDSA Monograph Series No.53, July 2016, pp.96-97.

<sup>13</sup> Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, *The Art of War in Medieval India*, New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1984, p.1,4.

<sup>14</sup> Timoty Thomas, '*Russia's Military Strategy and Ukraine: Indirect, Asymmetric and Putin-led*', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol.28, No.3, July- September 2015, p. 455.

<sup>15</sup> Subrata K.Mitra and Michael Liebig, *Kautilya's Arthshastra – An Intellectual Portrayal*, NOMOS, Baden- Baden, 2016, p.84.

<sup>16</sup> RP Kangle, op cit, Sutras 7.18. 43-44, p. 384.

<sup>17</sup> James L Cook, '*2012 Defense Strategy Review and Financial Year 2013 Defense Budget Request: Strategy and Fiscal Constraints*', Orbis, A Journal of World Affairs, Vol.57, No.1, Winter 2013, pp.41-58.

<sup>18</sup> Lukas Milevski, '*The Nature of Strategy versus the Charter of War*', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol.36, No.5, 2016, pp.438-446.

<sup>19</sup> Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Collins Classics, London, HarperCollins Publishers, 2011, p.12.



## **‘India Remembers’ Project and Other CAFHR Activities : An Update**

**Ms Bhanushali Gahlot®**

**D**uring the period under review (Apr-Jun 2017), the Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (CAFHR) organised events as part of the ‘India Remembers’ project along with roundtable discussions and interactions with visiting scholars on themes pertaining to various aspects of Indian military history. In addition, the CAFHR on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India collated material and curated an exhibition for the Bangladesh Liberation War Museum project.

A roundtable discussion with a serving United States Marine Corps officer, Lieutenant Ethan Dalton was held at the USI on 07 Apr 2017. The subject of the discussion was the evolution of the Indian Army post-1962. Furthermore, on 03 May 2017, an interaction was organised with the visiting team from the UK Centre for Historical Analysis and Conflict Research (CHACR). The team consisted of Major General Andrew RD Sharpe, CBE, PhD (Retd) (Cantab), Director, CHACR and Colonel Martin Todd, MBE, Assistant Head, CHACR. They were accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Simon de Labillière MRAeS AAC, Military Adviser, British High Commission, New Delhi.

Briefs on USI, CAFHR, and Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (CS3) were given through the course of the interaction. In addition to this, two scholars made short presentations on aspects of historical research. The presentations brought together the two ends of the historical spectrum in the Indian context, with one highlighting extreme antiquity and its relevance to modern times and the other being rooted in India’s transition to a global strategic player.

During this period, the CAFHR was also tasked with collating material for the Bangladesh Liberation War Museum (BLWM), Dhaka on behalf of the MEA. The project focussed on the landmark political, diplomatic and military events that occurred through the

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course of the Indo-Pak war of 1971 with special reference to the role played by India in the liberation of Bangladesh. The collation of material included sourcing relevant images from archives and personal collections along with archival audio and video clippings of statements or speeches made at the time by political and military leaders of India and Bangladesh, etc. Interviews of a number of veterans who served in various operations during the war were also recorded.

On 08 Apr 2017, a ceremony was organised by MEA at Manekshaw Centre to honour the soldiers who laid down their lives in the 1971 war. It was attended by the Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India. At the ceremony, an exhibition curated by the CAFHR as part of the BLWM Project was showcased and a brief on the project and exhibition was provided by Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina, MBE, (Retd), Secretary and Editor, CAFHR to the two Prime Ministers.

Last year, the CAFHR began its endeavor to inculcate a culture of remembrance in the country by launching the pilot of a community engagement project called 'India Remembers', which culminated on 07 Dec 2016. An event to formally mark the closure of the pilot project was organised at the USI on 18 Apr 2017. It was attended by project stakeholders, members of the community groups that engaged with the pilot project, scholars and USI members.

At the event, the project team, community group members, and project partners outlined the impact of the pilot project by sharing their experiences. In a presentation given by Ms Bhanushali Gahlot, Project Manager, India Remembers, the audience was briefed on the various commemorative activities undertaken by the participating groups through the course of the pilot. Squadron Leader Chhina shared the aims, objective and rationale behind the project and also shed light on the future course of action. Ms Gugu Haralu, India Remembers coordinator from Nagaland shared her experience of engaging with the pilot project. The highlight of the event was a cosplay performance by Ms Lavanya Chaudhary, a student of Ahlcon International School who came dressed as an 'Unknown Soldier' and delivered a monologue urging people to remember our fallen soldiers.

At the event, an evaluation report prepared to formally assess the impact of the pilot project was presented to Ms Victoria Wallace, Director General, Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) and Mrs Shivani Dasmahapatra, Program Director, Flags of Honour Foundation (FOH) who received the report on behalf of Mr Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Member of Parliament and Founder, FOH. The report contains details of each of the community groups the pilot project engaged with and outlines the various approaches the project team applied to raise awareness amongst the participating community groups.

The event ended with a release of CAFHR's first publication in the 1971 War Golden Jubilee series titled 'Battleground Chhamb' by Major General AJS Sandhu, VSM (Retd). The book was released by General VN Sharma, PVSM, AVSM (Retd), former Chief of the Army Staff.

Lastly, at the request of the Indian High Commission (IHC), UK, the centre organised a wreath laying ceremony at India Gate to commemorate the Indian Labour Corps that participated in WWI. The ceremony was organised as part of the 'India Remembers' and 'Unremembered' projects. The latter is a similar initiative undertaken by the IHC, UK

At the event, marigold wreaths were laid by Sir Dominic Asquith, KCMG, British High Commissioner to India, Squadron Leader Chhina, Professor KC Yadav and Mrs Alpana Dubey, Director, Europe West Division, MEA.

The CAFHR is now focussing on the joint USI-Belgium project initiated to mark the 70 years of bilateral relations between India and Belgium. Through publications and an exhibition, the project will highlight a century of Indo-Belgium relations commencing with the magnificent role played by soldiers of the Indian Army who fought and died for Belgian freedom during the First World War. The opening of the exhibition and launch of the publications are scheduled to coincide with the state visit of their Majesties the King and Queen of Belgium to India on 08 Nov 2017.



**Sqn Ldr Chhina, MBE, (Retd) with PM Narendra Modi and PM Sheikh Hasina at the ceremony held at Manekshaw Centre on 08 Apr 2017.**



**Ms Lavanya Chaudhary, a student of Ahlcon International School during her performance at the India Remembers closing event held at the USI on 18 Apr 2017.**



The book titled 'Battleground Chhamb' written by Maj Gen AJS Sandhu, VSM, (Retd) being released at the India Remembers closing event held at the USI on 18 Apr 2017. (L-R) Maj Gen AJS Sandhu, VSM, (Retd), General VN Sharma, PVSM, AVSM (Retd) and Lt Gen PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM, (Retd)



British High Commissioner to India, Sir Dominic Asquith, KCMG at the ceremony held at India Gate on 25 May 2017 with the 'India Remembers' team and other participants.

## Short Reviews of Recent Books

**Gorichen to Siachen: The Untold Saga of Hoisting the Tricolour on Saltoro.** By DK Khanna, (New Delhi: Alpha Editions, 2017), Price Rs 850, pp..147, ISBN 9789386367105

This book, in 16 chapters, is the account of a newly raised unit (19 KUMAON) that conquered the virgin peak of Gorichen (6888m) in Arunachal Pradesh and later participated in Operation 'Meghdoot' for occupying the Saltoro Range. Smooth-flowing style of the author plus plenty of photographs and sketches facilitate understanding of the gripping saga of grit, determination and initiatives at individual and collective levels, in successfully completing tasks in face of overwhelming odds and huge demands on human endurance.

The first five chapters cover the author taking over the Unit in 1981, training his command for war especially in mountains, deployment for internal security in Assam, volunteering for the expedition to Gorichen that was being abandoned otherwise, conquering the peak in October 1982, and the unit moving to Khrew in J&K during 1983. The author got the first hint of an operation in glacial area in February 1984 while recovering from spinal injury, though exact task was unclear. What followed was intense training in glacial warfare. On 18 March 1984, the Unit left Khrew for a 630 kms trek to Siachen area in company columns, with everyone carrying 35 kgs over Zoji La, through other passes and finally over Khardung La (5602m).

On 13 April 1984, troops of 4 KUMAON and Ladakh Scouts were heli-dropped short of Sia La and Bilafond La for occupying these passes. 19 KUMAON was tasked to patrol the Lagongma and Layogma Glaciers, a task later expanded to Gyong La and Zingrulma Glaciers once enemy movement was observed at Gyong La on 19 May 1984. The Unit was not equipped for operations beyond 9000 feet, however, they hoisted the Tricolour at Point 5725 (overlooking Gyong La) on 29 May 1984. The unit lost a volunteer patrol of 18 in an avalanche while attempting to occupy Point 5965.

Pakistan acknowledges that India pre-empted Pakistani plans of occupying Saltoro. The author recommends India should keep holding Saltoro Ridge strongly till the Kashmir issue is finally settled. Of many books written on Operation 'Meghdoot', this one covering

what entailed at battalion level in run up to the operation, aside from its conduct, is special. It is recommended to be read by anyone interested in India's occupation of the Salto Ridge.

*Lieutenant General PC Katoch, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SC (Retd)*

**How Pakistan Got Divided.** By Rao Farman Ali Khan, (Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2017), Price Rs 1150.00, 174 p. ISBN: 9780199406982.

This is a book that tries to defend the indefensible. Rao Farman Ali Khan, a General of the Pakistan Army, was part of the military machine that organised the wanton killings that aimed to destroy Bengali aspirations for self rule. He served as Advisor Civil-Political affairs to five successive Governors. Among them, the only one who refused to collaborate with the military hierarchy of West Pakistan and resigned, rather than be a part of the problem, was Lieutenant General Yakub Khan. The role of Lieutenant General Tikka Khan, as the butcher of Baluchistan and later of East Pakistan is well known.

Whereas the Hamood-ur-Rehman Commission has let off General Rao Farman Ali Khan lightly, by saying that his performance and conduct does not call for any adverse comment; one needs to understand that this does not exonerate him from his sins of omission, as part of the team of diabolical killers that slaughtered more than a million defenceless Bengalis. In such a situation, Rao Farman Ali Khan had only three options – either to resign and refuse to be part of the butchery, or to be an instrument of the pogrom like General Tikka Khan, or lastly to be a collaborator to the evil West Pakistan scheme. In the eyes of the world, Rao Farman Ali is seen in the third avatar. Many in Bangladesh see him as an evil participator in the Pakistan plan to exterminate the Bengalis so that they would never aspire for self governance again.

This book is seen as an attempt to whitewash the author's role in the holocaust that took place in East Pakistan. Whereas, he may not have been the man who wielded the gun to slaughter innocent Bengalis; he is seen as the person that worked behind the scene to allow all that to happen.



In comparable instances, Lieutenant General BN Kaul had tried to exonerate himself from the 1962 debacle with his book 'The Untold Story' and Lieutenant General AAK Niazi tried to defend his conduct in the 1971 war with his book, '*Betrayal of East Pakistan*'. In the eyes of the man in the street, both books have failed to clear the sullied performance of their authors. Rao Farman Ali Khan's book is of a similar genre and, in my opinion has done no better with this book.'

Notwithstanding the above, the book walks the reader step by step through the torturous sequence of events that led to the break-up of Pakistan. There are many 'ifs' in the story and the author tries to bring out that the demise of Pakistan could have been avoided if both sides could have looked at the big picture with more maturity and less anger. What comes out clearly however, is the arrogance, ego and stubborn rigidity of the principal characters from West Pakistan who refused to countenance being ruled by a Bengali Prime Minister or having Bengali ministers in the Pakistani Cabinet despite the fact that they won a landslide victory that justified these appointments.

Before the final breakdown of talks, a possible solution did present itself in the evolution of a confederation of East and West Pakistan, with separate Prime Ministers in the two wings. According to the author, the President, General Yahya Khan, during his final talks with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Dhaka in mid-March, appeared to be willing to consider this option, if only to step back from the abyss of the break-up of Pakistan, but the Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto would have none of it. The rest is history.

The reader however needs to read the book and decide for himself. While reading the views that the author tries to convey, he needs to read between the lines and balance Rao Farman Ali Khan's version against the vast material on this topic that is available in the public domain.

An interesting book that deserves to be read, if only to know what happened during those fateful days; even though it is narrated by a person of the Government of West Pakistan who 'willy-nilly' was part of the plot.

*Major General Ian Cardozo, AVSM, SM (Retd)*



**Learning to Live with the Bomb – Pakistan: 1998-2016.** By Naeem Salik, (Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2017), Price Rs 1125/-, p, 328, ISBN 9780199404568.

The Book, written by Dr Naeem Salik is an interesting read. It will be handy for the scholars who desire to know the Pakistani nuclear programme, as the book provides a Pakistani perspective on the country's nuclear programme. Much is expected from this book, as the author has a good understanding of Pakistan's nuclear issues, due to his past association with the Pakistani Government in establishing the Pakistan's Command and Control structure after the 1998 nuclear tests, and also, the author served at the Strategic Plans Division.

The book is comprehensive with adequate citations. The theoretical aspects have been covered coherently, giving both a pro and counter narrative to many of the controversial issues, but the author's own views on some of these issues are lacking. Nevertheless; the book provides an in-depth account of Pakistan's nuclear programme be it the Command and Control structure or its evolving nuclear doctrine.

The book has eight chapters. In the First Chapter, which is a backgrounder, the author explores Pakistan's experience as a Nuclear Weapon State, through a process of its 'Nuclear Learning'. Further he enunciates the 'Typology of Nuclear Learning' and illustrates an interesting 'Nuclear Learning Matrix', where the role of military, political leadership, bureaucracy and security analyst's interaction in terms of decision making, doctrinal aspects, institution building, safety and security etc., are elucidated. Second Chapter briefly delves into Pakistan's nuclear history and a chronological progression of its nuclear programme and the development of its nuclear weapons. He also tries to provide an insight, as to why Pakistan's nuclear programme became controversial, especially the repercussions to the Pakistani propaganda of the 'Islamic Bomb'. It concludes with the important lesson being learnt - that through single minded determination and national resolve, insurmountable challenges could be overcome by Pakistan.

Third Chapter discusses the evolution of Pakistan's nuclear doctrine – its role, significance and various manifestations. It also discusses the nuclear strategy by various other nuclear weapon states. It concludes by stating that Pakistan has gradually matured

in its nuclear ideas and has responded to the changing threat environment with a definitive nuclear objective of deterrence and stabilisation of strategic deterrence in South Asia. Next Chapter deals with the all-important 'Command and Control' set up. He starts with the description of assertive and the delegative types of controls and further on the nature, challenges, the internal dynamics and the evolution of its nuclear command and control structures in Pakistan. He further highlights the difference between the National Command Authority (NCA) Ordinance of 2007 and 2010 and illustrates the organisation, role and functions of NCA and its constituents, and organisation of the Strategic Plans Division (SPD).

Since the author served as the Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency at the SPD, he has included in his book the chapters on Nuclear Safety and Security Arrangements, Pakistan's Nuclear Export Control Regimes and Pakistan's Nuclear Regulatory Regime.

In conclusion, the book has a lot of data collected from various open sources which through the book is available at one source and which would be useful for the researchers, but there is no newness in terms of analysis of threats, and the author has been guarded in divulging his own views.

*Dr Roshan Khanijo*

**A Tale of Two Victoria Crosses.** By Lt Gen Baljit Singh, (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2017), pp..82, Price Rs 495/-, ISBN: 9788182748859.

There are many books that cover various aspects of that most iconic of gallantry awards, the Victoria Cross (VC). Instituted in 1854, the VC was the highest reward for gallantry in the face of the enemy that soldiers of the commonwealth nations could aspire to. The first awards to the Indian Army were made for the expedition to Persia in 1856-57 but till 1911 only British officers were eligible for the decoration. Indian soldiers became eligible from 1912 onwards and the first recipients were decorated for gallantry in action on the western front in France and Flanders in 1914. From 1856 till Independence in 1947, 164 VCs were awarded to the Indian Army of which 40 were to Indians.

This book, which has 82 pages and number of captivating photographs, is written by way of tribute from one soldier to another.

It is an attempt by the author to resurrect the memory of a brave Indian officer, Lieutenant Karamjeet Singh Judge of the 4th Battalion, 15th Punjab Regiment (now 12 Punjab, Pakistan Army) who fell in the moment of his greatest glory while directing tanks of 116th Regiment, RAC onto Japanese bunkers during the Battle of Meiktila in Burma on 18 March 1945.

While the author narrates the events that led to the award of the VC the charm of the book lies in the author's narrative that links events and people across space and time to tell a tale of human warmth, affection and soldierly ties that transcend race and nation.

Lieutenant Karamjeet Singh was the younger brother of the author's first commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Ajit Singh Judge. The anecdotes linking the two brothers and another VC of the Sikhs, John Smyth, the author and other actors that played a part in the telling of this story are what make this little book stand apart from others of its ilk.

The book is recommended for purchase by service libraries as it highlights tales of bravery, leadership and devotion to duty, linking the soldiers' ethos across generations.

*Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina, MBE (Retd)*

**Themes of Glory – Indian Artillery in War.** By Brigadier Darshan Khullar (*Vij Books India Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 2017*), Price Rs 850/-, p. 233, ISBN 9789385563973.

The first thing that strikes one about this book is its novel approach. It does not follow the stereotype of writing a book. The uniqueness of this book has been aptly summarised in the introduction "About the Book". To quote "*Writing even an abridged history of the Regiment of Artillery, which is the second largest Arm of the Indian Army and its glorious achievements would have been a herculean task and would have run into a couple of volumes*". But the author has deftly tackled the dilemma by selecting to write about six field generals, eight gallantry award winners, four Artillery intensive battles, twenty four battle honours and some noteworthy vignettes of valour. With this uniquely innovative approach, the book makes a great collection of marvelous facts of the Regiment and the role it has played in shaping the outcome of wars fought by the Indian Army".

The author has selected six field generals very aptly. All of them have made a unique contribution to the Regiment of Artillery in their own way – whether in peace or in war. General Kumaramangalam handed over a battle hardened and well-equipped Army to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, which enabled the latter to win laurels in 1971 war resulting in creation of a new nation – Bangladesh. Piece done on six field generals is embellished with anecdotes which add value to the narration. Lieutenant General KP Candeth kept a low profile but under his able leadership Western Command made a great contribution to the overall war effort in 1971. Major General Mohinder Singh took over a demoralised 15 Infantry Division and restored its fighting spirit by his personal example and was rightly awarded the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC). The credit to stem the tide of Pakistan offensive in Chhamb Sector rightly goes to Lieutenant General Sartaj, which then Captain Sheru Thapliyal (later Major General) saw first-hand as he was a OP Officer with 5 SIKH, part of 191 Infantry Brigade. Baba Sartaj, as he was affectionately called by all ranks, stood like a rock on the East Bank of Manawar Tawi river and rallied all ranks to halt the rampaging Pakistanis. A maverick, who was nonetheless very astute and capable, General Jacob, although the Chief of Staff, Eastern Command, played an outstanding role in the war in securing the surrender of over 93000 prisoners of war, a feat, unparalleled in military history. Major General Lachman Singh Lehl rose to fame as the GOC of 20 Mountain Division in the Eastern Sector in 1971 war and for his skillful command in Hili and Bogra battles. He is also a soldier-scholar.

Although the share of gallantry awards won by the Regiment of Artillery is a mere pittance of the total won by the Indian Army, the selection of eight award winners is very apt and deserving. The citations of the MVC winners say all.

Four artillery intensive battles have been carefully and correctly chosen. Khem Karan in 1965, Poonch and Basantar in 1971 in the Western Sector and battles in Kargil in 1999 prove that artillery indeed is a battle winning arm. The list of Battle Honours won by the Regiment is extensive, covering the period right from the Second World War onwards to Jammu and Kashmir operation in 1947-48, 1962, 1965 and 1971 wars to operation Vijay in Kargil in 1999.

The final chapter, rightly named 'Vignettes of Valour', showcases the ability of the gunners to take on infantry role and display their ability to innovate and take extra initiative whenever the need has arisen. The much neglected gun end also finds a mention in some of these episodes.

To conclude, Brigadier Khullar deserves kudos for an extra ordinary book with its interesting, racy and apt description of personalities and events which must have taken a great amount of research. This book deserves to be in all unit and formation libraries and also in the Think Tank archives. To quote Major General Ashok Mehta – "*Themes of Glory is a fine repository of vignettes of valour and the wisdom of Topchis.*"

*Major General SV Thapliyal, SM (Retd)*

**China-Pakistan Relations – A Historical Analysis.** By Ghulam Ali, (Oxford University Press, 2017), pp 263, Price 1225, ISBN 978-0-19-940249-6.

The book is authored by a Pakistani professor, who works at the China Study Centre, COMSTATS Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad and has done Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Center for Pakistan Studies, Department of South Asian Studies, Peking University, and Beijing. He examines how and why of the "all weather, time tested and sweeter than honey" relationship between Pakistan and China that has evolved over the years and its durability.

The historical perspective of the relationship is laid out in seven chapters covering the period from 1950 to April 2015. The chapters are - The Formative Phase (1950-62); Strengthening and Deepening of Relations (1963-77); China's Reforms and Modernisation, and relations with Pakistan (1978-89); China's Policy of Balance and Stability (1990-2001); China's Renewed Interest in Pakistan- Relations Post 9/11; China-Pakistan Economic Corridor; and the last chapter covers the 'Factors of Durability'.

The book explains how in the early years when both China and Pakistan faced internal and external challenges, their relationship turned into *entente cordiale*. The author argues that the disruption in US-Pakistan relations, the sanctions and the India factor pushed Pakistan closer to China. The nature of Sino-Pakistan

relationship is strategic and armed forces of the two countries have helped to strengthen it.

There are also commercial and economic aspects in this relationship. To support this contention, the author argues that when China during the period 1978-89 was reforming and undertaking modernisation, instead of mainly focussing on Pakistan expanded the scope of her South Asian policy and stopped grants and started giving concessional loans to Pakistan. China's supply of arms to Pakistan, help in nuclear and missile programme and support in other areas must be viewed in this backdrop.

The book conveys that mutual trust accumulated over the years, interdependence and ongoing expansion makes the relationship between China and Pakistan strong and capable of overcoming any challenges of the future. It is brought out that there are structures in place that ensure that their relationship remains a 'give and take relationship' against a 'patron-client equation'.

The author gives greater credit to China than Pakistan for maintaining durable partnership. But cautions that with the launch of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, the relationship has reached crossroads where it can grow exponentially or it may get diluted due to the possibility of more active engagement by China in the internal affairs of Pakistan, something from which China has stayed away in the past.

The book is very informative, well-structured and arguments have been developed logically. It is considered useful in understanding the historical perspective and the contours of the relationship between China and Pakistan to researchers, planners and policy makers.

*Lieutenant General Chander Prakash, SM, VSM (Retd)*

**NSP-33	Power is a Dynamic Concept : Challenges to India's Strategic Autonomy in the Coming Decade and How we can Shape the Strategic Environment By Lt Gen Vijay Oberoi, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd)	195	2016
**OP-1/2016	Nuclear Security Summit – The Challenge Continues Dr Roshan Khanijo	100	2016
**OP-2/2016	Analysis of China's Military Reorganisation Maj Gen BK Sharma, Brig Sandeep Jain & Dr Roshan Khanijo	100	2016
**OP-3/2016	"India and United Nations Peace Operations : Security Sector Reform" By Ambassador Asoke Mukerji, IFS (Retd) & Lt Gen Chander Prakash, SM, VSM (Retd)	100	2016
**OP-4/2016	Does India Need to Review its Nuclear Doctrine?" By Dr Roshan Khanijo	100	2016
**OP-5/2016	"India's SCO Membership – Challenges and Opportunities" By Maj Gen BK Sharma, AVSM, SM** (Retd) & Dr Raj Kumar Sharma	100	2016
**OP-6/2017	"South China Sea in Retrospect Post Tribunal Verdict" By Cdr MH Rajesh	100	2017
**OP-7/2017	"New Threats in the Information Warfare" By Col Anurag Dwivedi	100	2017
**OP-8/2017	"China-Pakistan Economic Corrdior (CPEC) : Connecting the Dots" By Lt Gen PK Singh, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)	100	2017
**NSS-62	The Indo-Pacific Region – Security Dynamics and Challenges" Edited by Gp Capt Sharad Tewari, VM (Retd) & Dr Roshan Khanijo	850	2016
CAFHR-32	"Battle Ground Chhamb - The Indo-Pakistan War of 1971" By Maj Gen AJS Sandhu, VSM (Retd) M/s Manohar Publishers & Distributors	1395	2017
**CAFHR-33	"Sideshow of the Indian Army in World War-I" By Harry Fecitt, MBE, TD	1095	2017
M-16/2017	"Summer 2016 Kashmir Unrest Summation and Analysis" By Prof Kashi Nath Pandita M/s GB Books	195	2017

\*\* Available from Vij Books

\* Available from USI



# USI

(Estd. 1870)

## OUR ACTIVITIES

### Library and Reading Room

The library holds over 68,000 books, and journals, including some books of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, on an astonishing variety of subjects. While the principal emphasis is on strategy and defence, there are a large number of works on different vistas of Indian life. There are memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries, journals, manuscripts for scholars and researchers. The reading room is air-conditioned, spacious and well stocked in terms of current reading material. Library was automated in 2002.

### Correspondence Courses

The Institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion examinations, and for the entrance examinations to the Defence Services Staff College and Technical Staff College. Over the years, this has been a significant and well-received activity.

### USI Journal

The *USI Journal* is the oldest surviving defence journal in the country and in Asia, having first appeared in 1871. In an era when there is a feeling that free expression of views by Defence personnel is not looked upon kindly by the establishment, the Journal in fact provides just such a forum, without regard to seniority and length of service in the Armed Forces, subject of course, to propriety and quality of the written work.

### Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation

The Erstwhile Centre for Research and its resources have been merged into the new Centre named as USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI-CS3) wef 01 January 2005. The Centre aims at conducting detailed and comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses of national and international security related issues, and gaming and simulation of strategic scenarios, to evolve options for wider discussion and consideration.

### USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

The Centre was established in 2000 and functioned with USI till Aug 2014, when it moved out of USI premises and was delinked from USI. Its aims were organising workshops, seminars and training capsules for peace-keepers, observers and staff officers – both Indian and foreign. It also oversaw the practical training of Indian contingents. It functioned under a Board of Management headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and worked in close coordination with the Service Headquarters and the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence. In August 2014, CUNPK moved out to the accommodation allotted by the Army HQ.

### Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research (CAFHR)

The Centre was established on 01 Dec 2000 and encourages study and research into the history of the Indian Armed Forces with objectivity, covering different facets such as strategy, tactics, logistics, organisation and socio-economic aspects and their implementation.

### Gold Medal Essay Competitions

Every year the Institution organises two gold medal essay competitions: one for officers below 10 years of service and the other open to all officers. These essays, the first one of which was introduced in 1871, constitute a barometer of opinion on matters that affect national security in general and the defence forces in particular.

### Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition

This has been instituted from 2015 on a subject related to Armed Forces Historical Research. The Essay Competition is open to all across the globe.

### Lectures, Discussions and Seminars

A series of lectures, discussions and seminars on service matters, international affairs, and topics of general interest to the Services, are organised for the benefit of local members in Delhi.

### MacGregor Medal

This medal is awarded to Armed Forces personnel for valuable reconnaissance and adventure activity they may have undertaken.

## MEMBERSHIP

The following are eligible to become members of the Institution :

- Officers of the Armed Forces
- Class I Gazetted Officers of Group 'A' Central Services.
- Any category mentioned above will be eligible even though retired or released from the Service.
- Cadets from the NDA and Cadets from the Service Academies and Midshipmen.

For further particulars, please write to Director, USI of India, Rao Tula Ram Marg, (Opposite Signals Enclave) Post Bag No. 8, Vasant Vihar PO, New Delhi – 110 057