



Vivek

Issues & Options

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Maoist War Against India

India-China Relations

Remembering The Dreaded Emergency

Political Ad Campaigns Or PSYWAR?

and many more

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Editor's Note

The entire nation's focus this month has been on the devastation caused by the Uttarakhand floods in which hundreds of lives were lost and national property worth thousands of crores were extensively damaged. While natural phenomenon such as floods cannot be prevented, precaution and timely action could have contained the extent of loss. While it is important to fix accountability for the callousness and criminal negligence that caused such damage, the need of the hour is also to put in place a long term disaster management strategy and policy that would minimize the losses in any such future occurrence.

The dastardly attack by Maoists in Chhattisgarh on May 25 continues to dominate the national discourse. In this issue, our Director Mr Ajit Doval, an authority on internal security, has dwelt at length about the problem. He has aptly concluded thus, "The war (against Maoists) is difficult but winnable. The need is for capacity building both at the Central and State levels and right leadership to convert plans into realities on the ground. They have started the war; it will be finished by us."

While we have witnessed a lot of rhetoric, hype and hoopla built around India-China relations following Premier Li Keqiang's visit, it is very essential to do a reality check, which has been extensively dealt with by Lt Gen (Retd) Gautam Banerjee.

The election of moderate Hassan Rowhani as the new Iranian President has ramifications for both West Asia and India. Former Foreign Secretary Mr Kanwal Sibal in his article has emphasised on the need to deftly handle this strategically important relationship.

Those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it. Though the seminar circuit in the capital seem to have almost forgotten the dreaded Emergency imposed on the intervening night of June 25-26, 1975, noted author A Surya Prakash has recalled that dark chapter in India's democratic history lest we forget.

There are also other articles pertaining to the nation's energy security, maritime credentials, state funded political advertisement campaigns and decline of important institutions.

We are also in the process of giving a new look and feel to Vivek and our website.

Your valuable feedback is always welcome.

K G Suresh

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Maoist War Against India: Time For United & Strong Response

- *Ajit Doval, KC*

The May 25th extremist attack by Maoists in Chhattisgarh was one of the depredations that hit India. But, more tragic is what follows – delayed tactical response, leadership confusion and helplessness, scripted statements carrying no conviction and even ministers looking for opportunities to derive political mileage. In the world of security what happens is important, but what decides the end game is how the governments respond to them. While the former is not always and fully in their control, the latter is a matter of their conscious choice. The tragedy of what they fail to protect and prevent is compounded by the wrong or inadequate response that guarantees perpetual failures.

There is a predictable pattern of discourse that follows major attacks. Political statements and counter statements, Centre versus State blame game, accusations of intelligence and security failure, all relevant, but leading nowhere. There is no clear and unequivocal

message to the perpetrators, enunciation of a new national policy and strategy, initiatives towards capacity building and pressing into action innovative tactical plans.

Prevention of this obfuscated discourse necessitates clarity on the fundamentals. Left wing extremists are enemies of the nation – their ideology, political goals, trans-national linkages, strategic plans all make it amply clear. Their history of siding with the Chinese during the 1962 war, supporting Pakistan Army's genocide in East Pakistan and dubbing Indian intervention as imperialist, aligning with Kashmiri separatists and supporting North-East insurgents leave no doubt about their intentions. Their putting in place an 18,000 plus guerrilla force, nearly 16,000 sophisticated arms, weapon procuring and manufacturing infrastructure, fund raising abilities and an effective propaganda apparatus clearly indicate their burgeoning

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capacities. Misled by the rhetoric of them being social activists or crusaders for the poor, we should not underestimate their intentions and capabilities. There is no room to treat them anything other than being enemies of the state who have to be fought, vanquished and neutralised.

The second point that obfuscates the discourse is its political dimension. The message that goes out to the Naxalites is that the government is confused and weak, dishonest and insincere, lacks the gumption to take the battle to its logical end, and wilts under the pressure of media, local level political workers, extremist linked NGOs, etc. The political cross-fire between the Centre and the States only gladdens their hearts. There is a need to make the message to the extremists loud and clear that the state will use all its power to protect its sovereign rights. In the instant case, the Congress leaders were wrong in trying to give it a political colour and advance possible conspiracy theories. There is no ambiguity whatsoever about the role and responsibility of the Centre and the States. Article 355

Left Wing Extremism (LWE) is no more a “public order” issue, and falls well within the innermost circle of what Justice Hidayatullah calls “three concentric circles” of threats.

of the Constitution unequivocally affirms that “It shall be the duty of the Union to protect every State against external aggression and internal disturbance”. Left Wing Extremism (LWE) is no more a “public order” issue, and falls well within the innermost circle of what Justice Hidayatullah calls “three concentric circles” of threats. In the judgement in *Ram Manohar Lohia vs. State of Bihar* (1965), the Supreme Court asserted that when a threat transcends limits of public order and threatens internal security, the overriding responsibility lies with the Union government. However, to make it happen, the Prime Minister needs to be strong to have his writ run both at the Centre and in the States.

The next requirement is strong laws with an efficient criminal administration system to administer them. The threats, internal or external, that threaten the unity, integrity and sovereignty of India, require a different jurisprudence than ordinary criminal laws and must empower the state to deter and neutralise the enemies. The front

organisations, masquerading as NGOs and think tanks, who skilfully assist the extremists in exploiting discontent and subvert them to take recourse to the gun must be made accountable. Those who provide them intellectual and ideological space by projecting them as social revolutionaries are as guilty as the gullible people who take to arms. It is also necessary that the justice system functions with speed, fairness, transparency and honesty. To bring down the crisis of legitimacy, any illegal police action or efforts to frame the innocents should be dealt with an iron hand.

The state police forces, due to their superior knowledge of terrain, language and customs of the local people, are best suited for counter-LWE operations. There is an urgent need to increase their strength, provide them better leadership, training, weapons and equipment. It is pertinent to note that Naxalism has assumed deep roots in States where the number of policemen available per one lakh population is amongst the lowest and much below the national average of 135. This

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situation should be corrected immediately and minimum of 200 policemen per lakh population must be made available to the Naxal affected states. Not just quantity, but quality equally matters. What India requires is, as the Padmanabhaiah Committee advocated, a “highly motivated, professionally-skilled, infrastructurally self-sufficient and sophisticatedly trained police force.”

The availability of real-time actionable intelligence is critical for launching surgical operations against the Naxal leadership and guerilla armies. For this the operational capabilities of state intelligence, right up to the police station levels must be bolstered for undertaking tactical operations. A good intelligence often has made the difference between victory and defeat, and life and death. We have to develop a totally different set of capabilities to cater to our rapidly changing intelligence requirements. This needs to be done at several levels—from our training modules to doctrines to equipment. This transformation

has to be across the spectrum of our intelligence capabilities and operations. Concerted efforts to choke Maoists' sources of finance and channels of procuring weapons also deserve high priority.

The war is difficult but winnable. The need is for capacity building both at the Central and State levels and right leadership to convert plans into realities on the ground. They have started the war; it will be finished by us.

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India-China Relations: A Reality Check

- *Lt Gen (Retd) Gautam Banerjee*

The Elephant's Dilemma

New Delhi's purportedly 'meek submission' to what is seen as arbitrary, at times blatant, affront to India's national dignity that is regularly inflicted by Beijing, often comes in for sharp criticism by our strategic community. Common citizens too are dismayed when they find New Delhi bending-backwards to reconcile to Beijing's highhandedness, sometimes after lodging meek protest and sometimes allowing the arrogation to pass¹. Many a times, as in the matter of the muscle flexing by the Chinese People's Liberation Army's (PLA) at the Line of Actual Control (LAC), either the incidents are left unreported, or when that is unfeasible, down-playing explanations are advanced to soothe public consternation - a case of the victim holding brief for the tormentor²!

In more disconcerting vein, there comes grave provocations from China that amount to a sort of 'hostility' against our nationhood.

Besides, the mind boggling nonsense of staking claim over the state of Arunachal Pradesh, occupation of the *Shaksgam Valley* in Ladakh, pumping up Pakistan with military, nuclear and missile capabilities - a brazen recourse to destabilize India - and negation of New Delhi's stance on terrorism go to exemplify Beijing's obsessive antipathy towards India³. In all such cases, New Delhi suffers these inimical policies in stoic resignation. Thus, the criticism that our strategic community heaps upon the government of the day is not unjustified.

Governance in contemporary India is driven by economic considerations, as indeed it should be. However, there are signs emanating from policy-making confabulations which indicate that the other fundamentals of national security may be consigned to the sidelines in favour of the 'interests' of the commercial conglomerate. Obviously, when tested under eternal political wisdom, it is a trend dangerous for the future of our nationhood. Even if the

*Lt Gen (Retd) Gautam Banerjee, Executive Council, VIF

undertakings of national defence are suspended as a temporary trade-off in favour of economic-industrial take-off, as China did during the 1980's and 1990's, the governing establishment may not be absolved from its primary charter that mandates, not the promotion of business interests *per se*, but the provision of secure and sovereign environment for the people to flourish.

The purpose here is, firstly, to suggest that notwithstanding the enchanting dream of ending geo-political rivalry through commercial connections, the *Sino-Indian relationship* may remain contentious in the foreseeable future; and secondly, to argue that *articulation of military power-backed diplomacy would be a hopeful option* for India to live in peace with an overwhelmingly powerful and pugnacious neighbour⁴.

Contentions Ever-Interminable

One comes across many theories to explain Beijing's compulsive hostility towards India. Experts opine that the root causes of

China's aversion is the power-play of regional *leadership* – of the kind of that usually comes up between the largest and the second largest neighbours. Then of course, there is India's repudiation of China's *territorial claims* and China's piqué of Indians' solidarity with the Tibetan people. In economic terms, competition for *energy, water* and mining rights for strategic minerals, and China's efforts to secure her *sea lines of communication* are also identified as the points of contention. No

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doubt, all these irritants add up to reinforce the already existing mutual suspicion. However, with the kind of sabre-rattling that China

is frequently at, there is no doubt that a powerful majority in the Chinese establishment is afflicted with a sense of apprehension vis-à-vis India. But then what might these apprehensions be, and what can India do about it?

The answer may lie in the weight of the contentious issues that cast a shadow of unease upon Sino-Indo relations.

Regional Leadership?

In the question of rivalry for *leadership* in the region, the verdict is clear. To state the obvious, China encompasses a vast geographical area and unlimited range of resources. Traditionally, she cradles an extraordinary level of socio-political as well as practical intellect, and has developed sublime forms of civic and military wisdom in equal measure. It is her cultural strength that allowed her to preserve her sovereignty through the periodical shrinkages of political authority, never giving up her claims to rule over what she considered her domain and staking her 'rightful' status as a superior race of the "Middle Kingdom".

China's fortune is again on an up-curve; she is a rising power of mind boggling potential. Her grip over all segments of her society is pervasive and her technological, economic and military clout is galloping sure and fast. While lining up to do business with China so as to keep their domestic economies on track, even powerful nations are compelled to be wary of the inevitability of security challenges emanating from the fire-breathing dragon. Indeed, there is little doubt regarding China's global ascendancy in the

days to come; political thinkers are already articulating the idea of her role as a 'pro-active superpower'. In bilateral context, her lead over India on every aspect - political authority, structural stability, economy, science and technology and military power - is so overwhelming, and continuously increasing, that even a fleeting thought of closing the gap may be discarded outright.

In contrast, India, though an equally ancient civilisation, has not articulated a proportionate balance between spiritualism, socio-political wisdom and nationalism. All through her history, there have been short periods of powerful centralisation followed by long periods of political disintegration that invited cyclic invasions and foreign rule. Presently, even as her economy improves and she emerges as an accommodative member of the global polity, she is yet unable to articulate her state-power to disperse such anti-national tendencies that emanate from within or without⁵. Thus, notwithstanding a vibrant democracy in play, armed rebellion has displaced the state in nearly one-fifth of the country. One third of her people remain malnourished while numerous

groups of ethnic, linguistic, casteist, religious, business and political manipulators assail each other, and by default, harm national ideals. Meanwhile, inimical neighbours continue to sabotage her national interests, with impunity.

To be realistic, there is no way India can stake claim for regional leadership in the foreseeable future. Even if Beijing views India's growing strategic relationships with US, Japan, Australia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Central Asian States and Myanmar as 'ganging up' to contain her, she may seek remedy not in targeting India, but in controlling her own brusque and over-bearing manner of conducting regional diplomacy. Indeed, China need not slip into a banal belief that India could pose a challenge to her ascendancy in any manner⁶.

But that 'ghost' of apprehension may be exorcised by the Chinese themselves; India can do little to clear that perception.

The Tibet Issue

The *Tibet* issue is a cause of concern that sets Beijing on the

warpath. History records that the borders of successive Nanjing-Beijing empires have gone through many cycles of expansions and contractions. Thus in some periods, Beijing's imperialistic control extended westwards right up to Turkmenistan, while at other times, revolt emanating from outlying provinces caused the empires to shrink into just the *Han* populated areas of the *Hwang Ho* and *Yang Ze* River Basins ⁷. Perhaps this ingrained memory makes the ruling communist regime extremely sensitive to situations in Tibet, Xinjiang and Outer Mongolia. Chinese leadership's avowed purpose being to perpetuate the stability of their autarchic rule, the simmering discontent in Tibet and world-wide solidarity with the Tibetan cause must be a cause of serious anxiety for them. Even her attempts to buy Tibetan people's loyalty through accelerated economic development have failed to silence the skeptics who see it as a step to cascade Han settlements and so alter the demography of Tibet. Besides, economic prosperity stokes the urge for freedom, and therefore, the "Free Tibet" movement will remain a serious worry for the

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Chinese leadership in the foreseeable future. India, in sheltering a Tibetan Government-in-Exile, would continue to be viewed as an ‘upstart challenger’, a potential ‘destabiliser’, who needs to be ‘kept in place’⁸.

There is really nothing that India can do about successive Dalai Lamas and their followers taking shelter in her territory. May be China could do something about her ways of dealing with these unfortunate people so that they do not have to escape to India. She could reconcile to India’s compulsions in accommodating Tibetan refugees under the established international convention. May be New Delhi’s support of China’s causes in various forums even in absence of any reciprocal gesture would some day satiate Beijing’s complexes in this regard.

Here again there is little that India can do more than what she already does do to assuage China’s fears.

The Territorial Dispute

India’s repudiation of China’s occupation of the strategically sensitive *Aksai Chin* and *Shaksgam Valley*, and outright rejection of the unwarranted claim

over Tawang/Arunachal Pradesh further adds to the latter’s consternation. Indeed, it is difficult to visualise India ceding territories to humour China’s expansionist agenda, just as it is naïve to expect China to rid herself of her deeply ingrained instincts of expansionistic philosophy⁹. India, therefore, will continue to be a target for Beijing to vent her frustrations upon.

Water

The Tibetan Plateau is the major source of sweet water that sustains life in South and East Asia. No doubt, diversion of such waters to enliven her heartlands is an enticing prospect for China. But when considered in the light of international riparian laws and the Middle Kingdom’s compulsive urge to secure great power status, of which display of sense of responsibility is an essential ingredient, the dream may encounter major hurdles. China will have to contend with the fact that diversion of waters from the *Brahmaputra*, *Sutluj* and *Indus* rivers would affect many other neighbours, and that coalescence of a coalition of victims of her highhandedness, even if it is made up of smaller and weaker nations, would be detrimental to her

interests¹⁰. Thus, even if technological complexities, enormity of investment, decades of construction and environmental consequences may not deter her, and if the global political equation continues to remain favourable to China during those decades, any arbitrary diversion of waters by China may not be beyond contest.

In the overall context therefore, China may not find India as the sole stumbling block on this issue; in India, it would continue to be a cause of discomfiture though.

Strategic Encirclement?

What is described as China's '*string of pearls*' strategy - that is, establishment of naval facilities surrounding the Indian Peninsula in alliance with littoral countries - would certainly strengthen her *sea lines of communication* as well as *mining* prospects in the India Ocean; it would also enhance her economic and diplomatic clout. Indeed, China is free to seek political arrangements to create this 'string' as she wants to, but there is much concern that this 'string' would lead to 'encirclement' of

India. No doubt that 'string' would pinch, but only if India fails to invest in sea-power and take advantage of the strategic situation of the peninsular India that is best situated to control the Indian Ocean.

Rationally viewed, factoring facilities for naval replenishment located on foreign shores thousands of nautical miles away from mainland China as unassailable 'military bases', from where flotillas of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN)

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would supposedly set about to impose adversities upon other users of the Indian Ocean, may cause less anxiety when tested in

light of the scales of naval forces and logistics that would be necessary for that purpose. It may take China four to five decades of continuation of favourable internal and international order to realise that purported goal, howsoever delightful that ambition might be to a compulsive hegemonist¹¹. Besides, it would be an entire lot of nations whose interests would be equally threatened by China's dominance over the Indian Ocean.

This issue, therefore, would be a common concern among many nations, India included, that needs resolute preparations over time to manage.

Competition for Strategic Resources

There may be a case to view the issue of race for resources just as a business competition that is ever present in all deals at all times. Such rivalries may not lead to enmity *per se*¹². Besides, securing global sources for supply of assured *energy* and strategic *minerals* for one country does not imply that the other may have to starve; the architecture of economic exploitation of natural resources is so intimately intertwined across the globe. The concern that India would jeopardise China's energy hunt, or in securing her sources of energy China will cause India to be shunted out, may not, either way, be so overwhelming¹³.

The trade race may, therefore, be allowed to gain momentum without acrimony.

Compelling Observations

Sino-Indian relationship is marred by such fundamental incongruencies which cannot be

resolved at India's instance without compromising her core values. New Delhi has to wait and hope that Beijing will some day get rid of her anxiety over India taking what she believes to be her pie, but lot of water must flow out of *Tsang Po* before that.

Keeping the 'Dragon' at Bay

Beijing's growing acts of diplomatic hostility, even to the extent that the understandings reached in the past - the peace and tranquility agreement 2005, for example - are sought to be repudiated through deliberate acts of negation, must remain a potential source of trouble for India¹⁴. Therefore, stakes in geopolitics rise, China's insidious muscle flexing along our entire Northern borders, across the Indian Ocean region and even on international waters, should be expected. We are also aware of the fact that, Pakistan would continue to serve as China's proxy detractor against India. How does India deal with a bellicose and belligerent China is a strategic challenge. How to keep the 'dragon' off her back? How do we, as many strategic thinkers opine, keep China's predatory instincts in check while concentrating on own economic progress?

Lure of Complacency

First, we may not take China's rhetoric of "peaceful rise to power" on face value; firstly, because in geo-politics, power never comes peacefully, and secondly, the peace Beijing speaks of is but a peace on her terms.

Second, we may not be fixated to the view that integration of Taiwan is China's sole focus. Presently, that goal remains farfetched, whereas Tibet is a 'live' issue in contention. Settlement of the Tibet issue will bring her a step closer to integration of Taiwan. Therefore, possibility of a situation when Beijing may bolster her politico-economic measures with military power to overwhelm the Tibetan refractor, is real. India will invariably be embroiled in that conflict in some manner or the other.

Third, growing bilateral trade may not be a harbinger of dispute resolution. History bears testimony to the fact that good business does not come in the way of politico-military confrontation.

Fourth, the claim over whole of the Arunachal Pradesh may not be seen just as a bargaining posture. Such rhetorical claims, when repeated over decades, tend to get crystallised into national aspirations. When that happens, even authoritarian regimes are unable to back out against popular pressure.

Lastly, we may not dismiss those experts who have recently expressed the possibility of another Chinese 'attack' on India. Of course, as expected, the manner of the offensive may differ. In any case, we have to do better than repeating our gullibility of the pre-1962, post-Kutch 1965 and pre-Kargil kinds if we do not wish to suffer another visitation of misfortune.

Thus in the context of China's adversarial posture, New Delhi has to convince Beijing to limit her uncontrollable expansionist urge to nothing beyond a ritualistic war-dance.

Options Oft Articulated

Will a *tit-for-tat* exchange work? Asking Beijing either to move out the PLA from Occupied Kashmir

or face the prospect of the Indian Army moving into *Aksai Chin*, for example? Or by sallying out to damage some huts and paint some boulders across the LAC? Can India indulge in such charade without poking Beijing to up the *ante*? The obvious answer is that such a bizarre 'game' may make a subtle gesture, nothing more, but worse, it might invite a reaction that India would be hard put to absorb.

Can New Delhi impose such a regime of trade restrictions that it starts hurting China's economy? By all accounts, such a step may cause some losses to China, but its counter-effect on Indian economic progress may be many times over. After all, the weaker gets trampled first.

Growing economic inter-dependency could be thought of to marginalise the hawks in Beijing, mainly the PLA and the rank communists. This may be a good option provided the economic benefits are equitably balanced, not biased against India. Besides, it needs to be appreciated that notwithstanding encouraging prophecies, economic bindings have seldom prevented one state from undermining the other. Conversely, in her efforts to keep

the trade equation in her favour, China may find another cause to be nasty.

Strength of human resources bolsters national security. Can we bank upon that to stand up to Beijing's arrogance? Well, that could be possible if we could maintain our lead in mathematical genius, English language, scientific temper and strong civil institutions that we had inherited at independence. Sadly, that lead has been lost, more or less; China catches up fast when she wishes to, while India tends to entangle herself in endless arguments and agitations, nepotism and mobocracy, divisive compromises and farcical politics. This option therefore is contingent upon India reinventing her societal strength – it is a far away option.

Possibly, India can leverage common cause with the United States, Japan, Vietnam, Australia, Indonesia, to name just a few, to blunt China's predatory tendency. Can such a leverage be accomplished without provoking China, something that wisdom tells us to better avoid? Can we prevent such collaborations with the 'like minded' parties – no saints themselves – from undermining our interests in some

other manner? Arguably, it may be possible to forge such a leverage, though it would be a tight-rope act, liable to misfire. What about retaliatory measures in Tibet? Can India stoke Tibetan resistance in the same manner that China uses Pakistan to tie knots around her? That indeed would be a strong leverage to exercise. But what if China retaliates by promoting Maoist and North East insurgencies; she had been doing so earlier even without any provocation, after all? Obviously, this extreme option may be reserved as a recourse only in war, with due preparations to handle the consequences.

Can India stoke Tibetan resistance in the same manner that China uses Pakistan to tie knots around her? That indeed would be a strong leverage to exercise.

already evident. Considering its ever-present roots as discussed above, Sino-Indian confrontation of some kind or the other is inevitable. Given China's philosophy of using military might as a catalyst of political ambitions, it is imperative for India to wield such military power that would motivate Beijing to seek her goals through peaceful means. Indeed, that is what our political leadership have sought to do all these years since 1962. But with the military institution frozen in obsolescence and afflicted with

debilitating 'hollowness', can India's military power continue to pay its 'deterrence-dividend', or even dissuade our

The preceding discussion leaves *military deterrence as the sole practicable, and profitable, recourse to keep China on friendly terms.*

eastern neighbour's innate urge to grab territories? The answer, as honest analysts aver, is 'no'.

Role of Military Power

We know that obduracy of an overwhelmingly powerful neighbour may not be contained by reconciliatory or collaborative diplomacy alone. Beijing's arrogance will rise in step with her progress and power – this is

Further, given that our goal of socio-economic uplift precludes the practicality of competing with China's military prowess, India may not hope to ever acquire that level of military power that could defeat a *full-spectrum, all-front, total war* that the PLA's doctrine espouses, even if that strategy is sought to be camouflaged under the beguiling terminology of

“limited war under conditions of informalisation”.

A ‘Smile and Gun’ Option

From the preceding discussion, it emerges that given the compulsions under which it has to carry the burden of statecraft, the courses adopted by New Delhi in keeping the overbearing ‘dragon’ at bay have to be double-nuanced. Indeed, it makes sense to promote political and economic engagement, sometimes reconciling affronts with petulance and showing occasional resolve¹⁵. However, since Beijing is no exception in respecting the power of gun, that stoicism needs to be backed up with an efficient military machine that could ‘bite’ painfully even when bound. *India could work towards that level of military preparedness which, even if she may not prevail, would make a clash of force prohibitively dear to China.* History tell us that it is possible to do so at a cost that is affordable and a pace that is adaptable. Indian strategists may therefore have to come to terms with the aforementioned restraining dispensations, and yet devise strategies that would deny free run to the PLA should Beijing decide to settle her pique with force.

But insight also tells us that the Indian system of administrating its military institution restricts, rather than sponsors such exceptional strategies. Our political culture remains in oblivion of the nuances of cost-efficient management of military organisation and development of strategic articulations, while the burden of defence policy making is consigned to a school of pretending strategists made up of bureaucrats, scientists and auditors - in exclusion of sanctified representation from the military intellectuals! As the show of smug satisfaction among the polity and the media over raising of two army divisions, or positioning some aircraft on the North-East frontier, or successful launches of missiles – all half-measures, titillating but overall lopsided - indicates, innocence of the profound nuances of war-fighting seems to pervade the entire state-apparatus. Consequently, even while maintaining the third largest army in the world, the nation remains bereft of the advantages expected and dividends accrued. That is a sad situation.

Engaging with China

Friendly engagement with China is a necessity that would work only if it is cemented with the backing of military strength. A comprehensive revamp – transformation, so to say – of the Indian defence establishment is therefore overdue. This, however, may be possible only if there is firm resolve in our politico-bureaucratic system to nurture military expertise, foster synergy between India's numerous defence and quasi-defence establishments and respect the time-lines of force-modernisation.

This condition does not prevail today.

Endnotes

1. New Delhi's reconciliation with issue of 'stapled visa' to the residents of J&K, blocking the Asian Development Bank loan for Arunachal Pradesh and whimsical response to the threat of deluge along Paree Chu in Himachal Pradesh are some examples. Diplomatic protests, when lodged, are disdainfully dismissed by Beijing, mostly so.
2. Instances of damaging Indian bunkers, shooing

away bonafide graziers and preventing track construction work near the LAC to proceed are known. Besides, of course, there are ever increasing violations of the LAC. India's attempts to explain away these violations to her citizens as "differing perceptions of the alignment of LAC between the two sides" does not really wash since the Chinese have consistently avoided specifying their 'perception' of the LAC and so settle this irritant till the border issue is resolved.

3. Since 2006, China 'clarifies' that the entire Arunachal Pradesh ("Outer Tibet" is the newly invented nomenclature!) is hers. Imagine an international boundary, running not along the watershed of massive Himalayan Ranges, but over and across its reverse foothills! That is a glimpse of 'Chinese logic'! In the case of Shaksgam Valley, one squatter has gifted its trespass to another! The mischievous deal has gone a step further: Chinese Army is now operating in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir.

4. China and India have never been neighbours. Tibet has always occupied that place independent of the ever-changing Sino-Tibet political equations, till communist China completely subsumed Tibet nationalism in the 1950's.
5. Arguably, the eulogistic chants of India being an "economic power" or even an "emerging super-power" notwithstanding, she is actually just a "business destination" for the developed nations to rake profit from. It is the lure of profit that causes the developed world to lip enchanting adulations over India's supposed "success story".
6. Of course, China too faces numerous problems. But she is in control and is prepared to keep it that way, notwithstanding from some China-watcher's wishful predictions of a gathering trouble.
7. All this while, the vast belt of territory starting from Manchuria in the North, and covering what are called Inner Mongolia, Quinghai, Gansu, Xinjiang and Tibet regions in the West, had enjoyed freedom or subjugation – at varying degrees – at one time or the other. It was only during the early Manchu rule that the map of the empire appeared to be somewhat close to what China controls today, or lays claim upon.
8. Recently, the instinctive mindset was revealed when commenting on India's 'Agni V' missile test, a Chinese mouthpiece accused India of 'entertaining visions of imposing regional hegemony', a status that was, by implication, considered to be reserved, by divine consensus, for China alone.
9. Ironically, the communist regime fully identifies with its much decried imperialist past. Thus, the communists claim the largest areas that were ever controlled, or even trod upon, by Beijing-based empires at any point of time. By this logic India could claim Pakistan, Afghanistan, Myanmar etc, the Britain may claim half the world, and every other country may claim every other's territory!
10. As political philosophers have contended, even the most powerful

hegemons are consciousness of a virtual 'red line' which when crossed, invites self-doom. Beijing will ignore that 'line' at her peril.

11. A static international order is nearly impossible to imagine. Besides, 'encirclement' of the Cold war era is invalid in today's world. Granting a foothold for naval replenishment does not necessarily mean that hostile acts against another country will find auto-endorsement.
12. India opted to purchase fighter aircraft from the French stable, much to consternation in the US. And that did not lead to a duel.
13. Economic and societal survival of nations that export and import energy and other minerals is so inter-wound that any major disruption in the cycle will devastate societies of both categories. The effect will be global – it will lead to a kind of global chaos.
14. We may recount three cases of Beijing's diplomatic duplicity. One, when asked as to why wasn't her territorial claims raised

before the late 1950's, Zhou en Lai replied that "the time was not ripe"!; two, the volte-face on Beijing's stance on Sikkim; three, claim over all of Arunachal Pradesh and invention of the term "Outer Tibet". *Indeed*, it is hard to reconcile to a great nation indulging in such undignified tricks.

15. Instances of either versions of reactions are: one, 'ignoring' the recent episode of visa denial to an officer hailing from Arunachal Pradesh and going ahead with a truncated delegation on military exchange; and two, petulant 'reconciliation' with PLA's move into Pakistan Occupied Kashmir by simply stating that the matter was 'being watched'. Conversely, 'resolve' was shown in going ahead with explorations in the South China Sea, rejecting Beijing's 'warning'.

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New Iranian President: West, India Need To Wait And Watch

- *Kanwal Sibal*

Hassan Rowhani's election as President of Iran on June 14 is unlikely to materially change the dynamics of the conflict between Iran and the western powers. The "reformists" in Iran who have backed Rowhani want improved handling of Iran's diplomacy though not at the cost of yielding on principles.

On the nuclear issue and relations with the US, the Iranian positions have become entrenched over a period of fruitless negotiations and cumulation of mutual suspicions, with robust sanctions imposed by the US and Europe and military threats against the country, including by Israel, making the resolution of issues more complicated politically and procedurally.

Situation

The situation has become more tangled because of social and military convulsions in the Arab world leading to the emergence of conservative Muslim Brotherhood

regimes in the north African littoral with extremist Salafist groups in tow. This has sharpened the confrontation between Iran and Saudi Arabia, anchored into a widening Shia-Sunni divide in this region as a whole, with Iran being accused of actively feeding Shia turbulence across the Arab world. Possibly even more than the West, the Gulf countries would wish to see the growing Iranian power curbed.

The Syrian issue has added to Iran-related anxieties. Iran is seen as Syria's strongest regional supporter, with Syria also serving as its link to the Hezbollah in Lebanon. If the Sunni Arab world led by Qatar and Saudi Arabia would want the Alawite regime of President Assad to collapse so that Iranian influence in the region is diminished, Iran would want to retain its influence in the arc consisting of Iraq, Syria and Lebanon and thus remain a vital factor in regional politics.

Barring Turkey, which today

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seeks an Arab role as an Islamic country, contrary to its historical tilt towards Europe as a secular country, Iran sees itself as the region's largest country demographically and geographically, with massive energy resources, a well educated and technologically skilled population and potentially the region's biggest market, and therefore impossible to ignore.

With Shias now ruling in Iraq and Iran's role in Afghanistan set to expand after the US withdrawal and India's search for connectivity to Afghanistan through Chabahar for retaining its own influence there, and with Saudi Arabia and Qatar feeling threatened by Iranian power, the Iranians can well conclude that the overall situation is playing in their favour despite western attempts to squeeze their country economically through sanctions.

The Israeli factor is a huge obstacle in the way of any "balanced" resolution of the Iran-West conflict- one that cedes some strategic ground to Iran. Israel would want Iran's nuclear capability- seen as an existential

threat- to be completely eliminated. If concerns that Iran may use its nuclear weapons against Israel in some future scenario seem highly exaggerated, its fears that with its nuclear capability giving it immunity against any retaliation, Iran may provide more potent support to Hezbollah to stage attacks against Israel are less imaginary, as our own experience with Pakistan tell us. This explains why Israel backs the elimination of the secular Assad regime even if it is replaced by Sunni extremist groups, because for it the breaking of the Iran-Hezbollah link through the Alawite Assad regime would be paramount.

Significantly, Israel and Qatar are together in this game.

Obama

The pro-Israel lobby in the US is working to ensure that President Obama maintains a coercive line towards Iran. In part to forestall any precipitate Israeli military action, Obama has imposed severe energy and financial sanctions on Iran- the latest on June 3 targeting the already heavily

depreciated Rial and Iran's automotive industry.

For reasons of domestic politics too, the White House seems currently unreceptive to any constructive move to begin untying the Iranian nuclear knot. Obama's primary focus is on his domestic agenda for carrying through which he needs every vote that he can possibly muster in the House of Representatives. With the Israeli lobby in the Congress already contributing to systematically blocking his initiatives, Obama will not apparently take the risk to alienate it further by any overture towards Iran. John McCain's hawkish position on Iran has made his position even more difficult.

Rowhani

Rowhani, who was the chief nuclear negotiator when Iran suspended uranium enrichment in 2003, is considered a moderate. His operational style being very different from that of his predecessor, he will avoid antagonizing the US unnecessarily. His election in the first round itself, without

accusations of vote-rigging, gives him credibility. However, it is well understood that on key political and security issues, including the nuclear one, it is Ali Khamenei who has the last word. How much can Rowhani's supposed moderation orient Iranian policies on various contentious issues in a positive direction remains questionable. He will also have to deal with the nuclear hardliners in the Revolutionary Guards Corps and the Qods Force.

During his electoral campaign, Rowhani had called for President Assad to remain in power till the scheduled 2014 elections. At his first press conference on June 17, he ruled out any suspension of uranium enrichment but mentioned his desire to make Iran's nuclear activities more transparent in order to build international confidence. He reiterated that Iran would welcome direct negotiations with the US if the latter stopped attempting to meddle in Iran's internal affairs and abandoned its "bullying attitude". If the West was looking for "new thinking", that is not discernible yet.

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Rowhani, who has dealt with India before, should be a friendly interlocutor. Our relationship with Iran has suffered because of stringent western sanctions against Iran. Although we have

handled fairly deftly our difficulties so far, the natural expansion of India-Iran ties will have to await a resolution of the Iran-West conflict.

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Meeting India's Energy Needs: A Challenge To The Scientific Community

- *Dr M N Buch*

It is a paradox that India, which is the fifth largest producer of electricity at approximately 2,12,000 MW, is also the lowest per capita consumer of electricity at 704 units as compared with 13616 units in the United States of America, a world average of 2752 units, with even China having a per capita consumption of 2328 units. There is obviously a total mismatch between the size of our population and the quantum of power generated by us. Of the power generated, a whopping 66.91 percent is accounted for by thermal power. The fuel largely used for thermal power is coal, with coal based generation accounting for 57.42 percent. Hydro power, which is clean and relatively cheap, accounts for 18.61 percent of production, nuclear for 2.25 percent and renewable sources such as wind, biomass, bagasse cogeneration accounting for 12.20 percent of the total power generation. Thus, more than two-third of power

generation in India is based on fuels which are polluting and create a large carbon footprint.

It has been officially stated that for India to have even a reasonable availability of power by the end of the year 2013, we should increase our power generation from 2.12 lakh MW to at least 2.50 lakh MW, with an eight to nine percent growth of generation per annum, which leads to the level of 10 lakh MW of power by 2050. That amounts to a terawatt of power. In the twelfth plan, the proposal is that 88000 MW of additional power be generated which, taking into account increased demand, would still not close the gap between power availability and power demand which, at present stands at 11.6 percent, rising to 15 percent during peak load.

In the matter of generation, what are the options available to us? It is planned under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission to

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add 22,000 MW of power through solar sources by 2022. Solar radiation is high throughout India and, therefore, we should be able to expand the programme substantially, but for one factor. Conversion of solar energy into electricity has a very low efficiency factor, hovering around 20 percent. To take the analogy of railway traction, the steam engine had a conversion factor of about 30 percent, which rose to about 60 percent with diesel electric traction. With all electric traction this goes up to between 75 and 80 percent. In a process of power generation in which the efficiency of conversion is only about 20 percent, can any generation infrastructure with such a low plant load factor be a truly effective instrument of delivering power on a national scale? Disaggregated generation and use of solar power directed at the household or a small community seems to be perfectly in order. Massive production of solar power to feed the grid is a completely different proposition. I state this not as an argument against solar power, but as a caution about

Conversion of solar energy into electricity has a very low efficiency factor, hovering around 20 percent. To take the analogy of railway traction, the steam engine had a conversion factor of about 30 percent, which rose to about 60 percent with diesel electric traction.

whether conversion of solar energy into electric power is necessarily the best and most economical solution to our power requirements.

Thermal power, even with all the devices such as electrostatic precipitators, filter systems which capture particulate matter and even systems of carbon recovery only partially deals with the problem. Apart from its carbon footprint, a coal based thermal power station is prodigal in its use

of cooling water and the fly ash generated by such a power plant has created waste management problems on a gigantic scale. Considering the

preponderance of thermal generation, regardless of environmental issues, one does not see a reduction in the role of thermal generation in the foreseeable future and we have to try and reduce the negative factors.

Hydro power is cheap, nonpolluting and should be a major source of energy in a country where it is the hills and mountains in which our rivers,

both Himalayan and Peninsular, rise, with steep gradients in the early part of their courses as they plunge towards plains. There is an almost unlimited source of hydel power available to us, but there are major problems associated. Had the present day environment activists existed then, the Gersoppa and Jog falls would never have been used for hydel generation, nor would Jogindernagar have existed. The problem with hydel generation is that one has to create a barrier across a river, such as the Bhakra Dam, both impounding water and creating a vertical drop which would enable hydel generation through turbines driven by the rushing waters. Environmental activists, including Sunderlal Bahuguna, are totally opposed to any dams. Their arguments are based on the assertion that there is lack of safety because of seismic activity in fragile mountain areas, the acquisition of land involved in creating a lake, the felling of trees in the basin of the lake and interference with the course of flow of our mountain and hill rivers. The environmental lobby has been so powerful that the second phase of Maneri-Bhali on the Bhagirathi River has been scrapped. Virtually every single dam is opposed and, therefore,

hydel generation has come under severe threat in India. Common sense demands that a balance should be struck between hydel generation and environmental issues because both are important, but the positions taken are so extreme that it is almost impossible to find a via media.

One single example illustrates this point. The Narmada, which arises at Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh, flows for more than 85 percent of its length in Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh is not only the upper riparian – it is also the major user or, rather, should be the major user of Narmada water. The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) has opposed projects on the Narmada tooth and nail. The Gujarat Government, on the other hand, where the largest dam on the Narmada, Sardar Sarovar, is located has made the Narmada waters an article of faith. The Supreme Court and the State High Courts have sometimes been facilitators but more often obstructionists. The Narmada is supposed to have 29 major, 450 medium and 3000 minor projects on it and its tributaries. Most of the projects are stalled, many of them after hundreds of crores of rupees have been spent. Sardar Sarovar is the only one which has

been completed and benefits of it are flowing throughout Gujarat, with a major share of power coming to Madhya Pradesh. What some people choose not to believe is that the Narmada can be a major source of hydel generation and Sardar Sarovar alone generates 1400 MW of clean power Omkareshwar and Maheshwar should double this, but thanks to NBA, the projects are making very slow headway. Without going into the merits of the agitation, one can safely say it is a symbol of how a major source of generation of clean power has been stymied.

India has set itself a target of generating 20 percent of energy

from renewable sources by 2017. Can we achieve this? Not at the present pace. For example, in the matter of grid interactive renewable power, the target for 2011-12 for wind power was 2400 MW. We have achieved during this period generation of 833 MW, that is, approximately 35 percent of the target. In the case of micro hydel projects, as against a modest target of 350 MW, India has achieved only 111.3 MW, which

comes to 31.8 percent of the target. In the case of solar power, only 2.5 percent of the target has been achieved. Gujarat and now Madhya Pradesh are striving to push solar energy, but how soon the results would be achieved remains to be seen.

That brings us to nuclear energy as a major source of power generation. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh even put his government at risk in order to

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh even put his government at risk in order to push a treaty with the United States of America which would enable India to move out of the pariah category in the nuclear world and be accepted as a global partner in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

push a treaty with the United States of America which would enable India to move out of the pariah category in the nuclear world and be accepted as a global partner in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

With many 'ifs' and 'buts', the treaty went through, with the Prime Minister arguing that if India were to become energy sufficient and through a clean source of generation, we had no option but nuclear power. The entire nuclear power generation programme is based on the premise that it is the cleanest form of energy because there are no emissions, nuclear power stations do not add gaseous or

particulate matter to the atmosphere, there is no carbon generation and there are no mountains of fly ash such as one finds in a coal based thermal power station. The only danger is a Chernobyl type explosion which released radioactive material, or a Three-Mile Island type of melt down which, fortunately, was contained. Then, of course, one had Fukushima in which the nuclear power station was wrecked by a tsunami and it is only the heroic sacrifices by dedicated Japanese engineers which prevented this mishap from being converted into a disaster which would have devastated Japan.

In India, new nuclear plants include the one which is in the process of becoming operational in Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu and two which are in an advanced stage of planning. These include Jaitapur in Maharashtra and a proposed plant in the Mandla District of Madhya Pradesh. Activists and even a section of scientists are strongly opposed to these plants on account of safety. In some ways, the Fukushima disaster has triggered grave doubts about nuclear power plants located near the coast because it is feared that a tsunami can

overtake them, leading to devastating results. There have been large scale and continuing protests Against Kudankulam and Jaitapur. . The Prime Minister and the entire nuclear science establishments have no such doubts. Their way to reassure the people about the safety of these power plants is to virtually guarantee that neither Chernobyl nor Fukushima can ever be repeated in India. Those who are opposed these plants refuse to buy the government's arguments, not only because they question the scientific basis of certifying the plants to be safe, but also on account of very little credibility remaining with government as one financial scandal after another hits India. Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, was asked on his return what passed through his mind as he blasted into space. His reply was, "The first thought I had was that every single part of the moon rocket had been supplied by the lowest tenderer". Even in the United States, doubts have been expressed about quality and with our penchant for cutting corners when tendering and then trying to recoup any loss by substandard work, one certainly shares some sympathy for those who question safety guarantees. Nevertheless, the government has argued

vehemently that India has no option but to adopt nuclear power generation as a major source of energy in the years to come.

The whole debate centres around the absolutely unavoidable need to increase our generation capacity if India is to modernise. If power is viewed as a commodity, then as in the case of all commodities, there is both a demand and supply of the commodity. Our present approach to electricity is focused only on supply because it is taken as given that demand will ride a rising curve and that if India is to modernize, demand must be made to rise very sharply. That scenario leaves us with no option other than increasing our generation capacity. Depending on finite resources, there is bound to come a time when we cannot increase power supply and then we would run into a massive problem of a demand driven economy being brought to a halt because the supply side has failed.

Is electricity necessarily a commodity? Is it not a convenience? Before power traction came on the scene, travel

was a function of the human muscle, animal power, water power and wind power which moved sailing ships. Many things which we take for granted today were not available, but there was an ecological equilibrium the value of which we have never taken into account. We certainly cannot revert to the pre-automobile engine era and that this convenience, electricity, has become more than a convenience, more than a commodity because it has become a vital necessity. It is,

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therefore, necessary to accept that India needs electrical power for its electronic application. Once this is established, then the question arises from where will it obtain this power? Unfortunately, the country not really seriously looked at the demand side. Electricity is a prime mover, which is defined by the Chambers Twenty-first Dictionary as “the force that is most effective in setting something in motion”. That means that the more cumbersome, more inefficient a thing which is to be set in motion is, it will require a much larger quantity of the prime mover, in this case electricity. Traction

motors largely use electricity as the prime mover. Let us take the case of a ceiling fan whose motor uses between 60 and 100 watts of power. If the motor were to be made so efficient that it consumes only 10 watts, we would have a 600 percent saving of power on a ceiling fan. Multiply this by crores of ceiling fans in use in a hot tropical country and the mind cannot even grasp how much power would be saved by this one improvement. Take every other motor, whether it be the traction motors of a railway train, the motors which drive heavy machinery in an industry, the motors which drive pumps which lift water for irrigation and one would find that by substantially improving the conversion factor of power to motion one could probably make do with about half the power we generate today. We could then concentrate on making our power stations more efficient, increase the plant load factor to almost a ratio of 1:1 and also in the process reduce pollution from these power plants to an acceptable level. It is only after this new equilibrium is established that we should think of more forms of application of electricity and, therefore, additional power generation.

I am not a scientist but have seen how Japanese scientists took the old valve radio set, transferred the circuitry to a button size transistor and gave us a radio set about the size of a pack of playing cards and transformed the entire information technology scene. Today semi conductors, the micro chip, the integrated circuit allow all sorts of equipment to function on a 1.5 volt battery and have eliminated the need for continuous mains supply to these appliances. I have suggested to the Indian Institutes of Technology that they should have a very strong research programme which looks at power demand and then come up with solutions which reduce demand as suggested above. The research would not be glamorous because it will deal with such mundane items as submersible pumps for lifting water from a tube well. It will not drive a Ferrari or a Lamborghini. It will be used by common cultivators, but such research would transform the entire power scenario in India and the world. Will any of our institutes of technology take up the challenge? My humble submission is that the route to the Nobel Prize does not necessarily lie in fundamental research. Applied research which takes electricity and makes it a

truly thrifty servant of man can also lead to a Nobel Prize.

What is stated above is only a commonsense approach and one wonders why neither activists, nor scientists, nor the technologists are pushing it. A standard argument is that research which leads to efficiency of virtually every appliance which uses electric power would be very expensive and would push the cost of the commodity beyond ordinary levels of affordability. Perhaps this is true, but only so far as the prototype is concerned. Replication of a prototype does not call for cost to be incurred on research and when the prototype is tested, proved and found to be acceptable, its mass production would bring the unit cost down to not more than what the present appliance costs. Look how expensive were the original cumbersome, slow and clumsy computers. Refining, fine-tuning and mass production have brought the computer within the reach of every common man. This is true of mobile telephony. Why should it fail in the massively wide spectrum of electrical and

Industry, government, the scientific establishment and our Institutes of Technology must come together with a very specific and determined programme to make the use of electrical energy so efficient that a little bit goes a long way.

electronic goods which have now become a part of our daily life? Industry, government, the scientific establishment and our Institutes of Technology must come together with a very specific and determined programme to make the use of electrical energy so efficient that a little bit goes a long way. There can be no tokenism in this programme because if India is to survive as an ecologically and environmentally healthy, modern nation in which power is harnessed for man's needs and there is enough power for everyone, then efficiency of everything which needs power to operate has to be central to our philosophy of use of power. Whether we put a man on the moon or not is not very relevant. Whether we can make one megawatt of power perform the same function as a hundred megawatts of power is vital to our survival. Will our scientific and technological establishment respond favourably?

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Remembering The Dreaded Emergency: Lesson For Future Of Indian Democracy

- *Dr. A Surya Prakash*

June 25 marks the 38th anniversary of the dreaded Emergency that turned a vibrant Indian democracy into a dictatorship. It was imposed by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975 to gain absolute power after she was found guilty of corrupt electoral practice by the Allahabad High Court. Unwilling to accept the judicial verdict, Ms Gandhi got a pliant President to issue a proclamation under Article 352 of the Constitution to impose an “internal emergency”. The emergency, which lasted 19 months, constituted the darkest hour for India’s democracy. The Constitution was mutilated, parliament was reduced to a rubber stamp and the media was gagged. Even the judiciary failed to stand up to the tyrannical regime. As a result, the people of India lost their basic freedoms and came face to face with fascism. Democracy was restored after the defeat of the Congress Party in the March, 1977 Lok Sabha election.

Here is a brief account of how it all

started and what the Indira Gandhi government did to Parliament, the Media, the Judiciary and more importantly, to the basic freedoms of the people. The political crisis that led to the imposition of the emergency began on June 12, 1975 when Justice Jagmohanlal Sinha of Allahabad High Court held Prime Minister Indira Gandhi guilty of corrupt practice in the Lok Sabha election of 1971. The judge held her election to parliament as void and barred her from contesting elections for six years. On a request by Indira Gandhi’s lawyer, the judge stayed his own order for 20 days to enable her to go in appeal.

Indira Gandhi’s lawyers filed an appeal in the Supreme Court. Justice V.R.Krishna Iyer, passed orders on this petition on June 24, but the interregnum was used by the Congress Party to stage a series of rent-a-crowd-rallies in support of Indira Gandhi outside her residence. The biggest rally was held on June 20 and for this

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the Delhi administration and the Delhi Police commandeered 1700 buses and the railways ran special trains from far and near. Since all buses were forcibly requisitioned for the rally, citizens of Delhi had to do without public transport that day.

Indira Gandhi had hoped that the Supreme Court would provide her relief but that was not to be. Justice Iyer granted a “conditional stay” of Justice Sinha’s decision. He barred Indira Gandhi from participating in debates or voting in Parliament and referred the matter to a larger Bench of the Court.

Meanwhile, the opposition parties got together to press for Indira Gandhi’s resignation in the light of the Allahabad High Court judgement. Justice Iyer’s order, prohibiting the Prime Minister from voting in parliament or participating in debates, had made her position even more untenable, they said and demanded that she must quit office forthwith. They held a massive rally in the Ramlila grounds on June 25, which was addressed by the Sardovaya leader and freedom fighter Jayaprakash

Narayan, who was leading the movement to cleanse politics, and a host of other leaders. The Prime Minister, they said, was moving towards dictatorship and fascism. On the other hand, Indira Gandhi’s son, Sanjay Gandhi and many of her friends and political associates were pushing her towards a confrontation and were even suggesting measures that could wreck the Constitution. Siddhartha Shankar Ray and several others came up with suggestions which had the same effect – snuffing out democracy.

Meanwhile, the opposition parties got together to press for Indira Gandhi’s resignation in the light of the Allahabad High Court judgement.

Every member of the Prime Minister’s household appeared to be gravitating

towards the same idea – crush political opponents and cling to power at any cost.

In the months preceding the Allahabad High Court judgement, Sanjay Gandhi had emerged as an extra-constitutional authority and people in government and the Congress Party were seen cringing and crawling before this new centre of power. When he found Congressmen and officials at his feet, Sanjay “summoned” Chief Ministers to the Prime Minister’s residence and began preparing

lists of opposition politicians who, in his view, deserved to be put away. As congressmen vied with each other to produce hired crowds before her house, Indira Gandhi called S.S.Ray and told him the country needed “a shock treatment”. Ray said she could give India the shock treatment by imposing an “internal emergency” under Article 352 of the Constitution.

Thereafter, Indira Gandhi, accompanied by Ray, went to the President and asked him to impose an internal emergency under Article 352. She said there was no time to call a meeting of the Union Cabinet to discuss the proposal. On her return from the President’s House, she sent a letter to the President accompanied by a proclamation. President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, who was a rubber stamp President, signed on the dotted line. The rules governing conduct of business in government prohibit a Prime Minister from taking unilateral decisions in matters such as these. It is mandatory that this be placed before the Cabinet. But the President lacked the moral fibre to protect the Constitution. As a result, he meekly succumbed and signed the Emergency proclamation.

Once the deed was done, Indira Gandhi’s household got out the lists and the police forces across the country were directed to arrest leaders of opposition parties. Jayaprakash Narayan, Morarji Desai, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Lal Krishna Advani, Madhu Dandavate, S.N.Mishra, Subramanian Swamy and a host of other leaders were arrested and sent to jails in Delhi, Bangalore and other places. Next, on Sanjay Gandhi’s orders electricity was cut off on New Delhi’s Fleet Street – Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, to prevent publication of newspapers next morning.

Having thus succeeded so effortlessly in wrecking the Constitutional scheme, Indira Gandhi summoned the Union Cabinet at 6 a.m on June 26 to “inform” it of her decision to impose an internal emergency under Article 352. The Cabinet capitulated and without discussion gave post-facto ratification to this decision. Soon thereafter, the Home Ministry imposed censorship on the media and prohibited newspapers from publishing news about detentions. A Chief Censor was appointed to keep a close watch of newspapers and journalists.

Once this infrastructure for dictatorship had been laid, other things followed. On June 27, 1975 the President issued an order suspending citizens' right to move the courts for enforcement of fundamental rights guaranteed under Article 14 (equality before law and equal protection of the law), Article 21 (no deprivation of life and liberty except by procedure established by law), Article 22 (no detention without being informed of the grounds for it). With the passage of this order, citizens lost their fundamental right to life and liberty. Later during the emergency, the President passed yet another order suspending the right of citizens to move court for enforcement of freedoms under Article 19.

Armed with these draconian powers, the government went about arresting politicians, journalists, academics and persons from other walks of life who opposed the Emergency. Most of them were locked up under the dreaded Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) with officials fabricating charges. MISA itself was amended to prohibit

courts from applying the principles of "natural justice" in MISA detention cases. Even more extraordinary was the amendment which said disclosure of grounds of detention were not necessary, that the grounds were 'confidential' and should not be communicated to the detainees or the courts and to bar representations against detention.

Meanwhile sycophancy reached the zenith. Dev Kant Barooah, President of the Congress Party declared "Indira is India, India is Indira".

Later during the emergency, the President passed yet another order suspending the right of citizens to move court for enforcement of freedoms under Article 19.

One of the most ugly features of the Emergency was forcible sterilisation of the

population and cleaning up of cities on Sanjay Gandhi's order. In order to achieve quick results, Indira Gandhi assigned sterilization targets to all Chief Ministers, who in turn passed on targets to all government servants including teachers and policemen. The police went about target achievement in the only way they know. They surrounded villages, nabbed all males a la municipal squads which trap street dogs, and carted them off to the nearest primary health centers to be

vasectomised. When villagers resisted, the police opened fire killing and injuring many protestors. Villages largely inhabited by Muslims were specially targeted because the government believed this community was against population control. Similar atrocities were perpetrated in the name of cleaning –up Delhi. Backed by a strong police force, municipal officials in Delhi swooped on residents of Turkman Gate and other areas and bulldozed hundreds of homes. Dozens of citizens lost their lives in the riots that broke out in the area.

A word about the conduct of different organs of the State. Parliament buckled under pressure and passed some of the most atrocious constitutional amendments including the 42 Amendment which stuck a big blow against the foundations of democracy. The speeches made by Congress MPs during these debates constitute the most shameful acts of sycophancy. The Supreme Court did not cover itself in glory either. Tragically, this institution too failed to stand up for the fundamental rights of citizens. The most glaring example of its capitulation to the ruling establishment was its infamous

judgement in A.D.M.Jabalpur Vs Shiv Kant Shukla delivered on April 28, 1976 in which it declared that in view of the presidential order suspending fundamental rights, no citizen had the right to approach a court to safeguard his right to life and liberty. Barring honourable exceptions, the media, which came under harsh censorship on a daily basis, buckled under government pressure. The conduct of the bureaucracy was pathetic. Most bureaucrats succumbed to pressure and meekly complied with all illegal orders and caused endless misery to common people.

Democracy was restored after the defeat of the Congress Party in the March, 1977 Lok Sabha election. The first act of the Janata Party government that succeeded Indira Gandhi's dictatorial regime was to restore democracy and remove the fascist amendments made to the Constitution. The cleaning up was done via the 44 Amendments and changes in many other laws that had been mutilated during the Emergency.

We must remember the Emergency and all the horrors that were inflicted in its name, if we want to prevent such tyranny hereafter. This is a story that

must be told and retold so that citizens understand the value of democracy and fundamental rights and remain eternally vigilant to safeguard these freedoms. And the

25th of June is a befitting occasion to do that every year.

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State Funded Political Ad Campaigns Or PSYWAR?

- *K G Suresh*

The U.S. Department of Defense defines psychological warfare (PSYWAR) as. "The planned use of propaganda and other psychological actions having the primary purpose of influencing the opinions, emotions, attitudes, and behavior of hostile foreign groups in such a way as to support the achievement of national objectives."

Apart from enemy countries, PSYWAR has also been effectively used by despotic, totalitarian regimes and military dictatorships in several countries to mislead their own people and subvert their knowledge base, whether it be by the junta in Pakistan from time to time or the Communist regimes in China and erstwhile Soviet Union.

PSYWAR has been highly criticised, particularly, when used on the domestic front, as it seeks to misuse the tax payers' own money to mislead him and project as true information that are contrary to facts and ground

realities.

With barely a year to go for the General elections, television audiences and newspaper readers across India are being bombarded day in and day out with advertisements tom tomming the "achievements" of the UPA Government.

With an initial allocation of Rs 180 crore, the ad blitz 'Bharat Nirman' has been penned by veteran lyricist and ruling UPA nominated MP, Javed Akthar and filmed by Pradeep Sarkar of 'Parineeta' fame.

According to reports, the government has spent about Rs 16 crore to produce the television advertisements.. The theme song, a jingle titled 'Meelon hum aa gaye, meelon hume jaana hai (We've come a long way, we have a long way to go)", has been sung by well-known singers Shaan and Sunidhi Chauhan. Composed as 45-90 second clips, the advertisements are being rolled

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out in three phases.

Recently, a finance ministry panel approved another Rs. 630 crore in the 12th Five Year Plan for the campaign. The Department of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), the Information and Broadcasting Ministry's nodal advertising agency for various ministries, will get the lion's share of the money for creating campaigns at district, state and national levels.

Notwithstanding sharp criticism from the opposition parties with regard to misuse of public funds for "political propaganda", the Government maintains that the publicity is aimed at ensuring that the benefits of central government schemes reach the targeted people so that they actively participate in government programmes.

"The main theme of the campaign is dissemination of information about the government schemes", claimed the proposal put before the finance ministry's committee.

Besides, funds have also been allocated to the Press Information Bureau, which disseminates information related to government

policies and programmes to the media, to highlight the "achievements" of the UPA government at the block level.

Indigenously built robots, a growing network of metro railways in big cities, easier access to higher education, and other schemes feature in these professionally crafted advertisements.

However, the inherent political bias becomes apparent even at a casual glance. For example, in the

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case of Delhi, the credit for the development of the metro rail is given to the Sheila Dikshit-led Congress

government (though the proposal for the Metro rail was mooted by the BJP Government in Delhi led by Madan Lal Khurana (who also acquired the land and set up the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation), sanctioned by the Deve Gowda-led Government and the first trial run was inaugurated by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of NDA).

Interestingly, in the case of Bangalore and Chennai, the 'Bharat Nirman' advertisement

gives credit to the UPA government at the Centre.

Apart from Opposition parties, even civil society organisations and NGOs have expressed their reservations about some of the claims made in these advertisements.

For instance, Jeevika (Jeeta Vimukti Karnataka), an NGO which advocates the cause of bonded labourers in the State of Karnataka, has termed as shocking, ridiculous and misleading the claims of Bharat Nirman on the exploitative bonded labour system through its advertisement in the print media under the title “Thanks to MGNREGA, no bonded labour anymore.”

It seems the authorities of Bharat Nirman, a programme for rural infrastructure development being implemented by the Union government, are not aware of the facts or of how farm labourers have been converted into bonded labourers in different States, media reports quoted Kiran Kamal Prasad, State coordinator of Jeevika, as having stated.

He said the claims of Bharat Nirman that the job scheme had become an instrument of major

social change made no meaning to these bonded labourers in the region.

The NGO described the claims on social change as “a joke on the hapless bonded labourers of Karnataka.”

Similarly, critics are pointing out that while making a broad generalisation about the youth, Congress leaders often tend to forget that it was the youth which formed core of the Anna Hazare campaign for the Lokpal, and the spontaneous protests at India Gate in the aftermath of Delhi gangrape case.

The campaign has also sparked off speculations as to why the Congress would initiate the campaign a year ahead of elections and whether the polls are actually closer. Incidentally, half of the money allocated for the campaign would be spent till March 2014, around the time the model code of conduct would come into force, as the current Lok Sabha’s term expires on May 31, 2014.

Smart tag lines and catchy slogans of political parties have often captured the imagination of the people, whether it be Jai Jawan Jai Kisan” of the Congress in the 1965 polls, Indira Gandhi’s

“Congress Lao, Garibi Hatao” slogan in 1971, Janata Part’s ‘Indira Hatao, Desh Bachao’ in 1977, Congress party’s ‘Jab Tak Suraj Chand Rahega, Indira Tera Naam Rahega’ in 1984, ‘Raja Nahin Fakir Hain, Desh Ki Taqdeer Hain’ for V P Singh in 1989, BJP’s ‘Mandir Wahin Banayenge’ in 1989 and ‘ Abki Bari Atal Bihari” in 1996, UPA’s ‘Congress ka Haath, Aam Aadmi Ka Saath’, RJD’s ‘Jab Tak Rahega Samose mein Aalu, Tab Tak Rahega Bihar mein Lalu’ in 2000, NDA’s ‘Pandrah Saal, Bura Haal’ in Bihar in 2005 or Bahujan Samaj Party’s social engineering slogan, "Haathi nahi ganesh hai, Brahma Vishnu Mahesh hai" in the 2007 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections.

But there have been exceptions as well. In the 2007 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, people outrightly rejected the ruling Samajwadi Party's advertisement featuring Bollywood icon Amitabh Bachchan mouthing the ironical words, "UP mei dum hai kyunki jurm yahan kum hai", when crime and lawlessness had become the hall mark of the state. The Mulayam

Singh Yadav-led party was decisively routed.

Almost a decade back came one of the most disastrous of such campaigns - NDA's Rs 100 crore 'India Shining' campaign. Creating hype was a different thing but if the creator himself starts believing in it, then the results are obvious. The super confident BJP cadres did not even bother to distribute voter slips at the booth level and thereby offered unexpected victory to the Congress party on a platter.

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Party veteran L K Advani himself acknowledged later that the India Shining slogan was

"inappropriate" for an election campaign. The advertisements, many felt, just did not take into account the social and economic realities and projected an utopian image of the country which just did not exist.

It is but natural that ominous comparisons are sought to be made between the two campaigns.

As was the case during the NDA regime, the Bharat Nirman campaign is being funded by the government, and not by the ruling

coalition, at the tax payer's expense.

India Shining was touted as a marketing slogan aimed at hard-selling the optimism of an economy on the upswing, Bharat Nirman is being projected as an attempt to restore the feel good factor of the 9% growth story. If the NDA campaign, masterminded by key strategist late Pramod Mahajan, had hired a leading ad agency Grey Worldwide to design its campaign, the UPA has gone for big names from the Hindi film industry such as Javed Akhtar.

Notwithstanding the self-righteous assertions to the contrary by the ruling coalition, a closer look at both the ad campaigns reveals the similarity in theme and content, whether it be about the economic upsurge, price stability, free education, expansion in roads, telecom and other infrastructure et al. The only exception is the UPA's ads on social cohesion, a packaging of its 'secular' card. The timings of the two campaigns too have great similarities. While launching the India Shining campaign much ahead of the due dates for the Lok Sabha polls, NDA leaders maintained that it was primarily targeted to attract

foreign investments. Subsequently, buoyed by the victories in some Assembly elections, the leadership advanced the polls by six months and as they say, the rest is history.

Ironically, during the 'India Shining' campaign, Congress party and other critics of the NDA had lambasted the Vajpayee Government for a "totally wasteful expenditure which could have been spent on developmental works'.

Forget 'India Shining', ahead of the 1996 Lok Sabha polls, the very same Congress party under the leadership of P V Narasimha Rao had launched a video campaign, "Congress sarkar ka yeh uphaar, paanch varshon ka sthir sarkaar" directed by none other than noted film maker Mani Ratnam.

Scores of such videos highlighting the party's concern for the poor and the underprivileged were telecast not only on the then predominant Doordarshan but also some private channels and cable networks which were still at a nascent stage. The outcome, 140 Parliament seats, was perhaps the lowest tally in the party's history till then.

Refusing to learn from the past, the UPA Government is hoping that the people would get carried away by these feel good advertisements and forget about the endless instances of corruption, price rise, and national security concerns.

Undoubtedly, communication plays a key role in elections. It is important for political parties to convey to the people their achievements and their promises, about what they stand for. A sizeable section of the Indian population may be illiterate but they have proved time and again that they are not politically naive. Catchy slogans would have to be necessarily accompanied by visible changes at the ground level. Public perception is built not by television bytes or advertisement campaigns but by real experiences they encounter at the market place, the shops and the streets and in their dealings with the Government machinery at the grass root level.

Thanks to a free and independent media and a political aware

citizenry, such psychological warfare based on half truths and misleading information have neither succeeded nor likely to succeed in the days to come.

Political messages cannot be packaged like soaps and tooth pastes nor can public relations or advertisement professionals replace the booth level communication between the voter and his or her representative. Other democracies including the United States have also witnessed massive advertisement campaigns ahead of elections but the political parties paid for them and not the Governments.

Writing in the Bloomberg Businessweek, Larry Popelka , founder and chief executive officer of GameChanger, an innovation consulting firm, says, “the problem is that in business and in politics, oversize ad budgets rarely work. In many cases, they actually have a negative effect, as they distract marketing teams from their real mission, which is to find creative and relevant ways to communicate their product’s benefits.”

Moreover, it has been established world wide that Brands that intrude too much on people's time with messages they don't care about are punished by the viewers and readers. A study by former Wharton School Professor Russell Ackoff showed that Anheuser-Busch (BUD) was actually able to increase Budweiser sales by reducing advertising for the brand because, at high spend levels, viewers were becoming annoyed by all the commercials.

According to Popelka, Consumers/voters are growing more sophisticated and paying

more attention to the advertisers' motives than ad content.

No wonder then that even major corporates have begun shifting ad dollars into charitable causes.

If Governments in India too pay heed and spend even half of their ad budgets on providing succour and relief to the needy, it would not only make a difference to the India story but also their political fortunes.

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Ignoring ICCR: Undermining India's 'Soft Diplomacy'

- *Dr. Anirban Ganguly*

India's premier and oldest agency for furthering her soft power, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), is faced with an acute crisis of resources. The challenge is serious and yet it does not seem to have moved the powers that be. In terms of resource allocation, the ICCR, acknowledged as the 'Government of India's primary arm for projecting India's soft power and earning goodwill' has continued to stagnate.

In fact, trends reveal that the last active expansion phase for the ICCR was in 2009, when it had succeeded in opening seven new Indian Cultural Centres worldwide. Since then, successive Parliamentary Standing Committees have lamented the reduced and standstill allocation of funds to this principal agency for India's cultural diplomacy. The ICCR was launched with the objective of developing into a main instrument for furthering India's cultural power. The aim was to reactivate linkages with those

civilisations and people who had once been open to and active in assimilating India's culture and her traditions.

The ICCR was one of the first agencies to take off as early as 1950 with this lofty objective. Addressing its inaugural function on 9th April 1950, post-independent India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had emphasised this pre-eminent cultural role when he said that he 'always looked forward to furthering the cause of India's cultural association, not only with the neighbouring countries to the East and West but with the wider world outside.' For Nehru, this reaching out to the world culturally was crucial, it was essential if India was to again regain her cultural spaces across the globe and especially in her immediate vicinity, 'it is not a question of merely wanting such cultural association or considering it good' Nehru pointed out, 'it is rather a question of the necessity of the situation which is bound to

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worsen if nothing is done to prevent it.’

To see an organisation, in which was reposed such high hopes and aims, languish because of lack funds is a stark reflection of our lack of resolve to evolve a cultural strategy for Indian diplomacy. The twentieth report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs Demand for Grants 2013-2014 paints an unflattering picture of the financial state of affairs of the ICCR. Against the budget demand of Rs.282.50 crore, only Rs.160 crore has been allocated to ICCR. The Indian Foreign Secretary in course of his testimony before the House Committee has accepted that due to this repeated shortfall over the years ‘many of the Cultural Centres abroad are facing problems ... and even many programme [and] activities of ICCR are suffering.’

This cash crunch has hit the agency most in its international outreach and commitments. The ICCR has decided to become the partner institution in 2013 for the prestigious Europalia festival held in Belgium and supported by the

Government of Belgium and a consortium of companies, museums and art institutions. The Europalia festival offers a great opportunity to show case one’s own culture and throws up possibilities of conceiving and launching collaborative ventures with other museums and cultural institutions in other countries in Europe. The occasion could have turned, if seriously supported by Government resources, into a unique opportunity for projecting India’s thriving and fascinating cultural power in the heart of Europe. An invitation to these could have been turned into a positive opportunity to forge lasting cultural ties with other leading cultural institutions. But the occasion and its possibilities are being squandered away because the ICCR ‘has received no additional budgetary support’ for its initiative in partnering the Festival. While the idea of seeking other sources of funding, mainly from corporate India, is gaining ground and the Committee itself has asked the External Affairs Ministry to look into such possibilities in the future, the Government of the day

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cannot abdicate its principal responsibility in furthering globally the essence of India's culture. Such an abdication, if it happens, shall be a retrograde step for India's cultural power and its global potential.

Understandably the Ministry has raised an alarm at what it terms a 'drastic reduction in allocations.' Until 2009, the ICCR was upbeat about its worldwide expansion activities. That year it opened seven new Indian Cultural Centres in Asia – in Kabul, Kathmandu, Bangkok, Tokyo, Dhaka, Kuala Lumpur and Abu Dhabi. The same year saw the earmarking of a building in Washington to house the Indian Cultural Centre. The Washington Cultural Centre is yet to take off and other Centres are facing the brunt of lack of resources.

Coming down to 2012-2013, the pace appears to have heavily slowed down and questions of even running the existing centres have cropped up. The Ministry, in its reply to the Committee, pointed to the uncertain future of India's cultural wings abroad. Explaining the surplus expenditure incurred by the ICCR, the Ministry pointed out that, 'Closing down these Cultural Centres, Chairs and

Regional Offices would send a wrong signal to the outside world putting India in an embarrassing position. The excess expenditure was therefore unavoidable, thought it was minimized by reducing several activities'

The plans for reaching out to newer regions, particularly the Caribbean, Latin American and African countries seem to have been put on hold. Its entire national as well as global expansion programme has been subjected to availability of funds, the Ministry's note to the Parliamentary Committee indicated as much: 'ICCR has also directed to open new Indian Cultural Centres in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Santiago (Chile), Lagos (Nigeria) and Nairobi (Kenya). In addition, ICCR has also six new Centres in the pipeline which include Washington, Paris, Toronto, Sydney, Hanoi, Singapore. However, opening of these new Centres although already committed, would be subject to availability of funds.' In effect it means that India's attempt to develop a dynamic roadmap for the expansion and projection of her soft power will continuously remain hostage to the non-availability of resources. It is

evident that there is a total lack of focus and will, when it comes to utilizing India's vast cultural resources to further her global power objectives.

The Standing Committee noted with great concern the state of affairs and has recommended to the Ministry to 'enhance budgetary allocation' for the ICCR 'in view of emerging contours of cultural diplomacy.' The Committee also noted that it was 'essential to expand the network of Indian Cultural Centres and establishment of chairs abroad' but this appears to be a tough call with the drying up of resources. The Committee flagged the crisis when it further stated that 'with the funds allocated to ICCR, they are not even able to manage the established Centres outside India, then how can they think about new centres?' While there is endless talk and clichéd references to the potentials of India's soft power and how Indian culture had once permeated the world and can do it once more, little serious collective effort seems have been made on the ground to save and energise institutions that are mandated for

spreading and popularizing that soft power.

In the meantime, a cultural hegemonist looms large and grows in our neighbourhood, a country that is determined to push through globally its image, way of life and belief. Through its formidable chain of Confucius Institutes (CI), China is making entry into world academia and cultural institutions. As of 2012, there were more than 400 CIs in 108 countries and regions. It has also been estimated that more than 500 Confucius classrooms with more than 600,000 registered students function across the globe. 70 of the world's top 200 universities have already opened their CIs. The Hanban's stated global target is to have 1000 CIs in operation by 2020. It is not the case that India should replicate or compete with such efforts in its own way. The CIs, which in any case do not reflect the essential Confucian culture and directions of Chinese civilisation, have, of late, come under the scanner for their espionage objectives and subtly pushing forward the CPC's political agenda. In fact, a number of universities in the West seem to

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be having second thoughts on allowing the entry of CIs in their campuses. China's determined projection of its soft power and the huge resources that it has made available for the purpose – it has been accepted that funding has been a major reason for universities agreeing to tie up with the Chinese government in opening CIs – is an example of what we shall eventually be faced with in the future if our pace of cultural outreach and expansion slows down.

The Indian Cultural Centres, with their open cultural agendas and programmes can in the long run be a greater attraction than tightly controlled and propagandist CIs. A long term view of the role of India's Cultural Centres abroad, a far reaching plan for their sustenance, functioning and popularisation, a proactive effort to enlist a vast array of support for these initiatives are what need to be looked at urgently if the ICCR is to be saved and its mandate

salvaged, otherwise we risk losing the race for reactivating our civilisational and cultural linkages.

A celebrated Indian sociologist and historian, a scholar of the nationalist school, Benoy Kumar Sarkar (1887-1949) in his treatise on the 'Beginning of Hindu Culture as World Power (A.D. 300-600)' (Shanghai, 1916) had made an interesting point, when he said Hindus possessed a vibrant 'world-sense' which attracted a continuous stream of representatives from other civilisations. It was this unique 'world-sense' that was a distinguishing characteristic of Indian civilisation, argued Sarkar.

Ironically, we seem to be frittering away and blunting that sense today and remain oblivious to its long term implications.

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Reinforcing India's Maritime Credentials: Need Of The Hour

- *Chietigij Bajpae*

The future of India will undoubtedly be decided on the sea'.¹ This was stated by KM Panikkar, one of India's first post-colonial strategic thinkers almost 70 years ago. These words were prophetic considering that 95 per cent of India's total external trade is now conducted by sea, with over 70 per cent of the country's oil imports transiting the maritime domain and 70 per cent of Indian hydrocarbons also emanating from offshore blocks.² India's maritime interests are also reflected in the plethora of threats facing the country emanating from the maritime domain, as reflected in the devastation inflicted by the 2004 Asian tsunami on India's eastern coast, the Indian Navy's participation in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean and the terrorist attacks on Mumbai in November 2008 in which the attackers infiltrated the city through the country's porous, poorly demarcated and disputed

maritime borders.

Complementing this has been the country's growing maritime capabilities, as reflected in India having the world's fifth-largest navy with ambitions for the development of a 160-plus-ship navy, comprising three aircraft carrier battle groups by 2022.³ This is complemented by India's growing maritime infrastructure, including a tri-services Andaman and Nicobar (Southern) command at the mouth of the Strait of Malacca, a base for unmanned aerial vehicles on the Lakshadweep islands, and the construction of a naval base in Karwar, Karnataka on the country's western coast, which supplements the existing Eastern Command headquartered in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh and the Western Command in Mumbai. Reflecting the country's growing maritime interests and capabilities, the Indian government has expressed lofty ambitions to establish "a brand new multi-dimensional Navy" with

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“reach and sustainability” from the north of the Arabian Sea to the South China Sea.⁴

Case study: India’s South China Sea interests

Case in point of India’s maritime credentials is the Indian Navy’s growing presence in the South China Sea. While not as vocal as the United States that declared the South China Sea disputes a “national interest” in 2010, India has nonetheless injected itself into the maritime territorial disputes in the East and South China Seas by echoing the US position of calling for a peaceful resolution to the disputes and maintaining the freedom of navigation in the region. India has also pursued deepening relations with several claimant states, notably Vietnam and Japan, as well as participating in offshore oil and gas exploration in disputed waters. For instance, India and Japan held their first bilateral naval exercises in June 2012 while the Indian Navy has also gained permanent berthing rights at Vietnam’s Na Thrang port as well as providing training to Vietnam in underwater warfare to support

the country’s growing submarine capabilities.⁵

However, India’s presence in the South China Sea also demonstrates the deficiencies of its maritime strategy. India continues to be regarded as a contested player in the region. In being labelled as an “extra-territorial power” India has been shunned by some countries from playing a prominent role in the South China Sea. Notably, China, which maintains a preference for a bilateral, non-internationalised

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approach in resolving maritime territorial disputes, has demonstrated its displeasure to the growing Indian presence in the

region. This was evidenced by reports in July 2011 that an Indian Navy vessel, the INS *Airavat* received alleged radio contact from the Chinese Navy demanding that the vessel depart from disputed waters in the South China Sea after completing a port call in Vietnam.⁶ This was followed by the less belligerent but nonetheless provocative gesture of an Indian naval vessel, the INS *Shivalik*, receiving a People Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) escort while on its way from the

Philippines to South Korea in June 2012.⁷ Beijing has also opposed Vietnam granting exploration rights in offshore blocks located in disputed waters to Indian company ONGC Videsh.⁸

In this context, there are calls by some in India that it should tone down its presence in the region based on rationale that the country's limited maritime capabilities do not yet warrant its lofty maritime ambitions; that India, as a continental power should remain focussed on its continental concerns, namely its land border disputes with Pakistan, China and Bangladesh and the plethora of insurgencies plaguing the country's heartland and hinterland; and claims that an expanding Indian naval presence in China's backyard would only serve to further antagonise China with whom India already maintains precarious relations.

Reinforcing India's maritime credentials

However, there are several flaws in these arguments. First, India's long-standing focus on its land borders does not undermine the validity of its growing maritime orientation. Alfred Thayer Mahan, a theorist of naval power noted six

conditions in assessing the strength of naval power in modern nation-states; geographical position, physical conformation, extent of territory, population, national characteristics and governmental institutions. Panikkar supplemented this with scientific achievement and industrial strength, which is reflected in the presence of adequate maritime training institutions, a merchant navy, shipbuilding industry, naval air arm, a naval ministry, and rekindling public interest in the navy. Panikkar noted that 'if India desires to be a naval power it is not sufficient to create a navy, however efficient and well-manned. It must create a naval tradition in the public, a sustained tradition in oceanic problems and a conviction that India's future greatness lies on the sea'.⁹

To be sure, India has yet to completely fulfil these conditions. The army continues to receive the bulk of India's defence budget and continental concerns rooted in land border disputes and internal insurgencies continue to dominate India's strategic concerns. Nonetheless, the country is undergoing a maritime renaissance as evidenced by the growing size of its navy and the

Indian economy's growing dependence on overseas trade. This is complemented by India's maritime infrastructure, including the country's 13 major ports and 187 minor and intermediate ports that are scattered across the 7,517 km Indian coastline, as well as more than two dozen shipyards and 14,500 km of navigable inland waterways.

Beyond its material accomplishments, India has also rediscovered its long-standing naval traditions. This is reflected in the renewed interest of naval expeditions of the Chola Dynasty, which included Rajendra I conducting a mission to Srivijaya (present-day Indonesia) to protect trade with China and Rajendrachola Deva I (Parmeshwara) who named the island of Singapore (Singapura) in the 10th century AD.¹⁰ In this context, India (and for that matter China's) on-going naval transformations have redefined the long-standing "sea-power versus land power" debate by challenging the notion that a state's status as a continental or

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maritime power is permanent or static as India and China transition from the former to the latter or more realistically acquire the characteristics of both.

India as a Southeast Asian power

Second, with respect to the claim that India is not a Southeast Asia power, while continental India does not share a contiguous maritime border with the South China Sea, its maritime strategic interests in the region are well established, including the fact that almost 55 per cent of India's trade passes through the Strait of Malacca.¹¹ The Indian Navy has also been involved in several high-profile maritime operations in the region since its first deployment to the South China Sea in 2000, including humanitarian assistance/ disaster relief (HADR), joint naval exercises, port calls and transit. Notably, the Indian Navy's prominent role in relief operations following the Asian tsunami of 2004 and the cyclone that struck Myanmar (Burma) in 2008 have earned it the reputation of being

‘on the verge of possessing Asia’s only viable expeditionary naval force¹² Joint naval exercises have also become a catalyst for maritime confidence-building, including multilateral operations such as the biennial *Milan* (that includes Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore since 1995), and Search and Rescue Operations (*SAREX*) (with Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia since 1997), and bilateral exercises such as the Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercises (*SIMBEX*) since 1993.

Furthermore, despite the absence of forward bases, the Indian Navy has been able to make port calls in Singapore, Vietnam and other countries. This has been complemented by the expansion of the Andaman and Nicobar (Southern) command with the establishment of deep-water maritime facilities in Campbell Bay (*INS Baaz*) in July 2012, which India’s Chief of Naval Staff has referred to as India’s “window into East and Southeast Asia”.¹³ India’s strategic interests in the South China Sea also emanate from sea’s importance as a vital transit route given the Indian Navy’s growing presence in the Western Pacific, as evidenced by

its joint naval exercises with Japan and South Korea and import of oil and gas from Sakhalin in the Russian Far East.¹⁴ Finally, while India has not yet become reliant on hydrocarbon resources from the South China Sea, this is likely to change given India’s burgeoning relations with Vietnam.¹⁵

Moreover, the divide between the Southeast Asian and South Asian sub-regions may be regarded as an artificial one. The emergence of the ‘Indo-Pacific’ as a new geopolitical frame of reference and the concept of India’s ‘extended neighbourhood’ allude to the growing interdependence between these sub-regions fuelled by the growing importance of ‘maritime Asia’.¹⁶ Indian strategic analyst, Raja Mohan, goes further by arguing that ‘the perception that South and East Asia are two very different geopolitical entities...is of recent origin’ given that ‘India was very much part of the early expression and popularization of Asian identity’ when ‘South and Southeast Asia were not always seen as separate geopolitical entities’.¹⁷

For instance, India played a prominent role under the leadership of the country’s first

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in the region-building process of post-Colonial Asia, as noted by such initiatives as the New Delhi-hosted Asian Relations Conference in 1947 and Bandung Conference of 1955, as well as laying the groundwork for defining the rules of regional interaction through the 'Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence'. India's presence in Southeast Asia can be traced to trading links stretching back two millennia to the Silk Road and Calicut emerging as a major trading port in South Asia while cultural and religious bonds date back to Emperor Asoka's spread of Buddhism beyond the sub-continent in the third century BC.

Furthermore, despite the reluctance of some countries, such as China to acknowledge India's presence as a regional power, several countries have accepted India's role as an increasingly important member of the regional architecture. Singapore's founding father Lee Kuan Yew has noted for instance that "India would be a useful balance to China's heft" given India's role as a Asian

As Scot notes, 'in geographical terms, India is located outside the South China Sea, but in geopolitical and geoeconomic terms India now increasingly operates inside the South China Sea'.¹⁹

power, which makes it a more acceptable counter-balance to China than a non-Asian power such as the United States.¹⁸ Aside from this, Indian membership in several regional initiatives – both established forums, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, East Asian Summit, ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus, ASEAN + 6 and its more recent manifestation, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, and more ad hoc initiatives such as the trilateral

mechanisms with South Korea and Japan established in 2012 and with Japan and the United States established in 2011 – have cemented

India's role as a player in the Southeast Asian strategic landscape. As Scot notes, 'in geographical terms, India is located outside the South China Sea, but in geopolitical and geoeconomic terms India now increasingly operates inside the South China Sea'.¹⁹

Negotiating from a position of strength

Third, the view that an Indian presence in the South China Sea

could serve to undermine the Sino-Indian relationship is also based on the fallacious assumption that tensions in the continental and maritime domain are disconnected. The fact that China has placed all of its maritime and continental territorial disputes (including the Diaoyu/ Senkaku islands in the East China Sea, the Paracel and Spratly Islands in the South China Seas, and Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh along the Sino-Indian border) under the single label of a “core interest” (*hexin liyi*) demonstrates that China itself does not accept the assumption of a continental/maritime divide.

Moreover, India’s growing presence in China’s backyard in the East and South China Seas and improving relations with China’s traditional rivals, including Japan and Vietnam, offers New Delhi leverage in dealing with Beijing’s growing presence in India’s neighbourhood and “all weather friendship” with India’s historic rival, Pakistan. In fact, a stepped up Indian presence in the East Asian maritime domain may actually serve to raise the stakes for China to resolve bilateral tensions on mutually acceptable terms.

The Sino-Indian relationship has tended to be unbalanced with Indian strategic thinkers giving far more credence to China than the other way round. China has historically regarded India as a ‘mid-level priority ranking’ country with no great sense of strategic relevance.²⁰ This trend is being exasperated by the balance of power tilting in China’s favour with its economy now being more than three times that of India, which has translated into the growing asymmetry of material capabilities in the bilateral relationship. This has granted Beijing greater confidence and leverage in pushing India to resolve the territorial dispute on its own terms.²¹ This contrasts with China’s earlier offers to resolve the territorial dispute with India on more amicable terms during a period of greater parity in China and India’s material capabilities; until the mid-1980s both countries’ GDP and per capita incomes were similar.²²

The most recent evidence of China’s increasingly aggressive posturing on the territorial dispute was an incursion by Chinese troops 19km across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Daulat Beg Oldi sector of Eastern Ladakh in mid-April,

during which the soldiers maintained a presence in the disputed territory for almost 20 days.²³ This incident occurred days before the first overseas visit of China's premier Lee Keqiang and in the aftermath of other incidents that have served to fuel bilateral tensions over the territorial dispute; These include China issuing stapled visas to Indian nationals from Jammu and Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh and refusing to admit military and civilian government officials from both states;²⁴ China seeking to block an Asian Development Bank loan to India in 2009 as it included a package for Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims as 'South Tibet';²⁵ Beijing stepping up infrastructure projects in Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan-administered Kashmir;²⁶ and issuing new e-passports that show the disputed territories as part of China.²⁷

In this context, New Delhi's stepped up presence in China's strategic backyard in East Asia will serve to bring India and China into more direct contact, prompting China to grant more

weight to India in its strategic thinking. The fact that India's improving relations with the United States over the last decade have served as a 'wake-up' call for China to accelerate the pace of rapprochement with India demonstrates that if India seeks to improve relations with China, it will need to do so from a position of strength.

Matching China's maritime interests

These include China issuing stapled visas to Indian nationals from Jammu and Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh and refusing to admit military and civilian government officials from both states;²⁴

Finally, India's maritime presence in South China Sea has implications beyond accessing offshore energy resources and ensuring the safe passage of its vessels through the chokepoint of the Strait of Malacca. India's interests in the maritime domain of East Asia are also linked to broader interests associated with maintaining the freedom of navigation and ensuring that the maritime 'global commons' are governed by the rule of law. India also needs to ensure adherence to the concept of 'open regionalism' that takes account of the views of extra-territorial, non-claimant stakeholders that have an interest

in the peaceful resolution of maritime territorial disputes. In this context, India needs all parties, particularly China, to recognise that the era of seeking bilateral local solutions has passed. In doing so, present-day India's position on the maritime domain echoes that of its previous role in the pre-colonial period. As Panikkar notes, 'the period of Hindu supremacy in the Ocean was one of complete freedom of trade and navigation'.²⁸

Additionally, China's increasingly assertive position over territorial disputes in the South and East China Seas, including its ambiguous and expansive claims to the 'nine-dash line', offers a harbinger to China's potential behaviour in the Indian Ocean. This is especially true if China elevates the protection of sea-lines of communication to a "core interest" (*hexin liyi*) on par with its sovereignty interests of resolving maritime and continental territorial disputes, reunification with Taiwan and developmental objectives. As a recent *Washington Post* article noted, China is developing a strategy of 'using the seas as the stage on which to prove itself as Asia's dominant power'.²⁹ Whether or not this is the case, this

perception has prompted some members of India's 'strategic elite' to view China's nascent naval presence in the Indian Ocean with suspicion, including the PLA Navy's anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean. Reports in April that Chinese submarines were picked up by Indian sonar operating in the Indian Ocean demonstrates the potential for the Indian Ocean Region to emerge as a new theatre of competition between China and India.³⁰ This strengthens the case for India to be engaged on the South China Sea to clearly articulate its commitment to maintaining the freedom of navigation and preventing a repeat of China's South China Sea behaviour in the Indian Ocean. As Scott notes, 'India may find that it is unable to block Chinese entry in the Indian Ocean, but can counter-pressure by going into China's own maritime backyard of the South China Sea'.³¹

Envisioning an expanded Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean is no longer a matter of speculation. To be sure, the hype surrounding the launch of China's first aircraft carrier, the *Liaoning*, in 2011 may have been exaggerated given its modest size, the country's lack of carrier experience and the absence

of a full carrier battle group to support its operations. Nonetheless, the fact that China is in the process of developing two more indigenously developed carriers, (with ambitions for 4-6 carriers, as well as nuclear-powered vessels) demonstrates China's ambitions to project naval power beyond its immediate sub-region.³² Similarly, while some 36 countries maintain submarines in their navies, China and India are two of only six countries with a nuclear submarine capability, which points toward a growing interest in power projection beyond their littoral regions.

Apart from what is known about China's naval modernization, a recent report by the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission has noted that more often than not, the international community has underestimated the pace of China's military modernization.³³ This is illustrated with the examples of the *Yuan*-class diesel electric submarine that was launched in 2004, the development of the *Dongfeng-21D* anti-ship ballistic missile in 2010, and the test flight

of the prototype of China's fifth generation stealth fighter, the J-20 in 2011, all of which caught followers of China's military modernization by surprise. This alludes to the possibility that the PLA Navy's ability to project power into the Indian Ocean is likely to proceed faster than anticipated.

Finally, China's expanding maritime security interests have also manifested in shifts to its maritime doctrine, including a move beyond "near-coast defense" towards "near-seas active defence" and increasingly into the realm of "far-sea operations".³⁴ This has demonstrated China's growing interest in projecting power beyond its traditional spheres of interest around the first and second "island chains".³⁵ Surprisingly, despite China's weakened position following the Second World War and its civil war, Panikkar was aware of China's future naval ambitions, noting that 'it is hardly to be imagined that China will in future neglect her naval interests'.³⁶ Remarkably, taking note of

Finally, China's expanding maritime security interests have also manifested in shifts to its maritime doctrine, including a move beyond "near-coast defense" towards "near-seas active defence" and increasingly into the realm of "far-sea operations".³⁴

China's potential to operate naval bases from Hainan, Panikkar referred China's thrust southwards as part of a 'naval policy of a resurgent China'.³⁷ This alludes to China's present-day efforts to alleviate its so-called 'Malacca Dilemma' through projecting power into the South China Sea and Indian Ocean.

Reinventing the regional architecture

The changing nature of the maritime security domain in Asia comes amid the wider strategic development of renewed US engagement with the "Indo-Pacific region".³⁸ However, the United States is as much 're-balancing' within the region as it is 'pivoting' towards the region.³⁹ The United States is experiencing an 'East of Suez' moment in its foreign policy, as it reduces its global military footprint amid the operational fatigue of two consecutive land wars and pressures of fiscal austerity. While the country has pledged to protect freedom of navigation, it has not been as forthright with respect to coming to the defence of its allies. As such, the "re-balance" or "pivot" towards Asia is as much about reiterating the US commitment to the region as it is about burden-sharing

through getting its regional allies to adopt a more active position on regional security.

This demonstrates the growing complexity of the emerging regional security architecture in Asia as the US-led 'hub and spokes' bilateral alliance model is replaced by a 'spokes-to-spokes' multilateral security system.⁴⁰ The most notable evidence of this has been Japan's increasingly proactive role in forging bilateral and multilateral regional security partnerships, such as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's proposal for a 'security diamond' comprising Japan, the United States, Australia and India, which would 'safeguard the maritime commons stretching from the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific'.⁴¹ Like Japan, India also needs to step up its regional maritime role as the United States' position as the region's "sea-based balancer", is gradually eroded.

This trend is exasperated by pressures on the current regional architecture, which is led by mid-ranking powers such as the states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This was most visibly manifested by the inability of ASEAN to issue a joint communiqué at its ministerial

meeting in July 2012 due to disagreement between member states over the issue of maritime territorial disputes with China.⁴² Furthermore, regional norms of interaction with an emphasis on minimal institutionalisation and non-confrontation have had a limited role in restraining competitive naval developments.⁴³ For instance, both the 2011 guidelines and 2002 declaration on the 'Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea' have failed to quell the war of words and sporadic skirmishes in the South China Sea amid the absence of a legally binding code of conduct.⁴⁴

This demonstrates the need for a new regional architecture led by the region's major powers. In this context, India's National Security Advisor Shiv Shankar Menon has proposed a 'Maritime Concert' in which the region's major maritime powers would have collective responsibility to protect the maritime 'global commons'.⁴⁵ The fact that China, India and Japan have been coordinating their anti-piracy patrols in the Indian Ocean within the framework of the Shared Awareness and

For instance, both the 2011 guidelines and 2002 declaration on the 'Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea' have failed to quell the war of words and sporadic skirmishes in the South China Sea amid the absence of a legally binding code of conduct.⁴⁴

Deconfliction (SHADE) mechanism demonstrates that such maritime cooperation is possible.

Conclusion

Panikkar's recognition of the importance of the maritime domain to India's strategic interests was insightful given that it came at a time when India was still a fledgling nation-state struggling with maintaining its cohesion in the aftermath of a bitter and bloody independence struggle, which included the horrors of partition, a stalemate over the status of Kashmir and incipient separatist movements, which all pointed towards continental rather than maritime threats to India's national interests. Furthermore, despite Nehru's economic path of socialism and self-sufficiency, Panikkar foresaw that India's 'prosperity is dependent almost exclusively on sea trade'.⁴⁶

More generally, Panikkar's reference to the growing strategic importance of the maritime

domain predated the nations of Asia emerging as major trading powers with their economic growth contingent on seaborne trade. It also came before the rivalries between the independent nation-states of Asia increasingly shifted from the continental to maritime domain, as reflected in the contrast between the land wars that dominated Asia during the Cold War – the Korean War (1950-53), Sino-Indian War (1962), Vietnam War (1968-75), Sino-Russian border conflict (1969) and Sino-Vietnamese border conflict (1979)) – and the plethora of maritime territorial disputes that have flared up in the post-Cold War period – including the Diaoyu/ Senkaku islands between China (and Taiwan) and Japan; and China (and Taiwan's) claim to the “nine-dash line” around the South China Sea, which conflicts with Vietnam's claim to the Paracel Islands and the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Brunei's claim to portions of the Spratly Islands. This has been supplemented by more localised territorial disputes with a maritime component such the Northern Limit Line between North and South Korea; the Dokdo/ Takeshima islets between South Korea and Japan; the Southern Kuriles/ Northern

Territories between Russia and Japan; the Suyan/ Leodo Reef between China and South Korea; the Reed/ Recto Bank and the Scarborough Shoal/ Huangyan Island between the Philippines and China; and the Natuna Islands between Indonesia and China. Panikkar's views also foreshadowed the renewal of transnational security threats facing the maritime ‘global commons’ such as maritime piracy, which has plagued the Indian Ocean from the Horn of Africa and Strait of Malacca and the latent threat of maritime terrorism, as manifested in the sophisticated maritime capabilities of the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Looking ahead, the US quest for energy independence fuelled by the shale gas revolution within the country and more general efficiency gains across OECD countries could serve to reduce the United States' strategic interests in Asia, paving the way for a reduction of its naval presence in the region. In 2011 the United States imported 2.5 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil from the Middle East, accounting for 26% of its global imports, which is projected to fall to 100,000 million bpd or 3% of its oil imports by

2035.⁴⁷ In this context the maritime domain is likely to emerge as an increasingly active theatre of inter-state rivalries amid concerns of a strategic void created by a more 'hands-off' approach by the United States in the region, as well as the growing interest of major regional powers to protect their burgeoning seaborne trade, access offshore energy resources, and project power amid ambitions of 'Great Power' status.

For India, its relevance in the East Asian strategic landscape will be determined by its behaviour in the Asian maritime domain. As such, an Indian naval presence in the South China Sea is not merely prudent but also pivotal for sustaining India's 'Look East' policy. If India is a marginal player in the maritime domain, it will also be a marginal player in Asian regional architecture. Panikkar noted thus, 'India's future is closely bound up with the strength she is able to develop gradually as a naval power' and issued words of warning that 'without a well considered and effective naval policy, India's position in the world will be weak.'⁴⁸ It is wise that we heed these words of warning from India's first strategic thinker.

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VIF JINF Joint Study Launched - Framework For Indo-Japanese Strategic Partnership And Cooperation

Vivekananda International Foundation released a Study on “Framework for Indo-Japanese Strategic Partnership and Cooperation”, jointly conducted with the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals (JINF) on 4th June 2013 at the VIF premises.

Ajit Doval, KC, Director VIF welcomed P A Sangma, former Speaker of the Lok Sabha, one of the Patrons of the Joint Study (the other being Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe), Mr. Yasuhisa Kawamura, Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of Japan, New Delhi, and distinguished guests including industrialists and media persons. In his introductory remarks, Doval highlighted that the potential to develop strategic partnership between India and Japan remain largely untapped. The purpose of the study, he said, is to locate various dimensions of Indo-

Japanese bilateral relations which can be strengthened further, identify numerous constraints on them and formulate mechanisms to overcome such challenges.

Assessing the prospects of military and security cooperation between India and Japan, Gen (Retd) N C



Vij, Dean, Centre for Defence Studies, VIF and former Chief of Army Staff, stressed upon the commonalities of the challenges that the two democracies face today. Chinese military adventurism, as demonstrated specially along the Sino-Indian border and over Senkaku Islands, bring serious doubt to the notion of a “peaceful” rise of China. Valuating the offensive capability of China, Gen Vij emphasized on the urgent need for India, Japan and other democratic nations in the region to jointly develop sufficient defensive capabilities in order to counter a

militarily aggressive and expansive China.

Amb P P Shukla, Joint Director, VIF, followed the discussion with a brief assessment of the prospects of diplomatic and economic cooperation between India and Japan. Amb Shukla highlighted various domestic constraints, as discussed in the Study, which impedes cooperation in finance, defense, and civil nuclear industries. He, however, stressed that India and Japan have both taken vital steps in eliminating some of these constraints and the two nations are set to establish much stronger economic partnership in the next five years.

Kawamura, CDA, Japanese Embassy, thanked VIF and noted that the VIF-JINF joint study will contribute much to the development of ties between the two nations. He underlined that

Japan and its people see India as the most promising partner globally and that Japan will seek to build its relation with India based on three pillars: economic, strategic and people-to-people.

Speaking on the occasion, P A Sangma appreciated the diligent efforts put in by working group members from VIF and JINF for concluding the study. He highlighted the tremendous amount of resilience which Indians and Japanese possess in overcoming any crisis situation.

The release function concluded with a brief discussion where some important observations were made, new ideas were suggested and critical questions were answered.

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Interaction With Mr David Mckean

On 25 June 2013, Mr David McKean, Director of Policy Planning in the US Department of State and Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State called on Mr Ajit Doval, KC, Director, VIF in his office to discuss issues of mutual concern to the US and India. Among other subjects, the present security situation in the Af-Pak region and possible outcomes in Afghanistan post-



2014 were discussed. Ambassador PP Shukla, Joint Director, VIF and Lt Gen RK Sawhney, Distinguished Fellow, VIF were also present during the interaction.

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VIF Interaction With The Iranian Ambassador To India, HE Mr. Gholam Reza Ansari

VIF welcomed the Iranian Ambassador to India, HE Mr. Gholam Reza Ansari for an interaction on 28th June 2013. Amb Ansari candidly expressed his views on India-Iran relations, Iranian Presidential elections and Iranian foreign policy with respect to Syria, Afghanistan et al.

Discussing economic relations between India and Iran, Amb Ansari highlighted that there is a greater need to diversify trade in order to strengthen the partnership. He also called for greater exchange and cooperation between business communities from the two nations.

On the outcome of the Presidential elections in Iran, Amb Ansari mentioned that the victory of Hassan Rowhani is not a surprise for the Iranians as it has been portrayed by the global media for

the rest of the world. Amb Ansari informed that the new President-elect will seek to form new basis for cooperation in the region and with the West, but with no compromise on principles.

Mr. Ajit Doval, KC, Director VIF, thanked Amb Ansari for the talk and expressed his hope of continuing dialogue between him and the VIF in the future, and establishing scholarly exchanges with think-tanks and academicians from Iran. Amb Ansari thanked VIF and concluded his talk by emphasizing that Iran, irrespective of who is in power, would want to further strengthen its strategic relations with India.



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Vimarsha: 'Conflict Along India - China Border: Myth And Reality'

VIF organized its monthly series of talks by eminent persons, Vimarsha on 28th June 2013 where Mr. R N Ravi, former Special Director of the Intelligence Bureau, was invited to speak on the Conflict along India-China Border.

One of the myths associated with the border, as Mr. Ravi pointed out, is the assumption that the border is undefined. Mr. Ravi argued that nothing can be farther from truth and that maps till 1930s did show our delineated border with Tibet and China. He elaborated that China since 1950s has strategically and successfully kept its border with India undefined in order to create more room for China to put pressure on India and capture more parts of our territory which China considers crucial to its geopolitical interest. Another line known as the Line of Patrol (LOP) has been made which restricts our troops' movement near the LAC. Mr Ravi asserted that China would continue to create problems along the Indo-China border till



the time it resolves its problems in Tibet and Xinjiang.

Mr. Ravi stressed on the need to understand the Chinese intrusions and their growing numbers and aggressive nature. He argued that the intrusions like the one that happened in Daulat Beg Oldi sector recently was not a localized incident or what was called “acne”. He highlighted that these intrusions are strategically focused on areas that are crucial to the Chinese. Illustrating the case of two de-facto tri-junctions, Mr. Ravi argued that the Chinese attempt is to disconnect India from the Central Asia Republics in the North and Myanmar in the East.

Mr. Ravi concluded his enlightening talk by stressing on the need to understand the Chinese actions strategically and to establish our own strategic vision in order to make assessments that are not based on statements but facts. The Government should get out of the

self-denial mode and accept that there is a problem, he said.

Mr Ravi also pointed to the urgent need to consolidate our territories by augmentation of infrastructure which can play an important role in our relations with the Central Asian Republics and Myanmar. He also urged the Government to share sufficient and crucial facts in the public domain and believe in the nation's collective wisdom.

The session witnessed active participation from the audience. Shri A K Doval, Director, VIF, announced setting up of a team comprising eminent persons to collate actual facts pertaining to the India-China border.

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