



Vivek

Issues & Options

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Bengal Supporting War Criminals

EVMs Will Have Paper Trails

Analyzing Chinese Tactics & Strategy

Ailing Electoral System

and many more

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Let's Not Get Too Relaxed On China

- *Kanwal Sibal*

Reports of Chinese soldiers intruding 10 kilometers or more into Ladakh challenge once again our assumptions about the stability of the situation on the unsettled India-China border. Our expanding relationship with China has encouraged thinking that the border issue is no longer central to the future of the relationship and can await resolution as and when possible. We have adjusted ourselves to China's India strategy. We downplay such incursions.

Hopeless

The low priority attached by the Chinese leadership to the resolution of the border dispute is ignored by us. President Xi Jinping has lost no time in telling us that the border issue is not easy to resolve, reiterating former Chinese premier Wen Jiabao's remarks in Delhi in 2010. He has scotched any hope of changed thinking in Beijing on an issue that generates distrust and apprehensions about China's

longer term intentions. In effect, President Xi has closed the doors to a settlement for the next ten years when he will be in power. We have not reacted.

President Xi's five point proposal for conducting relations with India is self-serving, as it is calculated to play to China's strengths and side step India's concerns.

After ruling out a border settlement, the Chinese President proposes that the two countries cooperate to maintain peace and tranquility. This is singularly unimaginative as the two are maintaining peace and tranquility for the last two decades, following the relevant agreements of 1993 and 1996.

When President Xi proposes that border differences should not affect the overall relationship, he is only nodding at existing realities. The bilateral relationship has progressed tremendously despite Chinese periodic provocations, such as

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those laying claim to Arunachal Pradesh and describing it as “South Tibet”, protesting the visits of our political leaders there, shortening the length of the Sino-Indian border in a bid to question India’s territorial sovereignty in the eastern and western sectors, giving Kashmir-linked stapled visas etc.

These provocations have been one-sided. Notwithstanding all of this, our Prime Minister has met China’s leaders oftener than others; we have a strategic dialogue with China at political, economic and defence levels; our armed forces now conduct joint exercises, albeit limited. The two countries engage with each other in the Russia-India-China format, and in that of BRICS and G-20, apart from collaborating in the WTO and climate change negotiations. Now China has proposed a dialogue with us on Afghanistan, which we have welcomed.

In proposing that differences over the border should not affect the overall relationship, President Xi

wants to preserve the freedom to continue provoking us and undermining our interests in our neighbourhood, as the latest strategic decision to take over Gwadar demonstrates. His proposal that India should maintain close strategic communication in order to keep bilateral relations on the right track excludes any explanation from China about its strategic ties with Pakistan, its continuing assistance in building Pakistan’s nuclear capability, its opposition to our joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group and our permanent membership of the Security Council, etc.

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Telecom

President Xi calls for harnessing each other’s comparative strengths and expand mutually beneficial cooperation in infrastructure, investment etc. India has comparative strength in Information Technology and pharmaceuticals for instance, but it faces hurdles in accessing the Chinese domestic market. China, on the other hand, has become India’s largest trading partner in

goods despite our unsustainable trade deficit with it. Chinese telecommunication and power companies have bagged huge contracts in India despite serious cyber-security concerns. China would like to have a share of the \$1 trillion we intend investing in upgrading our infrastructure in the next 5 years, especially when it has huge unutilized capacities in this sector and opportunities abroad are declining because of a global slow-down. It can use its financial strength to advantage in countries like India if the politics can be managed. Unsurprisingly with the border issue “effectively controlled”, the People’s Daily advocates more focus on trade and multilateral issues with India.

President Xi’s emphasis on strengthening cultural ties is unobjectionable. Enhancing cooperation in multilateral forums to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries in tackling global challenges - another point that President Xi makes - is desirable although China has hardly championed the rights of

developing countries in the past, though today its hunger for natural resources and markets accounts for a different stance.

Concerns

When the Chinese President says that the two countries should accommodate each other’s core concerns, the hard kernel of his message becomes evident. India has never identified its core concerns to the international community or to China bilaterally.

When the Chinese President says that the two countries should accommodate each other’s core concerns, the hard kernel of his message becomes evident. India has never identified its core concerns to the international community or to China bilaterally.

Consequently, President Xi is not talking about China accommodating India’s stated core concerns. In any case, whether in the case of transferring nuclear and missile technologies to Pakistan, undermining our position in our neighbourhood, whether in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives or Bangladesh, China disregards our obvious core concerns.

The Chinese leader is expecting India, in a one-sided proposition, to accommodate China’s core concerns, evidently in South China Sea and Tibet, as Taiwan and Sinkiang are not contentious

issues with us. China wants its sovereignty over these areas to be respected, while using Tibet to claim Indian territory and expanding its presence in territory under Pakistan's illegal occupation in J&K.

We have chosen to interpret President Xi's remarks positively. We possibly believe that we are in control of our relations with China, that China is reaching out to us and we must therefore seize this opportunity to explore the potential of the bilateral

relationship. We are disregarding hard realities and confusing China's tactical moves with its strategic intent. President Xi has signalled that China will not compromise on territorial issues, whether today in the east with others and tomorrow in the west with us.

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Things Fall Apart, The Centre Will Not Hold

- *Dr M N Buch*

In 1947, despite the fact that Britain was the imperial power and India was the Indian Empire of the British Sovereign, the British did leave behind certain legacies, certain institutions, which did provide us the framework of administration and which still forms the skeleton and the sinews of our republic. India was governed by laws and we are a society of laws. At the level of the District and Sessions Court, the High Court and the Federal Court (now Supreme Court), the Judiciary was independent of the Executive and though the Magistracy worked under the District Magistrate the District and Sessions Judge exercised powers of both superintendence and supervision over the magistracy, apart from judicial superiority. The Legislature was functional both at the Centre and in the States (then Provinces) and there was an organised Executive consisting of the Covenanted Services (now the

All India Services), the Central Services and Provincial Services. The Police was a part of civil government and though a servant of the law it worked under the superintendence of government. However, in the investigation and prosecution of offences the police enjoyed complete autonomy under the Code of Criminal Procedure, a position reinforced by the provisions of Chapter XII Cr.P.C., 1973. The difference between the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1861 and 1898 and the present Cr.P.C. is that the present law brings about total separation of the Judiciary from the Executive even at magisterial level and whereas the Executive Magistracy continues to function under the District Magistrate and is no longer under the supervision of the Sessions Judge, the Judicial Magistracy now stands subordinated to the Chief Judicial Magistrate who, in turn, is subordinate to the District and Sessions Judge.

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The nearest thing to a Constitution that British India had was the Government of India Act 1935. This gave India a federal structure in which the centripetal forces were strong and which moved India towards a representational democracy. The Constitution of India as adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26.11.1949 and made effective from 26th January 1950 borrows heavily from the Government of India Act, 1935, especially in terms of the relationship between the Union and the States. The centripetal character of the Government of India Act 1935 is carried forward in the Constitution of India. Of course we have borrowed from other democratic constitutions also and the Chapter on Fundamental Rights is inspired by the Bill of Rights which forms a part of the American Constitution. Certainly the British, as represented by the Viceroy, did have overriding powers, especially in matters relating to the maintenance of the empire, but seeds of independent, republican India were undoubtedly sown by the Government of India Act 1935.

The Constitution of India as adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26.11.1949 and made effective from 26th January 1950 borrows heavily from the Government of India Act, 1935, especially in terms of the relationship between the Union and the States.

It would be churlish to deny this. The major contribution of our Constitution is that it did away with limited franchise, it recognised all citizens as equals, it extended the constitutional right of equality before law to all persons within the territory of India by Article 14, it eliminated separate electorates, it introduced universal adult suffrage under Article 326 and gave every Indian an equal say through his vote on who will govern India and how it will be governed. This is no mean achievement for a country which virtually shifted overnight from imperial rule to complete independence and that, too, in the midst of strife caused by partition and the massacres which went with it. This happened largely because the British left us the basic infrastructure of a State and our leaders were wise enough to not only keep it intact but to strengthen it. Pakistan lapsed into military dictatorship, despite the fact that we shared a common system and heritage of administration, because Pakistan had no leaders worth the name. The paths of India and Pakistan

have diverged completely and whereas our democracy is strong enough to withstand even the onslaught on it between 1975-1977 through declaration of Emergency by Indira Gandhi, Pakistan continues to be just one step away from total chaos.

The first two decades of independence were glorious. The Nehruvian version of a planned economy resulted in massive investment, largely in the public sector, which created the basic capital goods industry in which we were lacking, built the infrastructure of roads, railways, power, irrigation and other key elements of a modern State, revolutionalised agriculture through the Green Revolution and lifted India from the depth of poverty and backwardness to a level where it began to be recognised as a State with great potential. Because the dream of Nehru was socialist, equity was at the core of all development and certainly land reforms gave the farmer hope and the public sector kept the predatory private sector at bay. The present day votaries of liberalisation and privatisation would find these words anathema, but they are too young to have seen the India into which I was born, in which a total of five

thousand towns and villages were electrified (India has 5.5 lakh villages), the tiller of the soil was not its owner and we had just staggered out of the shock of the Bengal famine which killed over three million people. These economists, these acolytes of the private sector, who now denounce socialism, would probably not have reached the present place of eminence but for the institutions of higher learning created by the State. Macaulay may have made some Indians literate, but it is Nehru and Maulana Azad who made us educated. The Indian Institutes of Management which were not then the predatory agents of the corporate world, both to provide them employable youngsters and to train them at the cost of the State, charged a modest fee and created management cadres which have served the newly emerging corporate India with great distinction. This is because the fees structure was affordable, the State bore the cost of education, the students were not under pressure to get really high paying jobs because it was government which had invested in their education and, therefore, they were in a position to imbibe education rather than merely improve their own employability.

The Indian Institutes of Technology and the Agriculture Universities such as the Punjab Agriculture University, the Pant Agriculture University and Jawaharlal Nehru Agriculture University produced experts in technology, agricultural science and veterinary science who on the one hand propelled India into the space age and on the other converted India into a country of agricultural surplus. It is the State which played the lead role and this is something we must never forget. Today IISM charge a cripplingly high fee and institutions such as Indian School of Business at Hyderabad and Mohali in the private sector charge a fee which would put Harvard to shame. This has driven any desire for real education out of the management students and made them strive for that skill which will make them fit for high salary corporate employment. The day the Indian Institutes of Technology follow suit, higher education in India will take a nosedive.

In an environment of scarcity where there is a cut-throat competition for available resources, it is but natural that the law of the jungle will prevail, the strong will corner the major part of resources and the weak will be reduced to a level of serfdom. Let me give one example.

Growth has both a positive and a negative side. Without a certain basic level of the economy the nation would be one in which resources are scarce and the economy and psyche of its people will both be coloured by a scarcity syndrome. In an environment of scarcity where there is a cut-throat competition for available resources, it is but natural that the law of the jungle will prevail, the strong will corner the major part of resources and the weak will be reduced to a level of serfdom. Let me give one example. Anyone who visits both Pakistan and India is shocked by the low level of agricultural productivity in Pakistan and is impressed by how far India has developed in agriculture. Not that we do not have drought and hardship from time to time, as is happening in Maharashtra this year, but thanks to Verghese Kurien we are the world's biggest producer of milk, thanks to Y.S. Parmar we are one of the largest apple producers and because our land reforms have made the tiller of the soil its owner, the incentive to invest in long term

improvement is strong and, therefore, whether it is wheat, soya bean or paddy even States like Bihar have moved into an era of surplus. By contrast in Pakistan 120 families own the major part of agricultural land and because the system of tenure and tillage is feudal, despite having the largest perennial irrigation system in the world, the Indus irrigation system, Pakistan's agriculture is in dire strait. There are many amongst us who decry land reforms because according to them business like capital investment is thereby precluded from agriculture. I have never heard such hogwash in all my life because if we take the cumulative investment made by small farmers, with very encouraging results, it far exceeds the investment that would have been made had agriculture been made over to the corporate world. All this has been possible because India claims to be a socialist republic, not in terms of dogmatic socialism but certainly as an economy in which equity and social justice are the ruling principles and, therefore, land reform became the sine qua non of equitable government.

This is not an essay on socialism and undoubtedly many elements of the Nehruvian model are in

tatters. The politics of the country is highly fragmented and fragile and because the desire for power has completely overtaken the desire for service, politics has become immoral, venal and totally unprincipled. There is so much corruption, not only at policy making level but right down to the lowest functionary with whom a citizen may be forced to interact, that we are almost beginning to compete with Kuomintang China. There is no area of endeavour, public or private, in which money, muscle power, intrigue, violence and cheating are not the dominant factors. India was considered a spiritual nation, but now spirituality is replaced by superstition and materialism has eroded value systems. In some ways the country is beginning to resemble a cartoon in which there is a long line of fish ranging from minnow to shark. The larger fish is trying to swallow the smaller one virtually ad infinitum, with the ultimate target being the minnow. Whether it is politics, or business, or social organisation, the largest predator is the one who is bound to win. This is the very antithesis of the society we must try and create so that the words of the Preamble, "Justice, social, economic and political" come true.

The much wider question of ethics, morality, principled politics and good, effective government will be addressed a little later, but let us first see what went wrong with our model of planned development. One can consider here two different models, the Soviet plus Mahalanobis model of a much milder one of state planning as adopted by India; and the Meiji era model that Japan adopted after the Meiji revolution. As the West impacted Japan and that country watched in shock and awe how Commodore Perry's small American fleet with modern firepower easily overcame the Japanese forces. The Shogunate was overthrown, the Emperor, or Meiji, assumed power and Japan decided to modernise. Being a highly disciplined and organised people the Japanese sent droves of students to foreign universities to acquire a modern, scientific and technical education and the State made heavy capital investment in modern industry. The Japanese economy was totally state driven then, but the great business house, the Zaibastu, were co-opted very early to build and operate the economy. Being practical people

By contrast in India we just allowed the public sector to bloat itself. For the politician it became a cow to be milked for personal profit and a venue for extending patronage.

the Japanese constantly reviewed development plans and as the business houses acquired skills, managerial ability and trained manpower, the State stepped back, let private business manage industry and increasingly adopted the role of a helper, a facilitator, but also a very strong regulator.

By contrast in India we just allowed the public sector to bloat itself. For the politician it became a cow to be milked for personal profit and a venue for extending patronage. All public sector undertakings became grossly over stuffed, with efficiency being in inverse proportion to staff expansion. Corrupt politicians corrupted the managers and almost the entire public sector became a byword for mismanagement, corruption, inefficiency, indiscipline --- with almost all undertakings making heavy losses and undermining the economy. Because we did not review, evaluate, step back where necessary, co-opt the private sector as it matured , we have brought the entire model into disrepute. Perhaps wholesale disinvestment is not the answer because today the private sector is

also thoroughly corrupt and inefficient, but we need to loosen the control of government, give genuine autonomy to the management so that it runs the undertaking efficiently and swiftly punish all objectionable deviations and perversions. The public sector and what we have made of it is only one of the factors which has brought India to its present sorry state. I have been writing ad nauseam that after 1967, when the culture of purchasing power through bribing legislators afflicted us, the objective of being in politics has changed from the old concept of serving the country and instead it has made power and what can be personally gained by power the new paradigm. The old style politician who had come through the freedom movement and was still influenced by the austere philosophy of honest service, ahimsa, satya and satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi, did not consider power an end in itself, acquisition of power as the sole purpose of being in politics and the loss of power representing the greatest tragedy, gave way after 1967 to a new breed of acquisitive, power hungry, unprincipled and dishonest politicians. The minute this happened no party any longer had any room for ideology,

programmes, principled politics, a national vision and a declared and widely publicised policy statement or manifesto. In the absence of ideology and declared policy what remains is (1) management of elections by fair means or foul to maximize representation in the Legislature, (2) coalitions, generally between parties which had no common interests, which would bring the coalition partners to power, to retain which immediate expediency, unprincipled compromises and sheer populism would be the guiding principles of government. All these require complete eradication of conscience, values and morality from one's psyche, a total rooting out of any feeling of guilt at wrongdoing and a mentality in which wrong became right because it is wrongdoing which brought profit and power. This, then, is the root cause of corruption, because purchasing of power itself is corruption and only corruption can feed the means by which power can be purchased. Corruption then becomes a way of life and once there is indifference or even acceptance, the nation is doomed.

Let us take any issue. There is inflation, which causes middle class unrest and the government

answers by tightening money supply through high interest rates. The real cause of high prices is the parallel economy which is not amenable to fiscal or monetary control. A principled government would tackle the parallel economy, but an unprincipled government will not touch it because it is the main source of money for buying power. Therefore, in order to feed the parallel economy and keep it intact unscrupulous businessmen bribe politicians who, in turn, pressurise the civil servants whose duty it is to ensure good government,

subject to policies framed by the politicians. The

civil servants, in turn, begin to participate in

corruption because why should they be left out when everyone else is making money. At a higher policy level this hurts the nation, but it does not directly affect the common man. Corrupt civil servants, however, do not restrict themselves to the high plateaus. They descend into every valley and gulley, and the common man, the one who is most exploited, is squeezed by lower functionaries in the village itself. What is more, all the programmes meant for his upliftment, such as the National

Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, are subjected to such massive corruption, such massive leakages, that very little reaches the beneficiary and the major part is swallowed by politicians and officials. This is a negation of government.

We have no shortage of laws and the Indian Penal Code already has sufficient provisions for dealing with murder, rape, communal violence, etc. However, the politicians and influential criminals do not permit the Police

to exercise its legal power vested by Chapter XII of the Code of Criminal Procedure, to detect and investigate and

prosecute offences. After a while the police also become participants in corruption, with the result that crime goes unpunished. What is our answer? We enact more laws. Old laws are not enforced, harsh new laws increase the opportunities for corruption, crime remains uncontrolled, the average citizen suffers and politicians and civil servants garner wealth. How can such a system function? I am trying to avoid the retired civil servant's disease of harking back on old days as a golden period and

A principled government would tackle the parallel economy, but an unprincipled government will not touch it because it is the main source of money for buying power.

the present era being a black hole by comparison. However, the fact remains that upto 1967, by which year I had put in ten years of service, then upto 1975 till Indira Gandhi imposed a State of Emergency, India did have honest politicians and parties which had ideology. The civil servants, right down to constable, forest guard, village level worker and the Patwari, were not under the present day pressure to collect money for unscrupulous politicians and, therefore, were better, more honest, more people friendly officials than those of today. When the politicians become corrupt the civil servants are bound to be victims of this disease and this should cause us a great deal of anxiety.

We need to bring principles back to politics. Articles by me and speeches by learned people will not achieve this because ultimately the political parties themselves have to decide to go back to ideology and programmes. It is doubtful whether this will

happen spontaneously and, therefore, it is for the electorate to punish every politician who fails to come up to their expectations. I have faith in the electorate because it is the people of India who voted Indira Gandhi out of power in 1977 for imposing Emergency and brought her back to power in 1980 because the Janata Government failed. I hope the day is not far when members of unscrupulous coalitions are similarly punished by being defeated at the polls. Meanwhile public pressure must be kept up to punish wrongdoing, to enforce the law, to ensure that every public servant is assigned responsibility and then held accountable and by social boycott, through the vote, by publicity, by building of public opinion, unprincipled politicians and corrupt officials are weeded out. At present the words, "Things fall apart, the centre will not hold", seem to be true in India.

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At Last, EVMs Will Have A Paper Trail

- **Dr A Surya Prakash**

After standing on false prestige and even becoming vindictive against those who suspected the integrity of electronic voting machines, the Election Commission has finally acceded to the demand that the machines must issue a paper receipt to voters. The Commission's decision – made known to the Supreme Court recently in response to the plea by Dr. Subramanian Swamy, President, Janata Party that EVMs be scrapped – is a major victory for all those who were campaigning against electronic voting machines because they lacked transparency.

Dr. Swamy had argued that EVMs must be scrapped because they are not tamper-proof. They could be retained only if there was transparency via a paper trail, so that every voter knew that his vote had been registered correctly. Even Japan, which started the process of electronic voting had now reverted to paper ballots. Many other countries had also

fallen back on paper ballots for the same reason. The commission, which had stubbornly resisted the demand for either scrapping EVMs or introducing a paper trail, began to display some reasonableness in the matter after Dr. Swamy moved to the Supreme Court and a Bench comprising Justices P. Sathasivam and Ranjan Gogoi declared that it would hear the matter on a priority basis, so that the proceedings are concluded before the next parliamentary election.

The Commission signaled its readiness to consider the plea when it told the court last September that it was contemplating “foolproof methods” to ensure that EVMs were not misused or tampered and that it was consulting technical experts and political parties in this regard. Finally, some weeks ago, the Commission informed the court that it was willing to incorporate the paper trail in order to remove doubts about the integrity of EVMs. The Commission told the

**Dr A Surya Prakash, Distinguished Fellow, VIF*

court that it had done a trial of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in EVMs in 180 polling stations in various states. This system could be incorporated after it received the opinion of an expert committee that is examining the issue. The Commission proposes to use the paper trail first in some by-elections and later incorporate the same in general elections.

It has already asked EVM manufacturers to fine-tune the paper trail system. The debate on the integrity of the EVMs was started three years ago when a group of public spirited NRIs headed by Mr. Satya Dosapati of New Jersey organized

workshops in Delhi and Chennai under the aegis of 'Save Indian Democracy' and invited national and international experts to speak about the vulnerability of these machines to hacking and fraud. Among them was Mr. Till Jaeger, a lawyer who got the Federal Constitutional Court in Germany to ban the use of these machines in that country; Mr. Rop Gonggrijp, a computer hacker from Netherlands who

demonstrated on live TV how the machine could be hacked and Mr. Alex Halderman, Professor of Computer Science, University of Michigan, USA, who is an authority on electronic voting security. The most prominent Indian expert at these workshops was Mr. Hari Prasad of Hyderabad, who spoke about the ease with which EVMs could be tampered with and on how, irrespective of voters' preferences, the machine could be pre-programmed to produce a result.

The most prominent Indian expert at these workshops was Mr. Hari Prasad of Hyderabad, who spoke about the ease with which EVMs could be tampered with and on how, irrespective of voters' preferences, the machine could be pre-programmed to produce a result.

The argument against EVMs is that they can be tampered with at the manufacturing stage or at places where they are stored in state

capitals. The experts say Indian EVMs are similar to the ones that were used in the Netherlands, Germany or Ireland, before they were rejected in those countries. A standard method of rigging an election is to introduce a Trojan in the display section of the control unit, which will give a "fixed" result on the EVM screen after polling. The biggest drawback of these machines is that since the vote count happens inside the

machine, there is no way in which the result can be cross-checked. Given the extent of corruption and fraud in various facets of governance in India, it would be foolish to discount the possibility of EVM manipulation by political parties in power or by compliant election authorities.

Mr. Hari Prasad demonstrated the vulnerability of these machines to the Election Commission as well, some months prior to these workshops.

However, such was the Commission's fear of the truth that it abruptly stopped Mr. Hari Prasad and his colleagues midway through their demonstration.

Later, the Commission became very vindictive and even launched criminal prosecution against Mr. Hari Prasad and had him arrested in August, 2010 for demonstrating the EVM's vulnerability to fraud on what the police allege was a stolen machine. In fact, the alleged theft of the machine itself constituted an indictment of the Commission. It showed how EVMs could be taken out of the Commission's custody and

thereafter, even tampered with. The Commission learnt of the so-called theft only after Mr. Hari Prasad demonstrated on TV how the machine could be hacked.

Thus, the Election Commission resorted to punitive action against a whistle-blower, whose only intention was to protect the sanctity of the electoral process in the world's largest democracy. As a public body which has the responsibility of superintendence,

direction and control of elections, the Commission must function in a people-friendly and transparent manner. It must first convince us that those who man it are democrats who are

willing to see and listen. It must also convince us that it has no political axe to grind, although all the Commissioners are appointed by the government of the day through an obviously partisan process. As the former Chief Justice Mr. M.N. Venkatachalaiah often says "democracy is not just about statistics" (there are over 700 million voters in India, so many lakh polling booths etc) The members of the Commission must

Mr. Hari Prasad demonstrated the vulnerability of these machines to the Election Commission as well, some months prior to these workshops. However, such was the Commission's fear of the truth that it abruptly stopped Mr. Hari Prasad and his colleagues midway through their demonstration.

demonstrate their deep and abiding commitment to its ideals of democracy.

Given the fact that the Commission was headed at one time by Mr. Navin Chawla – a man indicted by the Shah Commission for conduct unbecoming of a public servant - during the Emergency, the attitude of the Election Commission against Mr. Hari Prasad was no surprise. When persons like Mr. Chawla are appointed Election Commissioners, it is no surprise to see the Commission running away from the truth on such an important question which concerned the integrity of the electoral process and, as a consequence, of the Election Commission itself ? In any case,

now that Mr. Chawla has retired, the Commission must redeem itself in the public eye. Since it has, in principle, accepted the argument that a paper trail is a must if EVMs are to be used, it must gracefully withdraw the criminal proceedings against Mr. Hari Prasad.

It must also speed up the technical clearances needed to give voters a paper receipt when they vote in the next Lok Sabha election. 2014 is a high stakes parliamentary election and the Election Commission is duty bound to ensure the sanctity of the results of that poll. The Commission must act with efficiency and grace.

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India's Ailing Electoral System: Need For Reforms

- **Mr PP Rao**

Democracy is passing through a difficult phase of institutional decline. The political parties are functioning in a manner detrimental to the interests of the country and its citizens. Persons without any commitment to the Constitution and its values are being elected in large numbers to the Parliament and State Legislatures. There is a growing conflict of interest between them, their parties and the people they profess to serve. Some of the policies they pursue are anti-national and unconstitutional. The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2002) observed that "the main cause and source of political-decay is the ineptness of the electoral process which has not been able to keep out criminal, anti-social and undesirable elements from participating in and even dominating the political scene and polluting the electoral and parliamentary processes. Political parties, which have a fair share of

the Criminal elements, handle enormous funds ostensibly for meeting party and electoral expenditure. Money-power and criminal elements have contributed to pervasive degeneration of standards in public life and have criminalised politics. This is reflected in the quality of governments and of the governing processes. ...There is crisis of confidence. There is crisis of leadership. Political leaders, owing to narrow partisan and sectarian interests and desire for short time political gains, are unable even to agree upon broad, common, national purposes."

In a memorial lecture delivered in 1998, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee said: "Barring exceptions, those who get elected to these democratic institutions are neither trained, formally or informally, in law-making nor do they seem to have an inclination to develop the necessary knowledge and competence in their profession. ...the electoral system has been

* Mr PP Rao, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court

almost totally subverted by money power, muscle power, and vote bank considerations of castes and communities. As a result, although casteism and communalism may be weakening in social life, the same are being aided and abetted by the electoral process. Elections are not entirely free and fair; they are not reflecting the true will and aspirations of the people. ...The natural inclination of today's MPs and MLAs is to get involved in the executive function - that too without accountability and much capability. The exceedingly high premium placed on capturing power by fair or foul means is because of the elected representatives' conviction that power is the passport to personal prosperity. ...The biggest challenge that we, who have preached and practiced probity in public life face, is to restore faith in the political class and rejuvenate the democratic process".

The Law Commission in its 170th Report on Reform of the Electoral laws (1999) observed: "There has been a steady deterioration in the standards, practices and pronouncements of political class,

which fights the elections. Money-power, muscle power, corrupt practices and unfair means are being freely employed to win elections. ..."

On the functioning of Parliament and the State Legislatures, the National Commission observed: "If there is a sense of unease with the way the Parliament and the State Legislatures are functioning, it may be due to a decline in recent years in both the quantity and quality of work done by them. Over the years the number of days

The exceedingly high premium placed on capturing power by fair or foul means is because of the elected representatives' conviction that power is the passport to personal prosperity.

on which the houses sit to transact legislative and other business has come down very significantly. Even the relatively

fewer days on which the houses meet are often marked by unseemly incidents including use of force to intimidate opponents, shouting and shutting out of debate and discussion resulting in frequent adjournments. There is increasing concern about the decline of Parliament, falling standards of debate, erosion of the moral authority and prestige of the supreme tribunal of the people. Corrective steps are urgently needed to strengthen Parliament's role as the authentic voice of the

people as they struggle and suffer to realise the inspiring vision of a free and just society enshrined in the Constitution. Also, it is of the utmost importance for survival of democracy that Parliament continues to occupy a position of the highest esteem in the minds and hearts of the people." In the words of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, "Sadly, serious debate has ceased to take place in our elective bodies, which have come to resemble *akharas* (arenas for fighting bouts) where noisy confrontation is the norm."

Nani A. Palkhivala, the most famous lawyer of his time, was a crusader for reforms. He said: "It is high time that, having regard to the lack of character and caliber in the overwhelming majority of our politicians, we should think of making some badly needed changes in our Constitutional Law... The time has come when citizens must wrest the initiative from professional politicians and form political parties, and insist upon men of knowledge, vision and character being chosen as candidates for parliamentary and state elections. It is only such men who can give India the type of government it needs - a government which is strong without being authoritarian and

humane without being weak. Poverty can be eradicated only by experts in finance, production and marketing, and specialists in social engineering and deployment of resources."

Several expert bodies like the Dinesh Goswami Committee, the Inderjit Gupta Committee, the Justice V.R Krishna Iyer Committee, the Law Commission of India, the Election Commission of India and the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution and distinguished leaders like Ramakrishna Hegde, C. Subramaniam and Krishna Kant, have suggested comprehensive electoral reforms.

Unity and Integrity of India

Speaking at the inaugural sitting of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan had said: "India is a symphony where there are, as in an orchestra, different instruments, each with its particular sonority, each with its special sound, all combining to interpret one particular score. It is this kind of combination that this country has stood for. It never asked the Parsis or the Jews or the Christians or the Muslims who came and took shelter there to

change their creeds or become absorbed in what might be called a uniform Hindu humanity... "Live and let live" - that has been the spirit of the country."

In the Constituent Assembly Dr. Ambedkar had declared emphatically: "The castes are anti-national, In the first place because they bring about separation in social life. They are anti national also because they generate jealousy and antipathy between caste and caste." In the Constitution, we the people of India had resolved to promote fraternity among all citizens and promote unity and integrity of the nation. Now we find that we are divided on caste and community and sectarian lines by the political class for electoral gains. The British policy of "divide and rule" was limited to playing the Hindus against the Muslims and vice-versa. India is much more divided today than during the alien rule as quite a few political parties thrive by relying on caste and community. In India we have common citizenship and all Indians are entitled to equal rights, but according to the philosophy of the Thackeray's

(Late Bal Thackeray, Uddhav Thackeray and Raj Thackeray), Maharashtra is for Maharashtrians, Indian Railways shall recruit only Maharashtrians, all employment opportunities - from the lowest to the highest in public as well as private establishments should be reserved exclusively for Maharashtrians; and every legislator must take the oath only in Marathi language, otherwise they will let loose their senas, paralyse civic life, attack targeted people and destroy their property. Can political parties

Can political parties with such an ideology be allowed to enjoy the benefit of registration and recognition by the Election Commission?

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Commission?

Recommendations

In order to eliminate the influence of caste and community in elections, Krishan Kant, former Vice President of India, had suggested two simple amendments to the election law: (i) to introduce a condition that in order to be declared elected from a constituency a candidate shall secure not less than 50% + 1 vote of the total votes polled, failing which, there shall be a runoff

election limiting the contest to the two leading candidates in the first round, and (ii) to add one more slot in the ballot paper "none of the above" for negative vote i.e. for rejecting all the candidates contesting. If a majority of the votes polled reject all the candidates there shall be a fresh election with new faces. If these are implemented, reliance on caste and community will vanish silently. The Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer Committee recommended in addition that a party bearing the name of a religion, race or caste shall not be registered as a political party to contest elections. Reasonable time may be given to such existing political parties to change their names, and a party which promotes communalism or seeks to fight elections on communal issues, shall be deregistered and disqualified. To ensure that the elected candidate represents a substantial section of the voters, the committee suggested that if the total vote polled in a constituency is less than 35 percent of the total number of voters in the constituency, there should be a repoll. The Committee's recommendation for regulation of political parties by law to ensure inner party democracy in every political party and maintenance of

regular accounts and their audit by them has subsequently been reiterated by the Law Commission of India.

Strengthen the Election Commission

The Election Commission has been doing a commendable job. It would do still better by revising the norms for classification of political parties which grow like mushrooms and help in the emergence of two national parties or at least two combinations of parties. Political parties should be classified into, national, regional and state for proper identification of the nature and size of a political party. Regional parties cannot be called national parties. All political parties have secured registration by giving a written undertaking to the Election Commission of India in terms of Section 29(5) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 that they shall bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established, and to the principles of socialism, secularism and democracy, and would uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India. In blatant violation of the undertaking barring a few exceptions, they rely on caste

differences and pursue communal, parochial and chauvinistic policies unconcerned about the unity and integrity of India. Now, it does not have the power to withdraw or cancel registration of a party. The Commission needs power to withdraw or cancel the registration granted to a political party if and when the party violates the undertaking given to the Election Commission. There is no law to regulate political parties. The Election Commission is powerless to discipline them. It cannot even cancel the registration of erring political parties. The Commission should be enabled to deregister communal parties which are masquerading as political parties.

Proliferation of Political Parties

The problem in India is that there are too many political parties bereft of ideology, with a burning desire to capture power and retain it by hook or crook. They are destabilizing our democracy. Too many cooks spoil the broth. In 1988, the Justice Sarkaria Commission noted: "A large number of splinter groups with

shifting loyalties and narrow interests have been thrown up rather than large-size political parties with healthy traditions and broad outlook which could shoulder heavy responsibility if occasion arose. This has tended to encourage irresponsible political behaviour." In the words of the Law Commission: "...there has been a steady deterioration in the standards, practices and pronouncements of the political class. The proliferation of political parties, almost a mushroom growth over last few decades, necessitating the formation of coalitions with all their internal contradictions, pulls and pressures, has resulted in lack of good governance. This has to be checked. A Parliamentary democracy can be run successfully only if there are two or three parties. The Commission has suggested measures to check proliferation of political parties. Democracy cannot work without political parties. Stable and successful democracies like UK and USA function mostly with a two-party system.

In the words of the Law Commission: "...there has been a steady deterioration in the standards, practices and pronouncements of the political class.

From Parliament downwards to a students' union, democracy is by and large, seen as securing votes somehow, by candidates who are mostly ill-equipped, self-serving and ambitious investors in politics who are hungry for the limelight and exploitation of power. The people who are the real repository of sovereignty have no say in the choice of candidates. The option given to them is either to vote for one or the other of the candidates contesting or to altogether abstain from voting. Indian democracy has now become a routine ritual. In the words of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto: "the din and noise of election have kept democracy going in India." The National Commission gave a warning: "There is increasing criminalisation of politics and of the electoral process. If the remedies are not found and implemented speedily there might remain very little of value to salvage."

Coalition Governments

Horse-trading is part of coalition politics. The traders bargain for lucrative portfolios. They do not permit clean, transparent and effective governance. A Prime Minister or a Chief Minister heading a coalition government dare not drop a corrupt minister so

long as the minister commands the support of a coalition partner which has a sizeable strength in the house, unless he is prepared to risk the fall of his own government. Integrity and ability are no longer the main criteria for appointment of ministers. The wishes of the people of India have no role in the selection of candidates by political parties or in the appointment of ministers. The National Commission observed:

"There is pervasive impurity of the political climate and of political activity. Criminalisation of politics, political-corruption and the politician-criminal-bureaucratic nexus has reached unprecedented levels needing strong systematic changes. Black-money, parallel economy and even parallel Governments are the overarching economic and social realities. Legitimate Government will, in due course, find it increasingly difficult to confront them. In course of time these illegal criminal outfits will dictate terms to the legitimate Governments." This has happened in Orissa and Chhattisgarh when Naxalites kidnapped a District Collector and MLAs.

State Funding of Elections

After considering the recommendations made earlier by various committees regarding state funding, the Law Commission accepted the suggestion of the Inderjit Gupta Committee for partial state funding of elections in kind on an experimental basis by providing facilities for organising meetings, allocating time on the radio and television and facilitating printing of election literature and postage etc. The committee also recommended imposing simultaneously restrictions by law on the number of cut-outs, banners, wall posters, hoardings, flags, vehicles to be used etc. The Law Commission has also recommended disqualifying a person against whom a criminal charge has been framed by a Court of law if the offence involved moral turpitude, from contesting at an election or continuing as a Member of Parliament or of a State Legislature.

Structural changes

To make the political executive perform better, it is necessary to carry out a few structural changes

in the Constitution with respect to the Executive. B.K. Nehru's suggestion for total separation of the executive and the legislature is not possible, parliamentary democracy being a basic feature of the Constitution. However, it is desirable and possible to separate the executive from the legislature to the extent of making MPs, MLAs and MLCs ineligible to hold any executive office except the post of minister and simultaneously laying down strict conditions of eligibility for the office of minister to keep away undesirable persons. If ministership is made inaccessible to all except the well-equipped members of Parliament or a State Legislature, it will ensure good governance.

A provision for direct induction of outstanding persons of ability and experience in the cabinet to handle the key portfolios, without their having to be elected to Parliament or the State Legislature concerned is a felt necessity. They could be made ex-officio Members of Parliament or the State Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council concerned as

The committee also recommended imposing simultaneously restrictions by law on the number of cut-outs, banners, wall posters, hoardings, flags, vehicles to be used etc.

the case may be, to facilitate transaction of business in the House. Dr. Rajendra Prasad had mentioned in his concluding address to the Constituent Assembly: "I would have liked to have some qualifications laid down for members of the legislatures. It is anomalous that we should insist upon high qualifications for those who administer or help in administering the law but none for those who make it except that they are elected. A law giver requires intellectual equipment but even more than that, capacity to take balanced view of things, to act independently and above all to be true to those fundamental things of life - in one word - to have character. It is not possible to devise any yardstick for measuring the moral qualities of a man and so long as that is not possible, our Constitution will remain defective." Palkhivala said: "The grim irony of the situation where the one job for which you need no training or qualification whatsoever is the job of legislating for and governing the largest democracy on earth. You need years of training to attend to a boiler or mind a machine; to

Dr. Rajendra Prasad had mentioned in his concluding address to the Constituent Assembly: "I would have liked to have some qualifications laid down for members of the legislatures."

supervise a shop floor or build a bridge; to argue a case in a law court or to operate upon a human body. But to steer the lives and destinies of more than 650 millions (now 1200 millions) of your fellow-men, you are not required to have any education or equipment at all... By voting ignorant professional politicians to power, we have kept a singularly gifted and enterprising nation in the ranks of the poorest on earth." C. Subramaniam, former Union Minister and later Governor of Maharashtra, suggested that a candidate for election to an Assembly must possess a minimum educational qualification of Plus Two (HSC) and for Lok Sabha he should be a Graduate from a recognised Institute or have experience in the functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institutions or must have rendered public service in a recognised voluntary service organization.

Apprehensions of Leaders

C. Rajagopalachari had anticipated the present state of affairs 25 years before Independence, when he wrote in

his prison diary: "Elections and their corruption, injustice and tyranny of wealth, and inefficiency of administration, will make a hell of life as soon as freedom is given to us. Men will look regretfully back to the old regime of comparative justice, and efficient, peaceful, more or less honest administration...." He added: "Hope lies only in universal education by which right conduct, fear of God and love will be developed among citizens from childhood." In November 1949, Dr. Ambedkar voiced his concern whether India would maintain her Independence or will lose it again as it happened before due to "the infidelity and treachery of some of her own people". Dr. Rajendra Prasad in his concluding address to the Constituent Assembly sounded a note of caution: "Whatever the Constitution may or may not provide, the welfare of the country will depend upon the men who administer it. If the people who are elected are capable and men of character and integrity, then they would be able to make the best even of a defective Constitution. If they are lacking in these, the

It is evident that we have not been able to work the Constitution in the manner expected. To recall the words of Joseph Story, American Jurist: "Republics are created by the virtue, public spirit and intelligence of the citizens.

Constitution cannot help the country." Palkhivala posed the question, "Has the Constitution failed?" and answered it by saying that "it is not the Constitution which has failed the people, but it is our chosen representatives who have failed the Constitution." It is evident that we have not been able to work the Constitution in the manner expected. To recall the words of Joseph Story, American Jurist: "Republics are created by the virtue, public spirit and intelligence of the citizens. They fall, when the wise are banished from the public councils, because they dare to be honest, and the profligate are rewarded, because they flatter the people, in order to betray them."

Unless we bring into Parliament, State Legislatures and the Councils of Ministers, the best brains available in the country i.e. distinguished men and women of integrity, ability and vision who can work the Constitution successfully, democracy and the rule of law may not survive. India is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of human resources. There is no dearth of

patriots or Statesmen in the country. Besides electoral reforms, administrative reforms (including Police reforms) and Judicial reforms are the need of the hour. Pressure of public opinion alone will make the Parliament reform the system. Only the youth of the country can prevail upon

Parliament to amend the laws as they have done in the case of gang rape of a Delhi girl and saw to it that an Ordinance was issued in a record time.

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Assessment: PRC's White Paper On Defence

- *Brig (retd) Vinod Anand*

China has come out with its latest White Paper on defence as part of its regular exercise to convey to the world that it has been exhibiting higher levels of military transparency. However, the paper is an exercise in strategic communication both to its internal and external audience. It shows adequate transparency to deter its regional competitors while putting a lid on many details which the international community would like to know about its ever expanding defence budgets and the direction its growing military power might take. For the internal audience the paper has attempted to highlight some of the roles and missions of the PLA that are meant to be in aid of the people so that it can be justified that it is people's army and not the Party's army.

In the preface the paper says *"China will never seek hegemony or behave in a hegemonic manner, nor will it engage in military*

expansion". However, can it be said that its military muscle flexing in South China Sea, East China Sea and along the borders with India and even Vietnam is nothing but hegemonic behaviour? Evidently, this is merely a slogan and such a pronouncement cannot be taken seriously by China's neighbours who are at the receiving end of its assertive behaviour.

While surveying the security environment the eighth White Paper on defence has chosen to nominate Japan as trouble-maker over the issue of the Diaoyu Islands. Without naming the US the paper adds that *"some country has strengthened its Asia-Pacific military alliances, expanded its military presence in the region, and frequently makes the situation there tense"*. Thus, the American pivot to Asia has been causing much concern to the Chinese. For China, the "Taiwan independence" separatist forces and their activities are still the

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biggest threat to the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations.

However, what are conspicuously absent from the Chinese assessment are the current and past shenanigans of North Korea which are complicating the security situation in East Asia. In its 2006 White Paper, China had commented on North Korean nuclear tests and had observed somewhat cryptically, *"DPRK has launched missile tests and conducted a nuclear test. Thus, the situation on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia has become more complex and challenging"*. This time around there is complete silence on North Korea's destabilising activities. Even in its 2008 White Paper China had lauded itself by stating that *"The Six-Party Talks on the Korean nuclear issue have scored successive achievements, and the tension in Northeast Asia is much released."*

While concentrating on the US and Japan the White Paper has not included South China Sea and the littoral countries as areas of

concern thus for time being downplaying the issue and possibly setting priorities for settling/importance of the issues. Similarly, the border issue with India also does not find mention. This is in contrast to articulations made in earlier papers. For instance, the white paper of 2006 talked of having settled border disputes with 11 out of 13 countries. This formulation implied that India and Bhutan were being unreasonable. In his 'Five Point Proposal' for improving Sino-Indian ties made in mid-March this year President Xi Jinping had observed that *"The border question is a complex issue left from history and solving the issue won't be easy."* And just to prove this observation there are media reports that PLA troops have intruded 10 kilometers deep inside Indian territory at Daulat Beg Oldi in Ladakh. Thus, it would be safer to assume that not much effort is going to be invested by the new Chinese leadership in the resolution of the border issue during its reign of next ten years.

Curiously, the White Paper on Defence has been titled as

However, what are conspicuously absent from the Chinese assessment are the current and past shenanigans of North Korea which are complicating the security situation in East Asia.

'Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces', possibly to underline variety of roles and missions of the armed forces. This is a distinct departure from the past where all the papers were titled as White Paper on Defence. In contrast to the past practice many other details like defence expenditure and the progress of the respective services have been either totally excluded or mentioned in the passing.

Explaining its policy of active defence the paper says China's armed forces unswervingly implement the military strategy of active defence, guard against and resist aggression, contain separatist forces, safeguard the border, coastal and territorial air security, and protect national maritime rights and interests and national security interests in outer space and cyber space. "We will not attack unless we are attacked; but we will surely counterattack if attacked."

The paper briefly reiterates PLA's doctrine as 'to win local wars under the conditions of informationization --, intensify the joint employment of different services and arms, and enhance warfighting capabilities based on information systems. They

constantly bring forward new ideas for the strategies and tactics of people's war, advance integrated civilian-military development, and enhance the quality of national defence mobilization and reserve force building'. The doctrine of winning local wars under informationised conditions was mentioned in detail in its 2004 White Paper and subsequent papers wherein considerable details had been given as to how the PLA intends to proceed on the process of military modernisation in a step by step process.

For the first time the PLA has given out the structure of its armed forces. It is a different matter that much of it was already available in the public domain. However, what has been revealed by the PLA does not match some of the estimates made by analysts and researchers. The paper states that the PLA mobile operational units include 18 combined corps, plus additional independent combined operational divisions, and have a total strength of 850,000. The combined corps, composed of divisions and brigades, are respectively under the seven military area commands (MACs): Shenyang (16th, 39th and 40th Combined Corps), Beijing

(27th, 38th and 65th Combined Corps), Lanzhou (21st and 47th Combined Corps), Jinan (20th, 26th and 54th Combined Corps), Nanjing (1st, 12th and 31st Combined Corps), Guangzhou (41st and 42nd Combined Corps) and Chengdu (13th and 14th Combined Corps). Of particular interest to India are the corps based in Chengdu and Lanzhou which have operational roles on the Sino-Indian border. Apparently, the strength of many logistic and other supporting elements has not been included. The Indian Army, with a much smaller number of corps and other formations has a strength of 1.2 million. Thus, the PLA is hiding its actual numbers.

Similarly, the paper gives out the strength of the PLA Navy as 235,000 officers and men with three fleets under it, namely, the Beihai Fleet, the Donghai Fleet and the Nanhai Fleet. For long China had stressed that it was not keen to acquire an aircraft carrier; now with the commissioning of the Liaoning in September 2012 the paper proudly notes that *'China's development of an aircraft carrier*

has a profound impact on building a strong PLAN and safeguarding maritime security'.

So far as PLA Air Force is concerned the paper mentions that the PLAAF now has a total strength of 398,000 officers and men, and an air command in each of the seven Military Area Commands (MACs) of Shenyang, Beijing, Lanzhou, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou and Chengdu. In addition, it commands one airborne corps. The 15 Airborne Corps is an elite strategic formation and its capability also can be brought to bear against India in a very short time frame. Some years back the formation had carried out a training exercise wherein a division is supposed to have been inducted into Tibet in 48 hours.

In addition, it commands one airborne corps. The 15 Airborne Corps is an elite strategic formation and its capability also can be brought to bear against India in a very short time frame.

The strength of the PLA - Second Artillery Force - has not been mentioned, though it has been described as 'a core force for China's strategic deterrence'. According to the paper, the Second Artillery Force (SAF) is 'enhancing the safety, reliability and effectiveness of its missiles, improving its force structure of

having both nuclear and conventional missiles, strengthening its rapid reaction, effective penetration, precision strike, damage infliction, protection and survivability capabilities'. The current political leadership has been paying particular attention to SAF. After having taken over as Chairman of the Central Military Commission in November 2012, Xi Jinping visited Second Artillery Force and observed that "the artillery force is the core strength of China's strategic deterrence, the strategic support for the country's status as a major power, and an important cornerstone safeguarding national security". Many advanced versions of ballistic and cruise missiles are being fielded with appropriate integration with C4ISR assets which are both ground and space based. PLA has carried out another anti-ballistic missile test in January this year indicating that it is moving towards acquiring a ballistic missile defence capability which would impact the value and worth of India's nuclear deterrent.

The paper also gives insights into China's nuclear posture though to a very limited degree. It states "If China comes under a nuclear threat, the nuclear missile force

will act upon the orders of the CMC, go into a higher level of readiness, and get ready for a nuclear counterattack to deter the enemy from using nuclear weapons against China. If China comes under a nuclear attack, the nuclear missile force of the PLASAF will use nuclear missiles to launch a resolute counterattack either independently or together with the nuclear forces of other services. The conventional missile force is able to shift instantly from peacetime to wartime readiness, and conduct conventional medium- and long-range precision strikes". It is for the first time that there is no explicit reference to its No First Use Policy. Though, by inference from the formulation mentioned in the paper one may conclude that China may not be the first to launch a nuclear strike yet this needs further elucidation. There could be some message in the new wording and China needs to elaborate further on this aspect. It is also safer to assume that this principle will not apply to the conventional tactical or strategic strike. However, China's 'No First Use' nuclear doctrine remains an enigma for India as China's NFU does not apply to its own territories or territories claimed by it i.e. Arunachal Pradesh. Further, China possesses tactical nukes

and it is yet to clarify as to how the SAF intends to use such capabilities.

What is also a cause of concern to India is the increase in frequency of joint training exercises in the Tibet region. Not only have the Chinese army and air force carried out India centred exercises, they have also conducted live missile firing exercises in Chengdu and Lanzhou Military Area Commands which have their operational areas opposite the Indian border. Trans-MAC troops movement exercises and simulation exercises have also been carried out raising the level of military preparedness along the Sino-Indian border. The paper notes that *“Since 2010, a series of campaign-level exercises and drills code-named “Mission Action” for trans-MAC manoeuvres have been carried out. Specifically, in 2010 the Beijing, Lanzhou and Chengdu MACs each sent one division led by corps headquarters, together with some PLAAF units, to participate in the exercise. In 2011, relevant troops from the Chengdu and Jinan MACs were organized and carried out the exercise in plateau areas. In 2012,*

Trans-MAC troops movement exercises and simulation exercises have also been carried out raising the level of military preparedness along the Sino-Indian border.

the Chengdu, Jinan and Lanzhou MACs and relevant PLAAF troops were organized and carried out the exercise in south-western China”. Thus, India can ill afford to neglect its border infrastructure and military preparedness, which currently leaves much to be desired.

The Paper also describes the role of People’s Armed Police Force (PAPF) which is a para-military force meant for internal security duties and to assist the PLA in war time. However, its strength has not been mentioned. Some of its main tasks include performing guard duties, dealing with emergencies, combating terrorism and participating in and supporting national economic development. It is also employed for national development tasks and is composed of some special forces assigned for various miscellaneous civil and military tasks. Possibly, the Chinese troops which have been sent to POK for so called development activities are from this force.

For instance the Paper states that ‘Since 2011, the PLA and PAPF

have contributed more than 15 million work days and over 1.2 million motor vehicles and machines, and have been involved in more than 350 major province-level (and above) projects of building airports, highways, railways and water conservancy facilities. The PAPF hydroelectric units have partaken in the construction of 115 projects concerning water conservancy, hydropower, railways and gas pipelines in Nuozhadu (Yunnan), Jinping (Sichuan) and Pangduo (Tibet)'. The three new hydro-power dams built on Brahmaputra in Tibet are possibly the handiwork of such a force.

What has been expanded upon this time in the Paper is PLA's role in aid of the people and national development so that PLA can be truly seen as a people's army. This aspect was completely missing from China's White Paper on Defence of 2002. Since 2004 this role of the PLA is being stressed upon more and more. The paper says that "The Constitution and relevant laws entrust China's armed forces with the important tasks of safeguarding the peaceful labour of the Chinese people, taking part in national development and serving the people wholeheartedly". During

the CPC's 18th Congress conclave in November 2012, the party leadership had emphasised that "*We must unwaveringly adhere to the principle of the Party's absolute leadership over the armed forces and continue to educate them in the system of theories of socialism with Chinese characteristics*". In the Paper the PLA is being portrayed as the peoples and not the Party's army.

What is altogether missing in the paper is any mention of the defence expenditure of the PLA which has been invariably mentioned in all the White Papers issued so far. China's defence expenditure according to its 2006 paper was US\$ 36 billion; this year the budget according to figures released in 12th National People's Conference in early March this year the defence budget was estimated to be between US\$ 115 to 117 billion, more than three times the size of 2006 figures. Last year the defence budget was around US\$ 107 billion. However, according to a US Defence Intelligence Agency Report of 17 April 2013 China has spent as much as US\$ 215 billion on military related services and goods in contrast to the last year's official budget of 107 billion dollars. One of the major factors

contributing to the rise in the defence expenditure in Asia-Pacific is the double digit growth in PRC's defence budget from 1990 to 2013 as China's neighbours remain wary of its growing military might and enlargement of its 'core interests'.

Overall, the White Paper hides more than it reveals and there is more of opacity rather than military transparency.

So far as India is concerned it is quite evident that India has to accelerate its military modernisation which has been stymied due to the politico-bureaucratic system and processes. Though inadequacies and gaps in our military capabilities are well known yet

sufficient effort has not been put in to fill the void and gaps in our military capabilities. We need to improve our ground holding capabilities, C4ISR capabilities, accretion of space assets, missile warfare capabilities, long range precision capabilities besides infrastructure development in border regions. Further, China through its various manoeuvres has been aspiring to dominate the Indian Ocean region which is critical to Indian security; this challenge needs to be met both through diplomacy and modernisation of our maritime capabilities.

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Supporting War Criminals - Is Bengal's Liberal Space Shrinking?

- **Dr Anirban Ganguly**

Something unprecedented happened over the last week end of March (30th March) in Kolkata. Sixteen Islamic organizations came together at the Maidan, the second largest public ground in the city, in protest against the ongoing War Crimes Trial in Bangladesh, against the Shahbag sit in and in support of the Vice-President of the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, Delowar Hossein Sayeedi one of the prime accused in the 1971 genocide in Bangladesh.

It was astounding to see a huge and belligerent crowd gather from all over the state to support one of the best known razakars and collaborators with the Pakistan army in its genocide against Hindus and Muslims in East Pakistan. Speakers addressing the gathering attempted to whip up hysterical support for the Jamaat and its leaders and pledged that just as West Bengal's Muslims prevented Salman Rushdie from

the entering the state and hounded out Taslima Nasreen in 2007 they would generate a movement against the pro-War Crime trial bloggers in Bangladesh and would take on their supporters with the same zeal. They even threatened to block any future visit of Sheikh Hasina's to India.

But most shocking was their brazen support for Sayeedi, a known vocal anti-India preacher, a rabid anti-Hindu who has been active in organizing pogroms against minorities in Bangladesh over the years and one of the most avid collaborators in Pakistan's genocide against fellow Muslims.

They openly declared their support for Sayeedi saying that a death sentence for Sayeedi in effect meant a death sentence for the Koran and Islam. These speakers chose to ignore the fact that Sayeedi was being tried for killing in cold blood, among others, their fellow religionists. It was for the

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first time that such a mobilization took place in Kolkata and it simply reinforced an emerging mindset which has begun trying to consolidate a pan-Bengal Islamic identity. Incidentally, it was from the Maidan in August 1946 that the call for 'Direct Action' was given by the Muslim League. The result of that call on the history of both parts of Bengal is too well known to even require a passing reiteration. But our politicians have deliberately chosen to ignore that past.

Not a single political party, and in them especially those who at the first opportunity, jump to dissect delusional dimensions of

Both the Left and the Trinamool Congress (TMC) have maintained a studied silence having mortgaged over the years their politics to Islamic fundamentalist elements in the state.

Hindu fascism and habitually get into describing various conjured Hindutva theatres of genocidal experiments or pontificate on the need to maintain the secular and syncretic texture of our nationhood, came forward to condemn the positions taken in the meeting. Not one political party even recalled the genocidal role that Sayeedi and his ilk played in the past and of how they helped to sustain Pakistani resistance to Indian soldiers. The

Shahbag protesters have been calling for the establishment of a truly secular and constitutional Bangladesh where religious bigots would be reined in and their anti-national tendencies curbed and yet they find no support from our political secularists.

Both the Left and the Trinamool Congress (TMC) have maintained a studied silence having mortgaged over the years their politics to Islamic fundamentalist elements in the state. Comrades

who jump at every opportunity to display their secular credentials in order to keep communal forces at bay through organizing rallies, sit-ins, and

seminars have not issued even as much as a statement. In fact Sayeedi himself had a very clear benchmark for Communists, "Leftists are not Muslims. They don't believe in prayers", he had declared. It has always been an axiomatic truth for him that no non-Muslim could be allowed to live in Bangladesh. He assiduously worked for it ever since the War of Liberation in 1971. No wonder comrades in Bangladesh find it difficult to survive on their own

and have prudently sided with Sheikh Hasina.

The Congress believing that it shall gain space with the electorates' gradual disillusionment with the TMC has obviously kept quiet. Its studied silence is part of its larger grand design of mobilizing country wide minority support. Nor has the Indian media come forward to debate the phenomenon; it is still incapable of visualizing its status once congregations such as these begin spawning Sayeedi clones all over India. For the media and journalists Sayeedi had a simple equation, "Journalists write lies. They are the enemies of Islam", it is well documented as to what Sayeedi did to those whom he considered as enemies of Islam. It is this stoic silence in face of a rising vocal Islamic fundamentalism which is worrisome and condemnable. The liberal space in Bengal is fast shrinking and we have paid a heavy price for such a constriction in the past.

Archer Blood, the 'dissenting diplomat', then American Consul General in Dhaka cabled on 29th March 1971 on how the 'Hindus [were] particular focus of [the] campaign and how the army was 'going after Hindus with vengeance.'

Those in whose support the Maidan congregation was organized were at their vicious best when it came to treating minorities in their own country. Sayeedi himself, as head of the local Al Badr and Al Shams, has been convicted of killing Hindus, burning their homes and businesses and of forceful conversion. Sydney Schanberg, then correspondent of the *New York Times*, noted the selective approach in targeting Hindus, 'the [Pakistani] army is now concentrating on Hindus, the killing is more selective, [and] has not stopped.' Schanberg also recorded how the Pak army had 'painted big yellow H's on the Hindu shops to identify the property of the minority, eighth of the population that it has made it special targets.'

Archer Blood, the 'dissenting diplomat', then American Consul General in Dhaka cabled on 29th March 1971 on how the 'Hindus [were] particular focus of [the] campaign and how the army was 'going after Hindus with vengeance.'

Veteran Pakistani journalist

Anthony Mascarenhas, who fled to London in order to tell the truth about the Pak army wrote in exasperation in his columns in the *Sunday Times* that the Pakistani military operation had two distinctive features: ‘ One, the cleansing process’, the other ‘rehabilitation effort’ – i.e. ‘turning East Bengal into a ‘docile colony of West Pakistan.’ Sayeedi and his political colleagues had wholeheartedly facilitated all of these; the Maidan congregators were silent on that.

It was Sayeedi who had once said of the Hindus of Bangladesh, ‘Why should we feel sad when the

Hindu brothers choose to leave our country? Do we mourn when we have indigestion and materials leave our bodies?’

Do we then assume that those in West Bengal who have organized the Maidan rally in Sayeede’s support and those who have, through their silence given consent to their demands, really support that line? Aren’t they complicit in composing the final requiem for Bengal’s, once famed, liberal space?

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General In Gaol: Musharraf's Arrest And Its Implications

- **Sushant Sareen**

In what is being called a first in Pakistan's history, a former military strongman, Gen Pervez Musharraf, has been formally arrested on charges of terrorism and illegal confinement of judges. Musharraf's detractors see his arrest as a sign of the fundamental changes that have come in the political power structure in Pakistan. According to them, the power of the Pakistan Army has been seriously eroded with the restoration of democracy and the reinstatement of the judiciary, and this is reflected in the failure of the army to stand behind its former chief in his hour of trial and tribulation.

The cynics disagree. They are of the view that the army still remains the most powerful political player and beyond a point it will not allow its former chief to be humiliated by the judiciary because this will deal a body blow to the power of the military and the impunity and immunity enjoyed by the Generals.

According to them, even the judges are aware of the limits of their power and will desist from crossing the red-lines as far as the army is concerned. The dramatic arrest of Gen Musharraf, the cynics are convinced, is therefore nothing but a farcical drama. After all sides in this drama (particularly the judiciary) have played their roles, that is to say, established their credentials and made their point, the curtain will fall on this so-called demonstration of civilian supremacy and rule of law. Musharraf, at the end of the day, will not be thrown into prison, forget about being taken to the gallows for committing treason. He may, however, have to suffer the indignity of appearing in court to face the various cases that have been filed against him.

Historically, no Pakistani military dictator has ever been imprisoned. Ayub Khan and Yahya Khan were put under house arrest but this was more out of political necessity

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than for their crimes against law and constitution. One other army chief, Tikka Khan, was also arrested for a short period of time for participating in political agitation after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was deposed. But Tikka Khan, better known as the Butcher of Balochistan and Bengal, never was made to answer for the crimes against humanity that he committed. A Naval Chief, Mansur-ul-Haq, was imprisoned on charges of corruption but was soon released after a plea bargain which involved returning a large part of his ill-gotten gains. Other than these cases, no other top serving or retired military official who remains embedded in the 'establishment' has been prosecuted for any act of commission or omission.

The important point is that only defeated or deposed military strongmen in Pakistan have had to face any sort of action, albeit of a fairly benign kind. Unlike civilians who have been thrown in prison, humiliated, even tortured, the military officials have been treated with kid gloves, enjoying incarceration in the comforts of

their extremely well-appointed homes. Another important criterion for determining the kind of action taken against a general is whether he is part of the ruling establishment. Musharraf's almost successor, Gen Ziauddin Butt did suffer imprisonment and loss of all privileges but that was because he was seen as a man who was siding with the political establishment against the military. Officers like Major Generals Akbar Khan and Zaheerul Islam Abbasi were imprisoned but that was because they rebelled against the military hierarchy. On the other hand, Generals Aslam Beg, Hamid Gul and Asad Durrani have had no action taken against them despite their public confessions that they subverted the political system.

The eternal wisdom of Shakespeare that "there is a tide in the affairs of men which, when taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries" also comes into play in how dictators are treated in Pakistan. When things are going in their favour, everything they do is kosher and receives kudos; but

A Naval Chief, Mansur-ul-Haq, was imprisoned on charges of corruption but was soon released after a plea bargain which involved returning a large part of his ill-gotten gains.

when the tide turns, anything they do is a disaster and is denounced. Musharraf should have realised that his time as the master of all he surveyed was up. But his proneness for miscalculation coupled with his propensity for throwing caution to the winds has led him into a somewhat sticky situation. Clearly, apart from some of his foreign benefactors and guarantors (reportedly the Saudis) Musharraf was banking upon the army to ensure that he wasn't going to be put through the mill of justice in Pakistan. To an extent, both the Saudis and the army delivered. The Saudis ensured the deafening silence of Nawaz Sharif who had till recently been clamouring for Musharraf's prosecution. President Asif Zardari in any case wasn't interested in taking any serious action against Musharraf. For its part the army made sure that Musharraf was provided all necessary security.

But what Musharraf didn't budget for was that he had become both an embarrassment and an inconvenience for the military. While the army would not like to see its former chief humiliated or thrown in prison, it would also not go out on a limb for Musharraf and take on the judiciary, the

political class and the public by overthrowing or even destabilising the entire system for his sake. In other words, the army wouldn't want to see Musharraf mistreated but was also not going to lose any sleep if Musharraf was forced to fight his cases in courts. As the army saw it, Musharraf had been forewarned against returning to Pakistan because of the changed circumstances in the country which limited the ability of the army to protect its former chief from the rampaging courts. If despite this warning Musharraf returned, then he would have to bear the cross of his decision. Having barely regained its image that was badly sullied in the last years of Musharraf's rule, the army was unlikely to once again let its image take a blow for Musharraf's sake. What is more, the army is embroiled on too many fronts and would be loath to see another domestic front open only because of Musharraf. Most of all, the cases that would open against Musharraf would also open a can of worms involving serving military officials and the army in general, something that made the top brass extremely uncomfortable.

Compounding the problem for the military is the fact there is

currently a sort of uneasy balance between the judiciary and the army which could be disturbed because of Musharraf. The judiciary has been asserting itself against all pillars of the Pakistani state and winning. But as opposed to its tearing into the civilian government and elected politicians, the judiciary has been a lot more circumspect when it comes to dealing with the army. In numerous cases where there is clear evidence against serving officials – for instance, in cases involving extra-judicial killings, illegal detentions, unlawful use of force etc. – the judiciary has been all fire and brimstone but has refrained from taking any meaningful action against the guilty officials. This unstable equilibrium could get disturbed if either the judiciary or the army takes any precipitate action, either to fix Musharraf or protect him.

In a way, Musharraf has left the military, the judiciary and the politicians with difficult choices. If the army leaves its former chief in limbo then it will be setting a dangerous precedent. After all if

Musharraf can be prosecuted and punished for whatever illegal and extra-constitutional actions he did, then other generals too will be opening themselves to similar legal action in the future. This clearly is not quite acceptable. Already, the army feels that there has been a steady paring down of its power and influence. And while it still remains a player in the politics of the country, its role and influence is no longer what it was in the not so distant past. Increasingly, the army is able to

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only assert itself on strategic policy and direction and not so much on domestic politics. If this trend continues and is not reversed, the army will see a whittling down of its political role, something which the generals wouldn't exactly be happy about. But reversing the trend is going to mean intervention at a level that the army might find difficult to handle.

The politicians are meanwhile chary of exploiting the situation in their favour. If anything, they are waiting to see the outcome of the tussle for supremacy between the army and the judiciary and

therefore are quick to throw the ball either in the court of the army or the judiciary. No surprise then that cutting across the political divide, the political class, notwithstanding fiery statements against Musharraf, has not really tried to book Musharraf for treason and left it to the courts to take suo moto action in this matter. Despite the fact that only the government can institute a treason case, neither the erstwhile PPP-led coalition, nor the caretaker, and in all likelihood not even the next elected government is likely to book Musharraf for treason and will be happy to take the lead from the judiciary.

With the ball in its court, it now remains to be seen how far the judiciary will go against Musharraf. For now, the judiciary has been operating on the time honoured but unchivalrous Pakistani principle of power: kick a man when he is down and out. The manner in which his bail was refused by the Islamabad High Court judge in a bailable offence case, orders for his arrest issued by the same judge who also slapped him with terrorism charges, is a classic hatchet job. Quite aside the fact that Musharraf didn't help his case by his loud-mouthed brazenness and

brashness (admitting in an interview to allowing drone attacks and defending his action against the judges is just one example), the vindictiveness of the judiciary was also on display. The judge Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui is a man with a very dubious past. He was in the vanguard of the lawyers who threw rose petals on the assassin of the former Punjab governor Salman Taseer. While hearing the case against Musharraf his bias was reflected when he said that even he had been detained after emergency was declared on November 3, 2007.

Forget about this judge, the entire superior judiciary is working overtime to fix anyone they don't like – law be damned – and arrogating power to a point where it is literally becoming a supra-government. Every morning, it seems, the registrar of the Supreme Court scans the newspapers and prepares a brief for the chief justice on any issue which he thinks is of public interest and by evening suo motu notices are issued. From elections to electricity and from gas allocation to transfers and postings, the courts are calling the shots with the government behaving like a mute spectator to

this travesty. This is fast becoming an untenable situation and something has got to give if there is to be even a modicum of administrative coherence. Perhaps, the cases against Musharraf might become the tipping point.

Out of all the cases against Musharraf, the only really serious case is the treason charge for imposing emergency on November 3, 2007. All other cases – Lal Masjid, Akbar Bugti assassination, Benazir Bhutto assassination, illegal confinement of judges etc. – are political cases in which it will be impossible to find any real evidence of wrong doing against Musharraf. For example, the Lal Masjid operation was a legitimate operation against terrorists holed up in the complex. Regardless of the sensitivities involved and the repercussions that followed, Akbar Bugti's killing was also the result of action against a declared insurgent. In Benazir Bhutto's case, the only thing against Musharraf is that he didn't provide her adequate security and that he is supposed to have threatened her. And in the judges'

Out of all the cases against Musharraf, the only really serious case is the treason charge for imposing emergency on November 3, 2007.

confinement case, none of the judges who were confined illegally are a complainant! This leaves the treason case. But if the judiciary goes down that path, then under the letter of the law, a whole lot of people will be prosecuted, including the current army chief. What is more, the current chief justice will also find it difficult to justify sitting on the bench that sanctified Musharraf's 1999 coup and gave him the power to change the constitution. Although the parliament indemnified that coup, the point is whether the

parliament had the power to change the basic feature of the constitution; something the Supreme Court of

Pakistan has repeatedly said is not permitted.

While the legal and constitutional drama will unfold in the days and weeks ahead, the only thing that can be said with any degree of certainty in Pakistan is that Musharraf is history. If he was a genuine political leader with some following, his current trial would win him sympathy and rehabilitate him in the eyes of the people, as has happened with people like Benazir Bhutto, Asif Zardari and Nawaz Sharif. But as

a man who has a following only on Facebook, and no real party or organisation to back him, Musharraf is a political has-been. Whether he will now become a trailblazer by becoming the first coup-maker to be imprisoned in Pakistan or whether he will be let

off like his predecessors is the only thing in which he has any further contribution to make in Pakistan's sordid politics.

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Need To Transform Indian Navy Into A Blue Water Maritime Force

- **Radhakrishna Rao**

In the context of the South China Sea rapidly emerging as a turbulent oceanic stretch with China questioning the claims of a number of Asian countries over this disputed water body, late last year Indian Navy Chief Admiral DK Joshi had driven home the point that the Indian Navy is prepared to deploy vessels to the South China sea to protect Indian interests there. As it is, not long back India had sparred diplomatically with China over its gas and oil exploration blocks off the coast of Vietnam. China claims virtually the entire mineral rich South China Sea and has stepped up its naval presence here to ward off any challenge to its monopoly of this body of water. Joshi did also express the view that Beijing's growing maritime strength was a "major cause of concern." The moral of the story is that the Indian Navy cannot afford to keep its focus concentrated exclusively on the Indian Ocean region. It should build up the capability and power

level good enough to take care of Indian interests in any part of the global oceanic stretch.

As diplomatic experts point out, China is beefing up its naval capability with a view to not only exercise virtual monopoly over the South China Sea but also challenge US dominance over the global oceanic waters. The combat edge of the Chinese navy is expected to receive a shot in the arm from the home grown, 58,000-tonne Liaoning aircraft carrier built around the decommissioned Soviet era ship Varyag. China has been able to successfully land the indigenous fighter J-15 on the deck of Liaoning, which is currently going through extensive sea trials.

Of course, Joshi did hit the nail on the head with the statement that while India was not a claimant in the dispute over territorial rights in South China sea, it was prepared to act, if necessary to protect its maritime and economic

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rights in the region. “China opposes any unilateral oil and gas exploration activities in disputed areas in the South China Sea and hopes countries respect China’s sovereignty and national interests as well as the efforts of countries within the region to resolve dispute through bilateral negotiations,” said an official of China’s Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Nearer home, recent developments in neighbouring Sri Lanka and Maldives cannot but be a cause of concern for India.

Along with Myanmar and Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives are considered vital components of the

In addition to lending a big hand to a variety of infrastructure projects in these two island nations, China has already made inroads in the area of space cooperation with both Sri Lanka and Maldives.

Chinese strategy of “string of pearls” aimed at encircling India. In addition to lending a big hand to a variety of infrastructure projects in these two island nations, China has already made inroads in the area of space cooperation with both Sri Lanka and Maldives. The immense strategic significance of space cooperation could provide China a powerful platform in the Indian Ocean region to further its geo strategic interests. As such, Indian intelligence and security agencies

have suggested that ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) should take a proactive role in building and launching satellites for these two vitally located Indian Ocean island nations with which India has had long standing, cordial relations. But then unlike China, which already operates a string of powerful rockets capable of delivering satellite payloads of different weight class to required orbital slots, ISRO lacks the launch power to deliver satellites in the two tonnes plus class. For

currently, ISRO operates a solitary launch vehicle PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle), the most powerful version of which is capable of delivering a 1800kg satellite into a polar/sun-synchronous orbit.

Meanwhile, in a development of significance, Indian Navy’s offensive capability will stand augmented with the state owned Kolkata based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) launching work on the third corvette with stealth features. With 90% of the indigenous contents, this third anti submarine warfare corvette under Project-28 will showcase

India's warship building potentials with domestic resources and indigenous expertise. Aimed at enhancing Indian Navy's underwater warfare capabilities, the warship is said to be a first of its kind to be fitted with indigenous state of art weapons and sensors.

On another front, India's futuristic naval base is also set to take shape on the eastern sea board. This vitally situated sea base with an eye firmly set on China will ultimately have underground pens or bunkers to protect nuclear submarines from the prying eyes of spy satellites. The project named Varsha to be located close to Vishakhapatnam is considered a counterpoise to China's massive underground nuclear submarine base on the south-western tip of Hainan Island.

And to further bolster its blue water capabilities, the Indian Navy plans to acquire five self propelled Fleet Support Ships (FSS) that should be capable of transferring all types of stores, ammunition, fuel and personnel to naval units. Clearly and apparently, blue water navies boast of large auxiliary fleets comprising longer range fleet support vessels designed to

provide support far beyond territorial waters. As part of the plan to boost its long range surveillance capability, in December last, the Indian Navy received first of its eight P-81 maritime patrol aircraft it had ordered from the American defence and aerospace major Boeing. The P-81 long range surveillance aircraft is well suited for anti submarine warfare. Indian Navy has also decided to exercise the option of going in for four additional P-81 aircraft with a view to strengthening its maritime patrol capabilities as well as to counter piracy threats and the growing Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean region.

On a longer term canvas, Indian Navy has a 30 year plan for inducting 24 new submarines that was approved by the Indian Government in the late 1990s. But unfortunately that plan went wrong with not a single new vessel inducted in the one and half decade since. The Indian Navy currently has 14 diesel-electric submarines in its fleet - 10 Russian origin Kilo class vessels and four HDW German origin vessels-apart from one nuclear powered vessel borrowed from Russia on a 10 year lease. China on the other had has 60 diesel-

electric submarines and 10 nuclear powered vessels in its fleet. As such the need of the hour is to strengthen the submarine fleet of the Indian navy which is looking at expanding the area of its “operations”.

There is no denying the fact that the Indian Navy would need to boost by a substantial extent its surveillance and reconnaissance capability with a view to attaining a blue water capability essential to meet the multi-dimensional challenges of the future. The Indian Navy, currently the fifth largest in the world, plans to operate three aircraft carriers by the end of this decade. Indeed, air arm holds the key to attaining a credible blue water capability in all its manifestations. Against this backdrop, Indian Navy’s maritime doctrine rightly incorporates a comprehensive modernization plan for its air arm through a mid-life upgrade and modernization of its current aircraft fleet. The induction of Mig-29 multi role fighter aircraft with air combat, ground attack and maritime strike capability, would prove a major

force multiplier for the air arm of the Indian Navy.

The 37,500-tonne Air Defence Ship (ADS), currently under construction at the Cochin Shipyard Ltd, will be capable of accommodating 30 combat aircraft mix of Mig-29K and LCA Tejas naval version. Everything going as planned, this indigenous aircraft carrier will be inducted into the Indian Naval fleet by around the middle of this decade. Looking into the future, the Indian Navy has also drawn up a plan to design and

Looking into the future, the Indian Navy has also drawn up a plan to design and develop a vastly improved home-grown aircraft carrier as a follow up to ADS.

develop a vastly improved home-grown aircraft carrier as a follow up to ADS. The Indian navy’s currently

operational lone aircraft carrier Viraat is planned to be replaced by INS Vikramaditya which is now undergoing sea trials in Russia.

However, the delay in the delivery of the retrofitted aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya by Russia is a matter of concern for the Indian Navy. This 45,000-tonne class carrier refurbished around Russian decommissioned vessel Admiral Gorshkov was to be handed over to India in December 2012. But problems in the boiler of

the carrier revealed during the sea trials of September 2012 implied that the carrier required extensive rectification to render it fully operational. The saga of INS Vikarmaditya has been marred by time slippages in delivery schedule and steep cost escalation. India, which in 2004 had signed US\$974-million deal for the retrofitting of this decommissioned Russian vessel, was ultimately forced to cough up US\$2.3-billion. The air arm INS Vikarmadiaya comprises Mig-29K deck based fighters and Ka-30 early warning helicopters. Sometime back, Indian Defence Minister AK Antony had told the Indian Parliament that the Russia has been asked to deliver the retrofitted aircraft carrier before the end of 2013.

In a major milestone in developing a home grown deck based fighter, the naval version of India's home-grown fighter aircraft Tejas is now getting ready for a flight test involving the crucial ski jump trials at the shore based test facility at Hans air station of the Indian Navy in Goa. The ski jump trial is crucial for establishing the carrier compatibility of the deck based fighter. Derived from the air force version, the naval Tejas is a longitudinally unstable fly by wire aircraft making it an agile war

machine. The flight control system of LCA navy is being augmented with Leading Edge Vortex Controller (LEVCON) aiding reduction in approach speed for carrier landing. Landing gear for Tejas naval has been adequately strengthened to withstand increased landing loads in carrier operations. Phase Two of the LCA Tejas naval envisages the development of a single seat fighter with a new higher thrust engine and further design optimization.

With the kind of capabilities on the anvil, Indian Navy is seriously working towards transforming itself into a credible maritime force to tackle multi-dimensional challenges of the future. Against the fast changing global maritime dynamism, the Indian Navy has drawn up an ambitious plan to take care of the Indian "interests and assets" across the high seas of the world. The Indian Navy is clear in its perception that the futuristic threat would be dynamic and could emanate from multiple sources. Perhaps the most striking feature of the on-going programme of modernization launched by the Indian Navy is its thrust on sourcing its requirements through the indigenous routes by harnessing the potential of the

Indian industry. The Indian Navy has already made it clear that its plan for modernization is not China specific but based on the multiple threats facing India.

The Indian Navy's vision is to position itself as the third largest fleet in the world. The centerpiece of the Indian Navy's modernisation scheme revolves round, besides the acquisition of aircraft carriers, nuclear-powered submarines. In 2009, India launched INS Arihant, its first home-grown

nuclear submarine. This will give India a nuclear triad, currently capability possessed only by US, China and Russia. Arihant

will carry the Shaurya missile capable of carrying one ton class nuclear warhead with a range of 750-km. The 6,000-tonne plus Arihant equipped with a dozen K-15 ballistic missiles will constitute the robust under-sea leg of the Indian nuclear triad.

The Nerpa class Chakra nuclear submarine which India has taken on lease from Russia in tandem with Arihant will give the Indian Navy a greater degree of

manoeuvrability to hoodwink the enemy's surveillance system and strike hard as they remain submerged indefinitely. Arihant is now close to attaining its operational status. In particular the sea-based nuclear strike capability being put in place by the Indian navy would provide credible second strike capability. Incidentally, the nuclear strike capability based on a submarine platform has advantages in terms of stealth and survivability in cause of a first attack.

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The vision of Indian navy is to operate 150 plus warships of various categories and 500 aircraft including fighter jets, helicopters and

maritime reconnaissance aircraft by 2027. However the trump card of the Indian Navy is the Indo-Russian supersonic cruise missile BrahMos which has already been inducted into some of its warships. The 290-km range BrahMos with a phenomenal destructive power has been described as the "most powerful and most formidable" naval missile of its kind.

In keeping with the global trends, the Indian Navy has been quite

keen on making use of the space assets with a view to projects its combat power in littoral regions with a greater degree of confidence. The plan is to create and sustain a three dimensional, technology driven and satellite enabled network centric system to transform itself into a formidable sea power. To boost its strike capability, the Indian Navy is quite keen to link up its long range missiles, radars and air defence systems as well as the sea bed assets to a central room through a highly dedicated satellite network.

Given the practical difficulties involved in guarding a long and porous coastal stretch, the Indian Navy is looking at a string of satellites specially designed to take care of maritime security aspects. Against such a backdrop, the Indian Navy should be excited over the possibility of the launch of multi band communications satellite GSAT-7 some time this year by ISRO. This satellite which will serve as the exclusive space platform of the Indian Navy will go a long way towards strengthening the communications network of the Indian Navy to effectively link up its resources spread across the vast and sprawling oceanic region. It is

expected to transform the entire maritime domain awareness of the Indian navy. As envisaged now, the satellite will have a 600-700 nautical miles footprint over the Indian Ocean region.

Further into the future, as the situation unfolds, the Indian Navy will look at having dedicated satellite systems for ocean monitoring, weather watch, navigation, surveillance and reconnaissance. Without doubt, in years ahead to sustain its expansion programme, the Indian navy would be interested in acquiring advanced microwave imaging satellite systems, naval transit space platforms, electronic ferret satellites and other specialized space birds.

The Indian Navy should draw inspiration from the fact that India has had a long maritime and ship building tradition. What is more, the spreading of its cultural influence in South East Asia by Indian rulers was a tribute to the sea-faring spirit of medieval India. According to the US based geo-strategist Parag Khanna, who is also the founding director of the Global Governance Initiative at the new American Foundation think tank, "In terms of geopolitics, India's influence is still

very limited...What underpins that is the reality that India is not going to be what initially was thought and hoped it would be a land based continental rival to balance China. Now, India is seen as much more a naval power—overseeing and having a strategic

role with respect to the Indian Ocean and the trade routes there. That actually is the geopolitical future of India. It is a very strong future.”

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Crisis In Mali: Policy Report

- *Dr Vasabjit Banerjee*

A Background to the Regional Conflict

Mali is part of the broader African arid and desert region called the Sahel, which stretches from Mauritania on the West Coast of Africa to Somalia on the East Coast. The main ethnic divisions in the region are between the northern tribes who identify as Arabs and Muslims, such as the Tuareg and Hausa, and the southern black population that may or may not be Islamic. These divisions are worsened by the historical role played by the northern tribes in capturing and enslaving blacks.

In terms of law and order, the area has never been effectively controlled by post-colonial states. In the past, the French, British, and Italian colonial regimes were also unwilling or unable to control the area. This has led to uncontrolled population flows, accompanied by criminal activities, through what are known as Trans-Sahelian networks. At present, these

networks undertake human and narcotics trafficking. The border regions of southern Algeria and northern Mauritania are especially prone to these issues.

Given the trans-border networks, the crisis in Mali has either co-opted members from other insurgencies in neighboring countries or threatens to spread to them. The foremost group that has delivered members and received training with the Mali insurgents has been Boko Haram of Nigeria, which has an Islamic ideology. The first major sign of the conflict spreading was the January 2013 capture of a gas facility in Algeria, which led to the taking of 41 foreign hostages, by a terror group called Belmoktar that is associated with the Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

International Actors

The international actors are involved in Mali for different reasons, which blocks coordinated responses. In terms of western powers, the US is involved because

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it views the crisis in Mali through the prism of Islamic terrorism. The former colonial power, France, allegedly wants to secure the Uranium reserves in the Gao administrative region of Mali or intends to protect the supply route to Niger from where France gets 32 percent of the uranium supplies it requires for domestic electricity production. However, a recent article by Rod Adams uses data from the World Nuclear Association to argue that France neither depends on uranium from Mali nor does it need to maintain the supply route to Niger.¹ Nevertheless, France is the most actively involved international player because it has sent troops into the country that have pushed back the Islamist-Tuareg rebels, and is now supporting the training and buildup of Malian government forces. Also, the African-led International Support Mission (AFISMA) in Mali is present in combating the terrorists with the backing of the UN. The strength and capability of this force will grow via the recent injection of funds by the European Union.²

It is widely acknowledged that the Pakistani presence in Mali goes back to connections made via the military backed A. Q. Khan nuclear proliferation network.

With regard to Asian players, China also reportedly wants to maintain its assets in northern Niger, specifically the SOMINA uranium mine, which have been targets of Tuareg hostility.³ It is widely acknowledged that the Pakistani presence in Mali goes back to connections made via the military backed A. Q. Khan nuclear proliferation network. However, the Pakistani presence in Mali is now through terrorists in the Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).⁴ In a similar vein, Qatar has become involved because Islamic NGOs from there have channeled cash to the Tuareg rebels.⁵

Domestic Politics: Situation and Players

The crisis in Mali arises from the interaction of weak state authority with failed democratization. Although the 22nd March, 2012 coup in the wake of the successful advances of the Tuaregs was a setback for democracy, the political system was already oligarchic and corrupt. In fact, the Islamists have frequently presented themselves as honest alternatives to entrenched

political-economic elites. According to Dr. David Zounmenou of the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, the extant social divisions were ignored or mishandled by the democratic government. For example, the Tuaregs were already beneficiaries of affirmative action policies, but their real aim has been to restore political dominance lost due to democratization.⁶

As of March, 2013, there are four major groups vying for power in Mali. The southern region, containing the administrative districts of Kayes, Koulikoro, and Mopti, has three competing centers of power centered on the capital city of Bamako: President Dioncounda Traoré, Prime Minister Django Cissoko, and Captain Amadou Sanogo.

In northern Mali, the Ansar Dine representing the Tuaregs was present in the regions of Timbuktu, Kidal, and Gao. However, after suffering major losses against French forces, the group fragmented in January 2013. The Movement for Azawad broke away from Ansar Dine and accepted dialogues with the government, and a regional commander moving to the other Tuareg group, the National

Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). Initially fighting against the government, the MNLA was trained in Libya under the Gadhafi regime, but has reportedly switched sides and is now fighting for the government. The Islamist-Tuareg group called Al Qaeda Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), with its roots in the 1990s insurgency between Islamists and secular elites backed by the army in Algeria, is also present in the north. However, the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), also present in this region, has broken away from the AQIM, perhaps because of ethnic and ideological differences with the predominantly Algerian AQIM leadership.⁷

Policy Prescriptions:

At present, given its minor economic involvement in the region, India should only support the French, UN and African Union efforts to control the insurgency in the region. On the positive side, the conflict has not become centered on the control of mineral resources in the area, which extends from energy resources such as petroleum and natural gas, to mineral wealth like gold and diamonds, as well as uranium.

However, if the pattern in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sub-Saharan Africa is considered, then such resource-centric insurgencies could appear in the future (especially if state institutions remain weak). Insurgent groups would then seek to capture resource rich areas and earn rents from international investors. Furthermore, once this dynamic appears, the states would find it increasingly difficult to control the lost areas because it would entail destruction of industrial infrastructure and insurgent groups will acquire better weapons due to a higher and steadier revenue streams.

If Indian companies were to invest in the area in the region under such conditions, the Indian government should follow a two-pronged strategy of negotiating with locally powerful groups and the pertinent national state. India should also consider an overall industrial investment strategy in Africa that addresses the security concerns of private and public companies.

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Interaction On Situation In Pakistan And Regional Security

A delegation led by Ambassador Richard Oslon, US Ambassador to Pakistan visited VIF on 17 April 2013. The delegation interacted with members of the faculty led by Shri Ajit Doval, KC, Director VIF on recent occurrences in Pakistan and the overall security situation in the region. The US ambassador also touched upon some aspects of US perspective on evolving

situation in Afghanistan . The VIF faculty gave its own perspective on events in Af-Pak region and evolving Indo-Pak relations.



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Interaction On Evolving Situation In Afghanistan

On 18 April 2013, Mr. Shaida Mohammad Abdali, Afghanistan's Ambassador to India interacted with members of the VIF faculty on contemporary developments in Afghanistan. He spoke on the ongoing political, security and economic transition.

He gave his perspective on reconciliation efforts with the Taliban. He also covered the interests and its manifestations of its neighbours. The VIF faculty highlighted the Indian interests and objectives in Afghanistan and the developmental efforts which have won popular support.

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Seminar On Refugees In Their Own Homeland: Travails Of Kashmiri Pandits

A seminar was organized jointly by Vivekananda International Foundation and Patriots' Forum in the VIF Conference Hall at New Delhi, on 20th April 2013, on the subject 'Refugees In Their Own Homeland :Travails Of Kashmiri Pandits '.

The seminar was presided over by Shri K.P.S.Gill, IPS (Retd), former D.G. Police and a renowned expert on international terrorism.

Dr. Subramanian Swamy was the Chief Guest .

Amongst prominent personalities in attendance were Lt. General J.F.R.Jacob (hero of Bangladesh war), S/Shri Prakash Singh ex -DGP of U P, A.K.Verma ex-Chief of the RAW, Shri Vishnu Hari Dalmia, Col Tej Tikku, an eminent author on Kashmir along with many other intellectuals and retired senior officers from the Railways and other services.

Initiating the discussion **Shri Ajit Doval**, Director, VIF, and former Director of the Intelligence Bureau, gave an overview of the strategic problem. He emphasized

that the Kashmiri Pandits are the original residents of Kashmir and Kashmir belonged to them. They must be an integral part in all deliberations on the Kashmir issue at the national and international level, along with others.

D.C.Nath, President of Patriots Forum ,highlighted the activities of the Forum and drew attention to its PIL filed, admitted but awaiting hearing for a long time in Delhi High Court against formation ,findings and implementation of Sachar Committee Report.

A book containing the proceedings of the Forum's last two seminars on the demographic challenge facing India, was released by Dr. Subramanian Swamy, Shri K P S Gill and Shri Ajit Doval.

The newly launched website of Patriots' Forum was inaugurated by Dr. Swamy .

On behalf of Patriots' Forum **Shri R.K. Upadhyay** assured the



distinguished guests that the website of the Forum was not just an extra addition to the existing 'Information Explosion'. It will prove very useful to the netizens because of its strong patriotic flavor and analytical approach to the nation's problems.

Dr Subramanian Swamy in his inspiring address, complimented the organizers for highlighting the plight of Kashmiri Hindus who have become refugees in their own homeland. He faulted the Indian nation and the government for not doing enough to redress the grievances of Kashmiri Pandits. Lamenting the wrong twist given by the Kashmir Interlocutors appointed by the government to the national viewpoint during negotiations with secessionists, he emphasized that as per the Indian Constitution, not an inch of Indian Territory can be given away by the government, which has been blundering all along from the days of Pandit Nehru in spite of having a cast iron case. If Pakistan questions the 'Instrument of Accession' signed by Maharaja Hari Singh, its very existence can also be questioned.

He further clarified that Article 370 of the Constitution can be deleted by issuing a Presidential

Order, and doesn't require any constitutional amendment for removing it from the constitution.

The central government can always direct the state government to resettle Kashmiri Hindus in the valley. If the state government dithers, the central government can impose President's rule in the State under article 356. To ensure safety of Hindus the government should resettle ex servicemen from Jammu and other places in the state.

Shri R.K.Ohri, a noted author and retired IPS officer, presented his paper '**Kashmir : A Self Inflicted Wound By Nehru**' through a power point presentation. He traced the history of Kashmir from its origin when Maharishi Kashyap recovered the land from the lake Satisar. The beauty of Kashmir had been praised in great detail by poet Kalidas.

The persecution of Kashmiri Hindus started in 1389 during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Butshikan. Later on the historic Martand Sun Temple was destroyed. The Afghan marauder Abdullah Khan Aquasi invaded Kashmir in 1752 and thereafter another era of killing and

converting of Hindus started. Shri Ohri recalled the bravery of Guru Tegh Bahadur who saved Kashmiri Pandits from the tyranny of Aurangzeb by sacrificing his own life at the Gurudwara Sheeshganj in Delhi. Subsequently Kashmir was sold by the British to the Dogra King Gulab Singh for Rs.75 lakh after they defeated the Sikhs subsequent to the demise of Mahraja Ranjit Singh.

Pandit Nehru committed a strategic mistake by referring the problem to United Nations in 1947. The advancing Indian Army was stopped from capturing two strategic bridges at Domel and Kohala due to the mysterious and premature announcement of ceasefire. The UN, too, made an error by ignoring the Instrument of Accession.

Much before Osama Bin Laden appeared on the scene, Chaudhuri Ghulam Abbas had advocated training of twenty thousand Jihadis for creating chaos in Kashmir, a policy which was later implemented repeatedly.

Shri Ohri pointed out that Kashmiri Terrorism is actually a part of the global Jihad because fighters from 18 Islamic countries

had been found participating in Kashmir insurgency. Supported by Pakistani rulers, the jihadi militants killed more than 300 prominent Kashmiri Hindus between September 1989 and January 1990. On 4th January 1990, through local Urdu newspapers and announcements made on loudspeakers from mosques, the Hindus were given forty eight hours to leave Kashmir. This ethnic cleansing was ignored by the government of India. For more than 2 decades Kashmiri Hindus have been living in terrible conditions. The worst sufferers, however, were the Pandit women.

He insisted that the Government of India should resettle the Kashmiri Hindus in the valley and create an atmosphere in which they can live in peacefully in their ancient homeland.

Dr. Ajay Chrungoo, General Secretary of the Panun Kashmir, in his paper, '**Caught up between Denial and Destruction**', further elaborated the travails of Kashmiri Hindus.

His most important point was that the Kashmir problem is not merely a question of displacement, or Hindus becoming refugees in their

homeland. It has wider civilisational implications. The issue should be seen as the problem of the jihadis unleashing a systematic genocide which resulted in ethnic cleansing of Hindus. All signs of previous Hindu civilizational identity are being removed.

Dr. Shashi Shekhar Toshakhani, a veteran scholar of Kashmiri history and culture, in his paper '**Kashmiri Pandits Grappling with Question of Cultural Identity**' stated that Kashmir was an integral part of the ancient Hindu civilisational space. Now efforts are being made to deny that glorious history and making it look like an extension of Central Asian Islamic culture. Systematically Kashmiri Hindus are being forced to give up their ancient moorings and rich culture. All signs of ancient history of Kashmir are being erased and destroyed. The process is now being given further impetus by the drive to rename most of the ancient and historic sites.

Dr Romesh Raina, General Secretary of All India Kashmiri Samaj, in his paper '**Hindu Dimension of Kashmir**', highlighted that the local Muslim population has been

in the 'War' mode for a long time. The Stone-pelters, terrorists and separatists are all part of the same warring crowd. Moreover by not questioning the repeated denial of the Hindu identity of Kashmir and allowing destruction of its unique historicity, the Indian media are playing into the hands of alien forces.

Shri K.P.S.Gill enlivened the atmosphere by his inspiring presidential address and offered some very practical suggestions. He felt that the best option was to create a separate Union Territory in the valley for settling the Hindus, and take effective action to stamp out the jihadi militancy. There was an urgent requirement of cultivating an iron will at national level for defeating the secessionists. He gave the example of the Punjab terrorists trying to create anti-Sikh riots across India in order to force all Sikhs to migrate to Punjab and drive out all Hindus from Punjab. Elaborating his strategy to curb secessionism in Punjab he had set up a police post wherever more than four Hindu families were living in a village. Clear instructions had been given by him to all police posts and pickets that in case any Hindu family was forced to migrate the concerned

police personnel will be held responsible.

He further revealed that his last wish in service was to be the DGP of J&K, but it was not fulfilled .

The seminar ended with a vote of thanks by Shri R.K.Upadhyay and reciting of the Shanti Mantra.

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Round Table Discussion On Chinese Intrusion In Ladakh

A meeting to discuss the implications of the Chinese intrusion in Ladakh was held at the VIF on 26 April 2013. Gen NC Vij, former COAS briefed a select group of former diplomats and Army officers on the issue. Among those present included Mr Ajit Doval, KC, Director VIF, Ambassador Kanwal Sibal, Ambassador Rajiv Sikri, Lt Gen RK Sawhney (Retd), Brig Vinod Anand (Retd) and Brig Gurmeet Kanwal (Retd). Gen Vij began by situating the location of the intrusion and terrain configuration of the general area. The area lies between the Karakoram and the Ladakh Ranges and is towards the south-east of the Salto Ridge. The Karakoram Highway runs northward across the Karakoram Pass but the going is tough due to glaciated terrain and it is not physically possible to interdict the highway. While explaining the dynamics of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) environment, he said that such transgressions were



a common occurrence by both sides but the difference this time is the fact that the Chinese patrol decided to stay put on the Indian side.

Chinese troops in platoon strength have pitched tents in a patch of land south-east of Daulat Beg Oldie in Sub-sector North. Indian troops have also positioned themselves facing the Chinese. Tactically, the Chinese occupation is of little significance and can be easily isolated by establishing blocking positions and cutting off their supply line. Gen Vij also outlined other available military options including carrying out similar incursions on Chinese side of the LAC in a different sector and then use the same as a bargaining counter. He also reiterated the need for having unity of command along the LAC and placing the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) under the Army's chain of command for effective border management.

China's action is at variance with the general improvement of India-China ties, notably in the economic domain but also in terms of maintaining high level political exchanges bilaterally and working together in multilateral groupings. Defence contacts and regional dialogues, including the recent one on Afghanistan, are other signs of positive engagement between the two countries. This incident comes in the wake of the supposedly friendly exchanges between our Prime Minister and President XI Jinping at Durban on the occasion of the BRICS Summit. The Chinese action also appears to have the blessings of higher authorities and was not merely carried out by a local commander on the ground. The discussion was centred on understanding Chinese motivations behind the intrusion. Some felt that China was giving a strong message to India ahead of Prime Minister's Le Keqiang's scheduled visit to India on 21 May. Another reason could be that the Chinese have decided to pressure India in order to dissuade it from participating in the US pivot towards Asia, about which they are deeply concerned. However, the logic seems to be unsound as

this move may well push India closer to the US.

It was felt that India should have been more firm in dealing with the situation and must not accede to Chinese demands of suspending infrastructure development works on our side of the LAC. Under the circumstances, the scheduled visit of Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid to China is undesirable and India should have insisted that the Chinese first vacate their intrusion. In the long run, India should form closer alliances with the Rim Land countries in East Asia to counter Chinese aggressiveness and be prepared to meet any eventuality on the ground. India needs to give out a strong message to China that its bullying tactics and bellicosity would not be accepted. At the same time, the political and military leadership should draw important lessons from this episode and have a contingency in place for similar occurrences in the foreseeable future.

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Discussion On Political Assertion Of Radical Forces In Bangladesh: Impact & Implications For India

On 28 April 2013, VIF welcomed Gen. (ret) Shankar Roychowdhury PVSM, AVSM former Chief of the Indian Army, Amb. Satish Chandra, former Deputy National Security Advisor in the Chair, Shri DC Nath, President Patriots Forum and Shri Vikramjeet Banerjee, advocate Supreme Court of India, as key speakers for a highly engaging discussion on 'Political Assertion of Radical Forces in Bangladesh: Impact and Implications for India'. Shri Ajit Doval KC, Director VIF, welcomed the distinguished audience and speakers, and pitched critical questions which needed to be addressed.

Dr. Anirban Ganguly, Research Fellow, VIF, began the session with a presentation on: "footprints of radicalism", capturing latest incidents of violence that have happened in West Bengal (WB) and Bangladesh, depicting a clear trend of growing radical assertion



by Islamist organizations in the region. Shri DC Nath followed it up by assessing the socio-political scenarios in WB and Bangladesh. In WB, Shri Nath asserted that it has been the middle class, "Bhadra Lok" which has been enjoying greater socio-political leverage over the rest since Independence. Shri Nath

recommended for an early need to engage with the "Bhadra Lok", in order to dissuade them from nourishing Islamic radicalization, as they nourished

leftist revolution in the past. Gen. Roychowdhury presented a very succinct view of the ground scenario in Bangladesh. Analyzing the growth of Jamaat-e-Islami, he highlighted the fact that the followers of Jamaat continue to believe that the 1971 war should not have happened and are those who support the Jamaat's goal of Islamic radicalization. While Jamaat's influence has grown rapidly in the rural areas and among the uneducated class, Sheikh Hasina led- Awami League

(AL) government, however, still has popular support among the educated, middle class and upper class of the Bangladeshi society. And while the AL Government is attempting to stop radicalization of the society, Gen. Roychowdhury expressed his disappointment at the Indian Government and the West Bengal Government for allowing 16 Islamic organizations to hold a huge rally in protest against the Bangladesh War Crimes' Trials.

Shri Vikramjeet Banerjee highlighted events that depict the growing trend of radical assertion in West Bengal.

The main trends that Shri Banerjee traced out from these events were: growing clout of Islamic parties, expansion in support of Islamic organizations, increasing Islamic demands and the Government accommodating them. He clarified that Muslim economic demands have nothing whatsoever to do with Islamic political demands. Amb. Satish Chandra summarized the entire discussion, drawing out major points of agreement. He came strongly in support of the Shabag movement in Dhaka and called for preserving the liberal space in the Indian polity. An animated Q & A session followed the discussion.

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