

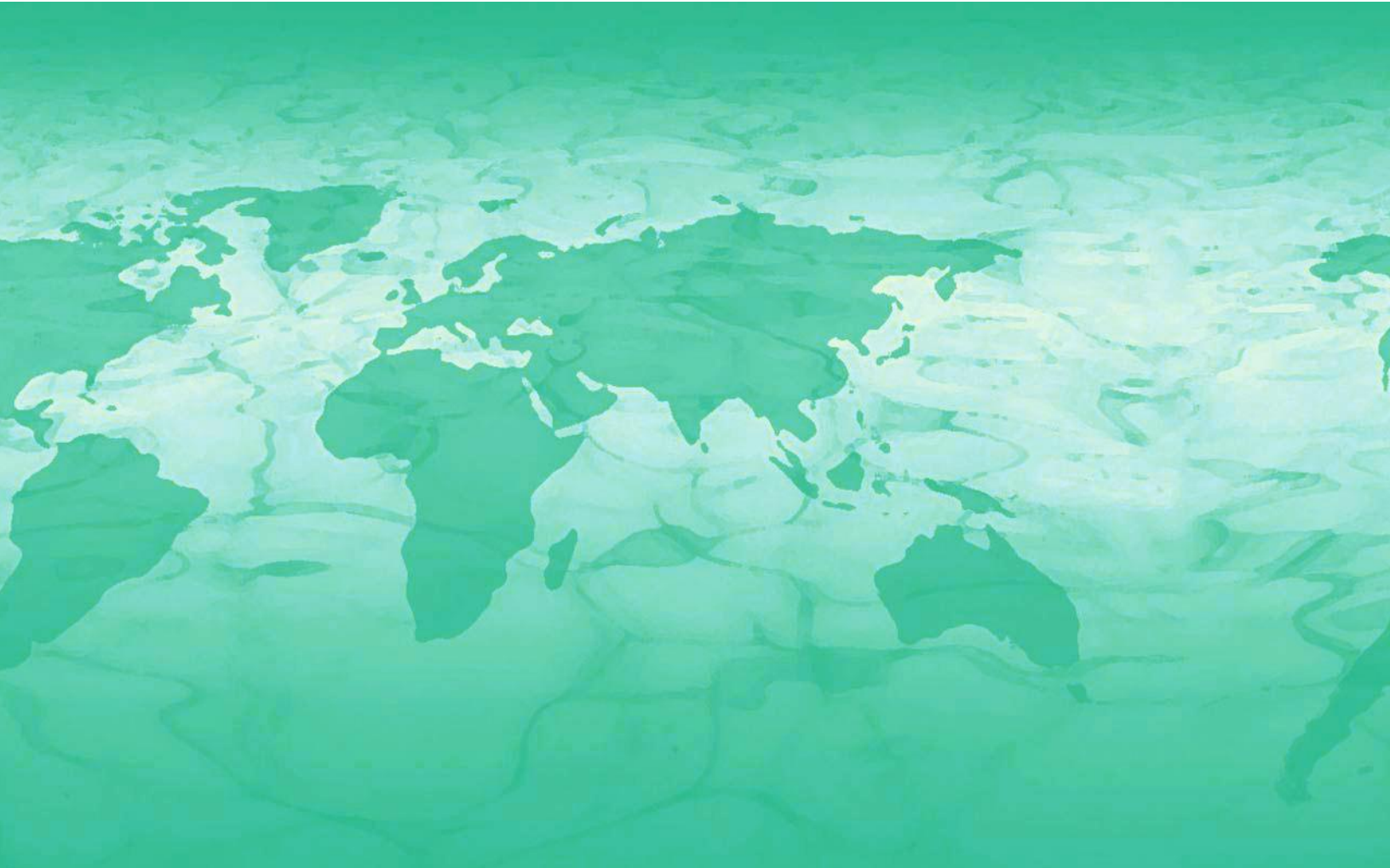


Vivek

Issues & Options

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Demise Of Anna Movement

Collapse Of Principled Government

Defence Production : Need For Indigenisation

China's Military Strategy

and many more

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Indo-European Relations: Strategic Alliances

- *Kanwal Sibal*

To appreciate better the subject of India's defence relations with Europe some reflections of a general nature would be pertinent. The point needs to be made right at the start that India does not have defence relations with Europe as such; it has them with individual European countries.

Europe has forged a strong economic personality in the form of the European Union, but it has failed to develop a common foreign and defense policy in the true sense. When it comes to economic issues India, like other countries, has to deal with Brussels.

In foreign affairs Europe has acquired some role as an interlocutor through the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, with India holding a regular dialogue with the EU as a dialogue partner. But in defence relations India deals, not with Brussels, but with individual

capitals.

It also needs to be pointed out that even though the EU exists as a shared economic space protected by common external tariffs, individual European countries commercially compete with each other intensely in foreign markets. In the defence area such competition is even more spirited as the overall cake is much smaller, the opportunity to win sizable contracts is not many, the contracts are generally high-valued and the margins are considerable. Also, the contracts create a long term relationship, with provision of spare parts, training, overhauling, periodic upgrades, modernization etc. providing plentiful returns.

Defence ties, besides, have a political element that commercial exchanges do not have. Countries with serious political differences, including the potential of conflict, can have flourishing economic ties, as is the case between US and

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China or Japan and China, not to mention political differences between Russia and Europe not standing in the way of their close energy ties. In such cases defence ties are excluded because that presupposes a degree of geo-political understanding beforehand.

Such ties also give the country that sells arms a degree of political leverage over the recipient country because the latter becomes dependent on the former for its defence preparedness. The danger is always there that at a critical moment spare parts may not be released or needed ordnance may not be available because of imposition of sanctions or the existence of a conflict situation. All these aspects are very relevant to India's defence ties with European and other countries.

India's defence relations with European countries have reflected, over the years, India's foreign policy choices, its adherence to the policy of non-alignment during the Cold War and the impact of the Cold war on our region with Pakistan deciding to join western military pacts and receiving military aid from the West. The position taken by European countries and others on India-Pakistan differences, especially on

J&K, that taken by individual European countries on sanctions imposed on India because of India-Pakistan hostilities or the degree of reticence in selling arms in order to avoid sharpening tensions in a region seen as unstable. India's nuclear and missile programmes have also had a bearing on the policies of European countries with regard to transfer of sensitive or dual use technologies barred under the technology denial regimes set up by the West.

Not many countries, even in Europe, manufacture advanced defence systems that can be sold in the international market. Defence manufacturing is a high-cost enterprise as very advanced technologies are involved, which, in turn, require huge outlays on R&D for development. The need to export in order has some economies of scale and amortizes development costs is therefore a pressing one. All the more so because in the absence of any real external threat European countries have had to reduce their defence budgets and the size of their standing armed forces, with the consequence that domestic orders for defence equipment are not sufficient to achieve the wanted economies of scale.

Conflict-Free Space

Europe's great success is, in fact, the creation of a genuinely conflict free geographical space in a continent that has witnessed the most inhumane and destructive wars in the past. No European country is threatened with aggression by a neighbour. This should have argued in favour of a massive contraction of the European defence sector. Ironically, outside the US which maintains a gargantuan defence sector and Russia which inherited an oversized defence manufacturing base from the Soviet Union but which has declined considerably, individual

European countries still retain impressive defence manufacturing capabilities. There is little relationship between the external threat European countries face

and the wherewithal they maintain to defend themselves.

For the bigger European powers which have wielded power internationally for a very long period and are habituated to it, and which have fought with each other and with others in order to advance or preserve their interests or impose their will, the possession of a sizable defence industry is an expression of their continued big power status. It gives credibility to their role in maintaining international peace and security whether institutionalized in the Security Council, within the ambit of NATO, a

“coalition of the willing” or self-assumed in the light of their national interests. Their military capabilities give them the means to project their power outside. Besides this, the civilian off-shoots

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of defence technologies are also very important as they have a bearing on the efforts of these countries to remain in the forefront of global-level technological innovation.

For Europe, rivalry with the US, which is both an ally and a competitor, is a powerful reason to maintain a sizable, independent defence manufacturing base. If, on the one hand, the trans-Atlantic alliance in the form of NATO provides Europe with the US defence umbrella and allows it to reduce its defence expenditure, fears of loss of independence in foreign policy making and subservience to the US makes the major European countries retain sizable defence capabilities.

With the lessons from the conflict in Yugoslavia in mind, these countries also want to be able to maintain peace at least on the periphery of Europe largely on their own rather than relying entirely on the US for this. The French, for example, have long

pushed for a common European defence policy, but without much success because of the NATO factor and the opposition of many European countries, especially those from the erstwhile Soviet block, not to mention the UK, to any dilution of the US role in European defence.

One needs to keep also in mind that while India and others deal with individual European countries for defence cooperation and purchases, in actual fact Europe's defence manufacturing has become mostly "multinational". Much of this sector has either been privatized in Europe or enterprises are jointly owned by governments and private capital.

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The economies of scale are sought to be obtained within Europe itself by various countries pooling requirements and jointly funding defence production programmes. Work is shared between countries often in proportion to the size of the procurement orders placed by them. Equipment manufactured

by one country has in its components manufactured in other countries, such is the nature of collaboration in defence manufacturing today.

In view of all the acquisitions and mergers that have taken place as part of a consolidation process the industry has undergone in the face of high costs, competition and declining orders. Hardly any product is now purely “national”. Even when a European product is being bought it is likely to have US made components in it. At the level of tie-ups in capital, the trans-national nature of major European defence manufacturing companies is even more of a reality.

The European Aeronautics, Defence and Space company (EADS), for example, was created in 2000 by merging French (Aerospatiale-Matra), German (DASA) and Spanish (CASA) companies. Its missile branch was merged with BAE systems of the UK and Finmeccanica of Italy to form the MBDA. The Eurofighter, the other contender for our MMRCA contract, is jointly produced by Germany (DASA), Britain (BAE), Italy (Aeritalia) and Spain (CASA). Dassault, whose Rafale has been selected for

negotiations for the acquisition of 126 combat aircraft by India, is owned by Dassault Group (50.55%) and EADS(46.33%), which means that even if the Eurofighter has been excluded from the 126 aircraft competition, EADS, the manufacturer of the Eurofighter, will financially benefit from the Rafale deal.

Augusta Westland, which has signed a joint venture agreement with Tata Sons to assemble its AW 119 helicopters is an Anglo-Italian company. Turbomeca, the French aircraft engine maker is tied up with Rolls Royce. Thales, another French company, which is involved in India defence programmes, is tied up with Raytheon from the US and BAE from the UK. BAE, the manufacturer of the Hawk trainer aircraft sold to India, the Ultra Light Howitzers that India has decided to acquire through the US FMS route and a partner in the Eurofighter, has made several acquisitions in the US.

For historical reasons India had close defence ties with the UK for some years after 1947, to the extent that India’s Naval Chief was a Britisher till April 1958, with Britishers also the Air Chief till April 1954 and Army Chief till

January 1949. India's Centurion tanks, Vampires, Canberra, Hunter and Gnat aircraft, and Leander class frigates were of British origin. But Cold war politics, British support for Pakistan and interference in the Kashmir issue in Pakistan's favour, a reluctance to strengthen India militarily against Pakistan, inevitably led to a dilution of the defence relationship.

Within Europe, France, whose commitment to Pakistan was not of the same order and which was not mentally hostage to any colonial era responsibilities towards Pakistan or the sub-continent, was an alternative source. India acquired from France, in the 1950s itself, Ouragan, Mystere and Alize aircraft, AMX tanks and air to surface and anti-tank missiles. In the 1960s India went in for licensed production of French Alouette helicopters, to which were added Lama helicopters for high-altitude operations in the 1970s.

The biggest consequence of Cold War politics was India's turn towards the Soviet Union beginning in the 1960s for defence supplies and licensed production of equipment, to the point that Russia accounts today for almost 70% of India's military hardware.

During the Indian Prime Minister's visit to France in July 2009, President Sarkozy had reportedly promised to open all doors for Indo-French defence cooperation. The Indian decision in favour of Rafale creates a favourable ground for India to press for implementation of that promise. For the time being, French attention is focussed on finalizing the Rafale contract and other major steps in defence cooperation, especially in restricted technologies, will probably have to wait till then.

France, amongst all the European countries, has been seen as the most reliable partner. It has studiously avoided imposing sanctions on India whether because of India-Pakistan tensions or even in the wake of India's nuclear tests in 1998, besides being

the first to establish a strategic partnership with India, indicating clearly how it perceived India's role in a developing multipolar world. In the 1980s India signed the agreement to procure Mirage aircraft from France. A \$2.4 billion deal was inked in July 2011 with Dassault Aviation and Thales to

upgrade 51 of these Mirage aircraft.

The selection of Rafale for final negotiations for the MMRCA contract, even if done strictly on the basis of technical and commercial parameters, testifies to the underlying confidence in the stability and security of defence ties with France.

In December 2005 India and France signed the \$3 billion Scorpene deal, opening up cooperation in an area the French were especially keen on, in part to obtain orders for their state-owned naval shipyard, the DCN, and, in part, to attenuate negative feelings in India about their considerable naval cooperation with Pakistan.

The element of competition with Germany, which had supplied 4 type 209 submarines to India between 1986 and 1994, was strong. Two of these German submarines were built in Germany and two assembled in Mazagaon docks. In 1991, however, HDW,

the manufacturers of the submarines, was blacklisted by India, which opened up space for France to enter the Indian submarine market.

The bagging of the Scorpene contract was a political success for France, given that Germany had greater experience and a more established reputation in

submarine building and technology.

This success was not unconnected with the goodwill France had earned by its

accommodative position on India's 1998 nuclear tests.

The delay in implementing the Scorpene project did cause some bickering about where the

responsibility lay, but this has been overcome.

Other projects with France include development of engines for the ALH, the Kaveri engine for the LCA and the Shakti engine for Dhruv. A major project involving substantial technology transfer that has been negotiated with MBDA and awaits governmental

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approval is joint development and manufacture of the SR-SAM, the short range surface to air missile. A successful implementation of this project can open up more cooperation in the missile field, including, potentially, ballistic missile defence.

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In 1979, with India ordering around 130 aircraft Anglo-French Jaguar aircraft, with licence production and transfer of technology as part of the package, the British made a sizable comeback into the Indian market. In February 2003 India ordered 66 Hawk trainer jets from Britain worth \$1.7 billion. India insisted these planes carry no US parts because of the experience with its

Harrier aircraft detained in Britain after the imposition on nuclear sanctions on India in 1998.

In July 2010, during Prime Minister Cameron's visit India India placed an order for an additional 57 Hawk aircraft worth \$1.1 billion to be built by HAL, with Indian complaints about delays in transfer of technology for the earlier contract apparently resolved. Apart from defence sales, India and Britain have held air and naval exercises.

In the area of R&D, the tie-up between DRDO and the British DSTL (Defence Science and Technology Lab) is of potential interest. Britain is offering participation to India in the Global Combat Ship (GCS), a flexible role frigate. Britain, as we know, has a very large defence manufacturing base, the largest in Europe, with almost 2600 defence companies. BAE systems, which have contracted to sell 140 Ultra Light Howitzers to India, is looking at a role in artillery modernization in India, for which it has tied up with the Mahindra Group to create a Centre for Excellence for artillery projects.

The German Connection

Germany's Kurt tank was involved in the manufacture of HAL's Marut jet fighter in the 1950s. Since 1999 Germany, which is the fifth largest exporter of defence items to India, has been providing parts for construction of ships and submarines, such as fire control systems, sonar and navigation systems, parts for planes, helicopters and tanks. Apart from supplying 4 Type 209 submarines, it has supplied a large number of Dornier 228 aircraft. India and Germany signed a new Defence and Security agreement in 2006; an Indo-German High Defence Committee has been formed; visits of service chiefs have been exchanged. In 2008, the first joint naval exercise was held off Kochi.

Of course the Germans have had their set-backs in defence deals, having lost the submarine contract to the French and failing to win the MMRCA contract for which they were the lead country for negotiations. Earlier, in December 2007, they saw the cancellation of the \$ 500 million 197 helicopter deal that had been won by Eurocopter. The result of the re-tender remains uncertain because of competition from the Russia's Kamov helicopter. Similarly, in the first tender for 6 Refuelling Aircraft, EADS's Airbus 330

(military version), for which the lead country is Spain (but Germany is a big shareholder of EADS), came out lowest in price but this tender too was cancelled in 2009 and has been re-tendered. The competition is again with a Russian aircraft, the IL76 with new engines, with uncertain result.

India's defence relations with Italy are relatively limited. Italy's Alenia Aeronautica has 21% share in the Eurofighter, but this plane lost out in the MMRCA race, as we know. Italy is providing consultancy to our Navy for our indigenous aircraft carrier. Finmeccanica of Italy is providing its propulsion system. India is obtaining heavy weight torpedoes for its submarines and frigates from Italy. Finmeccanica's subsidiary Augusta Westland won the tender for supply of 12 AW101 helicopters to serve as executive transport helicopters for the Indian VIPs. Augusta Westland has established a joint venture with Tata Sons to assemble the 8 seat AW 119 Ke light helicopter in India. In 2003 India and Italy renewed their 1994 MOU on defence cooperation. The India-Italy Joint defence Committee has met once, in January 2010.

India has the dubious distinction of being the world's largest importer of arms. This reflects extremely poorly on the state of indigenous defence manufacturing. That a large country like ours, with such huge security challenges from China and Pakistan combined aggravated by US and western arming of Pakistan and subjecting India to technology regimes, should have been impelled to build domestic capability on an accelerated basis. No country can follow a truly independent policy without an independent defence base of its own. There can be no strategic autonomy without an independent self-defence

capacity. We have not been able to leverage our large scale imports for obtaining the level of transfers of technology needed by us. Fortunately, the allure of the Indian market has persuaded countries like France and Germany not to enter into any

new major defence contracts with Pakistan.

Changing Attitudes

Today the situation has improved for us. India has been liberated from nuclear sanctions and our western partners are, in principle,

supportive of our membership of the various technology regimes set up by them. This changed attitude towards India should progressively make it easier for us to insist and obtain meaningful technology transfers. The policy on offsets will contribute to building a larger defence manufacturing base, but it would be on a sub-contractual basis

and is not likely to lead to the kind of transfers we want. For this a change in our rules on FDI in the defence sector is required. The present 26% ceiling needs to be increased to 49% as a first step. The private sector should be given

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all encouragement to enter the defence sector.

The entry of the US in the Indian defence market and its success in bagging contracts worth \$ 9 billion in the last 5 to 6 years is impressive. This shows that India does not think that the use of sanctions against India is a serious threat anymore. Meanwhile, Pakistan's relations with the US and the West in general have seriously deteriorated.

US has now begun to focus on the Asia-Pacific region to potentially counter a threat from rising China. These developments are in our favour in terms of building up our defence potential. The technology transfer problems will not be easy to deal with as the defence sector in western countries has been largely privatized and private companies cannot be compelled to part with proprietary technologies. Where governments are standing in the way through export controls that is where India needs to exert pressure.

European countries have to contend with Russia's entrenched position in our defence sector, the impressive share Israel has carved out for itself the second largest-in

this sector and the advances the US is making. India is caught between the need to limit the inventory of equipment it has for operational and maintenance reasons, and the need to diversify so as not to create over-dependence on any one country.

We are expected to import \$200 billion worth of arms in the next 12 years. European countries will certainly have a share of this. They should, as European cooperation comes with much less intrusive demands and fewer chances of disruption of supplies for extraneous reasons. And we have tested our cooperation with European countries for long years now.

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Seize The Chance With Dhaka

- *Satish Chandra*

The first India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission meeting held at the minister level on May 7 and at the foreign secretary level on July 24 are a convenient inflexion point to assess the trend of ties between both countries. Regrettably, neither received the attention they deserved from the media that remains fixated on the sterile and unproductive India-Pakistan relationship.

With Sheikh Hasina's assumption of power in January 2009, her path-breaking visit to India in February 2010, and Manmohan Singh's visit to Bangladesh in September 2011, India-Bangladesh relations have been on an upturn. This qualitative improvement in ties is largely been due to the Awami League government's readiness to meet India's security concerns without seeking any quid pro quo, its secular outlook, and an openness to explore wide ranging cooperation with India. The latter deeply appreciative of Bangladesh's positivity has

reciprocated with several moves such as the accord of a \$1 billion credit, grant of duty free entry of Bangladeshi goods to India barring a small negative list of 25 items, provision of transit to Nepal and Bhutan, etc.

Clearly India-Bangladesh relations are in a transformative phase, the template for which is reflected in the Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development signed by the prime ministers of the two countries in September 2011. The cooperative activities specified in this agreement extend to virtually every conceivable area ranging from economic and commercial field to security, from connectivity to management of water resources and from energy to cultural exchanges.

In order to ensure the actualisation of the aforesaid cooperative activities a Joint Consultative Commission has been set up at foreign minister level to oversee their progression. This mechanism is backed by

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annual consultations at the foreign secretary level and biannual consultations at the joint secretary level.

In concrete terms the following are some of the positive developments in the last several months: conclusion of the protocol on the land boundary which by creating a clearly demarcated and undisputed 4,096-km border will facilitate its policing and thereby vastly enhance national security; grant of 24-hour access to Bangladeshi nationals to Dahagram and Angarpota enclaves through Tin Bigha; opening of border haats on Bangladesh's borders with Tripura and Meghalaya; implementation of a Coordinated Border Management Plan to control cross-border illegal activities and crimes and maintenance of peace and harmony; under the \$1 billion line of credit offered to Bangladesh by India, the latter has already cleared contracts/ projects worth about \$800 million. It has reduced the interest rate from 1.75 per cent to 1 per cent and converted 20 per cent of the credit into a grant; India's trade liberalisation measures for Bangladeshi goods have already resulted in a 60 per cent increase in Bangladesh exports to India in the period July-

June 2010-11 as compared to the level a year ago; an agreement has been concluded for purchase of 250 MW of power by Bangladesh from India and purchase of another 250 MW is likely. Intergrid connectivity is expected to be established between the two countries by 2013. A joint venture for setting up a 1,350 MW thermal plant in Bangladesh has also been established, and; India has assured Bangladesh that it would not take any unilateral decision on the Himalayan segment of its river linking project that may affect Bangladesh, and that a sub-group of the India-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission would visit Tipaimukh to go into all aspects of the hydroelectric project being set up there.

India can be faulted for having failed to deliver on two issues on which Bangladesh sets great store, due to Mamata Banerjee's opposition, namely sharing of Teesta waters and implementation of the protocol for settlement of the land boundary. On Teesta, the agreement negotiated with Bangladesh is eminently reasonable and, in fact, had only been finalised after keeping West Bengal in the loop. It envisages an equitable sharing of the Teesta waters at the point of entry into

Bangladesh after providing for about 500 cusecs of water to inter alia maintain the flow of the river. The agreement set to be signed during Manmohan Singh's visit to Bangladesh in September 2011 was postponed due to Mamata's last minute objections. Since water is a highly emotive issue in Bangladesh our renegeing in this matter took the sheen of Manmohan Singh's visit and exposed Sheikh Hasina to severe criticism at home.

As the Bangladesh foreign minister pointed out whilst recently in India, relations between the two countries "will take a huge hit" if India does not deliver on Teesta. In practical terms, this has induced Bangladesh to go slow on several connectivity-related issues that are of great importance to us.

The Protocol on the Land Boundary Agreement so meticulously negotiated, after taking into account the wishes of the affected peoples, will result in a fixed demarcated boundary, entail the exchange of 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh with an area of 17,160 acres and 51

Bangladeshi enclaves in India with an area of 7,110 acres, and retention by each country of the areas held by it in adverse possession. (2,777 acres by India and 2,267 by Bangladesh). Implementation of the protocol apart from being in the mutual security interest and helping promote a harmonious environment on the borders, will enable the local residents for the first time to enjoy full legal rights

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as citizens of India or Bangladesh with proper civic facilities. It is no surprise, therefore, that these people are pressing for urgent implementation of the protocol. Arguments to the effect that as a

result of the protocol India would lose more land or that it would cause a major influx of people into the country are untenable. For one thing, the amount of land and people involved is paltry, particularly as compared to the benefits accruing from the proposed settlement. Moreover, transfer of land is only notional as neither country exercised effective control on its enclaves in the other country. Movement of people will

also be negligible as most will stay where they are and assume the nationality of the country where they reside.

In order to fast track the improvement in India-Bangladesh ties and, indeed, make it irreversible, the government must urgently override Mamata's irrational objections to the settlement of the Teesta and boundary issues. Speedy delivery

by us on these two issues will also help in consolidating the Awami League's position that would obviously be in our interest, particularly given the inimical bias of the BNP and Jamaat against India.

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The Emperor's Frayed Clothes

- PP Shukla

One important chapter of the Anna movement has ended; a new one is set to begin. Time, perhaps, to pause and take stock of what went wrong, why the promise of August fizzled by December 2011. The principal failure – for failure is what we are seeing, no matter how it is dressed up – was caused by the fact that Team Anna, and Anna himself, displayed the very faults that they were fighting against. The irony is that they did not see this. And when forced to confront it, they resorted to petulance or brazen denial.

Corruption was their main plank. And yet, all the principal members of the Team, and the most articulate ones for sure, were themselves exposed. What made things worse was that each time one or other individual was exposed, Anna condoned it. Not only did this expose the double standard that was being applied, but it also showed the arrogance of Anna who seemed to set himself up as the arbiter of right and wrong in these matters.

Importantly, it raised the legitimate question: if these men and women were going to be tempted by the piffling amounts they swindled, how could they be expected to resist the much bigger temptations that power would surely bring?

Anna was also in the habit of calling the Government gaddars. No question about it, this Government has done very nearly all it can to hurt the country's national interests, most notably on national security matters. They have left the country dangerously unprepared for any military challenge that may appear in the near term. Yet, here was Prashant Bhushan saying we should be prepared to let go of Kashmir. And again Anna set himself up as arbiter and declared that he disagreed but Bhushan would not be made to pay for this egregious betrayal of the country's supreme interests.

As if all this was not enough, there was the question of protection for the whistle-blower. Anna's own

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blogger, Parulekar, found that there was no protection for him if the whistle were blown against Anna. In a well-publicised case, Parulekar was sacked for bringing out the differences within Team Anna, and the unhealthy trends emerging within it. And again, Anna got away with it, because the media were giving him an easy time, for reasons of their own.

Anna's own tendencies need to be understood too. Firstly, the inconsistency that has been remarked upon earlier, showed up again over the famous slapping incidents, one involving the self-same Prashant Bhushan, the other involving Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar. The first incident attracted unbridled anger from Anna, and rightly so. But on the other, he went so far as to imply that one slap was not enough for Pawar. Again, this is not in defence of Pawar – God knows he has enough to atone for. But the inconsistency was glaring – and inexplicable. Further, when Anna was confronted with this inconsistency and asked to explain, he walked away from the interview.

The Team is also wont to make grand claims that their finances are all there for the country to see.

And they are never challenged by the media, where they make such tall claims. Here is what happened to me, writing under a pseudonym. I sent an email to Anna on his feedback address asking for his financial statements; within minutes I got a reply, automated I suspect, from a Suresh saying that he would get back to me soon. That was in August 2011. Since then, I have sent two reminders, but there has been no response. This is not to suggest that there is any financial impropriety in Anna personally, but that the tall claims of transparency are definitely hollow. As to whether their finances are indeed clean, we need details in order to be able to judge. Again, for accuracy, it should be added that charges against Anna have been probed and nothing has incriminated him.

Then there is the issue of nepotism. There is a father and son team working as part of the core committee. No doubt, Anna considers them very competent lawyers, but was it really necessary to find a father and son team? If a Minister or a leader of any political party were to do this – as indeed most are doing – do we not criticise the nepotism implicit? And especially here we have charges of soft corruption against

them, and of course, of being a gaddar against one of them.

These facts provide as good an explanation as any for the collapse of the movement started in April 2011, and received with such enthusiasm by the people of the entire country. By the time of the Mumbai fiasco, it was clear that the movement was dying down. Just as well: the actual draft of the Anna team for the Lokpal bill was really a power grab. It is a safe bet, borne out by many TV interviews of the people who gathered to support Anna at Ram Lila grounds in August 2011, that most of the people had not read the grandly-titled “Jan” Lokpal bill. The kind of power that it gave to the Lokpal would have effectively ended the separation of powers that is so important in a system like ours.

Anna has now recognised that one phase is over, and he has rid himself – so it seems – of Team Anna. Politically, there are very

difficult times ahead for the country. The General Elections of 2014 have been likened by someone to the Fourth Battle of Panipat. Indeed, the future of our country as an independent country, no less, is at stake. Anna’s latest is that he is going to plunge into electoral politics, though he does not appear to have decided what precise form this will take. He must weigh his options very carefully, realising that Brand Anna is frying and he does not have the cushion to be able to get away with too many more mistakes. As a nationalist, he must clear away all the cobwebs in his mind, and the persons, that led him astray. The coming year-and-a-half will undoubtedly see very rough tactics, and the nationalist forces must be ready to confront them at all stages and at all levels.

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Afghanistan And America's New Silk Road Strategy

- Vinod Anand

The security situation in Afghanistan continues to follow a declining trend where not only have the NATO supply routes through Pakistan been attacked by the Taliban, the logistics of going through Uzbekistan via the Northern Distribution Network have also come under Taliban attack. Indeed, relations between the US and Pakistan have not improved much; Pakistan's stance on Haqqani group continues to sour the US-Pakistan relationship. Recently the US Congress voted for the Haqqani group to be designated as a terror group. It is a well accepted fact that Pakistan continues to provide shelter to the Quetta Shura and other assorted militant groups despite its avowals to the contrary. America too has long been advocating a regional solution to the Afghan puzzle and its 'new Silk Road Strategy' unveiled last year is claimed to be a part of the same. Though the strategy largely stresses regional economic

integration with Afghanistan, it is not devoid of geo-strategic ambitions and the question arises is America's new Silk Road strategy is really new or is it old wine in a new bottle? What really are the objectives and significance of this strategy? Looking back through time it will be seen that its Silk Road Strategy has witnessed three iterations. The initial phase commenced with the demise of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991. The US and the West were the first off the blocks in making efforts to wean the nascent Central Asian nations away from Russian influence. At that time Russia had also become weak and expected the West to help it out economically.

In 1992, the U.S passed a Freedom Support Act and additionally a Silk Road Strategy Act in 1999. The main goals were to promote democracy and human rights, foster pro-West orientations in Central Asian nations, support economic growth, and

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development of transport and communications. Kazakhstan was viewed as an 'energy behemoth' and American companies sought to invest a great deal in its hydrocarbon sector. These were viewed by the US Administration to be efforts in 'strengthening the independence of the Central Asian states and forestalling Russian, Chinese and Iranian efforts to subvert them'. The overall objective was to integrate these countries into the European system.

When the US and its allies attacked Afghanistan following the September 2001 terrorist attacks to root out the Taliban, Russia, China and the Central Asian states welcomed the Western powers' intervention since it suited their short term strategic interests of dealing with security threats arising from Afghanistan. The Central Asian nations even offered bases to the US and western troops.

The next phase of America's Silk Road Strategy commenced in 2005-2006 when it promoted a 'Greater Central Asia Strategy'. The term 'Greater Central Asia' included many areas and countries surrounding the Central Asian nations. Ostensibly, the aim was

to promote greater economic integration especially focused on connecting Central Asia and South Asia. The main goal was to weaken the Russian control over the hydrocarbon sector in Central Asian countries like Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, through building pipelines bypassing Russian territory. The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project was a manifestation of this concept, as also the Nabucco gas pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline projects (procuring oil from Kazakhstan). The reasons for this were founded on the logic that the Central Asian nations need diversification of outlets for their natural resources and other products.

To attenuate its Greater Central Asian strategy the U.S. State Department included Central Asia in a revamped Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs in 2006. President Obama's objectives were aimed at recasting relations with Russia because of the complex geo-strategic situation prevailing in Afghanistan and Central Asian, which was a sub-set of the overall global environment where American power was considered to be on the decline. The Russians and the Central Asian countries

did help the US and its allies by allowing transit of logistics through the Northern Distribution Network (the existing infrastructure and road/rail network of which could become a basis for another silk route), recasting of relations could not be realized.

A new Silk Road Strategy heralded in July 2011 by Hillary Clinton is therefore, not new; the basic premises of the American strategy in Central Asia have not undergone any change; if at all there is some change, it is in the priority of ends which it wants to achieve in Afghanistan. Top priority is getting out of Afghanistan gracefully. Connecting Central with South Asia through a network of multimodal transport corridors and networks that include road and rail networks, pipelines, electricity grids and power transmission lines with Afghanistan as a hub, are some measures for economic upliftment. Such a strategy is expected to provide enough revenues to the Afghan Government to run its affairs without being dependent on foreign aid in the long run. Some American analysts propound that economic development and growth is possible even in unstable and

insecure environment. However, without security all the talk of pipelines and investments in the mineral ores sector of Afghanistan by China, India and others, would remain a chimera.

This new strategy envisaged encouraging “stronger economic ties through South and Central Asia so that goods, capital, and people can flow more easily across borders.” A ‘web of economic and transit connections that will bind together a region too long torn apart by conflict and division’ was what was envisioned.

This form of regional cooperation and economic integration was given impetus in the Istanbul and Bonn Conferences on Afghanistan in 2011. For instance, the Istanbul Conference had recognized Afghanistan’s role as the land bridge in the ‘Heart of Asia’, connecting South Asia, Central Asia, Eurasia and the Middle East, and reaffirmed their support for a secure, stable and peaceful future of Afghanistan. It also endorsed Afghanistan’s willingness and determination to use its regional and historical position to do its part to promote security and peaceful economic cooperation in the region. The Conference had also stressed the

central role of the United Nations in the international affairs, which was perhaps an oblique reference to the proclivity of the US in adopting a unilateralist approach in international affairs and bypass the UN.

India, together with Russia and Iran has been working on another version of Silk Road. They are founder partners of the International North South Transport Corridor the main goal which was to link not only Central Asia and Russia but also Europe. However, due to many bottlenecks and poor infrastructure in Iran and many other geopolitical problems associated with Iran the full potential of this Corridor has not been realized. Attempts by India to establish its own versions of the silk route have not been very successful. India had built a road from the Iran border town of Zaranj to Delaram in Afghanistan, linking up with the Garland highway of Afghanistan. This is one of the most important road-links in land-locked Afghanistan. Zaranj is also linked by Iranian road network to Chabahar port. However, unstable conditions and the influence of the Taliban in the Southern areas of Afghanistan have prevented this route from being exploited fully.

Further, Indian companies have decided to invest about US \$10 billion in the iron and steel sector of Afghanistan to exploit the mineral resources of iron ore deposits of Hajigak in Afghanistan. The issue of transportation of the minerals however remains. One project that may take off is construction of 900 KM railway line from Chabahar port to Bamiyan and Hagijak in Afghanistan, which could be used for transportation. At a wider level, India has been willing to work with any power or a group of countries which could help India gain access to Central Asia including Afghanistan.

The latest Silk Road strategy justifies the leadership role of the US as the biggest investor in the region. This would definitely be contested by China and Russia because of the geopolitical ramifications of this strategy. Although the American intelligentsia talks about the imperatives of involving Russia and China in the actualisation of this strategy, on the ground very little has been done so far, except for utilizing the NDN that goes across Russia and the Central Asian states before connecting to Afghanistan. The SCO regional organization has not been given

much recognition and credibility by the US and NATO forces. India would certainly be chary of any negative connotations associated with this concept that may impact its relations with countries like Russia or other powers in the region. Further, China in its own version of Silk Road strategy has announced its plans for construction of a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to China via Afghanistan and Tajikistan, thus avoiding the turbulent Pashtun held areas. In addition, China is doubling the capacity of the existing Turkmenistan-China gas pipeline to 61 billion cubic meters per year. They also endeavour to invest in oil exploration in Afghanistan expected to generate US dollars 7 billion of revenues. All these factors are likely to have a negative impact on the construction of TAPI.

On the other hand, if the US is able to influence Pakistan to grant overland transit rights to India then it would be a win-win situation for all involved, with Pakistan being one of the biggest gainers as it will earn huge transit revenues. Pakistan is part of the TAPI initiative of building a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to India, but it has so far refrained from acceding to India's proposal

for access to Afghanistan in the reverse direction. Therefore, there are many impediments in the realization of the new U.S. Silk Road Strategy.

An additional dimension to the debate is the reality that India and US have signed Strategic Partnership Agreements with Afghanistan, to intensify their consultation, coordination and cooperation in promoting a stable, democratic, united, sovereign and prosperous Afghanistan. The strategic Dialogue that took place in June in Washington, as one analyst observed, at which India had refrained from openly endorsing the New Silk Road architecture and the two sides discussed only the "vision" of an enhanced regional connectivity. The two countries have "reiterated that success in Afghanistan and regional and global security require elimination of safe havens and infrastructure for terrorism and violent extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan".

In the final analysis, the new Silk Road Strategy can be seen as a socio-economic approach combined with geo-political aspects to extricate the US and its coalition allies from an unwinnable situation in Afghanistan. Though

regional cooperation has been mentioned as the panacea for the ills of this region the US continues to emphasize on its leadership role without purposefully working towards a regional approach to the Afghan imbroglio. There are many contradictions in the US approach to the region as its new concept excludes countries like Iran, Russia and a regional group like

SCO from its formulations. It is also compounded by the fact that major players in Central Asia have their own versions of the silk road/routes.

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China's Emerging War Concepts

- Gurmeet Kanwal

The People's Liberation Army has launched a rapid modernisation drive to prepare for 21st century warfare and to enable China to project military power well away from its land borders and territorial waters. The new type of war that is now being envisaged by the PLA represents a revolutionary change from the traditional Chinese concept of People's War against an invading enemy seeking to occupy and destroy the PRC. People's War was expected to be an all-out or total war fought primarily by ground forces supported by a motivated population that was fully mobilised for a long-drawn struggle. The concept that was evolved by Mao was characterised by protracted, large-scale land warfare where the aim was to exploit China's strategic depth by luring the enemy deep inside, extending his lines of communications and logistics and eventually destroying him through prolonged attrition.

Underpinning the new professionalism of the PLA is the

basic doctrine of "active defence" (*jiji fangyu*) that seeks to conduct "people's war under modern conditions" (better understood as "local wars under hi-tech conditions" – *gaojishu tiaojian xia de jubu zhanzheng*). The 'active defence' doctrine calls for integrated, deep strikes – a concentration of superior firepower that is to be utilised to destroy the opponent's retaliatory capabilities through pre-emptive strikes employing long-range artillery, short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) and precision guided munitions. David Shambaugh, a well known China scholar has written: "Rather than conducting a 'people's war' (a strategy to 'lure the enemy in deep' into one's own territory), the PLA doctrine of 'active defence' calls for forward positioning, frontier defence, engagement of the enemy at or over the border and potential engagement in conflict beyond China's immediate periphery... this doctrine is essentially pro-active and seeks to take the battle into enemy territory." Beijing has defined the

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following five likely limited war scenarios: military conflict with neighbouring countries in a limited region; military conflict on territorial waters; undeclared air attack by enemy countries; territorial defence in a limited military operation; and, punitive offensive with a minor incursion into a neighbouring country.

The new doctrine and the strategy and tactics associated with it have been influenced by the lessons of Gulf War I in 1991 and the Iraq War of 2003, both of which have been extensively studied by Chinese scholars. The doctrine requires the creation of a capability to project force across China's borders through rapid deployment, conventional SRBMs and cruise missiles, information warfare, electronic warfare, precision-guided munitions, night fighting capabilities and other advanced military technologies. The building of these capabilities, in turn, drives procurement and defence production policies, the command and control structures and training. According to a US DoD report to Congress, victory is to be achieved through "strategic strikes" by gaining the initiative by striking first, achieving victory with one strike and concentrating

China's strength to attack the core of enemy defence.

Major General Shen Xuezai, former head of the Military Systems Department of the Academy of Military Sciences (AMS), has written: "Only by controlling the entire battlespace and striking at key points so as to paralyse the enemy's entire operational system and immobilize its forces, will it be possible to win a war." Commenting on the PLA's evolving doctrine, Major Mark A. Stokes has stated: "This strategic attack doctrine, one aspect of the PLA's 'limited war under high-tech conditions' (*jubu zhanzheng zai gaojishu tiaojian xia*)... continues to adhere to the traditional strategy of 'pitting the inferior against the superior' (*yilie shengyou*), which recognises technological inferiority for an indefinite period of time." Much the same point was made in the Pentagon's 2007 annual report on the Military Power of China: "Once hostilities have begun, according to the PLA text, Science of Campaigns (*Zhanyixue*) (2000), 'the essence of (active defence) is to take the initiative and annihilate the enemy... While strategically the guideline is active defence, (in military campaigns) the emphasis is placed on taking

the initiative in active offence. Only in this way can the strategic objective of active defence be realised” (emphasis added).

China also follows ‘anti-access’ strategies to deny access to the adversary to his planned launch pads in an endeavour to prevent build-up of forces for a war against China. Planning for anti-access strategies flows from the apprehension that if superior, well-equipped forces (read the US and its allies) are allowed to arrive in the war zone with the force levels and in the time frame planned by them, they are bound to prevail. According to a RAND paper of 2007, the Chinese calculate that “by mounting a credible threat to do so, they will be able to deter the United States from intervening in the first place, or at least limit the scale and scope of that intervention.” The PLA’s aim is clearly to deter a conflict or at least delay the opponent’s preparation till the PLA is better prepared to react. The PLA seeks

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to achieve this aim through attacks against air bases and ports and other elements of the logistics chain and against information systems so as to disrupt command and control during build-up. While anti-access strategies are unlikely to succeed in preventing conflict completely, these could impose considerable delay and caution during build-up.

The PLA’s new doctrine is also more assertive than previously thought and is not bound by any restrictions to confine and limit future conflict to within China’s national boundaries. China claims that it has only peaceful intentions and does not believe in launching aggression and that it fights wars only to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. According to China’s White Papers on national defence, active defence is a defensive military strategy. However, it is clear from Chinese writings that the major characteristics of active defence are distinctly offensive in

nature. The PLA publication *The Study of Campaigns (Zhanyixue)* (2000) highlights this offensive approach: “While strategically the guideline is active defence, in military campaigns, though, the emphasis is placed on taking the initiative in ‘active offense’. Only in this way the strategic objectives of “active defence” can be realised.”

The doctrine of high-tech local wars under conditions of informationisation is still evolving. In the absence of active operational experience, the PLA may take another decade or so to fully implement all the ingredients of the new doctrine. According to Chinese scholars writing in the *Science of Military Strategy*, the switch to fighting high-tech local wars is a “historic leap in the development of current wars”; it is the “reflection of the historic logic of war development at (the) present time”; it is “an important linkage in the chain of war development”; and, it is the reflection of change from industrial-era production mode to information-era production mode

in the military field.” Chinese scholars emphasise the high-tech feature of modern wars. In their view, “the aim, range, tools of war and time and space of engagements are all limited.” Compared with China’s historically reactive stance of luring the enemy in deep and destroying him through strategic defence, the present doctrine is essentially pro-active and seeks to take the battle into enemy territory. It also strives to achieve surprise in a pro-active manner that is demonstrated by new “quick-strike” tactics. The aim is to catch the enemy unprepared in order to inflict substantial damage on strategic targets and disrupt logistics to gain psychological ascendancy. While the land frontier is expected to continue to generate some local tensions, the Central Military Commission (CMC) has identified space and the oceans as the new areas where future conflict might take place.

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Illegal Migration As A Threat To India's Internal Security

- Dr. N. Manoharan

Among other things, one of the major aspects that have come out of the recent communal violence in Bodo areas of Assam is illegal migration. According to the Group of Ministers Report on National Security, illegal migration has generated a host of destabilizing political, social, economic, ethnic and communal tensions. Politically, the Bangladeshi migrants are in a position to influence the results of the elections in a large number of constituencies in the North East (about 32% of the constituencies in Assam). Economically, increased pressure on land, resulting in depletion of forest wealth, undercutting of wages of unskilled jobs, forcible occupation of Government land by the migrants and a host of other such issues, generate a ripple effect in the entire North East.¹

Illegal migration mainly takes place in the eastern and north-eastern parts of the country from neighbouring Bangladesh.

Bangladeshis have been moving out of their country due to economic, political and social reasons. There is a serious crisis of 'lebensraum' (living space) in Bangladesh due to alarming population growth rate without proportionate availability of land. This is going to worsen further in the future with the impact of climate change and natural disasters. As per 2011 estimates, the population density of Bangladesh is 964 per sq km, one of the highest in the world. Only Singapore and small city-states like Bahrain or the Vatican have higher figures.² And, this is expected to increase further in the coming years.

As observed by the Group of Minister's Report, illegal immigration from Bangladesh has led to demographic upheaval and generated serious communal, political, social and economic tensions and conflicts in several areas of the northeast of India. The most affected states are West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya,

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Nagaland, Bihar, and Tripura, although migrants “have spread to far off states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Delhi.”³ Although the exact figure is not known, it is estimated that there are about 15-20 million Bangladeshis staying illegally in India.⁴ The illegal migration of Bangladeshis in fact triggered the agitation in Assam by All Assam Students Union (AASU) in 1979-85. Despite the Assam Accord of 1985⁵, the issue remains unresolved to this day and the “silent demographic invasion” persists. Due to vote-bank politics, the motivation to block illegal migrants from Bangladesh is absent. The gravity and scope of threats arising out of illegal migration was highlighted by the then Governor of Assam, Lt Gen S. K. Sinha in his report. *Inter alia*, he points out,

“This silent and invidious demographic invasion of Assam may result in the loss of the geo-strategically vital districts of Lower Assam. The influx of these illegal migrants is turning these districts into a Muslim majority region. It will then only be a matter of time when a demand for their merger with Bangladesh may be made. The rapid growth of international Islamic

fundamentalism may provide the driving force for this demand. In this context, it is pertinent that Bangladesh has long discarded secularism and has chosen to become an Islamic State. Loss of Lower Assam will sever the entire land mass of the North East, from the rest of India and the rich natural resources of that region will be lost to the Nation.”

This applies to other states of the north-east, especially those that share borders with Bangladesh like Tripura and Meghalaya. In Tripura, the migrants have reduced the locals to a minority leading to rise of insurgent groups like All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF). Bangladeshi migrants have even spread to more distant states in the region like Arunachal Pradesh, and other parts of India and are seen as potential threats similar to those faced by other North Eastern States. Some of these migrants give shelter to Bangladeshi militant groups like HuJI (B) and are very amenable to ISI activities. The Supreme Court, in its 114-page judgment, in July 2005 observed that “The presence of such a large number of illegal migrants from Bangladesh, which runs into millions, is in fact an ‘aggression’ on the State of Assam and has also contributed

significantly in causing serious 'internal disturbances' in the shape of insurgency of alarming proportion making the life of the people of Assam wholly insecure and the panic generated thereby has created a fear psychosis."⁷

Despite the enormity of the issue, the response has been grossly inadequate. The entire stretch of 4,096-km India-Bangladesh border is heavily populated, making monitoring extremely difficult. Fencing has to a large extent been acting as an obstacle, but only 2,760.12 km have been fenced so far.⁸ The remaining stretch should be fenced at the earliest, complemented with floodlights and hi-tech surveillance devices. Most importantly, the existing border has to be demarcated at the earliest to make it free of 'enclaves' and 'adverse possession'; much of the activities take place in these undemarcated areas. Although the Border Security Force (BSF), in charge of policing

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the border, has been doing its job creditably, the force levels are not sufficient to monitor the long and difficult border. Apart from raising new battalions, it is important not to divert the BSF for duties other than border management. They also have to be equipped legally to handle situations at borders that include not only illegal migration, but also smuggling, drug-trafficking, counterfeits, and militant movements.

Apart from creating physical hurdles, it is also important to discourage illegal migrants through suitable deterrent legislation. Till recently, illegal migrants in Assam were handled by Illegal Migration (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983, that was held as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 2005 as it was "coming to the advantage of such illegal migrants as any proceedings initiated against them almost entirely ends in their favour, enables them to have a document having official sanctity to the

effect that they are not illegal migrants.”⁹ An exclusive refugee/migration law is long pending. It is also vital to issue multi-purpose identity cards, at least to curb further illegal migration. At some pockets of Indo-Bangladesh border, the issue of temporary work permits can be considered so that Bangladeshis can come, work and go back. At the macro level, India should help in the overall economic development and prosperity of Bangladesh so that its citizens need not to go elsewhere for their livelihood.

Endnotes

1. See Group of Ministers Report on Reforming the National Security System, Chapter II, p. 6, para 2.35.
2. For full details, see Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, “Population and Housing Census 2011,” p. 8, para 2.4.
3. Group of Ministers Report on Reforming the National Security System, Para 2.35 of the.
4. Ibid, p. 60, para 5.8 (h).
5. Full text of the Agreement is available at [http://aasc.nic.in/Acts%20and%20Rules%20\(GOA\)/Implementation%20of%20Assam%20Accord%20Deptt/Assam%20Accord.pdf](http://aasc.nic.in/Acts%20and%20Rules%20(GOA)/Implementation%20of%20Assam%20Accord%20Deptt/Assam%20Accord.pdf) Interestingly, there is a separate ‘The Implementation of Assam Accord Department’ in the Government of Assam that acts as “a Nodal Department for implementation of the Assam Accord and to monitor the implementation of various clauses of the Assam Accord by different Departments of the State Government.” For details see http://assamgovt.nic.in/departments/accord_dept.asp.
6. See Chapter II, Para 24 of the Report. D. O. No. GSAG.3/98, dated 08 November 1998, full text of the report is available at http://www.satp.org/satporgt/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/illegal_migration_in_assam.htm, accessed on 01 August 2012.
7. *Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India (UOI) and Another*, No. 131 of 2000, India: Supreme Court, 12 July 2005, para no. 39, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/refworl>

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8. Ministry of Home Affairs,
Government of India, *Annual
Report 2011-12*, pp. 46-47.
 9. “IMDT Act is the biggest
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India's Political Class Lacks Ideology

- *Dr. M.N. Buch*

The Preamble to the Indian Constitution delineates a democratic form of government by constituting India into a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic. Part V of the Constitution trifurcates the State into three equal constituents, the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. The composition of the Legislature, the Parliament of India, is formed by members elected by adult suffrage, in the case of the House of the People, the Lok Sabha, and indirectly, by the State Legislatures in the case of the Council of States or Rajya Sabha.

The entire Parliament in the Lok Sabha is divided into territorial constituencies and each elected member becomes the representative of the people residing in their constituency, and are registered in the electoral roll of that constituency. Each Member of Parliament then acts in the House on behalf of all his constituents, and it is for this reason India is a representative democracy. The division of powers

between the Executive, Legislature and the Judiciary closely follows the Westminster model and, therefore, India is considered to be a representative parliamentary democracy in contrast to that of the United States of America, which is a presidential form of democracy. In the Westminster model government, power is exercised by the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers who collectively enjoy the confidence of the House, and who advise the President on how the executive powers of the Union will be exercised. If the House loses confidence in the government, the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers must resign and the government would fall. In a presidential form of democracy, the President is directly elected by the people and neither he nor his cabinet is responsible to the House of Representatives, the lower house in the American Congress or Parliament. In fact, in the United States a cabinet member cannot be a member of either House of Congress. There, the balance of

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power is established by the Legislature through its functions of legislation and approving the budget, but by itself whereas the Congress cannot either dismiss the cabinet, nor remove the President except through the process of impeachment. India, which follows the Westminster model, legislation itself is initiated by government and because the Council of Ministers are collectively responsible to Parliament, the Executive and the Legislature come together in the matter of legislative business. Since the government enjoys a majority in the House, the Prime Minister can and does influence the proceedings in Parliament, whether it is an issues of budget, legislation or debate. To that extent the Executive embodied by the Prime Minister can override the checks and balances between the Legislature and Executive, which are a features of the American Constitution. It should be remembered that the infamous Nazi rule was initiated, facilitated and executed through a democratic process by Hitler as Chancellor persuading Parliament to approve the Enabling Act and further, succeeding in making President Hindenburg sign the Act into law. This enabled Hitler to rule Germany for a year by decree;

and the first decrees was to abolish Parliament and establish an absolute dictatorship.

This example has been cited to demonstrate that in a representative democracy a Nazi Germany scenario is not beyond the realm of possibility. For example, under Article 75, of the Indian constitution the President can appoint a person as Prime Minister even if he does not enjoy the confidence of the House. Further Article 85 of the Constitution allows for the President to summon each House of Parliament and the only restriction is that six months should not intervene between one session and the previous session. In other words, after swearing in the Prime Minister, the President need not summon Parliament for a period of five months and twenty-nine days. In this period the President would have the power to legislate by ordinance under Article 123, except in the matter of the Appropriation Act under Article 114. This is because under Article 113 (2) all estimates relating to expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India must first be assented to by the Lok Sabha, and only when a demand for a grant on any subject is approved by the Lok Sabha, can it

be included in the Appropriation Bill. This then is the principal check on the ability of the President and Prime Minister in conspiracy to that could convert India into a dictatorship because if there is no grant and no Appropriation Act, money cannot be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund. Therefore, the government would come to a standstill. Another check, is of the Judiciary which would strike down any attempt to bypass the Constitution or convert India from a democracy to a dictatorship. The Indian Constitution, therefore, does keep India safe from conversion to a dictatorship, notwithstanding an attempt made by Indira Gandhi in 1975 to superimpose her absolute rule on India.

A representative democracy cannot function if, for example, the Lok Sabha consists exclusively of 543 members, each independent and are not part of a group or party. To form a government, these members would have to come together in a sufficiently large enough group to form a majority in the House so that collectively this group can constitute a government which will enjoy the confidence of the House. 543 persons can form a

group or groups only if they subscribe to and enjoy a common ideology, a common programme, a common platform and common views so that they act cohesively. Such groups are what we call political parties. Section 29 A of the Representation of People Act 1951 provides for registration by the Election Commission of associations and bodies as political parties. Section 29 A (1) reads, "Any association or body of individual citizens of India calling itself a political party and intending to avail itself of the provisions of this Part shall make an application to the Election Commission for its registration as a political party for the purposes of this Act". In other words, the Act governing elections recognises the existence of political parties and provides for their registration, regulation and superintendence. It is the political parties which approach the people to vote for their candidates on account of ideology and programmes of the party as enunciated in the party's election manifesto and the people have the freedom to exercise their choice, not only on account of the suitability of the candidate proper but also because the candidate represents the party whose ideology appeals to the electorate.

In India for many years after independence, the Congress party, whose ideology was rooted in Gandhian principles, ruled the country both at the Centre and in the States. The opposition was weak, but the prevailing parliamentary culture was such that it was respected and the opinions expressed by it in Parliament were considered seriously without the majority party steamrolling them. Men of the stature of Ram Manohar Lohia and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee carried a weight in our politics far in excess of the numbers they represented in Parliament. Because the party in power had an ideological base and a programme in which the nation came first, the democracy was healthy, politics relatively honest and politicians definitely nationalistic. The Gandhian principles of austerity governed our politicians, whose life style, needs and attitudes were simple.

In politics ideology forms a basic construct around which the

political class function. The Chambers Twenty-first Century Dictionary defines ideology as: "The body of ideas and principles which form a basis for a social, economic or political system: the opinions, principles and way of thinking, characteristic of a particular person, group of people or nation". We cannot have a political system in which there are

We cannot have a political system in which there are neither ideas nor principles and if that happens we cannot have a social or economic system. A political party bereft of ideology is no party. Unfortunately as politics stands today there is no party which has an identifiable ideology and I state this in the context of the Communist Party of India or Communist Party of India (Marxist) also.

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of the Communist Party of India or Communist Party of India (Marxist) also. The Preamble to the Constitution states that ideology of a party must take into account the fact that India is and will be a republic, its form of government will be democratic, it will be secular in nature and it will be socialist in that it will promote both equality and equity.

India would be a republic with social, economic and political justice for all and there will be equality of status and of opportunity. The socialist ideal would ensure that the right to equality before law enshrined in Article 14; prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth enshrined in Article 15; and the equality of opportunity in matters of public employment enshrined in Article 16; would guide every government, regardless of party affiliations. Socialism in the Indian context also means that the directive to the state enshrined in Article 38 to establish a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life, will determine every policy of government. The question is whether any of these ideals forms part of the ideology of any political party in India, and whether in fact, any party has an ideology.

Ideology cannot be a matter of the moment. Ideology is the core of any political party and that core can evolve, but it be twisted and turned as a means of expediency. It is worth looking at the British

experience on this matter when Margaret Thatcher was the Conservative party's Prime Minister. She made an ideological statement when she came to power that she would dismantle the socialist state in the process would destroy the instruments of socialism. She then proceeded to fulfill her ideological objectives even when she faced opposition from the manner in which she dealt with the Arthur Scargil led coal miners strike, the issue of poll tax, the reduction of milk in the school mid-day meal schemes, etc., she remained unperturbed by her personal unpopularity. Prime Minister Thatcher went ahead with her programme to an extent where the political philosophy of the country changed.

Till 1967 the Congress Party ruled India and by and large the old political class inherited from the freedom movement continued to uphold Indian traditions. In 1967 everything changed where members of the Haryana and Madhya Pradesh State Legislatures were bribed to defect from the ruling party and form a separate group which caused the ruling party to be ousted, and new united front government to be formed for the first time and power was thus purchased.

Suddenly, legislators found that they could command a price and if this price was paid the mandate of the electorate could be undone and new political combinations could be formed to constitute the government. Of course the new government itself would be unstable, based as it was on bribery and, therefore, having illegitimately won power, it had to continue bribing in order to retain it. That was the end of any form of principled government in India and it brought into existence a new political class whose origin was corruption. In order to buy power one needed money and unless the State was subverted, money could not be had. Therefore, the instrumentalities of the State had to be made totally pliant so that it would not stand in the way of illegal money making. A systematic attack was launched on the Civil Services, was conducted

No democracy can function on the basis of the bureaucracy alone, however efficient, honest and forward looking it might be. The power to legislate vests in the Legislature and the power to take policy decisions vests in the Council of Ministers which consists of elected members of the Legislature. At different levels of government, including urban and rural local government, the same position prevails and ultimately it is the elected representatives who, in a democracy, take policy decisions based on their party ideology, their declared programme and the mandate of the people.

to facilitate this new ideology and officers were made to surrender to threat and coercion. The honest officers who stood their ground were identified and isolated, and the corrupt and the pliant brought to positions of power. The reason for the existence of the All India

Services, independence, fearlessness in giving advice and impartiality, integrity and fairness in implementing the orders of government, was attacked at the very root and virtually destroyed. Thus a nexus was built up between the Services and the political class and the binding force was corruption.

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consists of elected members of the Legislature. At different levels of government, including urban and rural local government, the same position prevails and ultimately it is the elected representatives who, in a democracy, take policy decisions based on their party ideology, their declared programme and the mandate of the people. The mandate of a Civil Servant's is to advise, to point out precedents and the law and to bring to the notice of the decision makers the various courses of action available at their disposal and the consequences of each. Once a decision is taken the Civil Servant must faithfully implement the decision, though in doing so he must be totally fair, evenhanded and impartial. In other words, the policy decision will be political, but its implementation will be totally impartial. These roles become completely blurred when all decision making becomes a function of expediency, and it is dictated by either the bribe which is received or the fear that is instilled by the possibility of losing power if a particular pressure group is not pleased. Such a political class no longer cares for the duties mandated to it by the Constitution because to its service of the nation, the welfare of the people, the development of the

country are not issues of importance. What is important is how to remain in power. The dictionary meaning of 'govern' is, "to control and direct the affairs of a country, state or organisation" Power, on the other hand, is defined as "control and influence exercised over others". If power is used to govern then it is desirable. If, however, power is used for self-aggrandisement, for pelf, for nepotism or for creating the means whereby power can be re-purchased, it is not desirable. The current Indian political class profess the use of power through the latter means.

It is time that political parties restore the trust of the people in terms of its ideology and programmes. That has to start by eschewing every form of caste and religion based politics. Today every political party calculates its chances of success according to the mathematics of caste and religion. The Congress must also have a specific ideological base from which programmes should develop and these should be presented to the people for their judgment. The Left Front, where leadership questions are not based on heredity, must also now decide whether it wants to become a clone of China, a country ruled by

the Communist Party or whether it wants to function under Indian realities in which a State Government cannot to acquire 38,000 acres of fertile agricultural land as the Left Front tried to do in Nandigram for allotment to an industrialist. The BJP on its part must decide whether it wants to develop in a secular environment in which RSS is no longer its principal mentor, because the dilemma before the BJP is that unless it widens its base it cannot be accepted in the South, and in the East and if it were to widen its base, the RSS may break away. Even if BJP were to work according to Hindutva philosophy, which could further widen the religious divide and polarise minority votes, there is no guarantee that there would be a counter-Hindu polarisation and more Hindu votes for the BJP, because the Hindu vote is already divided on the lines of caste. It fails to win because a large number of Hindus vote against it. It is for the party to decide whether it can garner more Hindu votes through an aggressive pursuit of a Hindutva programme or whether a more genuinely secular approach will get it more Hindu votes. Introspection by the

political parties will have to include coalescing of parties on ideological lines so that the blackmailing pressure of small groups representing either individual interests or regional interests do not take over and overwhelm any future coalition. In other words, the parties must try and absorb smaller groups so that eventually there is a centrist party, a right of centre party and a left of centre party where in the limits of extremes on both sides become circumscribed. It is this which will lead to more meaningful coalitions and, therefore, better government. Ultimately, the political class has to draw itself back from the brink of corruption and go back to what the Constitution envisaged for them -- principled politics whose objective is to promote the welfare of the people and wealth of the nation. Lastly, as things stand today, by 2014 we may reach a stage where no party, including Congress and BJP, may get more than a hundred seats. This would lead to even more fragmented coalitions and there would be virtually no government.

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A Purposeless Nation

The four Ds are in short supply not because they are in demand, but because Indians have become incapable of generating them

- *V Anantha Nageswara*

When leading business representatives say that India has fallen well short of expectations generated in 1991 and that the post-1991 buzz for India has fully evaporated, they are not saying anything new. It has been apparent to many perceptive observers for quite some time. The task of dismantling the India-shining story that began in 2004 is now almost fully accomplished. Of course, it is not just the government or politicians that deserve the credit. We have a pride of place, too. When ministers Kapil Sibal and P. Chidambaram talk of zero loss to the nation on account of spectrum or coal allocations, they are not being stupid. They have astutely recognized that they are dealing with an apathetic nation—a nation whose apathy makes its aspiration to be a super-power appear utterly unrealistic.

Yours truly logged about 1,000km

in the last four days visiting

ancient temples in the Tanjore-

Kumbakonam - Mayiladuthurai belt in Tamil Nadu known for their architectural splendour. The temples that I visited date from around 1148 BC to 1012 AD. The oil paintings and sculptures pack so much of creativity and artistic expression that even non-believers can lose themselves for days and months exploring and marvelling at their beauty, even if the divine tales behind them leave them unmoved. The tales will reveal their deep spiritual meanings for those who care to reflect on them. Now, the sculptures and pillars carry messages of love from boys to their girlfriends with mobile numbers. Otherwise, they serve as receptacles for the so-called devotees to deposit the sacred ash and kumkum they receive from the priests. The well in Gangai Konda Cholapuram (a UNESCO Heritage site) is murky and filled with filthy water. Not long ago,

**V Anantha Nageswara - Visiting Scholar, VIF*

one could spot a coin clearly even when the water was 50 feet deep.

It is a temple where the sunlight that falls on the holy bull Nandi is reflected on the Shiv Linga that is located 200 ft away, illuminating it.

The well in Gangai Konda Cholapuram (a Unesco Heritage site) is murky and filled with filthy water. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Our behaviour on the road is not merely a question of etiquette. It captures most things that are holding us back and are going to hold us back. We are happy to get off from a moving bus at a traffic island, be sandwiched between two lorries belching copious quantities of black smoke, while trying to cross the road to the other side. It is not our lack of concern for collective but the disregard for personal safety that leaves one stumped. It is almost as if we tell the rest of the world that our safety is their problem. It is a life of blissful



ignorance of priorities. Instant gratification at its worst.

We comfortably ride three or four on a motorbike with the right hand on the bar and the left cradling a mobile phone on the shoulder. We do not dim the headlights in consideration for the vehicles coming at us. We have no hesitation in riding on the wrong side of the road because we need to reach a tea-stall or find a bush to relieve ourselves. We yield to none even when we face off each other on a narrow bridge through which only one vehicle can pass. We stake our egos on petty and trivial issues.

The same pettiness makes us construct mosques, madrasas and churches in granite and marble in the villages and in the three temple towns mentioned above. Imagine how cheap it would be for a Hindu temple to steal the limelight and be a source of distraction near the Velankanni St. Mary shrine or near the Nagore dargah. Think about it.

It is a nation that has no pride in the past, does not identify priorities for the present and hence no sense of purpose about the future. It is a nation with no sense of history. Such a nation may still achieve spurts of economic growth, but it is unlikely to realize its potential ever.

The obsessive pursuit of instant gratification has resulted in the flight of decency, decorum, discipline and dignity from India's public space. Anything that is scarce becomes more valuable.

Therefore, there will be a natural scramble to possess them. Those who possess and display scarce commodities are rich. But not in India. These Ds are in short supply not because they are increasingly in demand, but because Indians have become incapable of generating them.

It is not impossible to find exceptions to this narrative. In a nation with a population of billion-

plus, that is a statistical inevitability. But such exceptions are merely balm for aching hearts. Nothing more.

It is tempting to say that it is a case of *Yatha Raja Tatha Praja* (if the king is immoral, so will be the subjects). Perhaps, it is largely true and, unfortunately, India has

not had a chance in a long time to see this statement in action positively. The general election in 2014 could give India an opportunity to see whether the ruler can make a difference to the nature of the ruled or if nothing would sway Indians from their death wish for which its rulers and elites have, so far, been willing executioners.

The obsessive pursuit of instant gratification has resulted in the flight of decency, decorum, discipline and dignity from India's public space. Anything that is scarce becomes more valuable. Therefore, there will be a natural scramble to possess them. Those who possess and display scarce commodities are rich. But not in India. These Ds are in short supply not because they are increasingly in demand, but because Indians have become incapable of generating them.

V. Anantha Nageswaran is a Visiting Scholar at VIF and an Independent financial consultant based in Singapore. This article also appeared in Mint magazine.

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Has the Political Class Failed Us?

- A. Surya Prakash

The end of 'Operation Jantar Mantar' by Team Anna without any tangible gains vis-à-vis the fight against corruption and the indications from within government that the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Bill, 2011 may not come up for debate until the Winter Session of Parliament – should come as a major disappointment for all citizens who believe in the pursuit of peaceful and democratic solutions for major problems confronting the country.

With Anna Hazare virtually throwing his hands up and signalling the failure of the tried and tested Satyagraha route, every section of the political class, and this includes the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA), the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the Third Front and the still nebulous Fourth Front, must be laughing all the way to their respective vote banks. This is a moment of triumph for politicians as a whole because they have successfully beaten back, at least for the moment, the biggest

threat that was posed to their corrupt ways. The UPA of course is leading from the front and has been able to stop the anti-corruption movement dead in its tracks.

One year ago, as the Anna Hazare Movement picked up, the UPA government introduced the Lok Pal Bill in the Lok Sabha and repeatedly claimed that it was committed to the passage of this law. Other members of the political class made similar noises and swore that they too were keen on having an independent ombudsman to probe cases of corruption. However, within Parliament there was an unwritten agreement among all parties that they should not go beyond rendering lip service to the anti-corruption movement. All parties also believed that by dragging the issue, they could tire out the crusaders. This plan appears to have worked. Twelve months hence, the anti-corruption crusade has become a victim of middle class ennui and the much-talked about bill has virtually

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gone into cold storage.

Caught in a maze of corruption, the UPA government was not keen on having an independent Lokpal. But it was not alone. It got some overt and covert backing from virtually the entire political class. The government introduced the Lokpal Bill on August 4, 2011 in the Lok Sabha and immediately referred it to the Standing Committee head by Mr. Abhishek Manu Singhvi. This gave the government a much-needed breather and also an excuse. It asked Team Anna and others to advance their arguments before the committee. The Singhvi Committee recommended that the Lokpal must have constitutional status and Parliament must take a call on whether to bring the Prime Minister within the purview of the Lokpal. It said group A and group B employees must be brought within the purview of the Lokpal, but the Chief Vigilance Commissioner should have jurisdiction over group C and D staff. The committee wanted MPs to be kept out of the Lokpal's purview in so far as their vote, speech and conduct in Parliament was concerned. The judiciary was also to be outside the Lokpal's jurisdiction. It suggested a single law for establishment of the

Lokpal and the Lokayuktas in the states. Once the committee's report was tabled, the government withdrew the Bill it had introduced in August and came up with a new Bill – The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Bill, 2011.

After much debate, which drew nation-wide attention, this Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha and the government raised the expectations of the people by pretending that it would see the legislation through in the Rajya Sabha as well. However, the government's real intention – to stall the passage of this legislation – became clear when the Bill came up for discussion in the Upper House on the last day of the Winter Session in December, 2011. The Congress Party's floor managers cleverly ensured that MPs belonging to many small and regional parties raised objections and obstructed the debate. Thereafter, as the debate dragged on, the party took advantage of the commotion in the House and mischievously ensured the adjournment of the House sine die, even though MPs wanted the debate to be concluded. With the abrupt adjournment of the House, the curtain came down on the Winter Session of Parliament,

thereby giving the government yet another breather.

However, when the Budget Session of Parliament opened in February this year, the UPA resumed its subterfuge. It promised to complete the legislative process in the Upper House but sprang a surprise on parliamentarians and the nation as a whole last May, when it announced the Bill was being referred to yet another committee – a Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha. Sadly, the BJP became a party to the government's dilatory tactics. This committee has been given time till the end of the Monsoon Session in September to submit its report. So, even as Anna Hazare and Co have ended yet another indefinite fast in order to live to fight another day, there are indications that the Bill will not come up for discussion until the Winter Session of Parliament this year. Going by the prevailing mood in the political class, do not be surprised if this Bill too suffers the fate of all previous Lokpal

Bills and lapse when the present Lok Sabha is dissolved in May, 2014 or earlier.

In the year gone by, the UPA government has slipped further down on the credibility meter and strangely, it is taking the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) along with it. As the main opposition party, the BJP ought to have been the moral policeman and the standard-bearer for clean governance, but it is even more irrelevant today than it was a year ago. The Congress and the BJP are now seen as two sides of the same coin. The people feel that they are merely engaged in a mock fight and they are tired of listening to the same old rhetoric. Film maker Shekhar Kapur correctly summed it up when he said the debate is not about the failure of the UPA but about the failure of the political system itself.

“India does not need change of government but change in political system. 65 years of current system

In the year gone by, the UPA government has slipped further down on the credibility meter and strangely, it is taking the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) along with it. As the main opposition party, the BJP ought to have been the moral policeman and the standard-bearer for clean governance, but it is even more irrelevant today than it was a year ago.

has created huge divide between the people and governance”, he said in one of his recent tweets.

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The ISI's Psychological Operations

- *Dr. Prem Mahadevan*

The government has stated that recent distress migrations of northeastern Indians were triggered by electronic messages originating from Pakistan. Investigators have found that the first hints of pogrom-style killings appeared on Pakistani internet forums, and rapidly spread to India as part of a coordinated psyops offensive. The modus operandi was vaguely familiar: doctored images and vitriolic texts flooded telecommunications networks, gaining credibility before law enforcement agencies could react. The apparent purpose was to stir up public anger in an already polarized setting and prepare the political mood for an outbreak of communal violence. During 1989, Pakistan had adopted similar methods when it broadcast television footage of anti-communist revolts in Eastern Europe and urged Kashmiri Muslims to likewise rise up against New Delhi.

What intelligence agencies now need to assess is whether their

Pakistani counterparts were merely out to embarrass India, or if the scare campaign had a deeper purpose. It is possible that the Inter Services Intelligence, if it was involved, has no strategic end-game regarding present tensions between Bangladeshi immigrants and Bodo tribesmen. The agency's covert operations cells might just be taking opportunistic advantage of the situation in Assam. Provided Indian authorities maintain public order, the matter might rest there. However, past experience of ISI psyops suggests that the agency rarely desists from coordinating its propaganda offensives with paramilitary action. Its favourite tactic is to combine persistent low-visibility subversion with sporadic high-visibility attacks, conducted on a deniable basis using local assets or expendable mercenaries.

A Suggestive Pattern

On at least three occasions, the ISI is thought to have used psychological and paramilitary operations in a synergistic role.

* *Dr. Prem Mahadevan - Senior Research Associate, VIF*

The first was in late 1983, when masked turban-wearing gunmen hijacked buses in Punjab and selectively killed Hindu passengers. Since the attacks occurred amidst worsening Hindu-Sikh relations, most commentators assumed that they were carried out by Sikh separatist militants. However, eyewitness accounts cast doubt on this theory: the killers' language and demeanour had indicated a military background. Furthermore, local intelligence was unable to identify them, suggesting that they were not based in Punjab itself. As such attacks continued into early 1984, arguments were advanced that the masked gunmen could have been Pakistani Punjabi mercenaries, working as agent provocateurs in a 'false-flag' campaign.

Irrespective of whether the hijackers were Indian or Pakistani, what is unquestionable is that their actions were intended to deepen Hindu-Sikh tensions. Furthermore, it is now generally acknowledged that Islamabad did intervene covertly in Indian Punjab. Throughout the 1980s and '90s, radio broadcasts expressed support for Sikh separatism. Pakistani scholars wrote about a possible second partition of India along Hindu-Sikh lines. ISI

officials posted in Western capitals funded Sikh separatist publications and organized publicity events. These propaganda initiatives were matched operationally by linking terrorist attack cells to ISI networks. One occasion in 1992 saw two ISI operatives being killed in the company of a Sikh terrorist leader. Although Islamabad initially tried to deny their Pakistani nationality, it relented after protests from their families.

The second case of (suspected) ISI subversion being used to camouflage (largely proven) paramilitary action occurred in Mumbai in 1993. A spate of rioting plunged Hindu-Muslim relations in the city into a downward spiral. With innocent Muslims having suffered disproportionately, some of their co-religionists within the criminal underworld plotted retaliation. Led by Dawood Ibrahim, they organized eleven synchronized blasts across the city in March 1993, targeting Hindu-majority areas. The explosive material used was military-grade, suggesting a state supplier. A detonator recovered by Indian investigators from one of the blast sites was traced to Pakistan army ordnance stores.

What is interesting is that the pre-blast riots had occurred in two distinct waves. The first, in December 1992, was spontaneous; a symptom of country-wide religious polarization following the Babri Masjid demolition. The second wave, in January 1993, appeared to have been planned: it began with knife fights in the Mumbai docks, which expanded into pitched battles across the city. Investigators noted that the docks were a stronghold of Dawood Ibrahim, whose smuggling operations were based there. Although a causal relationship was difficult to prove, circumstantial evidence indicated that Ibrahim's men had deliberately triggered the second round of rioting. If true, this hypothesis would suggest that the January 1993 riots were a classic intelligence provocation operation.

Ibrahim himself is believed by this time, to have come under ISI influence. Defectors from his group later revealed that the Pakistani government had impounded his

shipping fleet, thus gaining leverage over him. The men who actually planted the bombs were trained in explosive-handling in Pakistan, but their passports contained no stamps by Pakistani immigration authorities. Surmising on this, one reputed American commentator has noted that such free movement could only have been facilitated by powerful elements within

The men who actually planted the bombs were trained in explosive-handling in Pakistan, but their passports contained no stamps by Pakistani immigration authorities. Surmising on this, one reputed American commentator has noted that such free movement could only have been facilitated by powerful elements within Pakistani state institutions. ¹

Pakistani state institutions. ¹ The ISI is the logical suspect.

The third case is Mumbai 2008. It is now known that the ISI was aware of Lashkar-e-Toiba's plan to attack Mumbai. Testimony from Zabiuddin Ansari, one of the planners, even states that the agency provided the weapons and ammunition used in the attack and that two ISI officers personally supervised its implementation from a control room in Karachi. The Indian prime minister and national security advisor have long asserted that the Mumbai 26/11 attacks bore

signs of state support. Even if the Pakistani government as a whole was not involved, highly influential elements within it appear to have been.

This brings the context of the attacks into sharp focus. During the fall of 2008, alarm had been growing in India about a possible terrorist threat from Hindu extremists. These concerns were exploited by members of the political class, to deflect attention from the government's failure in preventing jihadist attacks. The Mumbai gunmen played to this discourse, forging identity cards under Hindu names and wearing saffron wristbands. The attack planners had calculated that once the gunmen were killed by Indian police, these 'clues' would mislead the subsequent investigation and media commentary.

In this regard, it is important to note that the initial reaction from Islamabad was to reject any

possibility of Pakistani involvement. The killings in Mumbai were projected as an outcome of domestic instability within India. Seen from hindsight, such discourse (later discredited by the confession of Ajmal Kasab, one of the gunmen) seems to fit the thesis that the ISI masks its paramilitary activities with calibrated propaganda offensives.

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The Logic of Pakistani Psyops

Reacting to claims made over the Assam crisis, Pakistani officials have accused Indian authorities of evading responsibility. They insist that India address its

own domestic problems rather than attribute culpability to Pakistan. Such demands would be credible, if they were not preceded by episodes such as Kargil '99 and Mumbai '08. On both occasions, Pakistani diplomats had initially ridiculed charges of cross-border involvement and accused India of spoiling bilateral relations. However, once the immediate

crisis had subsided and international attention had drifted elsewhere, Islamabad found it expedient to quietly admit to such involvement. It did so in order to claim ownership over a spoiling action that had disrupted bilateral relations and driven up the price of further engagement.

Therein lies the real 'core' issue that bedevils India-Pakistan relations. It makes sense for the Pakistani security establishment to occasionally bring bilateral rapprochement to a shuddering halt. There are three reasons for this obstructionist stance:

1. Spoiler actions derail grassroots-level peace initiatives and stop them from assuming an independent forward momentum, which Islamabad might later not be able to regulate. Civil activism for friendly bilateral ties is thereby held in check.
2. These actions also drive a political wedge between India and its main security partners. They compel countries such as the US and UK to abandon New Delhi and instead assume a neutral refereeing posture on Indo-Pak tensions – one

which invariably glosses over past jihadist transgressions against India.

3. Lastly, spoiler actions cement the Pakistan army's domestic image as protector of the people against a vengeful Indian government and public. Certain actions such as Mumbai '08 are also meant to serve narrower objectives, such as deflecting domestic Islamist militancy on to a foreign (and thus 'legitimate') target.

In each of the cases outlined above, Pakistani officials loudly proclaimed that terrorist attacks in India resulted from domestic tensions. This consistency in emphasizing India's internal fissures is revealing: it implies that at the governmental level, Pakistan views India as an artificial state, riddled by identity-based conflicts. Such views, if they actually do dominate official Pakistani thinking, would represent a colonial inheritance from the British Raj. During the 1940s, Raj officials had derided secular Indian nationalism as a doomed experiment. They predicted that, post-independent, India would fragment under the centrifugal influence of its own diversity. Building a common

polity from a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious population was thought to lie beyond the capabilities of the country's native leaders. So far, this prediction has been proven wrong, but continuing societal rifts provide hope to some ISI officers that it might yet come true.

Thus, while Pakistani writers claim that Indian elites have never accepted the logic of Partition, the same can be said of Pakistani elites. If India refuses to endorse the principle of religious exclusion that underwrote Pakistan's formation, Pakistan has also refused to recognize the legitimacy of the secular nationalism that keeps India together. The ISI, if it orchestrated the hate campaign that prompted thousands of northeastern Indians to flee to their home states, was merely acting in conformity with Pakistani ideological dogma.

What Indian security forces now have to prepare for is the more serious possibility that this might not be the end of it. As might have occurred previously in Punjab, there is a chance that ISI operatives shall create a communal flashpoint through agent provocateurs. Reports suggest that the Pakistani agency is keen to erase international memories of the Mumbai '08 attack.

What Indian security forces now have to prepare for is the more serious possibility that this might not be the end of it. As might have occurred previously in Punjab, there is a chance that ISI operatives shall create a communal flashpoint through agent provocateurs. Reports suggest that the Pakistani agency is keen to erase international memories of the Mumbai '08 attack. It hopes to achieve this by facilitating a major act of domestic terrorism in India, using only local assets. Islamabad could then argue, with all apparent reasonableness, that even if the Mumbai attack had featured Pakistani involvement, India still needs to put its own affairs in order. Towards this, ISI officials have already met with leaders of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in Dubai, to discuss possible collaboration. The Maoists have allegedly asked for military-grade explosive, and the ISI is believed to have asked in turn that the Maoists use these explosives to attack economic

targets, such as oil refineries, so as to attain maximum strategic impact.

Even if the ISI were to support the Maoists however, the main focus of its psyops would still be on identity-based conflicts rather than ideology-based ones. The agency has plenty of experience in exploiting ethnic and linguistic fault lines to its own advantage. One example would be the East Pakistan civil war (1971), when the ISI organized Bihari Muslims into vigilante groups to fight Bengali separatists. Another would be its covert support for Mohajir militancy in Karachi during the 1980s – a tactic intended to contain Sindhi and Pashtun nationalism. However, the agency has little insight into ultra-leftist discourse, having never confronted a communist insurgency. Its ability to relate to the peasant and tribal revolution in central India is likely to be quite limited. Moreover, class struggle is not an issue that ISI strategists would want to publicize, as it might backfire on Pakistan, given the country's own quasi-feudal social structure. For these reasons, it would make sense if the agency focused on Hindu-Muslim/Bodo-Bengali tensions.

Further 'Rogue' Operations Likely

Following the Mumbai '08 attack, the then ISI chief told US officials that rogue officers from the agency might have been involved. This same argument had previously served Pakistan well in 1993, when ISI involvement with Dawood Ibrahim had attracted American queries. Basically, the 'rogue operative' thesis capitalizes on the tendency of Western listeners to equate such operatives with 'enemies of the state'. Western analysts assume that if individuals within the ISI support terrorist attacks, Pakistani authorities would seek to identify and pursue them. Instead, India's experience has so far belied this paradigm – although some ISI paramilitary activities might have been carried out without express sanction from above, these have not resulted in punitive measures against the officials involved. Rather, the immediate consequence tends to be a reshuffling of agency postings, to throw off Indian and Western counterintelligence efforts against the 'rogues'.

There is a strong possibility that 'rogues' within the ISI will plan and assist a major act of terrorism in India, using local proxies as the

triggermen. Such a scenario may not occur in the short term (i.e. the next three months), since the renewed India-Pakistan dialogue has not yet made much progress. A major improvement in atmospherics however, such as a summit between civilian politicians of the two countries, would likely set attack preparations afoot. By a spoiler action, the Pakistan army and ISI would want to emphasize their veto rights over any political process that bypasses them. Given the ongoing instability in India, caused by poor governance and communal polarization, they are likely to have many opportunities for combining psychological and paramilitary operations. The Bodo-Bangladeshi conflict shall probably be just one among these.

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Endnotes

1. Jessica Stern, 'Pakistan's Jihad Culture', *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2000, accessed online at <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/jstern/pakistan.htm>, on 20 August 2012.

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Seminar On Perspectives From China On Af-Pak Situation And Counter Terrorism

A one day conference on the Af-Pak Situation and Counter Terrorism was organised by the VIF with visiting Scholar from China on 29th August 2012. Scholars and experts from China gave their perspectives on the evolving situation in Af-Pak region and their approach to counter-terrorism. Professor Li Jian, Vice President of China West Normal University, Sichuan spoke on 'SCO and Af-Pak Security Environment' while Dr. Zhang Jiadong, Assistant Director of Center for American Studies, Fudan University spoke on China's approach to counter-terrorism. In the second session Dr. Shen Xiaochen discussed 'America's New Silk Road Strategy and Future of Af-Pak Region' and Dr. Liu Jiawei of Sichuan University briefed the audience on 'China's Policy Options in Post-Withdrawal Era'.

It indeed was useful to hear perspectives from China on the Af-Pak situation and counter terrorism. The road approach of the Chinese scholars was that the current situation had arisen because of the earlier intervention by

the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and then later on by the intervention of the U.S. Further, the domestic/internal situation in both Afghanistan and Pakistan remains unstable for various reasons. Domestic weakness and years of strife in Afghanistan have also enabled foreign powers to intervene in Afghanistan.



In the Chinese perspective, America cannot leave Afghanistan without finishing the task they came for under the Security Council mandate they need to give more aid and support for stabilising Afghanistan. In addition, the neighbours should

also play a more active role.

The Chinese are also apprehensive of terrorist groups operating in Xinjiang and their links with groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan. They believe that improving economic conditions, for instance in Xinjiang and Tibet, would create a better environment for stability. They were also of the view that SCO provides a good platform for cooperating on anti-terrorism efforts. Further, China has given developmental aid to Afghanistan though not at the same level as that of India.

The Chinese scholars observed that India can play an important role in Afghanistan; India has created a good image in Afghanistan and India, Iran and Russia could play a useful role in Afghanistan. There was also a need to take collective action especially by the neighbours. As for America's New Silk Road Strategy, China is not a stakeholder in this strategy and therefore views this concept with 'diffidence'. However, there is a need for India and China to cooperate in development of Afghanistan's natural resources and infrastructure. China has been accused by the West for not taking responsibility in Afghanistan but this image can be improved by China taking part in reconstruction of Afghanistan. China has embarked on Western Area development plan and the new Eurasian Continental Bridge Project where Afghanistan becomes an important hub. Afghanistan links Middle-East and South Asia to Central Asia and China and vice versa. Both India and China

have common interests in Afghanistan and the Indian and Chinese companies could cooperate in development of Afghanistan. There are many areas where India and China can cooperate to contribute towards stability in Afghanistan.

There was a very interactive question and answer session after each session with the VIF faculty being represented by the Director, Mr. Ajit Doval, Jt. Director, Ambassador PP Shukla and Lt. Gen. (retd) Ravi Sawhney and other eminent experts from the strategic and security community.

Report Prepared by Sanjay Kumar

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