



# Vivek

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Brajesh Mishra's Unflinching Loyalty

Pakistan's Dangerous Quest For Arms

Sino - Indian Conflict: Global Ramifications

Insecure Minorities In Bangladesh

*and many more ....*

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# Polls Won't Affect Ties With India

- *Kanwal Sibal*

The upcoming presidential election in the United States lacks the excitement of the election four years ago when Barack Obama made history by being the first black person ever to occupy the White House. He cannot make that kind of history again. The issues he is grappling with in this election are humdrum ones of a sluggish economy and job-creation. They concern the lives of ordinary Americans but have no other extraordinary significance to the world outside.

The challenger, Mitt Romney, is not an electrifying candidate either. On the contrary, his campaign has been judged as amongst the worst ever by a Republican nominee. To many, he is not a credible candidate in terms of clarity and consistency of views and convictions. The domestic focus of the election also reduces the level of outside interest in countries that are not US allies.

## Thinking

Whether Obama or Romney wins is not too material for India-US relations because of the level of maturity and stability they have reached in the last few years. Political and economic attitudes on both sides have been transformed, with a visible desire to work together in mutual interest. The claim that bi-partisan political support now exists in the US for closer ties with India is well-based. The electoral platform of both parties is positive about India, with the Democrats affirming that the US “will continue to invest in a long-term strategic partnership with India” and the Republicans calling India a “geopolitical ally and a strategic trading partner”.

India has grown out of the simplistic traditional thinking that the Democrats are more friendly towards India than the Republicans. If Kennedy was more understanding of India, Carter was much less so and Clinton’s positions on nuclear matters, Kashmir, human rights issues, etc., were highly negative for us, a

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\* *Kanwal Sibal - Member Advisory Board, VIF*

reality his successful visit to India towards the end of his second tenure should not obscure. On the other hand, if Nixon's attitude towards India was unspeakable, Bush was responsible for transforming US ties with India. In reality, the Democrats and the Republicans will do what they think is best for the US in the given circumstances.

We know, of course, where we stand with Barack Obama, whereas Mitt Romney is an unknown quantity. But familiarity with one and the absence of it with the other is not important beyond a point as US policies emerge and evolve from an intensive internal inter-

departmental process that has maximization of national interest as the objective. Obama's views were not initially too congenial for us on several issues, but they evolved more favourably for us in the course of his presidency. After the election, he publicly mulled over nominating Clinton as the US Special Envoy on Kashmir. He believed that, to obtain Pakistan's

support for the US in Afghanistan, it was necessary to press India to make concessions to Pakistan on Kashmir. He was opposed to any prominent role for India in Afghanistan. He alienated the most pro-US section of the Indian entrepreneurial class by his position on outsourcing. But recognizing altered realities, his discourse on Pakistan, India's role

in Afghanistan, on Kashmir, etc., has changed in our favour, though on outsourcing he continues to play politics.

The Obama Administration is helping India strengthen its capacities to manage internal security, which the new

Administration will also do. It has designated LeT and the Haqqani group as terrorist organizations, and declared a bounty on Hafiz Saeed. But then, the US has to manage the political and military transition in Afghanistan for which they need a minimum of Pakistani cooperation, including access to supply routes. These

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realities will weigh with whoever wins the election.

## Candidates

The US as a whole, though, is now deeply disenchanted with the vagaries of Pakistan's policies towards terrorism and Afghanistan. Romney, undoubtedly, shares the general American disillusionment with Pakistan's conduct. If Obama loses and Romney wins, one can hardly see the US overcoming its distrust of Pakistan.

On Kashmir, Romney can be expected to pursue Obama's present neutral line of leaving it to India and Pakistan to settle the issue bilaterally. The US is not yet ready to give India the kind of comfort in Kashmir that should logically flow from its own experience of Pakistan's toxic policies in its immediate neighbourhood driven by military ambition and religious radicalism. However, on the whole, we will

have fewer issues with US policy towards Pakistan whatever the outcome of the next election.

Romney is particularly tough on China. If the Democrats under Obama consider India a lynchpin in the US pivot towards Asia, the Republicans under Romney will hardly think otherwise.

## Issues

Whether one candidate or the other wins, India and the US will have to contend with some irritants and unmet expectations. For India, easier export controls and high/dual use technology transfers, additional costs imposed on the Indian IT industry by hikes in H1B and L1 visa fees, outsourcing issues, etc., will remain on the agenda. US concerns about our nuclear liability law and the stalling of economic reforms will continue, even though the government has allowed FDI in multi-brand retail and raised its ceiling in the insurance and pension sectors.

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pension sectors. Despite our bilateral trade reaching \$100 billion, with a significant spurt in US exports, the US will continue to press for more market openings. The growing US defence sales to India are a strategic advance denoting growing mutual trust, but the US will expect more in this area. With job creation concerns in the US, outsourcing issues will persist. India will continue to

preserve its strategic autonomy in foreign policy, with the US complaisant but suspicious about its “nonaligned” logic.

Obama or Romney. for us, in meaningful political terms, the choice would not be of much import.

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# Brajesh Mishra: India's First Intelligence Tsar

- *Satish Chandra*

Many before him have exercised great influence on an Indian prime minister but no one's influence has been so extensive particularly in foreign policy and security related areas. This was, perhaps, an inevitability given his close personal friendship with Vajpayee dating back to the latter's days in the opposition, his simultaneous occupation of the key offices of principal secretary to PM and the National Security Advisor, his foreign policy expertise, and, of course, his qualities of head and heart.

Mishra was no ideologue but was rather the supreme pragmatist. Accordingly, he could easily accommodate the imperative for a better relationship with the United States with the requirement of a *modus vivendi* with China. That India under the Vajpayee regime was able to make much progress in revamping our relationship with both the USA and China, and that too after our

nuclear tests which were distasteful to both, is testimony to Mishra's diplomatic skill.

Not being a rigid ideologue, Mishra had the propensity to zero in on the best possible outcome on any issue that the political leadership could collectively live with and to maneuver a decision in that direction.

This may not have been the ideal solution or even his preferred choice, but was one which carrying near consensus was the most practicable under the prevailing circumstances.

The three areas in which Mishra left an indelible imprint were India's nuclear policy, its security systems and its foreign policy.

Given the fact that as the Bharatiya Janata Party's foreign policy spokesman, Mishra had unequivocally made known that if elected to power the BJP would make the bomb, it is no surprise that he presided over the

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\* *Satish Chandra - Distinguished Fellow, VIF*

nuclearisation of India. It is a tribute to him that he ensured that India's nuclear tests were successfully conducted within weeks of the NDA government's assumption of office and that the veil of secrecy so necessary to facilitate their conduct was duly maintained and not lifted till completion of the tests.

Having tested, it was Mishra who oversaw the country's nuclear weaponisation and put in place viable systems and structures not only to manage this process but also to ensure the effective use of these weapons, should the need arise, in accordance with prescribed policies and directives. Indeed, India's nuclear doctrine, its nuclear command and control system, and its increasingly effective deterrent are to no small extent due to Mishra's exertions.

Being the Prime Minister's pointman on security, in his capacity as the NSA, Mishra was inevitably involved in all security related issues both internal and external. One of his most important contributions in his role as NSA was to build a host of new security related institutions and structures. It was thus under his direction that the National Security Council system (comprising the National Security Council, the National Security Council Secretariat, the Strategic Policy Group, the National Security Advisory Group, and the office of the National Security Advisor) was set up designed to cope with both existing and emerging security challenges as well as to fuse and coordinate intelligence.

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In addition, an Intelligence Coordination Group was created to task the intelligence agencies and ensure their accountability, a



National Information Board was established for national level policy formulation on information warfare and information security and an apex techint agency was set up.

All these newly created entities and structures were assiduously nurtured by Mishra and had begun to find their feet by the time he demitted office. He, however, candidly admitted that while the NDA government had embedded these entities in the Indian security firmament they would take years to fully establish themselves and accordingly their future would depend upon whether or not succeeding governments would continue to similarly support them.

It may be mentioned that by virtue of his position as the NSA and his heading the Intelligence Coordination Board, Mishra in effect became India's first intelligence tsar who regularly interacted with all the intelligence agencies and sought to exercise effective oversight over them, and to ensure proper intelligence sharing.

In the realm of foreign policy, Mishra's role, given his background as a professional

diplomat, was considerable. It is, therefore, not surprising that after having gotten over the downturn in our ties with the USA and China, following our nuclear tests, India generally had good ties with countries all across the globe during the NDA regime.

As mentioned earlier, improved ties with the USA coincided with better relations with China, relations with countries like Russia and France were refurbished, and we had robust links with both Iran and Israel at the same time.

Both Mishra and Vajpayee showed little hawkishness on either Pakistan or China and presumably there was no perceptible difference of approach between the two. Nevertheless, it is significant that the former President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, declared a ceasefire across the LoC and, in the India-Pakistan joint statement of January 2004 negotiated by Mishra, provided an assurance that he would "not permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner." It is also significant that it was during the NDA regime that the Chinese authorities shared maps

pertaining to their claims in the middle sector.

Mishra also deserves unqualified credit for the upturn in India-US ties. After the damage done to the relationship, as a result of the US reaction to our tests had been arrested, Mishra made it plain to his US interlocutors that ties between the two countries would never be able to achieve their full potential unless there was cooperation on the trinity issues notably high technology commerce, civilian nuclear energy cooperation and civilian space collaboration. To its credit, the US in turn recognized the substance of this argument and sought to rectify the situation which led to the blossoming of ties between the two countries.

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All those privileged to work closely with Mishra would testify to the fact that he was an ideal boss. Always accessible, his decisions were quick and instructions precise and clear cut. While not one to suffer fools easily, he was quite willing to permit one to take a position not in consonance with his own. He was big enough to take an honest difference of opinion in his stride and not allow it to come in the way of a productive professional relationship geared to promoting the national interest.

All this taken together with the complete backing and support provided by him to those who worked with him in fulfillment of their mandate explains the unflinching loyalty and trust that he inspired from them and helped him in achieving as much as he did.

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# Perspectives On The 1962 Sino-Indian War

- *Claude Arpi*

When one looks at the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict fifty years after the event, it is striking that the two protagonists on the southern and northern sides of the Himalayas do perceive the event with opposite intensity.

In India, hundreds of cover stories, articles, TV programs, and debates tried to analyze what happened on the Namkha Chu, in the Walong sector or in Ladakh, while China kept noticeably quiet.

*The Global Times* just published a survey stating: “More than 80 percent of the Chinese people feel neutral or positive about Indians, and most believe the two neighboring countries can move beyond the specter of war.”

It elaborated: “Five decades after the 1962 war along the Chinese-Indian border, the Global Poll Center affiliated to *The Global Times* conducted a survey among people above the age of 15 in seven major cities ...When asked their impression of India, 78 percent of respondents said they have a

neutral stance toward the country, while 16.4 percent dislike the country.”

And not surprisingly (or not): “Only about 15 percent of the respondents knew about the 1962 war.” But for India, it has remained a major scar on her psyche.

When on October 6, 1962, the Chinese leadership decided to teach India a lesson, Mao Zedong justified the Chinese attack: “It seems like armed coexistence won’t work. It’s just as we expected. Nehru really wants to use force. This isn’t strange. He has always wanted to seize Aksai Chin and Thagla Ridge. He thinks he can get everything he desires.”

The Chairman explained to his colleagues: “We fought a war with old Chiang [Kai-shek]. We fought a war with Japan, and one with America. During none of these, did we fear. And in each case, we won. Now the Indians want to fight a war with us. Naturally, we don’t have fear. [But] we cannot lose

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\* *Claude Arpi*

ground; once we lose ground it would be tantamount to letting them seize a big piece of land equivalent to Fujian province [Mao refers to NEFA].”

Mao added: “China needn’t fear isolation, as long as the frontline troops fight well, we will be in an advantageous position. ...It’s better to die standing, than to die kneeling. If China fought successfully, in an awe-inspiring way, this will guarantee at least thirty years of peace”.

China still tries to make the world believe that the conflict was started by India and bought 30 (or 50) years of peace, courtesy the slap given to the Indian nation.

One of the reasons of the one-sided trauma is that the Government of India has never told the truth about the conflict. The classified Henderson-Brooks-Bhagat and other reports related to the border issue and the Sino-Indian conflict are still kept hidden from the Indian public.

Today, by keeping the Report under wraps, the Government is

doing a disservice to the nation, as Neville Maxwell’s interpretation alone seems to be the ‘authoritative’ one. Whatever blunder was committed 50 years ago, the holding of the report is unfortunate.

In 2005, when veteran journalist and former MP Kuldip Nayar requested access to the Henderson-Brooks Report under the RTI, he was told by the Defence Ministry (during a

hearing of the Commission on March 7, 2009): “Disclosure of this information will amount to disclosure of the army’s operational strategy in the North-East and the discussion on

deployments has a direct bearing on the question of the demarcation of the Line of Actual Control between India and China, a live issue under examination between the two countries at present.”

In a ‘decision notice’ dated March 19, 2010, the Central Information Commission said: “We have examined the report specifically in terms of its bearing on present national security. ...The disclosure of information of which the

One of the reasons of the one-sided trauma is that the Government of India has never told the truth about the conflict. The classified Henderson-Brooks-Bhagat and other reports related to the border issue and the Sino-Indian conflict are still kept hidden from the Indian public.

Henderson Brooks report carries considerable detail on what precipitated the war of 1962 between India and China will seriously compromise both security and the relationship between India & China, thus having a bearing both on internal and external security. ...For reasons that we consider unwise to discuss in this Decision Notice, this Division Bench agrees that no part of the report might at this stage be disclosed.” That was it.

Fifty years after the traumatic events, not only do some aspects remain hidden, but others are less known. I shall mention a few:

### **The precise location of the border in the Tawang sector**

The MoD and the MEA (Historical Division) in Delhi were aware that there was a discrepancy between the famous McMahon Line and the position of the frontier on the ground. Till the fateful day of October 20, 1962, the Army bosses in Delhi were unable to tell the local commanders where the

The MoD and the MEA (Historical Division) in Delhi were aware that there was a discrepancy between the famous McMahon Line and the position of the frontier on the ground. Till the fateful day of October 20, 1962, the Army bosses in Delhi were unable to tell the local commanders where the border in Tawang sector precisely was.

border in Tawang sector precisely was. This was certainly not a valid pretext for Mao to attack India, as in any case, China had robbed India of some 37,000 sq kms in the Aksai Chin region.

### **The Army had no map.**

Lt. Gen. Niranjan Prasad, GOC 4 Infantry Division wrote in his memoirs (*The Fall of Tawang*): “It is hard to understand how any

purposeful negotiation could have been conducted with Communist China [in 1960] when even such elementary details as accurate maps were not produced; or, if they were in existence, they were certainly not made available to

the Army, who had been given the responsibility for ensuring the security of the border.”

There is the story of Capt. H.S. Talwar of the elite 17 Parachute Field Regiment who was asked to reinforce Tsangle, an advance post, north of the Namkha chu on October 16. Without a map, he and his men roamed around for 2 days in the snow; they finally landed a



few kilometers east at a 2 Rajputs camp (and were eventually taken PoWs to Tibet with Brig. John Dalvi on October 21).

### **Some troops fought extremely well**

Take the example of the 2 Rajputs under the command of Lt. Col. Maha Singh Rikh who moved to the banks of the Namka chu river by October 10 as a part of 7 Infantry Brigade. The brigade was stretched out along a nearly 20 kilometer front beside the river. It was a five-day march to walk from one end to the other (the confluence with the Namjiang chu). Not a single man from the Rajputs was awarded any gallantry medal, because there was no one left to write the citations; all the officers or JCOs who were not killed or seriously wounded were taken POWs. Out of 513 all ranks on the banks of the river, the 2 Rajput lost 282 men, 81 were wounded and captured, while 90 others were taken prisoners. Only 60 other ranks, mostly from the administrative elements got back.

Major B.K. Pant of 2 Rajput displayed exemplary heroism, while wounded in the stomach and legs. Though his Company suffered heavy casualties,

Major B.K. Pant of 2 Rajput displayed exemplary heroism, while wounded in the stomach and legs. Though his Company suffered heavy casualties, he continued to lead and inspire his men, exhorting them to fight till the last man.

he continued to lead and inspire his men, exhorting them to fight till the last man. Ditto for several units in the Sela-Bomdila sector.

The Indian troops fought pitched battles in the Walong sector of the NEFA and Chushul area in Ladakh where the Chinese were inflicted heavy losses.

### **A complete intelligence failure**

A flamboyant new Corps Commander, Lt. Gen. B.M. Kaul, planned Operation Leghorn to 'evict' the Chinese by October 10. Kaul took over IV Corps, a Corps especially created 'to throw the Chinese out'. On his arrival in Tezpur, Kaul addressed the senior officers: "The Prime Minister himself had ordered these posts [near the Thagla ridge] to be set up and he had based his decision on the highest intelligence advice." The 'highest intelligence' inputs from Mullik turned out to be a sad joke on the 7 Infantry Brigade.

Till the last fateful minute, the arrogant IB Chief, B.N. Mullick, said the Chinese would not attack,



they don't have the capacity. Such a blunder!

The Prime Minister himself, at Palam airport on his way to Colombo, told the waiting journalists that he had ordered the Indian Army "to throw the Chinese out". He generously left the time to the discretion of the Army. This was on October 12, 1962, just 8 days before the fateful day. He had received intelligence inputs from Mullik!

### Chinese spies

Just as today Beijing can hack into any computer system, in Mao's days, the Chinese intelligence knew everything about Kaul's and his acolytes' plans. The Chinese had infiltrated the area using different methods. In his memoirs, Prasad recalled: "From our own Signals channels I had received reports of a pirate radio operating somewhere in our area, but when we referred this to higher authorities the matter was dismissed: we were curtly told that there was no pirate radio transmitter on our side of the border. Subsequently, it was confirmed that the Chinese had indeed sneaked in a pirate transmitter to Chacko (on the road to Bomdila) in the Tibetan labour camp. The aerial of their

transmitter was concealed as a tall prayer-flagstaff so common in the Buddhist belt of the Himalayas." This is probably how Mao was aware of Operation *Op Leghorn*.

Some war veterans recall that on the way to Bomdila, there was a *dhaba* manned by two beautiful 'local' girls. All officers and jawans would stop there, have a *chai* and chat with the girls. It turned out later that they were from the other side.

An informant told this writer that when Lt. Gen. Kaul was evacuated from the Namkha Chu on October 8, having fallen sick due to the altitude, he was carried pick-a-back by 'local' porters. It was later discovered that one of them was a Chinese interpreter in a PoW camp in Tibet. The secrets were out!

### Gallantry Awards

The entire operation theater was plunged in deep chaos due to contradictory orders from the Army HQ (Lt. Gen. B.M Kaul, the Corps Commander was directing the Operation from his sick-bed in Delhi). Ad hocism was the rule before, during and after the Operations.

The awards were decided by Delhi without consulting the local

commanders. It is said that an officer who had run away from the Namkha chu was given the Maha Vir Chakra, the second highest gallantry award.

### **Mao's return to power**

In early 1962, Mao was out of power due to the utter failure of his Great Leap Forward. Some 45 million Chinese had died after a 3-year man-made famine. Mao Zedong managed to come back on the political scene in September 1962. If he had not managed to return at that time, the war with India would have probably not taken place. Of course, with 'if' many sections of world history could be rewritten, but it is a fact that once Mao's ideological hard-line prevailed in Beijing, it was difficult to avoid a clash.

In early 1962, Mao was out of power due to the utter failure of his Great Leap Forward. Some 45 million Chinese had died after a 3-year man-made famine. Mao Zedong managed to come back on the political scene in September 1962. If he had not managed to return at that time, the war with India would have probably not taken place.

### **The Role of the US and the UK**

Averell Harriman, the US Assistant Secretary of State and Duncan Sandys, the British Secretary for Commonwealth Relations visited India on November 22, 1962. This was the

day China declared a unilateral ceasefire in the war with India. The visit was supposedly to assess India's needs to resist Communist China; however both envoys "made clear their governments' willingness to provide military assistance to India but pointed out the related need for negotiations to resolve the Kashmir dispute."

A clear signal was given to India who had hardly recovered from the blackest month of her history: she had to compromise on Kashmir.

Consequently, six rounds of talks between India and Pakistan were held to find a solution for the vexed issue, but to no avail. However, Ayub Khan, the Pakistani President, must have taken the Western intervention as an encouragement for his claim.

The Kennedy and later the Johnson Administrations thought of 're-balancing' the assistance to Pakistan, with the condition that India should accept to 'settle' the Kashmir issue.

## **The strategic importance of the conflict**

In *The New York Times*, on October 28, 1962, Robert Trumbull resumed the importance of the conflict for Mao: “Peking [Beijing] Takes Political Contest Into Military Sphere by Attempting To Gain a Strategic Advantage South of the Himalayas”, adding: “The armed conflict now raging along

the disputed border between India and Communist China is thought in Asia to be a recrudescence of the historic Chinese extension into the military sphere, and of Peking's determination to halt democratic India's challenge for political leadership in Asia.”

This way, Mao fulfilled his objective.

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# Sino-Indian War: Fifty Years On

- *Chietigj Bajpae*

Fifty years ago this month China and India went to war. Historically, the conflict that began on October 20 was a blip, lasting only a month with hostilities confined to their disputed border and even limited to the use of both countries' armies with a minimal role for their air force and navies. On the world stage, the conflict was overshadowed by a superpower stand-off between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

However, India's humiliating defeat is etched in its national psyche as the greatest foreign policy disaster suffered by the country since it became an independent nation-state in 1947. Moreover, despite being confined to their disputed border it was a strategically significant conflict as it symbolised the end of a short-lived campaign to forge an Asian brotherhood of nations, which had begun with India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru hosting the Asian Relations

Conference in April 1947. China and India played a pivotal role in laying the groundwork for defining the rules of regional interaction in post-colonial Asia when they forged the 'Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence' or 'Panchsheel', which became the antecedent to subsequent norms of Asian interaction, such as ASEAN's 'Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.'<sup>i</sup> However, this phase of Asian solidarity perished following the 1962 war, after which the Cold War rivalries superseded regional identities and super power-led security treaties such as the SEATO (Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation) became the core of the regional security architecture during the Cold War.

## International cooperation

The fact that there has been no renewed outbreak of conflict between China and India in the half century since the war is a positive achievement. Aside from a few brief conflagrations, notably in

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\* *Chietigj Bajpae* - Senior Research Associate, VIF

the Sumdorong Chu Valley in 1987, bilateral tensions have been confined to rhetoric and symbolic posturing. Both countries have a shared interest in maintaining a stable regional and international environment in order to maintain their growth and development trajectories and consolidate their 'comprehensive national power'.<sup>ii</sup>

Both countries' nuclear weapons capabilities have also served to deter the outbreak of an all-out war. While lagging behind China, India's fast developing nuclear capabilities, including the expanding range of its ballistic missiles (as illustrated by the test of the Agni V inter-continental ballistic missile in April 2012) and development of a nuclear triad (confirmed by the launch of India's first indigenous nuclear submarine, the *INS Arihant* in 2009) has ensured the presence of a credible nuclear deterrent in the Sino-Indian rivalry.<sup>iii</sup>

Furthermore, conflict has been constrained by the fact that their bilateral frictions have been largely strategic rather than ideological, unlike the US-Soviet rivalry during the Cold War. The bilateral relationship lacks the historical animosity seen in the Sino-Japanese or Sino-Vietnamese

relationship, with the only recorded conflict between both countries before the 1962 war occurring in 649CE when the Chinese carried out a limited incursion into the Gangetic plains.<sup>iv</sup>

At the international level, both countries have cooperated on issues ranging from climate change to opposing agricultural subsidies in industrialised countries, adopting a joint position on the Arab Spring and relations with pariah regimes such as Iran, Sudan and, until recently, Myanmar (Burma). Several forums have emerged to capture this cordial international relationship, including the Russia-China-India strategic dialogue and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation where both states have called for the emergence of a "multi-polar world". Meanwhile, the G20 and BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) forum have emerged as platforms where both states have deepened economic integration, such as an agreement for settling intra-BRICS trade in their local currencies.<sup>v</sup>

The year 2005 was a pinnacle for the bilateral relationship as both countries declared themselves to

be “strategic and cooperative partners for peace and prosperity,” which has been reaffirmed by confidence-building initiatives, including joint military exercises and diplomatic exchanges. These include the Annual Defense Dialogue, codenamed “Hand-to-Hand”, which began in 2008; the establishment of direct hotlines between the premiers of both countries in 2010; the Joint Economic Group; and the establishment of a new bilateral boundary coordination mechanism earlier this year. This complements other forums of interaction at the political, economic and military levels, including flag meetings, border personnel meetings and normal diplomatic channels.<sup>vi</sup>

However, at the regional level, their relationship has been far more precarious. Notably, the fact that both states have been unable to resolve their long-standing territorial dispute is a cause for concern. While China has resolved some 17 of 23 territorial disputes since 1949, limited progress has been made in the dispute with India under the special representatives’ framework, which has been in place since 2003.

### Territorial troubles

However, at the regional level, their relationship has been far more precarious. Notably, the fact that both states have been unable to resolve their long-standing territorial dispute is a cause for

concern.<sup>vii</sup> While China has resolved some 17 of 23 territorial disputes since 1949, limited progress has been made in the dispute with India under the special representatives’ framework, which has been in place since 2003.<sup>viii</sup> Aside from a few symbolic gestures, such as opening up border trade along the Nathu La and Jelepala passes,

recent events appear to indicate backtracking in the limited progress that has been achieved<sup>ix</sup>. This includes the 2005 “Political Parameters and Guiding Principles” that recognised the interests of settled populations.<sup>x</sup>

The relatively simple solution of recognizing the de facto borders—with India retaining control of Arunachal Pradesh and China of Aksai Chin – has been hijacked by the expanded tools and platforms available to both countries as a result of their rise as major powers.<sup>xi</sup> This was made evident in 2009, when China attempted to block an Asian Development Bank loan to India as it included a



package for the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims as 'Southern Tibet'.<sup>xii</sup> Similarly, Chinese investment in infrastructure projects in Gilgit-Baltistan (in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir), adds an economic facet to the territorial dispute.<sup>xiii</sup> This has been exasperated by claims that some 4,000 Chinese troops are based in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir to support these infrastructure projects.<sup>xiv</sup>

Added to this has been the changing strategic significance of the territorial dispute for both countries. For China, this refers to instability in ethnically Tibetan areas following the 2008

riots. This has been fuelled by concerns that the passing of the aging Dalai Lama may pave the way for the rise of a new generation of more radical Tibetan leaders who are likely to adopt less conciliatory positions toward the Chinese government. This has prompted Beijing to reaffirm its sovereignty over the Tibet Autonomous Region, while adopting a more stringent position

over its claim to all of Arunachal Pradesh, including the symbolically important town of Tawang, which is home to the largest Tibetan monastery outside Lhasa and birthplace of the sixth Dalai Lama. Other provocative actions, such as denying visas to residents of Arunachal Pradesh and issuing stapled visas to residents of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir provide further evidence of

China's increasingly hard-line position on the territorial dispute.<sup>xv</sup> This runs contrary to its earlier position of adopting an increasingly neutral position on the Kashmir dispute (which was demonstrated

during the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan in 1999).<sup>xvi</sup>

An additional dimension to the territorial dispute is the issue of water flows. Most of India's river systems originate in China and the lack of trust stemming from the border dispute has deterred transparency and cooperation between both countries on sharing information on hydrology, dam

An additional dimension to the territorial dispute is the issue of water flows. Most of India's river systems originate in China and the lack of trust stemming from the border dispute has deterred transparency and cooperation between both countries on sharing information on hydrology, dam construction plans and water diversion projects.

construction plans and water diversion projects.<sup>xvii</sup> Given both countries' growing water shortages and their still significant agrarian economies, the water-sharing issue threatens to enflame border tensions.

On the military front, China's development of the Qinghai-Tibet railway, its proposed extension to prefectures bordering India, and the deployment of additional border defense regiments and mountain brigades have strengthened the Chinese military's tactical position.<sup>xviii</sup> While lagging behind China, India has also increased infrastructure projects along the boundary, which will enhance the Indian military's response time to hostilities.<sup>xix</sup> Both countries have also deployed increasingly sophisticated and destructive military platforms along their disputed border. For instance, India's placement of the *BrahMos* cruise missile along the eastern border region in 2011 parallels China's deployment of CSS-3 intermediate range and CSS-5 medium-range ballistic missiles along its border with India in 2010.<sup>xx</sup>

Both countries' strengthened military positions along their disputed border have contributed

to a growing number of border transgressions. Indian authorities have reported 550 such "transgressions" by Chinese troops along three sectors — western (Ladakh), middle (Uttrakhand, Himachal Pradesh) and eastern (Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh) — since 2010.<sup>xxi</sup> However, this alludes to the fact that the Line of Actual Control (LAC), distinguishing the Indian and Chinese sides of the border, remains un-demarcated with no mutual agreement on the exact alignments of the border.<sup>xxii</sup>

### **Economic imbalances**

Adding to their longstanding territorial dispute is the emergence of new theatres of competition between both countries, which include the disparity in their economic relationship, their growing maritime interests and relations with 'third parties'. On the economic front, rather than rhetorical claims of Indian services complementing Chinese manufacturing and Chinese hardware complementing Indian software a climate of mistrust persists. This has been fuelled by a trade imbalance in China's favour and three-quarters of Indian exports to China

comprising commodities and raw materials with little value added in contrast to China's export of manufactured goods to India.<sup>xxiii</sup> While bilateral trade has grown rapidly, crossing US\$70 billion in 2011 with a target of US\$100 billion by 2015, it still remains relatively low with India accounting for a mere 3.8 per cent of China's total global trade as the country's tenth-largest trade partner, although China is now India's third-largest trading partner in goods, and the biggest if Hong Kong is included.<sup>xxiv</sup> One-fifth of India's total trade deficit emanates from China (rising to half of India's total trade imbalance when excluding India's oil imports).<sup>xxv</sup>

Mistrust in their economic relationship has also been fuelled by the persistence of non-tariff barriers, such as stringent Indian guidelines for investment in strategically important sectors such as telecoms and ports and in sensitive areas such as the Mannar Basin off the coast of Sri Lanka, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands at the mouth of the Strait of Malacca.<sup>xxvi</sup> China has also been slow to admit access to sectors where India retains a comparative advantage, such as information technology and

pharmaceuticals.<sup>xxvii</sup> India remains one of the leading initiators of anti-dumping investigations against China, with some 35 complaints and 22 duties against Chinese firms in the last three years.<sup>xxviii</sup> This has prompted India's reluctance to grant China "market economy" status.<sup>xxix</sup>

### **Maritime rivalry**

The rise of both countries as major trading and resource-consuming powers has in turn elevated the strategic importance of the maritime domain and led both countries to pursue increasingly aggressive military modernisation initiatives supported by growing defence budgets. More than 95 per cent of India's exports are seaborne compared to 60 per cent of China's exports while 70 per cent of Indian hydrocarbons emanate from offshore blocks and 80 per cent of China's oil imports transit the sea lanes of the South China Sea and Indian Ocean.<sup>xxx</sup> This in turn has transformed the nature of their bilateral relationship from a land-based rivalry toward a competition increasingly taking place in the maritime domain.

China's navy currently has three times more combat vessels and

five times more personnel than the Indian navy. Nonetheless, the Indian Navy – the world’s fifth-largest – has ambitious plans to establish a 160-vessel fleet including three aircraft carrier groups by 2025.<sup>xxxii</sup> The fact that China and India are two of only six countries with a nuclear submarine capability and two of only ten countries with aircraft carriers points toward both countries’ growing power projection capabilities beyond their littoral regions.

China’s pursuit of “new historic missions” that entail increasing overseas deployments coincide with the India’s Navy’s ambitions to transform itself into “a brand new multi-dimensional navy” with “reach and sustainability”.<sup>xxxiii</sup> This will ensure that both countries’ militaries cross paths more frequently. This was demonstrated in July 2011 when an Indian Navy vessel, the *INS Airavat* received alleged radio contact from the Chinese Navy demanding that the vessel depart disputed waters in the South China Sea after completing a port call in Vietnam.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Similarly, the 2009 deployment of a People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) naval taskforce to the Indian Ocean, coupled with the country’s

first “turn-around” naval facility in the Seychelles has brought China’s military into closer contact with India’s strategic backyard and turned the hypothetical debate over China’s blue water naval ambitions into a reality.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

### Third-party complications

Finally, several structural factors are facilitating the persistence of mutual mistrust between both nations. At the inter-state level, limited people-to-people contact rooted in cultural barriers and infrastructure deficiencies, such as the absence of direct flights between Shanghai and Mumbai, the commercial centres of both countries, has fuelled a climate of mistrust and misunderstanding. This is reflected in the jingoistic media reporting of both countries, which is illustrated by sensationalist headlines claiming that ‘China seeks to breakup India’ and ‘China will launch a war in a decade’, the construction of an “astronomical observatory in Aksai Chin” and proposals by China to “divide Indian and Pacific Oceans between China and US”.<sup>xxxv</sup> Exasperating this strategic mistrust and misunderstanding is rising levels of nationalism that accompany the

growing international clout of both countries.

At the international level, China and India's relations with 'third parties' have served to inflame their long-standing bilateral tensions. Notably, China's "all-weather" relationship with Pakistan has been complemented by deepening relations with other states around India's periphery, including Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Afghanistan.<sup>xxxvi</sup> These deepening relations have been evidenced in China emerging as a leading trade partner, source of diplomatic support and foreign investment, and provider of military hardware to several countries in the region. These include China's conclusion of a 'strategic and cooperative partnership' with Afghanistan in June 2012, less than a year after India concluded a similar agreement with Kabul in October 2011 and Chinese investment in the Hambantota port project in Sri Lanka, a deep-sea project at the Sonadia Island in Bangladesh, constructing a railway link

between China and Nepal and an oil and gas pipeline from the port of Kyaukryu in Myanmar to Kunming in China's Yunnan Province.<sup>xxxvii</sup> New Delhi fears, with justification, that these partnerships and projects could emerge as catalysts for "creeping" or "strategic encirclement" over time.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

Case in point is Pakistan, where despite growing levels of political, economic and security instability facing the country, China has remained a committed partner as noted by the presence of more than 60 Chinese companies and 10,000 Chinese nationals in the country working on 122 major development projects.<sup>xxxix</sup> Notably, China has recently renewed its commitment to the Gwadar port project in Baluchistan in south-west Pakistan after the Port Authority of Singapore decided to pull out of the port management and development contract.<sup>xl</sup> Despite problems facing the project over land acquisition and security concerns, China has re-assumed

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responsibility for the infrastructure project after earlier financing the construction of the strategically important port. China is now Pakistan's second-largest trading partner and economic integration has continued to gain momentum facilitated by their free trade agreement, the establishment of the Pakistan and China Joint Investment Company (JIC) and an agreement to settle trade across the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region border using the Chinese Yuan as the base currency (replacing the US dollar), which is a precursor for a currency swap agreement between both countries. <sup>xli</sup> China's on-going support for Pakistan's civilian and military nuclear power program is in clear violation of its commitments as a member of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group, specially where Chashma 3 and 4 are concerned.<sup>xlii</sup>

In Afghanistan, a nascent competition for transshipment corridors is underway with India having constructed the Delaram-Zeranj highway connecting Afghanistan with the Iranian port of Chahbahar, which provides an alternative to the Chinese-funded Pakistani port at Gwadar to access the resources and markets of

Central, West and South Asia.<sup>xliii</sup> Myanmar's on-going democratic transition also makes the country a key "battleground" state in the Sino-Indian competition for resources and strategic influence. While India has so far played "second-fiddle" to China in Myanmar, New Delhi's middle-path approach of engaging both the former military junta regime and pro-democratic forces is likely to yield dividends as the country comes in from the cold and re-engages with the international community. The democratic and economic liberalisation process itself appears to have been driven in part by the desire of the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP)-led government to reduce the country's overwhelming reliance on trade, aid and investment from China. This was most visibly illustrated by the suspension of the \$3.6 billion Myitsone dam and hydroelectric power project in Kachin state in September 2011 over social and environmental concerns.

Indian infrastructure projects in Myanmar, such as the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, which entails a road and inland waterway link from Myanmar's Sittwe port to India's



Mizoram state, have yet to yield results in the form of direct overland access to the resources and markets of East Asia. While Beijing has a significant presence in the hydropower, mining, oil and gas and construction industries in the country, India can offer assistance to Myanmar in sectors where it retains a comparative advantage, including information technology, pharmaceuticals, education and agriculture. Further room exists for New Delhi to push for capacity building on the economic front, while strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law in Myanmar. This will ensure that the country's on-going reform process is substantive and sustainable.

Another potential “battleground” state is Sri Lanka, where the state’s internal transformation is also emerging as a catalyst for China and India to reorient their relations. However, unlike Myanmar where the democratic

Another potential “battleground” state is Sri Lanka, where the state’s internal transformation is also emerging as a catalyst for China and India to reorient their relations. However, unlike Myanmar where the democratic transition offers opportunities to India to expand its influence, in Sri Lanka, the consolidation of the civilian dictatorship of President Mahinda Rajapaksa has offered China the opportunity to strengthen its presence.

transition offers opportunities to India to expand its influence, in Sri Lanka, the consolidation of the civilian dictatorship of President Mahinda Rajapaksa has offered China the opportunity to strengthen its presence. Amid criticism of Sri Lanka’s human rights record in the conduct of its military campaign against the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE) that culminated in victory over the separatist insurgency in 2009, Colombo has increasingly turned to “non-traditional” sources of diplomatic and financial assistance. Notably, China has emerged as Sri Lanka’s leading aid donor, provided preferential loans at subsidized rates in addition to investment in strategically and symbolically important infrastructure projects, such as the Hambantota port project and the Colombo South Harbor Development Project.<sup>xliv</sup> Beijing was also more forthcoming in providing offensive armaments to the Sri Lankan military in its

campaign against the Tamil Tigers and provided crucial diplomatic support to Sri Lanka that New Delhi was unable or unwilling to provide due to domestic political considerations.<sup>xlv</sup> This has strengthened goodwill between Colombo and Beijing, while souring relations with New Delhi.

Bangladesh and Nepal are not far behind as a potential stage of Sino-Indian rivalry. China has concluded the second-biggest investment in Bangladesh earlier this year by contributing two-thirds of the cost of a fertilizer factory in Sylhet.<sup>xlvi</sup> This has been accompanied by infrastructure projects aimed at helping Bangladesh emerge as a regional trade and transshipment hub, including constructing bridges and upgrading road and rail infrastructure in the country as well as strengthening the country's commercial shipping fleet.<sup>xlvii</sup> In 2011, China also signed an agreement with Bangladesh for the sale of defence-related items, including fighter aircraft, helicopters and radar systems.<sup>xlviii</sup> Meanwhile, the transition of the Nepali Maoists from an insurgent group to a mainstream political party (in the form of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)), has facilitated closer

relations between Nepal and China. The Sino-Nepali rapprochement has in turn allowed Nepal to reduce India's traditionally dominant influence over the country, such as through putting pressure on India to renegotiate the terms of the perceived unequal friendship treaty between the two states. Meanwhile, the Nepali government has reciprocated China's advances by becoming increasingly aggressive in its crackdown on Tibetan activists in Nepal, which hosts the largest population of Tibetan exiles after India.<sup>xlix</sup>

Meanwhile, India has pursued a deepening relationship with China's traditional adversaries, including Japan, Vietnam and the United States. The concerted US effort to help India emerge as a "world power", amid both countries' deepening economic interdependence and military-to-military cooperation while drawing India into the East Asia region, has been perceived by Beijing as a means of balancing China's rising regional and global influence.<sup>1</sup> Calls by the US officials for India to go beyond its 'Look East' policy and 'Be East', while shifting its characterisation of the region from the 'Asia-Pacific'

to the 'Indo-Pacific' allude to attempts by Washington to further embed India into the region.<sup>li</sup> Furthermore, the on-going transformation of the US-led hub-and-spoke bilateral alliance system into a multilateral alliance model in Asia signals that elements of the "arc of democracies" rhetoric that emerged under the George W. Bush administration remains alive. Evidence of this includes the launch of the US-Japan-India trilateral dialogue in 2011 and Japan's participation in the US-India Malabar joint naval exercises.<sup>lii</sup>

Meanwhile, India's relations with China's key Southeast Asian rival, Vietnam continue to deepen. India has been conducting joint naval exercises with Vietnam since 2000 and Vietnam has granted Indian Navy vessels permanent berthing rights at Na Thrang port, which has extended New Delhi's "sustainable maritime presence" in the South China Sea.<sup>liii</sup> India has also offered Vietnam its indigenously developed *Brahmos*

supersonic cruise missile and training in underwater warfare.<sup>liv</sup>

India is also emerging as an increasingly prominent player in Vietnam's energy sector with Indian state-owned company, ONGC Videsh, exploring for offshore energy resources under a contract with Vietnam, while India and Vietnam have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on civil nuclear

cooperation, which could become the catalyst for the sale of Indian pressurised heavy water reactor technology to Vietnam.<sup>lv</sup> The fact that India's deepening cooperation with Vietnam coincides with renewed tensions between

China and Vietnam over their maritime territorial dispute in the South China Sea signals the potential for the Sino-Indian relationship to "spill over" into the Southeast Asia region.

Finally, the rapprochement in India-Japan relations has coincided with deterioration in the Sino-Japanese relationship. Economic interactions remain

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weak with \$14 billion in India-Japan trade in 2011 and a target of US\$25 billion by 2014.<sup>lvi</sup> This pales in comparison to Japan's trade with China that was close to US\$345 billion in 2011.<sup>lvii</sup> Nonetheless, Indo-Japan relations have continued to move from strength to strength. India has been the leading recipient of Japanese overseas development assistance (ODA) since 2003 while both countries forged a 'strategic and global partnership' in 2006, which has been complemented by a bilateral strategic dialogue since 2007, a security cooperation agreement forged in 2008, the implementation of a free trade agreement (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) in 2011, and bilateral naval exercises in June 2012.<sup>lviii</sup> Japan is involved in several high-profile infrastructure projects in India, including the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor and construction of metro-rail services in several major Indian cities while Japanese and Indian companies have forged partnerships in several industries, particularly the automotive and pharmaceutical sectors.<sup>lix</sup>

### **Return of “Chindia”?**

Competition between China and India is by no means a certainty nor necessarily a cause for concern. Both countries face shared interests spanning their growth and development needs, tackling energy and maritime security concerns, and ensuring a more equitable distribution of power in the international system.—The September 2011 decision to permit Indian companies to access loans in Chinese renminbi demonstrates that their economic relationship is likely to continue to deepen.<sup>lx</sup> The state of Maharashtra is home to one of the first Chinese factories in India, run by Sany, while some ten Chinese firms are estimated to maintain or are in the process of constructing factories in India with about 100 Chinese firms having a presence in country.<sup>lxi</sup>

China and India are projected to emerge as the world's leading trading partners by 2030.<sup>lxii</sup> India with its huge market, demographic dividend and high growth rates also offers an ideal destination for China's surplus foreign exchange reserves with the potential to offer a better and safer return on investment than US and European government bonds or infrastructure projects in unstable regions of Africa and the Middle

East. In return, Chinese capital and expertise also offers a boon for India's manufacturing and infrastructure sectors. Even the countries that are the target of Sino-Indian competition are likely to gain from improved infrastructure and greater access to aid and investment from both countries. However, as this competition grows fiercer it may come at the cost of governance as domestic elites face less pressure to pursue reform amid financial and diplomatic aid with fewer "strings attached".

Both countries' expanding military capabilities also do not necessarily preclude the possibility of cooperation. Given both countries' mutual dependence on trade and imported resources to fuel their economies they share an interest in protecting sea-lines of communication (SLOCs) and maintaining freedom of navigation. India's military has generally outpaced China in the sphere of protecting the 'global commons', including maintaining the free flow of maritime trade and transport, addressing humanitarian disasters, and combating the scourge of maritime piracy, illicit trafficking, and the latent threat of maritime terrorism.<sup>lxiii</sup> This was

demonstrated by its assistance following the Asian tsunami in 2004 and the cyclone that struck Myanmar (Burma) in 2008 and the evacuation of Indian, Sri Lankan and Nepalese civilians from the conflict in Lebanon in 2006.<sup>lxiv</sup>

However, China is fast catching up in its humanitarian response capabilities, as demonstrated by the PLA Navy escorting non-Chinese vessels, including UN World Food Program convoys, through the Gulf of Aden; the Chinese navy inducting of one of the world's largest hospital ships, the *Peace Ark* in 2008; as well as the deployment of a Chinese missile frigate to the Mediterranean Sea in early 2011 to support the evacuation of Chinese nationals from Libya.<sup>lxv</sup> China's rhetoric of maintaining "Harmonious Seas" and pursuing "new historic missions" through engaging in military operations other than war (MOOTW) suggest that Beijing's potential for cooperation in the maritime domain could grow as its maritime security interests move further from its coastline.<sup>lxvi</sup> In this context, reports that China, India and Japan have coordinated their anti-piracy patrols in the Indian Ocean within the



framework of the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) mechanism demonstrates the potential for military-to-military cooperation to grow, especially as their interests move further from their coastline where sovereignty concerns are less pertinent.<sup>lxvii</sup>

### China-India moving centre-stage

China and India face an increasingly complex and multi-layered relationship as their growing economic and military capabilities and political clout on the world stage provides both states with more resources to interact with each other while projecting their bilateral relationship to the regional and international level. The Sino-Indian relationship is more nuanced than the US-Soviet rivalry of the Cold War with a more complex relationship interspersed with cooperation, competition and a latent rivalry, which has been characterized as a policy of “congame”.<sup>lxviii</sup>

China and India face an increasingly complex and multi-layered relationship as their growing economic and military capabilities and political clout on the world stage provides both states with more resources to interact with each other while projecting their bilateral relationship to the regional and international level.

On the one hand, a climate of mistrust permeates the bilateral relationship rooted in their unresolved territorial dispute, economic disparities, limited people-to-people contacts, deficient institutional mechanisms of interaction, and both countries’ growing overseas interests. However, this coexists with an emerging ‘Himalayan Consensus’ amid both countries seeing eye-to-

eye on a number of global issues ranging from climate change, to poverty reduction, relations with pariah regimes and calls a multi-polar world order.

In this context, over the short-term cooperation at the global level and latent rivalry at the regional level is likely to be the norm. The weakening of the US-led hub-and-spoke bilateral alliance model and deficiencies in regional forums led by mid-ranking powers such as the states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is likely to create a void for major regional powers such as India and China to play an increasingly prominent role in shaping the regional architecture.<sup>lxix</sup> However,



over the longer term as both states acquire the capabilities and ambitions to mould the international system, the relationship is likely to increasingly play out on the world stage. There have already been a few instances of this, such as India's push for a stronger voice in the international system, including a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which has brought it into conflict with China's traditional resistance to an expanded role for India. Another instance of this was China's veiled opposition to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) granting a waiver to conduct trade with India in civilian nuclear technology in 2008.<sup>lxx</sup>

Contrary to the rhetoric of an emerging Sino-US rivalry amid the United States' so-called "pivot" or "strategic rebalancing" toward East Asia, the reality is that this competition is likely to lose momentum given the fiscal pressure on the US to reduce its defence budget.<sup>lxxi</sup> Despite recent

claims that the US will devote 60 per cent of its global forces to the Asia Pacific by 2020, the United States appears to be experiencing an 'East of Suez' moment in its foreign policy as it gradually disengages itself from messy regional conflicts while calling on its allies to fill the void. Similarly, Japan's aging population, "lost decades" of economic stagnation, and current era of short-lived,

What is clear is that the next time a conflict breaks out between both countries, it is no longer going to be a footnote of history; it is unlikely to be confined to their disputed land border; it will involve both countries' air force and navies and will likely spill over beyond the confines of their bilateral relationship with greater repercussions for the regional and global security architecture.

coalition governments makes it an unlikely candidate of a prolonged strategic competition with China. Rather, it is the Sino-Indian relationship, with both countries' growing overseas interests and capabilities, fuelled

by a demographic dividend that is likely to be the most potent source of rivalry between major powers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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and navies and will likely spill over beyond the confines of their bilateral relationship with greater repercussions for the regional and global security architecture. Furthermore, renewed Sino-Indian hostilities will no longer be relegated to secondary importance as it did in 1962 when it came amid the tensions of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Instead, given the rising stature of both countries another Sino-Indian war is likely to be centre-stage among global developments. This is not an attempt at fear mongering. It is a call for both countries to realise the significance of their bilateral relationship and devote more resources to ensure a stable and cordial relationship for the continuation of their growth and development trajectories and the emergence of stable and peaceful international system.

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i. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation which subsequently became known as the 'ASEAN Way' centred around six principles; 1) Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all nations, 2) settlements of differences and disputes by peaceful means, 3) the right of every state to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion and

coercion, 4) non-interference in the internal affairs of one another, and 6) the renunciation of the threat and use of force - Carlyle A. Thayer, 'The Rise of China and India: Challenging or Reinforcing Southeast Asia's Autonomy?' in Ashe J. Tellis, Travis Tanner, and Jessica Keough (eds.) *Strategic Asia 2011-12: Asia Responds to its Rising Powers – China and India*, (Seattle and Washington, DC: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2011), p.314.

ii. 'Comprehensive National Power' is a Chinese quantitative measure of national strength, combining 'hard power' measurable indicators (such as economic, military strength) with 'soft power' qualitative indicators (such as cultural attraction, values and institutions) – See: Hu Angang and Men Honghua, 'The Rise of Modern China: Comprehensive National Power and Grand Strategy' *Strategy and Management*, No. 3, 2002.

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- ix. Nitya Singh, 'How to Tame Your Dragon: An Evaluation of India's Foreign Policy Toward China,' *India Review*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2012, p.144.
- x. Jabin T. Jacob, *India's China Policy: Time to Overcome Political Drift*, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, June 2012.
- xi. Chinese Premier Deng Xiaoping proposed a similar solution in 1988 with recognition of the status quo - S.N.M. Abdi, 'Standing their ground', *South China Morning Post*, August 7, 2009.
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# Tactical Nuclear Weapons: Pakistan's Dangerous Game (Or Quest)

- *Brig (retd) Gurmeet Kanwal*

The Pakistan army's continuing efforts to arm the 60-km Hatf-9 (Nasr) short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) with nuclear warheads will adversely impact deterrence stability on the Indian subcontinent as tactical nuclear weapons are inherently destabilising and invariably escalatory. The Nasr missile was first tested in April 2011 and then again in May 2012 and is reported to be a replica of the Chinese M-20.

Even though 50,000 to 60,000 nuclear warheads were produced since the arguably senseless bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, some basic human survival instinct "repeatedly stayed the finger that might have pushed the button." The world's abhorrence for nuclear weapons is now so widespread and deep-rooted that even if battlefield

or tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) were to be used against a purely military target in a conflict in future, the effect would be strategic. In fact, the impact would be geo-strategic as the explosion in anger of even a single nuclear weapon anywhere on earth would be one too many. The employment of nuclear weapons as useful weapons of war was always doubtful; it is even more questionable today. Given the widespread abhorrence of nuclear weapons, the Nuclear Rubicon cannot be lightly crossed now and whichever nation decides to cross it will have to bear the consequences.

According to William R. Van Cleave and S. T. Cohen, "... the term tactical nuclear weapons in the closest approximation refers to battlefield nuclear weapons, for battlefield use, and with deployment ranges and yields

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consistent with such use and confined essentially in each respect to the area of localised military operations.” Some air-dropped nuclear glide bombs, carried by fighter-bombers, have been known to have yields of over one megaton. Parts of NATO’s erstwhile TNW forces, including Pershing missiles, were on constant readiness alert as part of the Quick Reaction Alert force. The line dividing tactical (including theatre) and strategic nuclear weapons is rather blurred. While a strategic strike can be conducted with weapons of low yield, a tactical strike can be effected with virtually any class of nuclear weapons – though the results achieved may not be commensurate with the effort put in. For example, hitting a forward military airfield with an ICBM would be a gross overkill and would result in extremely high collateral damage. In fact, the phrase ‘tactical use of nuclear weapons’ would convey a more accurate sense of the intended use

rather than ‘use of tactical nuclear weapons’.

In the public perception, the most popular TNWs have been the 8 inch (203 mm) M-110 and the 155 mm M-109 atomic artillery weapons, and the Lance and Honest John SRBMs. At the upper end of the range scale were the Pershing missiles with a range of 160 to 835 km. These were intermediate range theatre SRBMs. The erstwhile Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces had their own corresponding TNWs. Among the better known ones were the FROG and Scud series of rockets and missiles. In addition, there was a category of weapons known as ‘mini-nukes’. These had yields from 0.05 to 0.5 kilotons. TNWs, particularly those of the US and its NATO allies, were nuclear warfighting weapons and formed an important part of NATO’s strategy of flexible response or ‘first use’ policy. These weapons were among the first that would have been used in the early stages of a NATO-Warsaw Pact war.

During the Cold War, the proponents of TNWs justified their requirement on the following grounds: they deter the use of TNWs by the enemy; they provide flexible response over the whole range of possible military threats; they offer nuclear military options below the strategic level; they help to defeat large-scale conventional attacks; and, they serve the political purpose of demonstrating commitment to the allies. The opponents of TNWs asserted that these 'more usable' weapons would lower the nuclear threshold and make nuclear use more likely. Fears of collateral damage in the extensively populated and developed NATO heartland spurred European opposition to TNWs. Many European political and military leaders convincingly argued that NATO would be better off without TNWs. Alain Enthoven wrote: "Tactical nuclear weapons cannot

defend Western Europe; they can only destroy it... there is no such thing as tactical nuclear war in the sense of sustained, purposive military operations..."

There are other compelling reasons too for leaving TNWs out of the nuclear arsenal. Firstly, these are extremely complex weapons (particularly sub-kiloton

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mini-nukes, because of the precision required in engineering) and are difficult and expensive to manufacture and support technically. Inducting them into service even in small numbers would considerably raise the budget of

the strategic forces. Secondly, the command and control of TNWs needs to be decentralised at some point during war to enable their timely employment. Extremely tight control would make their possession redundant and degrade their deterrence value. Decentralised control would run



the risk of their premature and even unauthorised use – Kissinger’s ‘mad Major syndrome’. Thirdly, since the launchers must move frequently to avoid being targeted, dispersed storage and frequent transportation of TNWs under field conditions, increases the risk of accidents. Lastly, the employment of conventional artillery and air-to-ground precision weapons by the enemy may damage or destroy stored nuclear warheads.

India has correctly opted not to go down the TNW route, but Pakistan has chosen to acquire these dangerous weapons. According to Pakistani analysts, the Htf-9 (Nasr) missile is their answer to India’s Cold Start doctrine as the

India has correctly opted not to go down the TNW route, but Pakistan has chosen to acquire these dangerous weapons. According to Pakistani analysts, the Htf-9 (Nasr) missile is their answer to India’s Cold Start doctrine as the use of TNWs will stop India’s armoured spearheads advancing into Pakistan in their tracks.

use of TNWs will stop India’s armoured spearheads advancing into Pakistan in their tracks. They miss the centrality of India’s no first use doctrine completely: even one nuclear strike – whether in India or against Indian forces – will invite ‘massive punitive retaliation’, which Pakistan can ill afford.

It is now universally accepted that nuclear weapons are political weapons and are not weapons of ‘warfighting’. By extension, TNWs now have no role to

play in combat. The international community must come together to stop Pakistan’s dangerous quest to acquire these destabilising weapons.

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# Russia's New Silk Road Strategy: Connecting To Pakistan

- *Vinod Anand*

**E**ven though the much-awaited visit of President Putin to Pakistan in the first week of October has been shelved, causing disappointment among the Pakistani establishment, the doors for finding a new understanding between the two on Afghanistan and regional issues remain wide open. Putin was to pay a bilateral visit to Pakistan before the quadrilateral summit that was scheduled for 2-3 October in Islamabad. Pakistan had become part of the quadrilateral of Russia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan in July 2009 when the forum's first summit was held in Dushanbe. The main goals of the quartet are to promote regional trade and undertake joint projects in energy, transport, communications, agriculture and infrastructure. Combating terrorism, extremism, illegal

trafficking of drugs and trans-national organized crimes, supporting peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the region are the other major objectives. These are usually the objectives of any number of multi-lateral structures and organizations that exist in this troubled region, for instance the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

Finding a regional solution to many of the problems being faced by the region especially that of instability, insecurity in Afghanistan and improving the socio-economic environment have driven the major players like the U.S., China and Russia to advance their own formulations and structures. However, the competing strategies of the main players in the arena have only added to the complexity of the regional issues.

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At a time when Pakistan's stock is running at all time low with the U.S. and its coalition partners in Afghanistan, Islamabad has been working to find a new strategic equation in the post-2014 Afghanistan scenario. The Russians believe that Pakistan remains central to the Afghan imbroglio and has an important role to play in the unfolding scenario. Pakistan hopes to obtain a favourable outcome in the Afghan end game with Russia on its side. Moscow has also not been much enamoured by the so called 'reset' in its relations with the U.S., as promised by Obama administration. American policies on BMD, eastwards expansion of NATO and contesting Russia's 'privileged status' in Central Asian region has soured the U.S-Russian relationship. Even though Russia is providing logistics routes through its territory for ISAF troops in Afghanistan, it continues to oppose American bases and transit facilities being provided by Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Further, in the long run both Russia and Pakistan would like to

see the back of the American troops in Afghanistan. They are against the long term presence of the American bases in Afghanistan as these have adverse strategic connotations for both Russia and nuclear Pakistan.

There is also a wide-spread belief that in its approach to Afghanistan, China is becoming wary of putting all its eggs in the Pakistani basket and has embarked on establishing a direct relationship with the Kabul regime. On the sidelines of the SCO Summit in June this year, China and Afghanistan signed a strategic partnership agreement. At the summit, Afghanistan was admitted to SCO as an observer. Further in September Zhou Yongkang – member of the powerful Politburo Standing Committee of the Chinese Communist Party - visited Afghanistan and signed a number of agreements on assisting Afghanistan in its security sector development programmes. He committed to training 300 Afghan national police officers which in effect could help the ISAF/NATO

efforts of training the Afghan National Security Forces.

Thus, Pakistan has been aiming at finding new partners in the power play taking place in the region. As part of Pakistan's desire to forge a cozy relationship with Russia, General Kayani has also traveled to Moscow in the first week of October. In fact, as a military head and one who is the final arbiter of Pakistan's security and foreign policies, his visit would give an opportunity to the Russian leaders to obtain insights into Pakistan's fresh thinking, if any, on Afghanistan and

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regional security issues. While Kayani was in Moscow, the Russian Foreign Minister was in Islamabad for parleys with his Pakistani counterpart to explain the absence of Putin and identify with Pakistan's role in the region. Sergei Lavrov supported

Pakistan's stance on the U.S. Drone strikes and denounced these attacks as violations of Pakistani sovereign territory.

Russia and Pakistan are looking for many benefits from mutual cooperation. The Russian gas company Gazprom has been looking forward to being awarded a contract for building the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline without many of the processes associated with the laid down procedures. Russia has agreed to modernise, reconstruct and expand the Pakistan Steel

Mills that has been running far below its capacity. Russia would also be supporting Pakistan Railways by undertaking a joint venture for developing a carriages' workshop and may even supply Russian rail carriages. The Russians are also converting two

Pakistani thermal power plants from furnace oil to coal.

Gaining access to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean has been a long cherished Russian desire since the days of Tsarist Russia and a route through Pakistan could be one useful option. Writing recently in Pravda, an analyst Lyuba Lulko suggests that “establishing close cooperation with Pakistan will give Russia a real chance to gain a foothold in Central and South Asia. In addition, Russia will be able to access the Indian Ocean, and make the U.S. troops in Afghanistan directly dependent on its logistics.”

The proposed multimodal transport links, another version of the old Silk Road are expected to provide benefits to all the four countries involved. Pakistan will gain access to Central Asian markets while Tajikistan and Russia would gain access to Pakistani ports. Commenting on

last year’s Quadrilateral Summit at Sochi, Chairman of the Russian Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev, observed that “Russia may become a donor of economic, social and military-political security for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan.”

Russia has also offered to revive all the Soviet era industrial and infrastructure

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projects (numbering about 140) in Afghanistan. Russia is also willing to help Tajikistan in the hydro-power sector. The Central Asia-

South Asia 1000 (CASA-1000) power transmission project of exporting electricity from hydro-power rich Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan is a much-touted project. However, it is difficult to be realized because of objections to hydro-power projects by the down stream Central Asian countries like Uzbekistan. Another project is of building a road from

Tajikistan across the Wakhan corridor to Pakistan in order to enhance regional connectivity. If Russia is able to support such projects and find the finances for the same then it would also gain a degree of control and enhance its influence in the region.

However, Pakistan and Russia would certainly have competing objectives in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Unlike Pakistan, Russia would be apprehensive of a radical Taliban regime in Kabul that may have the agenda of spreading its ideology to the Central Asian republics and beyond to Chechnya. Pakistan has not been serious about controlling its own radical jihadis and it is unlikely that it would seek a degree of control over a resurgent Taliban regime in Kabul.

As far as India is concerned, the pipeline projects like Iran-

Pakistan-India or TAPI gas pipeline project or for that any other multi-modal transport corridors can become economically viable only when India is included in them. A limited grouping like Russia-Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Pakistan may only produce a limited benefit, and will prove to be unviable, given the dire

Pakistan's obtuse policies of denying overland transit to Indian goods to Afghanistan and beyond, deprive Pakistan and other regional countries the benefits of revenue and beneficial economic engagement and trade. Equally, its sponsorship of terrorism, and proclivity to use transit for political purposes, as shown most recently by its shutting down the NATO supply lines to Afghanistan, ensure that India remains wary of any such projects.

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Connecting South Asia to Central Asia, especially through Pakistan (the shortest overland route) could be a win-win situation for all countries in the region with Afghanistan emerging as an important hub of communications in all directions. This would have positive effect on security, stability and economy of Afghanistan. But Pakistan will have to undertake a root-and-branch transformation of its security outlook for that to happen.

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# Is Verrier Elwin Still Relevant? - A Study Of The Bhils Of Jhabua

- *Dr Mahesh N Buch*

Verrier Elwin dedicated his life first to live with the Maria and the Muria tribals of Bastar (both groups belong to the Gond family) and then the tribals of the North East in what is now Arunachal Pradesh. Pt. Nehru had a liking for and faith in Elwin and many of our policies relating to the tribes were based on the thoughts of Verrier Elwin.

Elwin felt that the tribals are a very special people who must be kept separate from the rest of Indian society in order to conserve and preserve their ethnic identity, their tribal social structures, their culture and their way of life. He strongly believed that contact with the rest of India would place the tribals in an unequal contest with the nontribal people and would expose them to virtually unlimited exploitation. In a way, this is a policy which the American Government followed vis-à-vis their own indigenous American population, who were confined to earmarked reserves and kept from assimilation into mainstream

American society. It is almost as if these people were an endangered species of wild life whose habitat had to be shut away from the ordinary society. The fact that mainstream America was the guilty party and that the American Indians were an endangered species because of the threat of extermination held out by the new settlers seems to have been lost sight of. .

The legacy of Elwin is the Scheduled Areas and the Inner Line Areas which were kept isolated from the rest of India. Even today, an Indian citizen requires a permit to visit a designated Inner Line Area. This would work where the means of transport and communications were limited to such an extent that this restricted the mobility of people. The Second World War, which brought a foreign enemy into our tribal areas, especially Nagaland and Manipur, saw the massive induction of the Indian Army in order to fight the Japanese and this certainly ended

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the isolation of the North East. As the war ended and the armies receded, they left behind the merchants, tradesmen and other camp followers from all over India and they settled in the tribal areas. As a people, they were different from the North Eastern Tribals and whereas a degree of interdependence developed between the tradesmen and the locals, a large number of exploitative businessmen also came in and certainly there was resentment as they began to exploit the tribals. Verrier Elwin would no longer be relevant in a situation in which the tribal society was forcefully projected into mainstream India, in which the tribals were untrained, uneducated and not oriented to deal with these externalities which now impinged on their daily lives. The genesis of a great deal of unrest in the North East can be traced to this unplanned intermingling of, say, the Marwaris of Rajasthan, Bihari labour and the locals in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, etc. Verrier Elwin's theory of

keeping the tribals isolated left them unprepared for all external influences and this has had a very unhealthy effect on the economy, social structure and behavioural patterns of the tribals of the North East. This is one of the major causes of insurgency.

In Bastar, the size of the district, its remoteness, the density of the forests and the entirely Gond tribal nature of its people had kept the district fairly isolated from the rest of Madhya Pradesh and the adjoining States. However, roads were built, settled administration did penetrate the region and a degree of interaction between the tribals and the nontribals did take place.

and the nontribals did take place. So long as the pace was evolutionary it did not present many problems. However, two major developments took place which completely transformed the district and not necessarily for the good. The first was the settlement of a large number of refugees from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in the Dandakaranya area of Bastar and the adjoining Koraput

District of Orissa. In Bastar, the largest such development was in the Pakhanjor area of the north and the west of the district. Vast areas of the forest land were cleared and while the tribals were not allotted any land, the refugees were settled on it, thus causing simmering resentment amongst the tribals. The second major development was the discovery of what is perhaps the finest iron ore in the world, the blue dust of Bailadila. The forests of this region, which is drained by the Dankhani and Shankhani rivers, represented semi moist deciduous and evergreen forests of Central India at their climax. It had been reported that as late as the second half of the nineteenth century Bailadila was an abode of the one-horned Indian rhinoceros.

The people of Bailadila were very backward as their exposure to nontribal society was negligible. Suddenly, into this region was unleashed the National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC), with its huge machines such as excavators, front end loaders, dumpers, large drilling rigs and explosives for blasting. The tribals had never seen such equipment, they were not trained to operate it and certainly they were quite unprepared for the

influx of a whole army of workers from outside the region. Virtually in the twinkling of an eye, their forests were destroyed, their land pitted and cratered, their rivers polluted, their homesteads gone and their farms rendered useless. They received some cash compensation but they were totally untrained to handle cash and soon the money was gone. In what can only be called an act of barbarism, the tribals were rendered homeless, without work, their tribal society substantially destroyed because their social structures broke down as the people were scattered and their women virtually sold into prostitution. This is the inevitable fate of any group of people which finds that the cocoon around it has been shattered and the people rendered helpless by the relentless blows of external factors. Had India educated, trained and helped the tribals in acquiring new skills neither Bailadila nor Pakhanjor need have occurred. India could not adopt a policy of keeping the tribals in designated reserves, nor does its Constitution allow it to deny any Indian the opportunity for progress and, therefore, Verrier Elwin's thoughts ultimately proved fatal to tribal society.

Amongst the major tribes in India are the Bhils of Western Madhya Pradesh, Northern Gujarat and the adjoining areas of South Eastern Rajasthan. The largest concentration of Gonds is to be found in Jhabua, including Alirajpur, Dhar, Ratlam and Khargone in Madhya Pradesh, Panchmahals in Gujarat and Dungarpur, Bhilwara Banswara and Udaipur Districts of Rajasthan. Of these, Jhabua is more than ninety percent Bhil and about seventy percent of the population of Dhar is Bhil and allied tribals such as Bhilalas and Patelias. Of all the tribes in India, the Bhils have had the longest contact with nontribal people. The Bhils are basically war like, live in nuclear families, are highly individualistic, every Bhil has his own little compound or falia on his own little isolated hilltop and the nearest people to them that I can think of are the independent Highland clans of Scotland. Bhil warriors formed part of Maharana Pratap's army, they fought for the British as part of the Malwa Bhil Corps and even today the Bhil continue to be hardy and independent. He is fond of alcohol, loves music, can dance all night and he fiercely protects his individual freedom.

The Bhil districts, especially Jhabua and Dhar, are hilly, have poor soil which cannot retain moisture, have been massively deforested and this has caused environmental degradation and because of these unhealthy practices, soil productivity is low. Jhabua has about thirty five inches of rainfall per year but the rainfall pattern is erratic. Once in three years, invariably, there is a drought and because the forests have been felled and there is soil erosion, water run-off is rapid and ground water is in very short supply. All these have adversely affected agriculture and, therefore, the Bhils are forced into seasonal migration in search of livelihood. After the kharif harvest is in, one rarely finds any adult male in a Bhil village because all of them go out in search of work. This seasonal migration brings the Bhils into contact with the rest of India, though only in the form of unskilled, underpaid labour. Nevertheless, the Bhils are aware of what is going on elsewhere and to that extent they are not isolated like the tribals of Bailadila or Nagaland. That is also perhaps one reason why in the matter of religion, there is considerable sanskritisation of the Bhils. What is surprising is that, despite all the external influences and

interactions with nontribal people, the Bhil identity is not totally lost and one can still clearly recognise the Bhil as a tribal and his society and culture as typically Bhil. There have been changes, which is only to be expected as external factors begin to operate, but it says much for the innate strength of the Bhil culture that it has been able to retain its own individual identity whilst reacting to the modern influences which now operate.

The Bhil districts in Madhya Pradesh, being drought prone, have had at least sixty years of experience of government intervention through relief works. I remember

that, some years ago, the Engineer-in-Chief of the Madhya Pradesh Public Works Department told me that there was enough aggregate and stone dust collected in the districts through relief works to be able to pave every road in the State. The philosophy of relief works was that the work should be arduous, not

permanently productive, but of a nature such that only the really needy would come forward for it. In fact, there was a time when we were told that it was perfectly in order to dig holes and then fill them up because the idea was not so much to undertake public works as to provide employment. Fortunately, this philosophy

changed when the drought prone areas programme, integrated rural development programme, watershed management programme and now the National Employment Guarantee Scheme came into being. The ruling philosophy is that rural works should be taken up with the objective of

creating permanent assets which could benefit village society and economy, improve water and land management and create assets which could help to ameliorate poverty. Jhabua is one district where large scale watershed management programmes have been implemented and this has definitely improved water

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availability in a number of villages, increased fodder supply and by bringing many hill features under afforestation, has brought about long term stabilisation and improvement in the ground water. This, in turn, has had some effect in the matter of seasonal migration. The indications are that it is possible to improve the water situation in Jhabua and to increase soil productivity, which would inevitably bring about a major change in the migration pattern. Unfortunately, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), as it is designed today and operates in the field, has diluted the Watershed Management Programme and this is not a healthy development. Government must have a review of NREGS to see how it can be made an effective instrument in the creation of permanent village assets, especially through the Watershed Management Programme.

I have been visiting Jhabua on and off and have been a keen

observer of how Bhil society has evolved over the last fifty years. Certainly, in the villages, where the Watershed Management Programme brought about improvement, one can see that irrigated cultivation has caught on and one can see horticultural crops where none existed before. For example, in Petlawad Tehsil of Jhabua District there is extensive cultivation of tomatoes and chillies, both products which have a ready market. It is a pleasure to see stacked against walls of even mean hutments plastic crates used for transporting tomatoes to market. We need to expand this activity much further, but the inhibiting factor is that the markets are far away and there is considerable spoilage of what is a delicate agricultural product and the money which goes to the farmers is only a fraction of the price at which the product sells in the retail market. The pro-FDI lobby would immediately argue that, if we allow foreign retail chains to enter the market, they

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would take care of this problem, arrange to collect the horticultural products from rural areas and give a good price to the farmers. Those who know Jhabua well would realise that no FDI retail chain will penetrate into this remote region in the immediate future. Therefore, the true answer is for indigenous processing units to add value to the product by conversion of tomatoes into puree, sauce, juice or even tinned tomatoes. The processing units would be in the small and medium industry class, they would be local based because it is easier to transport the processed product than it is to transport the raw product and they would provide local employment for which the skill level required is not very high and for which the tribals, especially the women, can be easily trained.

I brought this up in a meeting of the district officers and whereas the officer in charge of horticulture welcomed the idea, the officer in charge of industries said that the scale of production did not attract entrepreneurs to set up units. I had to tell the District Collector that the two officers should sit

together, the Industries Department officer should project the minimum requirement of the processing industry and the horticulture officer should then try and increase production of tomatoes or any other horticulture product to a level where a processing industry could operate with profit. I am mentioning this specific case because if we have the correct mental approach and there is coordination many of these seemingly trivial problems can be solved locally.

The main problem appears to be that because of generations of seasonal migration the people of Jhabua seem to have lost faith in their own ability to make a good living out of land and have also lost faith in land as a provider of livelihood.

The main problem appears to be that because of generations of seasonal migration the people of Jhabua seem to

have lost faith in their own ability to make a good living out of land and have also lost faith in land as a provider of livelihood. I remember visiting the Punjab Agriculture University at Ludhiana some years ago. There were large groups of farmers thronging the campus because they had heard that the university had successfully experimented with a new variety of wheat. They wanted to know all about it so that they, too, could benefit from this

research by sowing the new variety of seed. The Punjab farmer is confident that he can earn a living from the land and he is independent enough to want to be his own master. However, in the Bhil mind, wage employment has become almost an embedded idea and, therefore, everyone I met in Jhabua wanted more wage employment and better wages. There was very little demand for the kind of land and water management techniques which would help to increase soil productivity and give the Bhils a good livelihood based on land, cultivation and allied activities such as cattle breeding, etc. Because of this mind set, the Bhil tribal has become excessively dependent on wage employment and to that extent he has lost his independence. That is why agricultural productivity in Jhabua is stagnant and the Bhil is, in a way, now bonded as a worker in wage employment programmes whose objective is to give employment but not necessarily to increase productivity or create assets. According to me, this is the single most harmful development in the land of the Bhils, the psyche of the Bhils and their attitude towards permanent upliftment. We need to break this and to bring the Bhil

back to a state where land becomes all important and the desire to earn a good living from land overpowers and, perhaps, eliminates the desire for wage employment.

How does one do this? One obvious answer is coverage of the district and all the Bhil areas with a watershed management programme which is universal and covers every mili and micro watershed in the region. Villages Jakhela, Khardubadi, Kharduchhoti, etc., are living examples of what watershed management can do. Thousands of acres of hill features have been brought under afforestation and they have magnificent grasses, shrubs and trees which have transformed these barren hills and have even attracted wild life. I have personally run into a pantheress and two cubs on the Khardubadi hill and there are reports of a tiger being sighted at Jakhela. Avifauna abounds where there was none before. The greening of these hills and the treatment of the rivulets and the streams in the area has revived all wells in eight villages and more than fifty new wells under the Kapiladhara Scheme have been sunk. There is no migration from these villages. This is the kind of

programme which must be undertaken throughout the region.

There is a Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), or Agriculture Science Centre in Jhabua. Excellent work is being done there on breeding and extension of the Kadaknath breed of poultry, which is unique both nationally and internationally, because the bird is black and its flesh is black. In fact, an IPR patent should be taken out for this bird because it does not exist anywhere else in the world outside Jhabua. But KVK Jhabua needs to go much further. It and the agriculture and horticulture departments of the government must demonstrate on a

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very large scale throughout the Bhil areas that, even with erratic rainfall, periodic droughts, poor soil and the present low productivity, it is possible for us to agriculturally transform Jhabua through correct soil and water management practices, careful choosing of crop varieties to suit the local agro climatic conditions and the adoption of agricultural operations which are well planned. If hundreds of such

demonstrations could be held throughout the district we should be able to convince the tribals that they can make a living from their land and that they need not seek wage employment.

What would be the advantage of such an approach? Improving the land is in itself one of the most environment friendly exercises that we can think of. Making the land yield enough to bring prosperity to the Bhils would be a

permanent reversal of environmental degradation and would certainly improve nutrition standards dramatically. Reduction or even the elimination of the seasonal migration would

enable children to be educated because they would be stable in their own villages and, therefore, the school system could be improved. This is equally applicable to health care, which is difficult to provide if people are migrating to distant places. As the Bhil society prospers and as stability of its population returns because there is very little seasonal migration, traditional Bhil culture would be

strengthened because now on their home ground the Bhils would be able to tackle externalities on an equal footing. If I were to be asked what is the one factor which can give strength to the Bhil society, I would say that we must replace the mindset of wage employment

by a desire for self-employment and this would release the innate entrepreneurial skills of the tribals who are determined to stand on their own feet.

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# In Bludgeoning Balochistan, Is Pakistan Army Losing Support In Punjab?

- *Sushant Sareen*

After the huge furore in Pakistan caused earlier in the year by the Congressional hearing on Balochistan organised by US Congressman Dana Rohrabacher who also moved a resolution in the US Congress calling for the right to self-determination in Balochistan, the restive province was once again the flavour of the week in Pakistan's political circles and media when the former Chief Minister Akhtar Mengal returned for a sojourn from a four year self-imposed exile to depose before the Supreme Court of Pakistan which was hearing a petition on the abysmal state of law and order and blatant violation of human rights in the province.

As was to be expected, Mengal's presence in Islamabad provided grist for the mills churning conspiracy theories in the capital city – did he return as part of an understanding with the establishment; is he positioning himself for becoming the Chief Minister in the forthcoming

elections; was he representing the Baloch separatist leadership that is currently in exile and paving the way for a reconciliation between the establishment and the separatists; was he only testing the political waters to see if he could return to mainstream politics; did he come to make a last ditch effort to keep the Pakistani federation intact, etc. Regardless of his real motives for appearing before the Supreme Court and presenting his arguments, what he has managed to do (whether wittingly or otherwise is hardly the point) is to jolt the military establishment and perhaps also cause a tremor which could potentially lead to tectonic changes in Pakistan's political system.

Mengal's appearance before the Supreme Court wasn't something that happened out of the blue. He had applied months back to become a party in the missing persons case that was being heard by the apex court. Clearly then, this was a well-thought out move.

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\* *Sushant Sareen - Senior Fellow, VIF*



Of course, the details of the political game-plan under which Mengal decided to use the Court to make his pitch and queer that of the military establishment and the civilian government is shrouded in mystery. Without indulging in any histrionics, harangues or hysterics, Mengal, in his own soft-spoken manner, adopted quite a hard-line, not only before the Court, but also in his various TV interviews and joint press briefings, which followed his meetings with top opposition politicians. What was most surprising, however, was that instead of outrage, Mengal's tough and biting words invoked understanding and sympathy among his interlocutors like Nawaz Sharif, Imran Khan and the Jamaat Islami chief Munawwar Hasan, who endorsed almost everything he demanded.

While Mengal very ably articulated the myriad grievances of the Baloch with Pakistan in his interviews and meetings – he cut the Pakistani establishment to the bone by calling the situation in Balochistan worse than that in Palestine and Kashmir (in other words, pointing out that not even the Hindus and the Jews are as oppressive as the Pakistani Muslims are to fellow Muslims)

and even went to the extent of calling for a peaceful parting of ways rather than a bloody divorce – it was his Six Point charter of demands, or recommendations, that he placed before the Supreme Court which seem to have caught everyone in Pakistan in a quandary. These Six Points are as follows: suspension of all overt and covert military operations against the Baloch; producing all missing persons before a court of law; disbanding all death squads being operated as proxies by the ISI and the MI; ending political interference by the intelligence agencies in Balochistan and allowing all political parties to function freely; bringing those responsible for torture and murder of Baloch political activists to justice; rehabilitating the Baloch displaced by the conflict.

On the face of it, these recommendations are unexceptionable because they seek nothing more than application of fundamental and legal rights enshrined in the constitution of Pakistan. But in the context of Balochistan which has been facing a very heavy-handed and brutal crackdown by the Pakistan military establishment, asking for due process of law is akin to rebellion against the Pakistani

state. Not surprisingly then, these innocuous looking Six Points are not only as unacceptable, but also as un-implementable, as the famous Six Points of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman of the erstwhile East Pakistan. Akhtar Mengal seemed to be quite aware of this and that is precisely the reason why he equated his Six Points with those of Sheikh Mujib. Mujib's Six Points, had they been accepted, would have ended up restructuring the Pakistani federation; Mengal's Six Points, if implemented, will effectively emasculate the Pakistan Army and inalterably shift the balance of power in favour of the civilians.

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That such a thing will never be allowed by the military establishment is a no brainer. This is so partly for what the army would call 'reasons of state' – i.e. it simply cannot countenance taking a back seat and allowing Baloch nationalists run of the place, even less so because these demands are only a 'confidence building

measure' that is expected to pave the way for a more substantial dialogue on the future status of Balochistan. And partly, the army will oppose these demands for 'reasons of person' – i.e. from top generals, including army chief, General Ashfaq Kayani, to foot soldiers, scores, if not hundreds, will face prison, or worse – if these Six Points were to be implemented in earnest. At least, this is what

Mengal expects because he has made it clear that his demand for bringing those guilty of crimes committed in Balochistan is not limited to only a Gen Pervez Musharraf but also all those officers who were directly or indirectly

responsible for the killing and kidnapping of Baloch political activists. Small wonder then that the very next day, the military and law enforcement agencies submitted a statement before the court and quite brazenly denying any involvement in either 'enforced disappearances' or in running death squads that 'kill and dump' the bodies of Baloch activists. The Army also activated

its proxy agents to file a petition seeking a judicial enquiry into the events surrounding the death of the iconic Baloch leader, Nawab Akbar Bugti.

Of course, Mengal would never really have harboured any illusion that his Six Points will be implemented. He knows well that the civilians, whether in the government or in the judiciary, neither have the power nor the will to deliver on these very constitutional demands. Take, for example, the judiciary, on which Mengal claims to have placed some faith because of its ostensible assertiveness.

While the Chief Justice and his colleagues are all sound and fury on the issue of missing persons in Balochistan, they have just not been able to show the same steely determination against generals and colonels serving in Balochistan that they displayed when they convicted an elected Prime Minister on charges of contempt of court. Forget about throwing some of these persons in prison, the judges have had to

show enormous forbearance on the non-appearance of many of these officials despite summons and threats having been issued.

But the support, even if only verbal at this point in time, that Mengal has received from the opposition parties like Nawaz Sharif's PMLN, Imran Khan's PTI and the Jamaat Islami signals a big shift in Pakistan's politics. All these parties receive the bulk of their support from Punjab, the province which has traditionally blindly backed the army's version of national interest. Today, these parties which are expected to attract the bulk of votes from Punjab are challenging the army's definition of national security and national interest. On the other hand, parties like the PPP, and to an extent the MQM and the ANP, which have all traditionally been seen as anti-establishment parties and which derive the bulk of their support not from the heartland of Punjab (i.e. the politically powerful Central Punjab and the military's recruiting ground, North Punjab)

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but from smaller provinces like Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the marginalised part of Punjab (South Punjab) have today become the biggest supporters of the military establishment's conception of national security and national interest.

One explanation for this sort of a stance by these parties is that the PMLN, PTI and Jamaat Islami are in opposition and as such they have much greater latitude for taking a contrary stand from that of the military establishment. The PPP, ANP and MQM, on the other hand, are part of the coalition government and hence cannot afford to take a stand that is anathema for the Pakistan Army because if they were to do so they would never be able to deliver. Of course, some Pakistani analysts have also pointed out that despite its reputation as an anti-establishment party, the PPP has always been far more obedient, subservient and supportive of the army – whether it be during the Bangladesh crisis in 1971 or in Balochistan in 2012 [or earlier]– than the so-called pro-

establishment parties like PMLN. Indeed, parallels are being drawn with the posturing of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto during the Bangladesh crisis and that of the PPP on Balochistan today.

Equally important is the political implication of this shift in the approach of the main political parties in Pakistan. To be sure, the PPPs calculation would be that both Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan would have spooked the army quite badly with their support for Mengal's Six Points. Already, the army did not seem to be very comfortable with the prospect of having either Nawaz Sharif or Imran Khan running the next government. Their endorsement of Mengal's Six Points would have only added to the army's discomfiture with them. The PPP senses an opportunity to ingratiate itself further with the military establishment and derive the benefit of this in the forthcoming elections. But what if the PMLN or even the PTI manage to get the numbers in the next election to form the government in

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Islamabad? If these predominantly Punjab based parties renege on the support they have extended to Mengal, they will only end up further alienating the Baloch and reaffirming the extremely negative perceptions among the Baloch about the Punjabis. But, if the PMLN or the PTI actually live up to their commitments, then it will pit them directly against the army. This will be tantamount to a Punjab-versus the Army conflict, something that the army will not find easy to handle, especially if the popular support in the province is with these parties.

In a sense then, Mengal has set the cat among the pigeons with his Six Points. At the same time, he has taken a high risk gamble of his own by appearing before the Pakistani Supreme Court. Although by and large most Baloch nationalists who remain pro-federation have welcomed Mengal's demands, the reaction from the separatists and anti-federation nationalists (arguably representing the

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predominant sentiment in the province) has been more nuanced. While people like Hyrbyar Marri and Brahmdagh Bugti have so far maintained a studied silence, others (which includes those who are either fighting the Pakistani state or are lending moral, financial, and at times even physical support to those who are doing the fighting) have been quite critical of what they see as Mengal's 'last ditch' effort to save the Pakistani federation. Unless Mengal has decided to ditch the separatist bandwagon and make his peace with the Pakistani state, something that he has consistently denied, he will have to play his political cards very deftly to keep himself politically alive in his core constituency that swears by Baloch nationalism and which has all but burned its boats as far as Pakistan is concerned. Any misstep and he stands to lose his core constituency. But if he manages to play this hand well, then he could well emerge as the

rallying point for all the Baloch nationalists and create the elusive 'single party' that so many Baloch nationalists say is required to spearhead the demand for independence of Balochistan.

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# Will Nepal Be Engulfed Into Another Conflict?

- *Hari Bansh Jha*

Conflict does not end for all the time once it breaks up in a country. It happened so in Africa, Latin America, Asia and other parts of the world. Experience shows that conflict re-emerged in at least 40 per cent of the countries that at one or the other point of time was engulfed by conflict. Though unfortunate, certain ominous symptoms of another conflict have already appeared in Nepal that was triggered by violent conflict between 1996 and 2006 and in which more than 18,000 innocent people were killed and there was huge loss of property. What would happen to the nation and in its neighbourhood, particularly in India, if another violent conflict arises? Time has come to consider this.

The violent conflict in Nepal had started in 1996 after the then Prime Minister of Nepal Sher Bahadur Deuba failed to meet 40-point demands of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Like in 1996, the Communist Party of

Nepal (Maoist), with its leader Mohan Baidya (alias Kiran), submitted a 70-point demand to the leader of Unified Communist Party of Nepal –Maoist (UCPN-Maoist) and Prime Minister of Nepal, Baburam Bhattarai, on September 10, 2012. However, the difference in the situation in 1996 and 2012 is that Baburam Bhattarai submitted the 40-point demand to the government of Nepal as a rebel leader of Maoists. But now Bhattarai is Prime Minister and the 70-point demand was submitted to him by none other than his own colleagues of CPN (Maoist) who split from the mother party UCPN (Maoist) on June 19, 2012.

Strikingly, many of the demands covered in the 40-point demand in 1996 resemble the 70-point demand in 2012 and this is more so when it comes to opposing deals with India. In their bid to give a nationalist colour to their demands, the Maoists in 2012 as in 1996 tried to raise different issues like the scrapping of all the

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\* *Hari Bansh Jha*

unequal treaties and other deals with India. Towards this end, emphasis was laid on scrapping the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship with India, which is virtually a security pact between the two countries. Besides, it also demands the abrogation of the Arms Treaty of 1965, the Mahakali Treaty of 1996 and the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement of 2011. Other issues that have been covered in the demand include controlling of Nepal-India border, scrapping of contracts given to the Indian contractors, such as GMR and others, for the construction of the Karnali and Arun III hydropower projects, preventing the movement of vehicles with Indian number plates, and banning Indian Hindi movies as well as Indian music in Nepal.

The Mohan Baidya-led Maoist party even threatened to take recourse to violent means if their 70-point demands were not met. As the Bhattarai-led government in Nepal did not do anything about the 70-point demands, as indeed those demands cannot be met, the CPN (Maoist) in the first phase of their struggle declared a

ban on the movement of vehicles with Indian number plates in Nepal. The cinema halls across the country have been threatened not to show Hindi movies and display Hindi music. The argument that they put forward was that some of these measures were essential to give opportunity to the Nepalese industries to grow, which many of the intellectuals contradict.

Of course, the Prime Minister of Nepal, Baburam Bhattarai, has given instruction to the security agencies to deal with the miscreants if at all they try to stop vehicles with Indian number plates because that could create shortages of basic essential goods in Nepal, including petroleum products and food items. But, in reality, the Maoist call seems to have been working as most of the vehicles with Indian number plates have stopped plying on the roads in Nepal out of the fear of attack. Even buses that used to bring Indian tourists to Nepal have been affected. On top of that, the cinema halls do not want to take the risk of showing Hindi movies and displaying Indian music.

In the meantime, Nepal's other political parties like the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) and the Madheshi parties have opposed the 70-point demand of the CPN (Maoist). There are reliable reports of retaliation across the border in India when efforts were made to stop vehicles with Nepalese number plates. In Nepal itself, many people are dissatisfied with the move of the CPN (Maoist) as they have started facing shortage of petroleum products and other essential items. Even the cinema viewers who like the Hindi movies and Indian music are disappointed. Most of the Nepalese media have also opposed the Maoist demands.

However, it is not well understood how the Maoists, who took shelter in India for years during the conflict period, have started targeting India. It was through the Indian intervention that the Maoists and the seven political parties of Nepal entered into the 12-point agreement in New Delhi in 2005, which ensured the safe return of the Maoists in Nepal.

Despite all such opposition, the CPN (Maoist) cadres are not in a mood to retreat from their 70-point demands. Media report confirms that the CPN (Maoist) have among their cadres those elements who could not be accommodated within the mother UCPN (Maoist) led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal (alias Prachand). At a time when the political situation in the country is

fragile and there is little by way of law and order, efforts are being made by the Party to bring to its fold those Maoist fighters who were discharged from the Maoist cantonments in 2012. Of the 19,000 plus Maoist fighters, more than 16,000 have already been discharged from the cantonments as they opted for voluntary retirement. Now efforts are being made to bring those people into the fold of the party. Besides, those thousands of Maoist workers who were disqualified in the cantonments in the initial stage for being child soldiers or on other grounds are also being mobilized. As a result of some of these activities, the Maoists' spirit is emboldened and the cases of forced donation, *bandhs* and other such activities have started growing.

However, it is not well understood how the Maoists, who took shelter in India for years during the conflict period, have started targeting India. It was through the Indian intervention that the Maoists and the seven political parties of Nepal entered into the 12-point agreement in New Delhi in 2005, which ensured the safe return of the

Maoists in Nepal. In a way, the 12-point agreement paved the way for the second People's Movement in Nepal in 2006 and the emergence of the Maoists as the single largest Party in the Constituent Assembly in 2008. It was then only that the monarchical institution of 239-long years was abolished and the Maoists were able to head the government in 2008-2009.

It is also difficult to understand as to why several Maoists want to maintain closer relation with China when they know that it was the same Chinese government which provided lethal weapons to Nepal to crush the Maoists in 2005 when King Gyanendra ruled the country.

It looks like that the CPN (Maoist) might try to take Nepal on the path of conflict again to serve their aim of capturing power, though such a move might prove disastrous to Nepal. They might do so with the help of the old fighters who stand to be heavily indoctrinated during the conflict period in Nepal. Yet, the ground reality does not all favour the Maoists. Perhaps, many of such cadres might not return to the jungle and work as guerillas as they did in the past because they

have been so much accustomed to the life of the cities and towns now. They have neither genuine support from the common mass of the Nepalese population nor do they have any international backing as such. Even the decade-long conflict made the people so wary that they cannot that easily be diverted. They are in no mood for any conflict as they are disgusted with the selfish nature of their leaders. But this does not provide room for complacency. In case the conflict of even low intensity breaks out, of which there is some probability, it might not only have impact within Nepal but also affect India most, as being the closest neighbor and also due to the fact that there is an open border between the two countries. Therefore, before the situation goes out of control, all the Nepalese and other international stakeholders, including India, should see to it that peace and stability are Nepal is not disturbed. Conflict anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere.

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# SAARC Home Ministers' Meet: Injecting Multilateralism In Counter-Terrorism

- *Dr N Manoharan*

**H**ow significant did the fifth meeting of SAARC Home/Interior Ministers held in Maldives on 24-26 September 2012 prove to be? It is difficult to answer this question exactly in qualitative terms, but quantitatively, the meet was noteworthy in three aspects.

1. **Continuity:** The fact that the Home/Interior Ministers of eight countries of SAARC met in three succeeding years is itself important. The first meeting was in Dhaka in May 2006, and subsequently in New Delhi (October 2007), Islamabad (June 2010) and Thimpu (July 2011). The event was postponed twice in 2008 and 2009, but resumed in 2010. This is not a surprising development; even SAARC summits have witnessed discontinuities. The South Asian countries, instead of placing a request for rescheduling arising from non-availability of the ministers, can consider

sending a junior representative. However, continuity is a clearly important trend in multilateral forums.

2. **Scope:** The practice of conducting SAARC Home/Interior Ministers meets is to review progress and challenges in implementation of the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and its Additional Protocol. Apart from this objective, the Fifth Meeting took up considerable number of issues at three levels. Firstly, among immigration authorities of SAARC nations; secondly, at the Home/Interior Secretaries level, and thirdly, among Home/Interior Ministers. The immigration officers had discussed trans-border crimes, terrorism and enhancing security measures within and beyond the region from the perspective of border guarding. The Home



Secretaries on the other hand had a fixed agenda for discussions and endorsement for the Home Ministers. Apart from reviewing follow-up action of the decisions made during the fourth meeting held last year in Thimphu, the Ministers covered all issues related to terrorism, maritime security and piracy, combating trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, mutual assistance in criminal matters, cyber crimes, counterfeit currencies, arms smuggling and trafficking of women and children. The scope of the issues that were discussed was indeed varied but subject to crucial follow-up action. If decisions fail to translate into reality, the meetings would remain as mere “talking shops”.

3. **Opportunity:** The SAARC meeting provided an opportunity for the Indian Home Minister, Sushil Kumar Shinde, and his Pakistani counterpart, Rehman Malik, to meet on the sidelines to discuss issues bilaterally. For the Indian Home Minister, the

meeting was a first multilateral confabulation in his current capacity and also the first with his Pakistani counterpart. The meeting between the two came in the wake of the arrest and deportation of Abu Jundal from Saudi Arabia, one of the masterminds of 26/11. It is worth noting that it was a luncheon meeting hosted by Malik and the discussions primarily veered to the 26/11 investigations and prosecution of its perpetrators. India is unhappy with the pace of prosecutions of the accused presently jailed in Pakistan, especially LeT commander Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi. The LeT/JuD chief, Hafeez Saeed, is roaming freely and indulging in anti-India rabble rousing. Although Malik had assured Shinde that the 26/11 trial would be taken to its “logical conclusion”, India is not confident as there appears to be undue procrastination in the trial process. The Pakistani judges trying the case have been changed five times; there have been long adjournments on flimsy grounds; lack of witness



protection; and thus far, Pakistan has disallowed the Indian National Investigation team (NIA) to examine the witnesses in Pakistan. Thus, India believes that Pakistan is not serious about the issue.

The Government of Pakistan has placed a request to allow a second visit of its Judicial Commission to collect further evidence from the Indian judicial magistrate who had recorded the statement from Ajmal Kasab; the investigating officer in the 26/11 case, and the two doctors who had performed the postmortem of the remaining nine terrorists killed by the Indian security forces in the operations. Home Minister Malik posited that the first visit by the Pakistani Judicial Commission in March 2012 could not collect creditable information with an “evidential value”. For India, before processing this request, it is imperative that the Indian NIA team be permitted to visit Pakistan and examine all the

For India, before processing this request, it is imperative that the Indian NIA team be permitted to visit Pakistan and examine all the evidences collected so far by Pakistani investigators and prosecutors. India also requires the original voice samples of those who were controlling the attack from Pakistan in the operation. These are not forthcoming from the Pakistani side, inspite of a promise to do so.

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South Asia is one of the most troubled and vulnerable regions in the world; most of the major terrorist incidents have occurred in this geographic area. The terror groups that are responsible, ironically, enjoy the support of state and non-state actors of Pakistan. Even so, the SAARC regional organization has been bound in effectively addressing the issue of terrorism. It is not that steps have been taken so far. The SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism, one of the oldest regional conventions on terrorism, was signed on 04 November 1987 and came into force on 22 August 1988 following its ratification by all member states. The Additional Protocol to

the Convention came into force on 12 January 2006. The challenge is the absence of an enabling legislation within member states to give effect to these Agreements and, above all, enough political will in implementing them. Unless

all SAARC countries consider terrorism as a common enemy and take appropriate counter-measures, the region will sink together.

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# Minorities In Peril In Bangladesh

- *Anirban Ganguly*

‘**M**y civilisation is lost. My lifetime of worshipping has gone in vain. I am a lost man and lost I will be...Please save my future generation! Please’ cried Satyapriya Mahathero, the second senior most Buddhist monk in Bangladesh. The 83-year old Mahathero’s monastery – the Kendriyo Sima Vihar – was vandalized and the Buddha statues in it defaced and burnt in the attacks on Buddhist and Hindu temples at Ramu, Ukhia, Patia and Teknaf under Chittagong Division on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> September. The venerable monk barely escaped with his life when his followers managed to whisk him away to a nearby paddy field during the attack.

According to the Delhi based Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR), at least 24 temples were burnt down and dozens of Buddhists villages were attacked, leaving thousands homeless. The Ramu sub-district with 15 burnt Buddhist temples was the worst affected. Two Hindu temples – Kolegaon Nabarun Sangha Durga

Mandir and the Matri Mandir in Patia sub-district were also burnt. The 250 year old Cheranghata Barakyang Buddhist Vihara was also torched and desecrated. Eyewitness reports indicate that mobs sprinkled gun powder and petrol and torched the monasteries obstructing and thrashing monks who attempted to douse the flame.

A number of leading commentators in Bangladesh have accepted that the attacks on the minority communities are a ‘blot on the nation’s conscience’ and have termed the massacres as unprecedented. ‘Never before in our history have places of worship of a religious minority been ravaged on such a large scale and in so deliberate a manner’, commented the editor of one of the leading dailies of Bangladesh. The law enforcement agencies and their initial role as bystanders despite repeated appeals and warnings by the minority community leaders that a tense communal situation was developing has also come in for a lot of flak. The role of the officer in

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\* *Anirban Ganguly - Associate Fellow, VIF*

charge (OC) of the Ramu police station has also come under the scrutiny. On the night of the attacks, the OC was seen sharing stage with the organisers of the protest rally and making provocative statements.

There seems to be no doubt that the attack was 'premeditated, pre-planned and quite meticulously organised'. Investigative sources have revealed that the planning took place at least four days in advance and the sudden spurt in the number of attackers points to a well-laid plan. The reason for the attacks, the tagging of a photograph that was 'insulting to the Muslims' onto the Facebook account of a Buddhist, Uttam Kumar Barua and the rapidity with which it was electronically disseminated among the members of the majority community was itself an indication that the entire operation was a planned affair. In fact, Barua, himself unaware of the tag, immediately removed it and had to go into hiding leaving his family under police protection. It was as if a trigger was being awaited to attack the Buddhists and the Hindus in Chittagong.

The entire procedure of broadcasting the pictures through sms and blue tooth and create a

situation of unrest is reminiscent of the forced exodus of people from the North-East from Bangalore in India earlier this year. The other aspect which points towards a pre-meditated attack is that most of the attackers seemed to have been outsiders who were brought to the spot overnight in buses and trucks. According to eyewitnesses, the vandals were mostly aged between 14 and 22 and were being egged on by their leaders from the rear. Agencies have also reported that a number of Rohingya Muslim groups also participated in the attack on the Buddhists in retaliation to attacks on them in Burma. Whether it is Azad Maidan in Mumbai, or the threats to the people from the North-East in Bangalore, or Masuri in Ghaziabad or Chittagong in Bangladesh, the modus operandi of engineering communal unrest seems to be strikingly similar.

In Patiya, where the Durga temple was attacked and the idols demolished, many among the mob, police reports indicate, belonged to the Jamaat-dominated workers' union of the nearby Western Marine Shipyard. Locals also say that a number of leaders belonging to different political parties who were also seen in the crowd did not do anything to calm down the

situation. In fact, the minorities in Bangladesh have been at the receiving end, regardless of which party is in power. Things seem to only marginally improve for them whenever the Awami League (AL) is at the helm but the local party apparatchiks of the AL keep flouting the diktats of its Central leadership vis-à-vis the protection of minorities.

Chittagong remains the stronghold of the BNP and especially of the Jamaat. The CHT [Chittagong Hill Tracts] areas too continue to remain volatile with a major flare up and attack on the Jummas taking place on 22<sup>nd</sup> September this year. Following a minor altercation, Bengali settlers attacked the indigenous Jummas leaving around 40 of them seriously injured. Even there the attack and the rapidity with which it spread seemed to have been planned much in advance. In the past too Chittagong, Hathazari, Cox's Bazar and the CHT has seen a large number of radical Islamist groups operate. The Awami

The minorities in Bangladesh, despite official reassurances and support from a large section of the urban intelligentsia, continue to be insecure and remain at the mercy of organised Islamist political and militant groups. The attacks and desecration at Ramu have again brought the issue to the fore and India, revered as the 'land of the Buddha', ought to take note of the developments and express concern.

League government does not seem to have taken stringent steps in the past three years to curb the activities of the Jamaat and other Islamist groups in the area. The Rohingya issue has also kept alive the simmering tensions and possibilities of conflagration in the area. In areas where the Rohingyas dominate, the Buddhists have been badly threatened and have been asked to leave the country. The slogans the Rohingyas repeatedly shouted on the days following the attack called for burning Buddhists temples and homes. A large number of Buddhists localities in the region have been deserted and the conditions in the refugee camps are reported to have become unlivable.

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have again brought the issue to the fore and India, revered as the 'land of the Buddha', ought to take note of the developments and express concern. Silence on its part will only strengthen the disruptive communal forces and encourage further attacks on the minorities in Bangladesh.

Trailokyanath Chakrabarti alias Maharaj (1889-1970) the legendary leader of the Dhaka Anushilan Samiti who spent three decades in British jails fighting for Indian independence and who chose to continue living in East Pakistan after independence in 1947 was himself witness to anti-minority riots in Dhaka in 1964. The 75 year old former revolutionary had to be transported to a refugee camp in the capital for safety. From the confines of his camp Chakrabarti managed to write a letter to the Hindusthan Standard in India. Portions of his heart rending letter bears repetition under present circumstances:

“What happened this time is not rioting which can occur only between two contending parties, but one sided attack, looting and killing. One side attacks and the

other side flees in fear of life. Those who have been victims of looting or have been killed ask ‘What crime have we committed since we do not dabble in politics, do not meddle with the activities of the people of the other community, do not quarrel with our neighbours, are citizens of this country, share its prosperity, sorrow or happiness, pay government taxes regularly, are loyal...then why should we be killed, why our houses should be looted and burnt...”

Nearly five decades later, the situation has hardly altered – or, more accurately, has changed for the worse - and these questions continue to remain relevant. Satyapriya Mahathero too made much the same point when he said, surveying the extent of the damage done to his monastery, ‘This attack is totally out of the blue...This is an attack on my religion. I have no foes.’

The minorities of Bangladesh ask the same questions and they continue to struggle in trying to find answers.

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## Interaction with the Cross-Strait Interflow Prospect Foundation

On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012, the Vivekananda International Foundation organized an interactive session with the Cross-Strait Interflow Prospect Foundation from Taiwan. The Prospect Foundation was represented by their President Mr. Kuang Chung Liu, Vice-President Mr. Yang-Ming Sun, Dr. Tuan-Yao Cheng, Ms. Tsun-Tzu Hsu, Mr. Shih-Wei Yao and Ms. Yu-Chen Chung.

The discussion was moderated by Mr. Ajit Doval, Director, VIF. Chairman, VIF Adm.(retd) K. K. Nayyar, Joint Director Amb. P. P. Shukla, Gen.(retd) N. C. Vij, Lt.Gen.(retd) Ravi Sawhney, Amb. Satish Chandra, Air Marshal (retd) S. G. Inamdar, Air Marshal (retd.) K. K. Nohwar and Former Additional Secretary R&AW Mr. Jaidev Ranade and other senior researchers represented the VIF faculty.

The two-hour-long interaction included some detailed and substantive discussion on topics pertaining to the security of East

and South Asia, the economic cooperation between Asian nations, especially between India and Taiwan, the forthcoming political transition in China and its implications for developments in the Asia-Pacific Region.

On the economic front, it was felt that there was great potential for strengthening the business linkages between India and Taiwan. Elaborating some statistics, the Prospect Foundation highlighted that the Taiwanese Business groups, especially in the manufacturing sectors, have recently been moving out of China for several reasons, like rising labour costs, diminishing incentives and limited economic reforms, etc. Though after China, the Taiwanese Business community prefers Indonesia, due to regional proximity, the Taiwan Government has been making serious efforts to encourage trade and economic relations with India. It was also emphasized that Taiwan and its business community seek political stability



and a consistent economic policy, and emphasised that India holds many attractions for Taiwanese business. Also mentioned was the importance of opening up Myanmar which could present opportunities to both the countries for undertaking joint projects. There were also possibilities for India to strengthen its trade and economic relations through such groupings as ASEAN plus 6 and even the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

As far as security issues were concerned it was acknowledged that there was a need for ensuring a code of conduct in the maritime issues relating to the South China Sea. It was stated that any kind of unilateralism in the international water bodies must be discouraged and an amicable approach should be pushed for. It was admitted that Asia, at present, is the “gravity centre of the international political economy and international relations”, where all the global powers, including the US, Russia, Japan, China, India, etc., are involved in complex strategic dynamics. There was need for a regional governing institution to deal with the issues, which, if ignored, could flare up into conflicts. Also, the need for an increased sharing of

information was emphasized so as to ensure peace and stability in the region.

Discussion on the political transition in China and its implications attracted contrasting perspectives. While the Prospect Foundation felt that the new Chinese Government will be tougher but not aggressive to its neighbours, the VIF team highlighted that the Chinese Government has already been taking a tough and aggressive stance, hinting that the new changes could bring in some hardliners posing further challenges to India and, perhaps, Taiwan itself. The fine line between a tough and an aggressive policy was debated upon. India needs to be prepared for the worst and hope for the best for all including for China itself. The interaction also included the effects of these political changes in China on its economic growth and the recent slowdown. However, a crucial point which was highlighted was that for China, in the next decade or so, the biggest challenge will not be an external one but rather an internal one of democratic reforms. This process of internal political reform, if it is to happen, would be highly critical to the peace and stability of Asia

and perhaps the entire world. Possibilities of China externalizing its internal struggle were also discussed.

further cooperation between the two institutes.

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The discussions concluded with drawing out a framework for