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**Editor-in-Chief**

Air Marshal **Vinod Patney**, SYSM PVSM AVSM VrC, (Retd)

**Consulting Editor**

Dr Shalini Chawla

**Distributor**

KW Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

All correspondence may be addressed to

Editor-in-Chief

DEFENCE AND DIPLOMACY

Arjan Path, Subroto Park, New Delhi 110 010

Telephone: (91.11) 25699131-32 Fax: (91.11) 25682533

e-mail: [diroffice@aerospaceindia.org](mailto:diroffice@aerospaceindia.org)

[capsnetdroff@gmail.com](mailto:capsnetdroff@gmail.com)

website: [www.capsindia.org](http://www.capsindia.org)

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Defence and diplomacy go hand in hand. Any marked change in one inexorably will impact the other either in the short or mid-term. A notable recent example is the nuclear deal between Iran and the six powers. On the one hand, as the possibility of Iran making a nuclear weapon has been pushed back for some years at least, the underlying lowering of tension between Iran and the USA and its allies created noticeable flux in the international relations amongst the players in the area. With Israel remaining intransigent and Saudi Arabia siding with Israel, some significant realignments could occur with immediate impact on the security situation in the area. The changing situation will have an effect across the globe, to some extent or the other. Similar brinkmanship is on display elsewhere as well. Afghanistan and the US/NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) have yet to come to an agreement on a security pact post the NATO withdrawal in 2014. Both sides appear to hold firm on stated positions although both recognise that a deal has to be, and will be, struck. The other countries in the area, including India are equally concerned as to what deal is finally struck and how it will affect the security of the area.

Closer home, Chinese actions and assertiveness have been noted worldwide. The most recent incident relates to the unilateral institution of the East China Air Defence Identification Zone, with immediate effect on both security and diplomacy. Many questions arise, including regarding what China will do next. On our part, we should be prepared, with our military and our diplomatic options. It should be ensured that we are not taken by surprise.

Interest in activities in outer space is on the increase. On November 5, 2013, with great pride India launched the *Mangalyaan*

or Mars orbiter. Twenty-five days later, the craft broke through the Earth's orbit on its 300-day flight to Mars. At about the same time, on December 12, 2013, China launched its Moon probe and Rover (Chang'e 3). Both are outstanding achievements. The significance of space activities is on the increase as the world is rapidly moving towards militarisation and weaponisation of space. Such activities are expensive and an attempt could be made to enter into cooperation with other countries. The European countries, more developed than us, joined hands to form the European Space Agency (ESA) and now ESA is cooperating with Russia to study if there is any life on Mars. Such research can have use in many other fields as well.

There have been ups and downs in our relations with Japan, relations that are so obviously to mutual benefit. In this respect, the very successful visit of the emperor and empress of Japan to India bodes well for the future.

This edition of the Journal covers a number of diverse topics but the underlying theme is the interaction of defence and diplomacy even if it is not very obvious. All the articles have been written by our scholars—some by our very young scholars.

Happy reading.



# SUPERCOMPUTER CAPABILITIES: INTERPRETING ITS ROLE IN DEFENCE

**E. DILIPRAJ**

Supercomputers, the monsters of the computing world, occupy enormous rooms and perform trillions of calculations per second. In general, a supercomputer can be defined as a machine with high computing performance that has extremely fast processing speeds which are employed for specialised applications that require immense amounts of mathematical calculation and logical analysis. A supercomputer may either be built as a single machine or can be a cluster of computers that process data simultaneously.

The high capacity of such super machines is used for various types of scientific research like recreating the Big Bang, understanding earthquakes, protein folding, bloodstream mapping, modelling of new diseases, oceanographic modelling, predicting climate change, weather forecasting, recreating brain patterns, finding the God particle and other atomic and sub-atomic research. While supercomputers are constantly relied upon for performing the above mentioned high end complex civilian scientific research, they are also used almost at the same magnitude by different countries around the globe for defence related research. Therefore, this paper intends to study the

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**E.Dilipraj** is a Research Associate at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

role played by these computing giants in the field of defence and the capabilities of various countries possessing such technology.

### **ROLE OF SUPERCOMPUTERS IN DEFENCE**

The use of supercomputers can enhance a country's national defence in the field of Research and Development (R&D) by imbibing the capabilities that these supercomputers possess. Countries can employ these computing giants in various weapon programmes, simulations of weapon systems and in designing and modelling of high end technologies for different weapon systems. This process of using the supercomputer capabilities for defence related research would make the research less time consuming, more efficient and would also help in boosting the technology of the weapon systems.

Around the world, countries with the capability of producing supercomputers are using their superior technology in the field of defence for various purposes, a few major uses of which are as follows:

- Simulation of nuclear weapons testing.
- Biological warfare testing.
- Missile and space programmes.
- Submarine programmes.
- Simulation of war-games.
- Weather forecast for military operations.
- Data mining and information espionage.
- Quantum computations.<sup>1</sup>

Although all supercomputers seem to be extremely fast and capable of handling complex tasks as listed above, the general practice is to make separate machines specific to their task so as to make them dedicated for that particular job.

#### *Simulation of Nuclear Weapons Testing*

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has banned countries from conducting nuclear tests. But simulating the tests of nuclear weapons by using supercomputers is a safe method for any state that

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1. "Computer Science: How Exactly are Supercomputers used by Departments of Defence?" [URL]: <http://www.quora.com/Computer-Science/How-exactly-are-supercomputers-used-by-Departments-of-Defence>

wishes to continue conducting its nuclear tests hidden from the eyes of the rest of the world to avoid any outcry. A supercomputer also helps a country to keep its nuclear stockpile safe, secure and effective without the need for underground testing and gives increased confidence in the nation's nuclear deterrent as the weapons stockpile changes under treaty agreements. It enable nuclear scientists to have a better understanding of weapons' performance by simulating and predicting what happens to materials at very high and very low pressure and temperature points. It also helps to anticipate and prevent problems that come as a result of the aging of nuclear weapons. The weapons are assessed and modified in order to make them last longer with the life extension programmes using the supercomputers.<sup>2</sup> For instance, the US' supercomputer 'Sequoia' was used by the National Nuclear Security Agency of the USA for monitoring the country's stockpile and also to conduct simulated nuclear tests.

### *Biological Warfare Testing*

Although biological warfare is recognised as one of the most dangerous forms of warfare and there is a ban by the international community on both the use, or production of any biological weapons, a few countries still use covert methods to keep their biological weapons production alive. The supercomputers come in handy in this process as they help in the research to develop genetically modified biological weapons in the labs which can be used against the rival state. The supercomputers help in reducing the time and money spent on the research and, at the same time, increase the possibilities and efficiency of these hazardous weapons. It is believed that China has an active biological warfare programme with the aid of its supercomputers and has exported its biological warfare technology to Iran.<sup>3</sup>

### *Missile and Space Programmes*

Missile and space programmes involve a lot of complex arithmetic calculations combined with theories and formulas of physics and,

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2. Edward Tessen Tanaka, "IBM's Sequoia and the Politics of Dual-Use Supercomputers", June 21, 2012, [URL]: <http://www.patexia.com/feed/ibm-s-sequoia-and-the-politics-of-dual-use-supercomputers-20120621>
  3. Charles R Smith, "Chinese Germ Warfare Ignored by State Department", [URL]: <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/fr/584818/posts>

therefore, supercomputers are seen as a boon for the scientists who undertake research in this field. These mega machines are used in all possible ways to conduct studies in aerodynamic modelling, missile trajectory simulation, missile testing (simulations or real-time), missile defence programme, design and analysis of delivery vehicles, and to solve complex aeronautical problems. In November 2012, India conducted its ballistic missile defence test in which two incoming missiles were intercepted simultaneously and destroyed successfully.<sup>4</sup> Out of these two incoming missiles, one was simulated and the simulated missile was destroyed by a simulated interceptor. This simulation testing was made possible by the supercomputers used by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the defence research organisation of India.

### *Submarine Programmes*

Regarding research in submarine programmes, supercomputers are mainly used to undertake computational fluid dynamic studies to increase knowledge and assist in the evaluation of technical risks associated with the hydrodynamic performance of future naval platforms. They are also used to analyse the risk factors associated with the newly designed model by conducting simulated tests. In July 2013, the Australian Department of Defence purchased a supercomputer from Cray computers for \$2.2 million in order to conduct research for their future submarine programme.<sup>5</sup>

### *Simulation of War-Games*

Conducting war-games is always important for a country to gain experience about war and to explore the various possibilities in a battlefield. The advancement in technology and the induction of supercomputers in the field of defence have enhanced the quality of war-games that a country conducts. The supercomputers help in creating simulated complex war scenarios which help a country's armed forces to understand the battle situations much better during

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4. "India Proves Capability of Missile Defence System", *The Hindu*, November 23, 2012.

5. Trevor Clarke, "Defence to Get New Supercomputer", June 11, 2013, [URL]: <http://www.smh.com.au/it-pro/government-it/defence-to-get-new-supercomputer-20130611-2nzzr.html>

peace-time. They also help in simulating war scenarios in order to train the soldiers to effectively tackle these. Almost all the major countries of the world use this method of simulation of war-games with the help of supercomputers to keep their forces alert. Even a small territory like Taiwan, which is claiming sovereignty over its territory and is at loggerheads with the mighty People's Republic of China, is using supercomputers bought from the USA for the purpose of simulation of war-games.<sup>6</sup>

### *Weather Forecast for Military Operations*

In military operations, accurate weather predictions can mean the difference between success or failure -- and life or death. Accurate forecasting by military meteorologists provides situational awareness for the commander in order to make wise and timely military decisions.<sup>7</sup> A supercomputer plays the overall role in this by accurately predicting the weather for the military to operate in the field. Especially, air force weather specialists can use the capabilities of the supercomputer in tandem with satellites in order to predict the weather more accurately for their fighters. Almost all the countries of the world follow this method to make their armed forces' operations a success.

### *Data Mining and Information Espionage*

The digital age has become an advantage for the spying agencies of various countries as they are able to use the technology to tap into the adversary's communications and other information, whichever they prefer to acquire. All the digital data collected are stored in bulk data deposit servers located in safe houses and are processed using the massive supercomputers to trace out the enemy of the state. The processing speed and storage capacity of the supercomputers are very useful for this purpose. Also, loaded with some trawling software, these supercomputers can be converted into spying giants which can trawl into millions of posts in the Internet and identify a possible terrorist.

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6. Brian Hsu, "Military to Buy New Supercomputer", December 8, 2003, [URL]: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2003/12/08/2003078791>
  7. Gerry J Gilmore, "Air Force Weather Specialists Provide Combat Multiplier", *American Forces Information Service News Article*, December 13, 2001, [URL]: [http://www.european-security.com/n\\_index.php?id=2884](http://www.european-security.com/n_index.php?id=2884)

### *Quantum Computations*

Quantum computers which are modelled to function based on the laws of the quantum mechanism, use the quantum nature of matter, i.e. the atoms themselves, as computing devices unlike today's computers which are based on the bit—represented either as a one or a zero. The quantum computer is so programmed that the input is initially both zero and one. A quantum computer can be used to solve enormous, complex problems in a reasonable length of time. For example, it can be used in disaster management situations like instantly finding optimal travel routes for aircraft to avoid a snowstorm and to deliver their passengers safely to a destination.

These quantum computers would totally change the way data is processed and would also increase the capability of these machines in terms of speed. Although expertise is yet to be achieved in the quantum computation that is speculated to be available 15 years down the line, a quantum computer would also be a doorway to code breaking like nothing else conceived till now, and would probably do a whole lot to change the cryptography landscape.

While it can be used in code breaking, it can also be used in encryption and decryption of data. At first, a quantum computer would send qubits<sup>8</sup> of data entangled according to a standard scheme. Later, the user would tailor the measurements to the particular state of each qubit and then send it to the quantum server. Without knowing the initial state of the qubits, and with the measurement instructions of the user being random, it would be impossible to eavesdrop to read the qubits. The keys would be present at both ends of encryption and decryption so as to send data safely.

Quantum computers can be used in the fields of cyber security, logistics and planning. At present, the US aeronautical giant Lockheed Martin uses the D-Wave Systems, a form of quantum computer for its research in its labs.<sup>9</sup>

## **SUPERCOMPUTER CAPABILITIES OF THE WORLD**

The capacity of supercomputers used for both civilian and defence

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8. Qubit is the basic unit for measuring data in quantum computation.

9. Bernhard Warner, "What Quantum Computing Can do for You?", [URL]: <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-05-30/what-quantum-computing-can-do-for-you>

related purposes varies amongst nations. The need to have such capable supercomputers for a country is directly proportional to its national interest and also to its technological capability. While the history of supercomputers dates back to the 1960s, every year the number of countries mastering the technology and their capabilities is increasing rapidly. This is evident from the "List of Top 500 Supercomputers of the World" published twice a year by the website [www.top500.org](http://www.top500.org). This list of the top 500 supercomputers is compiled by Hans Meuer of the University of Mannheim, Germany; Erich Strohmaier and Horst Simon of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; and Jack Dongarra of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.<sup>10</sup> It is speculated that apart from the machines mentioned in this list, there are many other faster machines in the world possessed by various countries which are kept hidden from the world community due to their use in secret missions.

According to the list published in June 2013, out of the top 500 fastest supercomputers, the United States of America has 252 machines which is the highest number possessed by any country, followed by China with 66 machines. Other countries like Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and India follow, one after the other, with 30, 29, 23, 19 and 11 machines respectively in their possession.<sup>11</sup>

The capabilities of these computing mammoths are also huge. In the same list, the fastest supercomputer of the world is China's Tianhe-2 with a speed of 33.86 petaflops per second which is equivalent to 33,860 trillion calculations per second or in simple terms Tianhe-2 is 338,600,000 times faster than a normal desktop computer. Next in the list is the USA's Titan with a speed of 17.59 petaflops per second. The Chinese indigenously built Tianhe-2 surpassed the USA's Titan with its superior technology and almost double the speed.<sup>12</sup> It came as a huge surprise to the world community when China unveiled its Tianhe-2 in 2013, as the project was actually scheduled to be operational only by 2015.

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10. "China's Tianhe-2 Supercomputer Takes No. 1 Ranking on 41st TOP 500 List", June 17, 2013, [URL]: <http://top500.org/blog/lists/2013/06/press-release/>

11. Robert F Service, "China's Supercomputer Regains No. 1 Ranking", June 18, 2013, [URL]: <http://news.sciencemag.org/scienceinsider/2013/06/chinas-supercomputer-regains-no-.html>

12. "TOP 500 Supercomputers List, June 2013", published by [www.top500.com](http://www.top500.com)

Other competing countries are Japan, France, Italy and Germany all which have at least one supercomputer in the rank list of the fastest twenty supercomputers of the world. Their numbers are growing every year and their use in the field of defence is almost 50 percent of their total possession by each state. This is an indicator to show that the countries of the world have not only realised the need for supercomputers but have also constantly developed their capabilities to build supercomputers of their own.

However, countries which are unable to make their own machines are either opting to purchase the whole machine from abroad or to transfer the technology from friendly countries. For example, Iran buys its supercomputers from China, while Taiwan purchases these from the USA. In supercomputing technology, apart from the hardware components, the capability to create compatible software to conduct accurate research also plays an important role. Every country has its own capability in this area which also decides the level of supercomputer capability possessed by these countries and, in a very rare case, a country would opt for outright purchase of software from another country.

### **SUPERCOMPUTING CAPABILITY OF INDIA**

The history of supercomputing in India started way back in the 1980s although India was denied permission to import the CRAY supercomputers—the leading supercomputers developing company of the US during that period—due to the fact that these supercomputers could be used to develop nuclear technology. In spite of such an embargo on India to acquire the technology and components for developing a supercomputer, India managed to develop its own supercomputer with help from Russia. This first supercomputer of India was called PARAM 8000 which was the first in the PARAM series and it was developed by the Centre for Development and Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in Pune, India. The development was made possible due to the cooperation established between India and Russia in the field of science and technology. The C-DAC collaborated with the Institute of Computer Aided Design (ICAD), Moscow, Russia, for making its first supercomputer.

The C-DAC has designed and assembled six other supercomputers belonging to the same PARAM series and their latest PARAM YUVA II is listed as the 69<sup>th</sup> fastest supercomputer in the world by the website [www.top500.com](http://www.top500.com) in their recent report. Including the PARAM YUVA II, there are 11 supercomputers from India which have been ranked in the top 500 list of fastest supercomputers of the world. These supercomputers are ranked 36, 69, 89, 95, 174, 245, 291, 309, 310, 311, and 439 in the list. According to the June 2013 update, the fastest supercomputer of India is the iDataPlex DX360M4, which is being used in the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology. This supercomputer functions at a speed of 719.2 TFlops per second and with a theoretical maximum speed of 790.73 TFlops per second.<sup>13</sup> Although India is at the 7<sup>th</sup> position in the list of top 500 supercomputers in the overall number of supercomputers possessed by a country, it lags behind in speed and technology that the other countries possess in the field of supercomputing.

However, the supercomputers ANUPAM and DHRUVA, which do not appear on the list of fastest 500 supercomputers are the only consoling factors for India's defence related supercomputing programme. The supercomputer ANUPAM developed by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) functions at a speed of 202 GFlops per second at peak performance and is used to solve large complex problems in the field of advanced atomic sciences and nuclear physics. Moreover, the DRDO's DHRUVA which was the product of the Advanced Numerical Research and Analysis Group (ANURAG) is placed at the Centre for High Performance Computing and Research (CHITRA). The DHRUVA is used in computational fluid dynamics to design any aircraft, or airborne or waterborne system.<sup>14</sup> The then Union Minister of State for Defence, M Pallam Raju stated during the inauguration of the CHITRA:

This is a big step towards self-reliance in the country. The lab should also explore the commercial applications of DHRUVA. However,

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13. Ibid.

14. "Defence Applications of Super Computers and Indian Capability", [URL]: <http://www.defence.pk/forums/indian-defence/61497-defence-applications-super-computers-indian-capability.html>

we have a long way to go to match our technologically advanced neighbours like China.<sup>15</sup>

### **THE ROAD AHEAD**

Supercomputers have become an integral part of the defence system in the fields of both research and operations. The use of these mean machines in the modern world which is becoming increasingly digitalised and virtual can have serious repercussions. Supercomputers have already become the battleground for the information war that is going on in the world. But, the most feared use of these supercomputers is for the covert research and testing of nuclear and biological weapons which would keep these Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) alive, despite all the treaties. On the whole, the increased use of supercomputers in the field of research for defence would undoubtedly enhance the defence capabilities of a country but, at the same time, makes its offensive capabilities more deadly.

As for India, the technology and human resource it possesses are no match to its challengers in the world area. Its not so friendly neighbour China has mastered the technology of the supercomputer whereas India is lagging far behind in spite of claiming to be a leader in the field of Information Technology (IT). It suffers a huge setback when it comes to indigenous development and investments. The same point was highlighted by the former DRDO chief Dr. Saraswat. He stated:

The country suffered from a handicap in the area of all high-end computing systems which had to be imported and that is where our vulnerability lies. India needed huge investments in research in this field as the world was moving to new technologies such as silicon and photonic systems.

With the growing world of supercomputing, and the threats of information espionage, it is necessary for India to quickly enhance its capabilities so as to be able to defend itself more efficiently. Moreover, China's cyber skirmishes in the Indian cyber networks have almost

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15. "Super Computers & Defence: Indian Capabilities", [URL]: <http://www.defence.pk/forums/indian-defence/61497-defence-applications-super-computers-indian-capability.html>

become a daily phenomenon while the recent revelations of the USA's large scale information espionage<sup>16</sup> have exposed India's weakness in the field of cyber defence. But it can be believed that India would be able to secure its networks and enhance its supercomputing capabilities as it has realised its need for its own defence. The realisation led to the release of Cyber Security Policy by India in July 2013 in which it has addressed almost all the issues faced by the state in the cyber field and it is also working towards the setting up of an Army Cyber Command.

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16. The PRISM is a clandestine mass electronic surveillance data mining programme known to have been operated by the United States National Security Agency (NSA) since 2007.



# EMERGING CONTOURS OF RUSSIA-TURKEY RELATIONS IN THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST

CHANDRA REKHA

## INTRODUCTION

Competition to gain allies and regain one's status quo in the new international milieu became the norm for many countries in the post bipolar world. The Middle East was no exception for geopolitical competition among influential actors as oil, trade routes and geographical location paved the way for countries trying to regain or preserve their hegemony in the region. Hence, the end of the Cold War phase and the coming of a new world order led many regional players to pursue their national interests in the region which includes Russia and Turkey.

In the playoff among countries in the Middle East, a prerequisite is effectively understanding the factors that motivate Russia's and Turkey's foreign policy behaviour in the Middle East which is an influential player in the region due to its geographical location and historical linkages. It has become a contested zone for Russia and Turkey even as the US, China and Europe have begun to play significant roles in the region.

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Chandra Rekha is a Research Associate at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

As for Moscow, its primary interest towards the Middle Eastern countries has been involvement in the political process of the region as a global power. In addition, the expansionist policies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and the strategic isolation and hostile encirclement of Moscow led to growing anxiety for Russia. However, in the 1990s, Russia did not assert itself in the Middle East as it did not play a proactive role due to its economic instability and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. However, with a formulation of a new foreign policy strategy and a stable economy in the late 1990s, Russia created a multi-vector foreign policy that served its interests in Central Asia, the Caucasus, Middle East and Eastern Europe as these regions gained strategic significance. The Russian Federation began to pursue an aggressive foreign policy with regard to energy security and also due to its military concerns in this region with its allies.

Another regional player striving to establish itself as a key player in the Middle East is Turkey. Turkey shares borders with three major Middle Eastern countries: Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Turkey ruled much of the region during the Ottoman Empire, but between 1945 and 1990, Turkish leaders consciously avoided involvement in various Middle Eastern conflicts.<sup>1</sup>

On becoming a member of NATO and with its continuous desire for permanent membership in the European Union and also the orientation of its foreign policy towards the West, Turkey was apprehensive about the motives of the Russian Federation in the post Cold War era. However, the relations between Moscow and Ankara have, in recent times, moved beyond bilateral relations and economic cooperation with the regional distribution in the spheres of global influence that has taken place since the Soviet Union's disintegration.

The political ramification taking place in the Eurasian geopolitics has led to a decline in confidence in the policies pursued by America on the eve of the multipolar system or the global power shift to the East post- 9/11. The effects of the political ramification on the rising global powers, and Russia's and Turkey's roles in this region are challenging at the time of a tectonic power shift towards the East,

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1. [http://www.mongabay.com/reference/country\\_studies/Turkey/GOVERNMENT.html](http://www.mongabay.com/reference/country_studies/Turkey/GOVERNMENT.html).

mainly due to the fact that these countries are not satisfied with the American dictates and are beginning to acknowledge the significance of their partnerships.<sup>2</sup>

The new foreign policy of Russia allows Turkey to participate actively as a player in the Middle East. This, in turn, allows Russia to manoeuvre the geopolitics of the Middle East. It is possible to draw the subjective conclusion that after 2000, Russia's main foreign policy priorities were to strengthen cooperation with Iran and Turkey. Getting closer to Turkey, Russia attempted to neutralise the Turkish-American cooperation in the region.<sup>3</sup>

### **RUSSIA'S AND TURKEY'S POLICY APPROACH TOWARDS IRAN**

The Russian Federation sees Iran as its strategic partner since both these countries had a good rapport with each other until recently. Nevertheless, both Moscow and Tehran have stood up for each other as when Russia opposed the invasion of Iran, and Iran supported Russia's position in the Chechnya crisis. Turkey is more circumspect about its political relations with Iran, given evidence of Tehran's past support for marginal Islamic and terrorist groups in Turkey, which has cast a shadow over the more positive bilateral trade relationship. But Turkey also sees Iran as a potentially important stabilising force in the region, not as the outright rogue state depicted by the US Administration since 2000.<sup>4</sup>

For Russia, the nuclear development began to play a central role in Russia-Iran bilateral relations. It was during this period that Russia unilaterally pulled out of the secret Russian-American Protocol on Iran signed in 1995 (better known as the Gore-Chernomyrdin Agreement), according to which Russia had initially committed to considerably reduce its cooperation with Iran and assistance in

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2. Emre Iseri, "Eurasian Geopolitics and Financial Crisis: Transforming Russian-Turkish Relations from Geopolitical Rivalry to Strategic Cooperation", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, vol 12, issue 2, June 2010, p. 1, at <http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a923215040>.
  3. Orkhan Gafarli, "Russian Foreign Policy in the Light of Changing Balances in the Middle East", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, vol 10, no 4, 2004, p. 148, at [http://www.researchgate.net/publication/220147483\\_Russian\\_Foreign\\_Policy\\_in\\_Light\\_of\\_Changing\\_Balances\\_in\\_the\\_Middle\\_East](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/220147483_Russian_Foreign_Policy_in_Light_of_Changing_Balances_in_the_Middle_East)
  4. Iseri, n.2, p.18.

its nuclear programmes. Russia took a series of practical steps to complete the construction of a nuclear reactor in Bushehr, Iran—a project which had been frozen under Yeltsin. This initiated the revival of Russia's military-technological cooperation with Iran and it offered political support to the Iranian position on the nuclear programme. Meanwhile, Russia intends to continue cooperation with Iran on the latter's peaceful, civilian nuclear programme.<sup>5</sup>

As for Turkey, during the 1980s and 1990s, diplomatic relations between Iran and Turkey were tense. Turkey's secular governments frequently accused Iran's Islamic regime of supporting the Kurdish separatist movement (the Kurdish Workers' Party – PKK) and Turkey's radical Islamists. Iran, for its part, disapproved of Turkey's close relations with Israel and accused Turkey of supporting the opposition groups that were fighting against the Islamic regime. But despite this, both governments allowed trade and tourism relations to expand during this period. Turkey was interested in importing oil and natural gas from Iran, while Iran relied on Turkey for imports during the Iran-Iraq War, because the Persian Gulf was not safe for commercial vessels.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, the Kurdish issue assumed an important role in Turkey's relations with both Iran and Syria, beginning in 1991. Ankara was concerned that Damascus and Tehran might exploit the Kurdish issue to put pressure on Turkey to compromise on other issues over which there were deep disagreements. For instance, although Turkey had enjoyed relatively close political and diplomatic relations with Iran for more than fifty years following the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, these ties were strained after 1979 when the Iranian Revolution brought to power an Islamic theocratic regime that frequently refers to secular governments such as Turkey's as an evil that Muslims should resist. Although bilateral trade remained important to both countries throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, their economic ties have not prevented the regular eruption of tension.<sup>7</sup>

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5. Gafarli, n.3, p.144.

6. Habibi Nader, *Turkey and Iran: Growing Economic Relations Despite Western Sanctions* (Crown Centre for Middle East Studies, May 2012, No.62), p. 2, at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/91902291/Turkey-and-Iran-Growing-Economic-Relations-Despite-Western-Sanctions>

7. <http://countrystudies.us/turkey/88.htm>.

Turkey sees Iran as a potentially important stabilising force in the region, not as an outright rogue state as depicted by the US Administration since 2000 C.E. (Iseri, 2010, p.18). The main driving force behind the improving diplomatic relations is economic and trade compatibility which is strongest in the energy sector: Iran is a major oil and gas exporter, while Turkey is entirely dependent on oil and gas imports. In addition, the international sanctions that have led to Iran's economic isolation have brought that country closer to Turkey for purposes of investment and trade in non-oil goods.<sup>8</sup>

Turkey's gas trade with Iran is likely to increase as Iran has been developing not only the South Pars field but also its domestic gas grid. Iran has a unique geopolitical meaning for Turkey. Iran, as a Caspian country, can allow Turkmenistan's inclusion within the European energy grid without the necessity to resolve the Caspian's legal status. And, in fact, existing pipelines from Turkmenistan to Iran, and from Iran to Turkey, already allow this.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, American policies toward Iran, Russia and Turkey have been impacted by the US' support to "colour revolutions" and regime change in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan, and potentially elsewhere in Eurasia. Moscow sees every US action in support of free and fair elections in Eurasia as somehow aimed against Russia—a determination to pull Russia's allies away from it by installing its Western friends and allies (such as Mikhail Saakashvili in Georgia and Viktor Yushchenko in Ukraine) as new regional leaders.<sup>10</sup>

For Moscow and Ankara, the events that have taken place can have a backlash on Russia-Turkish relations, with Russia favouring Iran. The motive behind Russia's inclinations towards Iran is that Iran can act as a check on the growing influence of Turkey in the region.

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8. Habibi, n.6, p. 4.

9. Mert Bilgin, "Energy and Turkey's Foreign Policy: State Strategy, Regional Cooperation and Private Sector Involvement," *Turkish Quarterly Policy*, December 11, 2010, pp.86-89, at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/45091712/Mert-Bilgin-Turkish-Energy-Diplomacy>

10. Ivan T Berrend, *From the Soviet Bloc to the European Union – The Economic and Social Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe Since 1973* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.39.

## **RUSSIA'S AND TURKEY'S POLICY APPROACH TOWARDS SYRIA**

Russia has enjoyed close ties with Syria which is the second important country for Moscow after Iran. Syria has been a customer of the Russian weaponry and arms. In such a situation, any action by Moscow against Syria, at the request of the United States and Israel, would result in a dramatic loss in its military exports as well as its influence in the Middle East region.

As for Turkey, it has been sceptical of Syria's motives. Turkey and its leaders believe that if an appropriate opportunity is given to Syria, it would use the Kurdish crisis to create a Kurdish state in the territory of both Turkey and Iran. The cognitive map of Syrian Arab nationalism has been shaped as anti-Turkish and this feeling has intensified over the question of the Sanjak of Alexandretta, over which the Syrian side continues to claim sovereignty rights, despite the fact that it has remained in Turkish territory.<sup>11</sup>

Tensions between Turkey and Syria actually had been accumulating long before the eruption of the PKK "dispute" in 1984. Like Iraq, Syria was an Ottoman province until 1918. Subsequently, it was governed by France under the League of Nations mandate. In 1939, France detached Hatay (formerly Alexandretta) province from Syria and ceded it to Turkey, an action bitterly opposed by the Arab nationalists. Syria, thus, became independent in 1946 with an irredentist claim against Turkey. The Arab-Israeli conflict soon developed as another source of Syrian antagonism toward Turkey, which extended diplomatic recognition to Israel in 1948. Syria's staunch Arab nationalists also condemned Turkey's participation in NATO and other Western defence arrangements during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>12</sup> Turkey's improving relations with Syria (and its attempts to bring Lebanon into this mix) are highly related to the Arab gas pipeline which can include Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria within the same gas transport system.<sup>13</sup>

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11. Aras Bulent, *Turkish-Syrian Relations Revisited* (Thomson Corporation Company, 2002), p.52, accessed at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Turkish-Syrian+relations+revisited.-a0101531218>

12. <http://countrystudies.us/turkey/88.htm>, accessed on March 15, 2011.

13. Bilgin, n. 9, p. 89.

Furthermore, Turkey's membership of NATO, the alliance with the US and military cooperation with Israel made it a natural foe for Syria, the closest Arab ally of the Soviet Union. In addition, Syria has complained that Turkey's massive development programme for the border region ("Southeastern Anatolia Project"), which includes dams, power plants and irrigation systems, has robbed Syrian agriculture of precious water resources, thus, leading to a water dispute between the two countries. Lacking other means of pressuring Turkey, Syria's Hafez al-Assad (1970-2000) backed the PKK, a separatist movement fighting for the independence of Kurdish regions from Turkish rule.<sup>14</sup>

Nevertheless, Turkey's relations with Syria saw an upward trend that is related to the Arab gas pipeline which can include Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria (along with Turkey's attempt to include Lebanon), within the same gas transport system.<sup>15</sup>

The recent Syrian uprising which has been ongoing since 2011 has led to straining of relations once again, thus, putting an abrupt end to the short-lived "honeymoon phase" for the Ankara-Damascus axis. The Syrian uprising is an outburst of displeasure against the Ba'ath Party and the Assad regime which has dominated the Syrian political scene since 1971. The Assad regime strictly controlled rights of expression, association and assembly, with a virtual single party state in Syria. The ongoing Syrian conflict is believed to be an outcome of the influence of the "Arab Spring" that erupted in Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan. The regime is upheld by Russia and Iran while Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Jordan are endorsing the struggle of the rebel army.<sup>16</sup>

However, Soviet-Syrian cooperation against Turkey started in the early years of the Cold War. It grew out of a combination of three factors: Syrian hostility toward Turkey; historic Russian ambitions against Turkey; and a Syrian-Soviet alliance. Each leg of this triangle deserves consideration.<sup>17</sup>

Where Russia is concerned, Moscow sees every US action in support of free and fair elections in Eurasia as somehow aimed

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14. <http://middleeast.about.com/od/syria/a/Turkish-Syrian-Relations-Overview.html>

15. Bilgin, n.9, p. 89.

16. <http://www.danielpipes.org/8132/crisis-turkish-syrian-relations>

17. <http://www.danielpipes.org/8132/crisis-turkish-syrian-relations>

against Russia—a determination to pull Russia’s allies away from it by installing Western friends and allies.<sup>18</sup>

### **ISRAEL AS AN EMERGING REGIONAL PLAYER IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

In terms of Israel’s strategic approach towards the Middle East, ever since its establishment, Israel has aimed at restructuring the region in favour of its own security. From the beginning, Israel decided to establish security behind an “iron wall” that would separate the country from the Arabs, and, most important of all, protect the lands that Israel had occupied through the methods of invasion, colonisation and depopulation.<sup>19</sup>

Oded Yinon, an Israeli journalist, formerly attached to the Foreign Ministry of Israel, has set out the scenario of the “division of Iraq” in these terms: Iraq’s rich oil reserves and the internal crisis are guaranteed candidates for Israel’s targets. He also highlights the fact that although Iraq is a Shiite majority state with a ruling Sunni minority, it would face an outcome like that of Lebanon. In addition, there is a large Kurdish minority in the north, and if it weren’t for the strength of the ruling regime, the army and the oil revenues, in Iraq, a division into provinces along ethnic/religious lines as in Syria during the Ottoman times is possible. So, three (or more) states will come into existence around the three major cities: Basra, Baghdad and Mosul, and the Shiite areas in the south will separate from the Sunni and Kurdish north.<sup>20</sup>

The spread of Islamic movements in the region has become a major threat to the Middle East and has forged relations among Russia, Turkey and Israel. All three states, Turkey, Russia, and Israel, have the same interest of containing radical Islamic movements that either originate in, or have links to, the Middle East. Turkey concluded a security alliance with Israel in the 1990s; while Moscow’s relations with Jerusalem developed over time through Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union to Israel that created a huge (almost one million strong) Russian-speaking population

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18. Berrend, n.10, p.39.

19. Yahya Harun, “Behind the Scenes of the Iraq War”, at <http://theunjustmedia.com/Jewish%20Zionists/Behind%20the%20Scenes%20of%20the%20Iraq%20War.htm>

20. [www.thepassionateattachment.com/2011/02/22/medvedev-arab-revolutions-could-further-oded-yinons-zionist-plan/](http://www.thepassionateattachment.com/2011/02/22/medvedev-arab-revolutions-could-further-oded-yinons-zionist-plan/)

in Israel. Russian-speaking Israelis have become an important cultural and political force in the country, and they now facilitate an expanding trade relationship between Russia and Israel that could soon directly include Turkey.

## CONCLUSION

The recent developments in the Middle East have made it a “turbulent space” that has given way to geopolitical rivalry. Faced by crises in the form of ethnic clashes, civil uprising, Islamic fundamentalism and in the wake of corruption charges against existing rulers, the Middle East is in a fragile status, resulting in the emergence of “tolerant powers” – the US, Russia and China – playing an influential role in the geopolitics of the region.

As for Russia, its geographical location makes it a member of the strategic system of Eurasia covering Central Asia, the Middle East and Caucasus. The New Great Game and the growing competition for energy resources, the colony revolutions, the Arab Spring, and the Syrian uprising have increased the importance of Eurasian geopolitics, thus, also increasing Russia’s role in the geopolitics of this region.

Vladimir Putin’s period saw a drastic shift in the policy towards the Middle East. Until then, the Russian leaders had pursued foreign policy objectives which existed during the Cold War period. However, despite the growing influence of the United States, Russia remains the preeminent power in the Middle East. While it has established formal relations with the Western countries through the Trans-Atlantic System Act of 1997, Moscow nevertheless strongly resists a greater regional role for external actors, in particular the trans-Atlantic powers.

Despite the fact that Turkish involvement in these Turkic republics could be a potential challenge to Moscow’s traditional influence and interests in Eurasia, the Russian Federation considered Turkey as the only physical and political tie between the trans-Atlantic and the Eurasian system; and in part underestimated the Turkish challenge. The successor states of the Soviet Union were seen as an economic and political burden till the middle of the 1990s and priority was given to integration with the West. The aim of integration was accompanied

by the idea of gradual membership in the Western-led organisations and institutions.

Steps are being taken by America and NATO-led Turkey to reframe its foreign policy which is multi-dimensional in approach, with the Russian Federation playing a vital role along with Turkey in its pursuit of establishing itself as an influential regional player. America's actions in Iran and Iraq, its stand during the Kurdish crisis against Turkey made Ankara suspect the efforts of America in the Eurasian geopolitics. Moreover, the foreign outlook of Turkey advocates not only promoting its national interests in Eurasia with its face turned towards the Russian Federation; it has also begun to focus on developing closer ties with its own Turkic republics with which it had no strong bilateral interactions until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The security dimension illustrates how both countries have common interests with regard to the security concerns of the Middle Eastern region. Terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism, ethnic clashes and inter-state conflicts in the Middle East have led both countries to develop strong relations. Moreover, the expansionist policies of NATO in Eurasia, and the reluctance of the European Union to grant Turkey membership in the European Union led to strengthening of the relationship which has now acquired not only an economic dimension but also political and security dimensions. Turkey's existence and its role as a regional player in Eurasia is much needed since it can help to establish stability and security in the region.

Hence, though some in the Russian Federation felt threatened by Turkey after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, others thought that the Islamic fundamentalism of Iran was more threatening than Turkey's role in the region. Under these circumstances, the Russian Federation considered Turkey as a guarantee of democracy, secularism and the establishment of a free market in the region.

# THE LABYRINTHINE ROLE OF NEWS MEDIA IN NATIONAL SECURITY: CASE STUDY EDWARD SNOWDEN

**KRITI SINGH**

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*

—Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

News journalism achieved a new height with the publication of serious revelations made by American computer professional and ex-Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and National Security Agency (NSA) employee, Edward Joseph Snowden on June 2013. Refreshing the memories of editor-in-chief and founder of WikiLeaks, Julian Paul Assange, the recent example has once again exhibited how powerful and deadly the media can be in term of national security. The recent issue has once again ignited the same debate on the role of the media: the media as a watchdog of a nation or a medium which provides a voice to the unheard, helps the whistleblowers to expose the cracks in our existing society and by doing so, performs a greater good for the public.

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**Kriti Singh** is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

This paper is a modest attempt to evaluate the complex role of the media in the light of the recent revelations by Edward Snowden and is part of a series of papers written on this issue. The paper will provide an overview of the recent event, reactions by various prominent figures, and timelines of Snowden's revelations. The scope of the study is confined to the media reports of the month June and July predominantly.

### **AN OVERVIEW**

On June 5, 2013, the UK based newspaper *The Guardian*, made an alarming revelation by releasing a top secret order of the US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC), which was issued in April 2013, which authorised agencies like the US National Security Agency (NSA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to collect the "telephone records of millions of unwitting individuals." According to a copy of the order, Verizon, which is one of the largest telecom agencies in the US, was required to disclose the numbers of both parties during a call, as well as the location, call duration, and other unique data on an "ongoing, daily basis." Meaning that, regardless of whether an individual is suspected of, or linked to, any crime, the data of all Verizon customers are currently being delivered in bulk to the intelligence agency.<sup>1</sup>

According to the US Federal Judiciary Centre website:

The Congress in 1978 established the FISC as a special court and authorised the Chief Justice of the US to designate seven federal district court judges to review applications for warrants related to national security investigations. The provisions of the court were part of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (92 Stat. 1783), which required the government, before it commenced certain kinds of intelligence gathering operations within the US, to obtain a judicial warrant similar to that required in criminal investigations. The Act of 1978 also established a FISC of Review, presided over by three district or appeals court judges designated by the Chief

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1. "Top-Secret Court Order Reveals NSA's Daily Data Collection on Millions of Americans," accessed on June 6, 2013, <http://rt.com/usa/nasa-collecting-millions-verizon-records-291/>, June 6, 2013.

Justice, to review, at the government's request, the decisions of the FISC. The USA Patriot Act of 2001 (115 Stat. 272) expanded the time periods for which the FISC can authorize surveillance and increased the number of judges serving the court from seven to eleven.<sup>2</sup>

As to the authority claimed by the government via this order, it is specifically cited to fall under the "business records" provision of the PATRIOT Act of 2001, which was granted a four-year extension by US President Barack Obama in May of 2011.<sup>3</sup>

On June 6, the next news story published by *The Guardian* and *Washington Post* exposed the top-secret PRISM programme of the US intelligence agencies. Initiated in 2007, PRISM is a covert mass electronic surveillance data mining programme which can be traced to the surveillance programme advocated by former US President George Bush. However, the present US President, Barack Obama took it manifold higher. If media reports are to be believed, the NSA paid millions of dollars to cover the costs of major Internet companies involved in the PRISM surveillance programme. According to the NSA, the technology companies, including Google, Yahoo, Microsoft and Facebook, incurred the costs to meet the new certification demands in the wake of the ruling from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) court.<sup>4</sup> The clandestine programme allowed the intelligence community of the US and UK to gain access from nine Internet companies to a wide range of digital information, including e-mails and stored data, on foreign targets operating outside the US.<sup>5</sup> According to the report published by the *Washington Post* based on an acquired top-secret document, "... extracting audio and video chats, photographs, e-mails, documents, and connection logs that enable analysts to track foreign targets....collection directly from the servers of these US Service Providers: Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube, Apple."

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2. For details see, "Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court," accessed on June 6, 2013, [http://www.fjc.gov/history/home.nsf/page/courts\\_special\\_fisc.html](http://www.fjc.gov/history/home.nsf/page/courts_special_fisc.html)

3. n.1.

4. "NSA Paid Millions to Cover Prism Compliance Costs for Tech Companies," accessed on August 23, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/23/nsa-prism-costs-tech-companies-paid>

5. "NSA Slides Explain the PRISM Data-Collection Program," accessed on June 9, 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/politics/prism-collection-documents/?hpid=z1>

On June 9, 2013, the *Guardian* newspaper published an interview in which it revealed the identity of the source. The 29-year-old former technical assistant of the CIA and employee of the defence contractor Booz Allen Hamilton, Snowden became “one of America’s most consequential whistleblowers, alongside Daniel Ellsberg and Bradley Manning. He is responsible for handing over material from one of the world’s most secretive organisations – the NSA.”<sup>6</sup> The news story was followed by a series of reactions from across the globe. The important reactions are dealt with in the subsequent part the paper. Also the newspapers, both print and online, provided the public across the world with detailed timeframes, slide shows on PRISM, a top-secret draft report from 2009 by the NSA’s inspector Stellar Wind in full document<sup>7</sup>, code names of US surveillance like “Blackfoot” which was the operation against the French mission to the UN; the one against its embassy in Washington, known as “Wabash”; one against the Italian embassy in Washington which was known to the NSA as both “Bruneau” and “Hemlock”; the eavesdropping of the Greek UN mission was known as “Powell” and the operation against its embassy was referred to as “Klondyke,” and so on.<sup>8</sup>

As the paper is confined to a timeframe, only a few news stories emerged which bring out into the open the imperious character of the US. The most notable was the news story published on June 30, 2013, by the *Guardian* which exposed how the US has been spying on its European allies and the same was published by *Der Spiegel*, a German weekly news magazine. The news reports disclosed how the US is wiretapping on the European Union mission in New York, and its embassy in Washington, and 38 embassies and missions which were described as “targets”, traditional ideological adversaries, and sensitive Middle Eastern countries, the French, Italian and Greek embassies as well as a number of other American allies, including

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6. “Edward Snowden: The Whistleblower Behind the NSA Surveillance Revelations,” accessed on June 9, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/09/edward-snowden-nsa-whistleblower-surveillance>
  7. “NSA Inspector General Report on Email and Internet Data Collection Under Stellar Wind – Full Document,” accessed on June 27, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2013/jun/27/nsa-inspector-general-report-document-data-collection>. *The Gaurdian*.
  8. *Ibid*.

Japan, Mexico, South Korea, India and Turkey.<sup>9</sup>

The other important news story which again exposed the monopolistic nature of the US was one on the Bolivian plane drama. On July 3, 2013, there was a surge of news reports that on the directives of the US, the European countries rerouted the Bolivian presidential plane over suspicions that NSA leaker Edward Snowden was aboard. The event ignited outrage among Latin American leaders who called the forcefully stopping of Bolivian President Evo Morales' plane at Vienna a violation of national sovereignty and disrespect for their region.<sup>10</sup> This was followed by a series of reactions from the Latin American countries. This news story was also thought-provoking as it not only showed to what extent the superpower could flex its muscles on the Latino countries but also exposed the double face of the European countries, that, on the one hand, were voicing their concern on the US' snooping programme and, on the other, facilitating the USA in capturing Snowden. The same was resonant with the news carried by *Reuters* on July 8, 2013, quoting an extract of the German weekly *Der Spiegel's* interview of Snowden in which he clearly said that "the NSA works closely with Germany and other Western states on a 'no questions asked' basis....They are in bed with the Germans, just like with most other Western states.. Other agencies don't ask us where we got the information from and we don't ask them. That way they can protect their top politicians from the backlash in case it emerges how massively people's privacy is abused worldwide"<sup>11</sup>

With various news reports covering details of the PRISM programme and diverse reactions of various' countries prominent figures, one can notice the gradual shift in the news reporting. Degree by degree, the news angles started to alter in the following news reports, which were more oriented towards Snowden's asylum applications, rejections of his application, his intentions

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9. "New NSA Leaks Show How US is Bugging its European Allies," accessed on June 30, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/30/nsa-leaks-us-bugging-european-allies>.*The Guardian*, Sunday, June 30, 2013.

10. "Snowden Case: Diplomatic Drama Surrounds Bolivia Plane," accessed on July 3, 2013, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/snowden-case-diplomatic-drama-surrounds-bolivia-plane-1.1390230>.

11. "Snowden Alleges America's NSA 'In Bed With' Germany and Most Others," accessed on July 8, 2013. Read more at: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/snowden-alleges-americas-nsa-in-bed-with-germany-and-most-others/1/287411.html>.*Reuters* Berlin,

behind making these revelations, his choice of countries for asylum, the US revoking his passport and his next refuge stop, and so on. Nevertheless, one country whose reaction is indispensable and which emerged as the fifth-largest target of the US electronic snooping, is India. The following extract from *The Hindu* published on June 9, 2013, summarises it all:

A snapshot of the Boundless Informant data<sup>12</sup> contained in what *The Guardian* describes as a top secret NSA ‘global heat map’ gives an insight into the sheer volume of data being collected by America’s most secretive intelligence agency. In March 2013 alone, it harvested a whopping 97 billion “pieces of intelligence from computer networks worldwide”....The newspaper reproduced one of the NSA’s colour-coded “heatmaps,” according to which countries are more extensively monitored. The colours range from green, for the least amount of surveillance, to yellow, orange and, finally, red for those subjected to the most surveillance. India is coded orange. The extent of the NSA’s surveillance of Indian communication traffic is greater than its electronic snooping efforts in China, Russia and Saudi Arabia.<sup>13</sup>

And equally interesting was the reaction from India’s side which is dealt with in a subsequent part of the paper.

## THE REACTIONS

As the new reports kept on emerging, one gradually unearthed the fact that it was not surveillance confined to one nation or a few countries, rather, it was mass surveillance on an unprecedented scale. At this point, it will be interesting to bring out the reactions that emerged in media reports of various prominent figures connected to this incident, directly and indirectly. However, due to the limited

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12. Boundless Informant is a big data analysis and data visualisation system used by the United States NSA to give NSA managers summaries of the NSA’s worldwide data collection activities. Source: Glenn Greenwald and Ewen MacAskill. “Boundless Informant: the NSA’s Secret Tool to Track Global Surveillance Data”, *The Guardian*. URL accessed on June 12, 2013.

13. “India Fifth-Largest Target of US Electronic Snooping,” accessed on June 9, 2013, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-fifthlargest-target-of-us-electronic-snooping/article4795588.ece>. *The Hindu*.

scope of this paper and the unlimited scope of the reactions from all across the world, only the reactions of the US, UN and India are dealt with in this section.

### *US Reaction*

The first impact of this revelation came on June 14, 2013, when the US filed criminal charges of espionage and theft of government property against Snowden and later revoked his passport. Here, two reactions of US President Barack Obama have been taken into account. The first is Obama's defence on the mass surveillance that came out on June 17, 2013, published by *The Guardian* where Obama tried to downplay the entire event and described it as the public "ruckus" over the leaked National Security Agency surveillance documents and hinted at the possible extradition of Snowden<sup>14</sup> The second reaction emerged later when, amidst high level criticism from across the globe, Obama said "he would not engage in 'wheeling and dealing' to persuade foreign governments – principally Russia – to return Snowden to America." "I'm not going to be scrambling jets to get a 29-year-old hacker," Obama said, according to a tweet from *the Washington Post's* David Nakamura.<sup>15</sup> However, the statement proved quite contradictory, with the Bolivian presidential plane drama happening simultaneously.

### *Reaction of Former Two-Term US Senator Gordon Humphrey (R-New Hampshire)*

Voicing his support for Snowden, former two-term Senator Gordon Humphrey (R-New Hampshire), in a letter sent to *The Guardian's* Glenn Greenwald (published by *The Guardian*) applauded the role of Snowden in exposing the "massive violation of the United States Constitution." Further criticising the US government's role in the entire event, Senator Humphrey wrote, "I object to the monumentally disproportionate campaign being waged by the US government against Edward Snowden, while no effort is being made to identify,

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14. "Obama Defends 'System of Checks and Balances' Around NSA Surveillance," accessed on June 17, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/17/obama-defends-checks-nsa-surveillance>.*The Guardian*.

15. "Obama: US Will Not Engage in 'Wheeling and Dealing' Over Edward Snowden," accessed on July 27, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/27/3obama-edward-snowden-wheeling-dealing>.*The Gaurdian*.

remove from office and bring to justice those officials who have abused power, seriously and repeatedly violating the Constitution of the United States and the rights of millions of unsuspecting citizens.”<sup>16</sup>

### *Reaction of CIA Whistleblower John Kiriakou*

This is an interesting reaction as it comes from CIA whistleblower John Kiriakou who is currently serving a jail term for disclosing classified information and the CIA’s waterboarding torture methods. In an open letter written by Kiriakou, dated June 13, 2013, and published by *Firedoglake* (a US collaborative blog), Kiriakou saluted Snowden for his brave act and advised him not to cooperate with the FBI. He wrote, “FBI agents will lie, trick and deceive you. They will twist your words and play on your patriotism to entrap you. They will pretend to be people they are not — supporters, well-wishers and friends — all the while wearing wires to record your out-of-context statements to use against you. The FBI is the enemy; it’s a part of the problem, not the solution.”<sup>17</sup>

### *UN Reaction*

In a statement given by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in a press conference in Iceland, he remarked that “Snowden misused his right to digital access and has created problems that outweigh the benefits of public disclosure.” The remark by the UN head came as a shock to the news media world as he was accusing the person who had exposed the biggest ever human privacy right violation perpetrated so far.<sup>18</sup>

Dr. Hamadoun Touré of Mali, secretary general of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the specialised agency of the United Nations dedicated to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), in an interview with a news agency on the Snowden issue and the NSA spying on Internet traffic, made the

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16. “Senator to Snowden: ‘You Have Done the Right Thing’,” accessed on July 16, 2013, <http://rt.com/usa/snowden-support-letter-humphrey-182/>. RTNews.

17. “CIA Whistleblower to Snowden: ‘Do Not Cooperate with the FBI’,” accessed on July 3, 2013, <http://rt.com/usa/kiriakou-snowden-letter-leak-618/>. RTNews. July 3, 2013.

18. “Edward Snowden’s Digital ‘Misuse’ has Created Problems, says Ban Ki-Moon,” accessed on July 3, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/03/edward-snowden-digital-misuse-ban-ki-moon>. *The Gaurdian*.

following statements. Firstly, he reiterated the fact that all countries are unfortunately engaged in a cyber war with each other but most of the countries either deny it or try to humiliate or embarrass the other nations. Secondly, he reinforced the need of a cyber treaty among the countries. Thirdly, he urged various governments to discuss the problem frankly and to “find some solutions that will not embarrass anybody”. Lastly, he also mentioned that it “included cyber espionage as a form of attack.”<sup>19</sup>

### *India's Reaction*

Many eyebrows were raised and the news media were bombarded with a series of news, views and debates after India's External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid made a controversial statement on the Snowden revelations, claiming that they comprised “cyber scrutiny, not snooping.” The minister downplayed the whole incident and said, “This is not scrutiny and access to the actual messages. It is only a computer study and a computer analysis of patterns of calls.” These comments were quite contradictory to the minister's previous stand when he had warned that any privacy violation would be “unacceptable”. However, after his meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry, one can notice a significant change in his stand. It seems that India took the stand that if you can't beat them, join them.<sup>20</sup> The Indian government's stand was highly criticised for downplaying the episode, denying asylum to Snowden and, to some extent, resonating the views of the US government. This brings the paper to the next part which will discuss in depth the media and society.

### **CONCLUSION**

The debate on the role of the media in national security is complex and never ending. As one digs deep into it, one realises that boundaries tend to get blurred with time. Any information can be detrimental for a country's security if it comes out in the open, but the same

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19. See the details of the interview at: “Snowden Affair is Chance for Truce in Cyberwar – UN,” accessed on July 15, 2013, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/07/15/usa-security-cybertruce-idINDEE96E0DQ20130715>

20. “Cyber Scrutiny, Not Snooping says Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid of US Surveillance,” NDTV, accessed on July 2, 2013, <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/cyber-scrutiny-not-snooping-says-foreign-minister-salman-khurshid-of-us-surveillance-386721>

information can be even deadlier if the public is kept in the dark. The role of the media is to bring to light all the possible loopholes and open them for a debate so that everything which happens is for the democratic good—and the news media should live to defend this aim. A power hungry government may overstep the limit and this is where an alert whistleblower and the media come into play. In the end, this entire event is reminiscent of the Greek mythical deity Prometheus, the Titan who defied the orders of the Greek Almighty, Zeus, by stealing fire and gifting it to mankind. The power of fire, thus, paved the way for mankind to develop and flourish. In a similar way, the media and whistleblowers, when they work hand in hand, do defy contemporary power symbols: despite the fact that they risk their own lives, they bring out the truth to mankind, to flourish and to develop. To conclude with Snowden's quote, "In the end, the Obama Administration is not afraid of whistleblowers like me, Bradley Manning or Thomas Drake. We are stateless, imprisoned or powerless. No, the Obama Administration is afraid of you. It is afraid of an informed, angry public demanding the constitutional government it was promised — and it should be."

# EIGHTH CII-CAPS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AEROSPACE INDUSTRY: A REPORT<sup>1</sup>

The eighth international conference on the aerospace industry jointly organised by the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was conducted at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, from November 6 to 7, 2013. The conference was inaugurated by Air Mshl P P Reddy, VM, D G (I & S), Air Headquarters (HQ). The theme of the conference dealt with greater involvement of the Indian industry in meeting the equipment and technological requirements of the Indian Air Force (IAF) in the aerospace sector.

In his opening remarks, Air Mshl Vinod Patney, Director General, CAPS, expressed concern over the delays in achieving the goals of indigenisation and self-reliance by the Indian aerospace industry. He emphasised that there should be greater interaction and understanding between the users and the manufacturers. The process of acquiring critical technologies in the aerospace sector should be hastened. With regards to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), he mentioned that they could become the backbone of indigenisation and their potential should be exploited. He also suggested that along with raising Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), we should go for more joint ventures with the foreign companies. In this regard, the proposal to deal with transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF)

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1. Report prepared by Lt Col R K Verma (Retd), Arjun Subramanian, Prerna Gandhi, Sana Hashmi, Simrat Virk, Debalina Rahul Ghoshal, Ankit Kumar.

through a joint venture between the foreign Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) and a private sector company in India was a step in the right direction. He also emphasised the need for out of the box thinking, for a change of business models, to tap the market for Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) and engineering support, to increase the FDI limits and attend to tax regimes. He insisted that Transfer of Technology (ToT) and licensed manufacture as systems must be viewed as a stop-gap arrangement and not an end unto itself. He stressed the need for better research, better plans, processes and products directed towards user needs. He said the government, the industry and the users must view each other as partners.

Mr S K Mittal, general manager, Business Development, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), highlighted the achievements of HAL while acknowledging that India has not done enough in the field of aerospace manufacturing. He further mentioned that the Indian aerospace industry is energised basically by customer demand, and briefed the gathering about the various programmes that HAL is working on such as the Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA), Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGCA), Intermediate Jet Trainer (IJT), Hindustan Turbo-40 Trainer (HTT-40 Trainer) and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), as well as a new project to develop and manufacture civilian aircraft in the 70-100 seat range. He pointed out some problem areas such as the fragmented nature of domestic industry, the gap in university curricula and the requirements of the aerospace industry, and the severe deficiency of raw materials.

Mr Satish Kaura, Chairman, Samtel Group, stressed that Indian industry is keen to have more active partnership with the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs). He pointed out that initiatives like defence offsets and procurement reforms have created more opportunities for the private sector. He mentioned the need for making Indian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) a part of the global supply chain. Manufacturing capability is critical for minimising production cost. He stressed the need to promote a culture of spending more on Research and Development (R&D). He said MRO facilities are critical for facilitating the life cycle extension of the existing fleet and keeping operational costs in check.

In his inaugural address, Air Mshl PP Reddy stressed on the need for India to become a net exporting country in defence rather than an importing one. He emphasised the need for the private industry to invest in R&D. He pointed out the lack of private industry participation in the aerospace sector, increasing the restriction of 26 percent FDI in defence, and aeronautics not being a preferred field of study in institutions. To promote indigenisation the government has introduced the Technology Perspective and Capability Roadmap. He suggested that the FDI limit should be raised and the public-private partnership model should be encouraged to reduce dependence on imports. He also mentioned that domestic capabilities cannot be built merely by giving Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to Indian companies. Multiple areas need attention such as funding the R&D, raising the FDI ceiling, protecting intellectual property, tax incentives, etc.

Mr Anjan Das, Executive Director, CII, highlighted the need for political will at the highest level, time-bound goals, work through the mission mode as it is efficient, and government support for the private sector in research. He also said that R&D by the private sector requires more funds and encouragement from the government. He further mentioned that global collaboration is needed for co-development and co-manufacturing.

Speaking on the "Quality System for the Aerospace Industry in the Future", Dr Tamil Mani, Director General (DG) (Aero), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), elaborated on how quality contributes to the improvement of air power. He pointed out that civil aeronautics has achieved a fleet reliability of more than 99 percent, while in defence, it is only 60 percent. It was essential to address this mismatch. He also listed the achievements of HAL such as the IJT, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and the achievements in composites and glass cockpit technology. HAL has reached maturity in terms of flight safety and flight testing. He mentioned that licensed production gives enough knowledge to translate a design into production. He then highlighted some of the problem areas such as:

- ToT to development and to production is an isolated affair and lacks proper interface.

- There is currently no pre-planning in setting up a production facility.
- There is no proper simulation study on the requirements placed by the Services.
- Accurate modelling is not done for simulation
- There is a multi-disciplinary optimisation in the design process.
- The maintenance aspect in the design process is not taken care of at all.
- The interface of the maintenance people to the aircraft is not appropriate
- Tailoring the requirements is very important
- Essential test facility is not present. The government needs to create test facilities
- There is no flying test-bed for high altitude engine tests and very few wind tunnels.
- Self-certification is to be focussed on.
- Tool design is a neglected area which needs attention, and automation is missing.
- Quality assurance is a weak area.
- In ToT, absorption has become a major problem because there need to be people who understand this.
- There are few trained engineers in this field.

Air Mshl Matheswaran spoke on “Transformational Trends in Recent Wars: Air Power”. He started by saying that a national level strategy is required for creating the ecosystem for the aerospace industry. He highlighted the need for a flexible organisational structure that should adapt to changing technologies, strategies, time and environment, and the need for the industry and the military to work together to bring about this change. He brought out the fact that the economy and war are interlinked. Wars have been driven by the Westphalia model, which is today in the receding mode. He observed that post-1945, all wars have taken place on the periphery of developing regions. As inter-state wars recede, they give way to unconventional and sub-conventional wars, and India lives in an environment where war is always a distinct feasibility. Hence, he stressed that India should be at the top end of technology. He

pointed out that China's war concept has changed to local war which is aerospace intensive. The doctrine of the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) has got a well integrated air and space component. Highlighting the transformational trends in war, which included the introduction of air power, he mentioned the role of the *blitzkrieg* and technology too as changing the strategy of war. A flexible organisational restructuring is required by the changing environment. Aerospace technology has moved the war capability into the realms of conventional deterrence. He listed some of the key campaigns to study the change in warfare trends, such as Beka'a Valley, Gulf War, Kosovo, 9/11 Afghanistan, Russia and Georgia conflict. He emphasised the importance of Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR), precision weapons, Network-Centric Warfare (NCW), UAVs and information warfare in the modern warfare.

Air Mshl Markus Gygas, former commander of the Swiss Air Force, spoke on the "Tactical Needs of Future Aerospace Power" and stressed the importance of aerospace power in the event of natural disasters. He said nearly 1,000 aircraft fly daily and are monitored by civil radars. Air traffic management and air policing is also being done by the air force. He emphasised the need for reliability, affordability and sustainability of the fleet. He said that there is a close association between the air force and the aerospace industry. He illustrated that in Switzerland, for the past two decades, the air force and the industry have been working in tandem. As a consequence of this synergy, fleet availability for the F-18 is about 50 percent, for the F-5, it is 70 percent and for the Jaguar it is 69 percent. He mentioned that amongst three aircraft, the Eurofighter, Rafael and Gripen, Switzerland had chosen the Gripen for the modernisation of its existing fleet because it is the most suitable aircraft, meeting national requirements. According to him, Switzerland's main objective for acquiring UAVs was reconnaissance and it had chosen the HERON I. He mentioned that Switzerland has moved from propeller powered aircraft to first line aircraft and has plenty of experience in this area. In his concluding remarks, he stated that Switzerland is a success story of rising air power focussing on the tactical needs.

Dr. Shyam Chetty, director, National Aerospace Laboratory (NAL), focussed on the civilian aerospace sector. He iterated the importance of affordability with advanced technology. He described the work undertaken in NAL on modular avionics, integration of the GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation (GAGAN), which will reduce the cost of ground infrastructure in airports, and fly-by-wire for the LCA. He stressed the need for building core teams to develop advanced technology and highlighted challenges in graduating from defence to civilian space like Analog to Digital Conversion (ADC), the need for design tools and the augmented engineering environment. Data fusion is critical to enable better situational awareness. He highlighted the role of modelling and simulation in product design, currently a weak area in the country.

Speaking on the “Present Air Force Capability in Space and Future Prospects”, AVM Upkarjit Singh stressed the importance of compressing the “sensor to shoot time” through technologies such as accurate navigation, precision weapons, data fusion and an efficient C4ISR. The importance of the space domain in enhancing the capability of the air force in the future was elaborated upon. To this effect, achievements of the country in space based navigation technology such as the GAGAN project and Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS) are laudable and there is a huge potential in the satellite launch sector for the private players.

Cmde S Samaddar (Retd), Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and director, ShinMaywa Industries India Pvt Ltd, spoke on “A Case for Incentives and Benefits” with regard to the involvement of the industry in the aerospace sector. He highlighted the huge domestic demand, from both the military and civilian sectors for aerospace products in the country, which should be converted to our advantage. In order to help local industry and to support indigenisation, he suggested:

- Proactive government support with the required policy interventions.
  - Some key changes to the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2013, such as inclusion of a price variation clause so as to share the burden of price fluctuation between the contractor and the customer; inclusion of exchange rate variations down

to the SMEs and MSMEs; inclusion of physical service sectors like MRO, upgrades, life extensions and engineering design; permitting Indian bidders to bid in foreign currency and this should be extended up to the Tier 2 and Tier 3 suppliers.

- Exports to be allowed and the procedure for approval to be eased.
- Purchase preference for Indian bidders, and along with delivery concessions.
- Provision of tax and other incentives to the aerospace sector industries and sharing of investment risks among the industry, government and buyers.
- The MI-17 upgrade programme and AVRO upgrades should be “Buy Indian.
- Emphasis should be placed on making engines in India.
- Pushing the aircraft and engine manufacturers to locate in India on bulk orders.
- Risks in R&D investments to be covered by both the industry and the customers.
- An ‘Entrepreneurship Promotion Plan’.
- Offsets to be made buyer driven and not vendor driven.
- Hundred percent FDI to enable investment in immovable assets (infrastructures/facilities).
- Creation of lab and test facilities for technology infusion by allowing FDI instead of the government making these huge investments.
- Incorporating the latest contracting process.

Ms Leanne Caret, Vice President and General Manager, Boeing Military Aircraft, laid emphasis on the criticality of capturing the hearts and minds of the people who work in the aerospace sector. She emphasised the need for a well defined path, investment in innovation and new technologies to let the workforce know they are part of something that matters, and having open lines of communication and opportunities to appeal to the personal ambitions of the workforce. She also mentioned the project collaboration between Boeing and Sikorsky to develop a new generation of army helicopters that would fly twice as fast and be more capable than any conventional helicopter that flies today.

Dr. Vivek Lal, President and CEO, New Ventures, Reliance Industries Ltd, spoke on the "Indian Aerospace Industry" and stressed that India must aim to become part of the global aerospace supply chain as it will help in acquiring class technologies and skills. It was brought out that the trend in the aerospace industry was towards building partnerships, infrastructure and network capability. The way forward for the Indian aerospace industry is to develop competitiveness, particularly across the lower end of the value chain. The hurdles faced by SMEs in India were high capital cost, low volumes and long gestation period of the projects. The following key suggestions were made:

- Improving the quality of the technical personnel and the adoption of the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) model for the aerospace sector.
- A central organisation to coordinate and guide the establishment of the aerospace industry.
- Improving the quality and robustness of the certification organisation.
- Creation of clusters of the supply chain to reduce transport cost, cut down on transportation time, etc.
- Research on new materials
- Certification process to be speeded up.

Mr Muralidaran from Tata Power SED focussed on communication in a digitised and net-centric battlefield environment. He noted that in the digital mode, security of communication becomes a concern. With communication equipment becoming wireless, the issue of spectrum utilisation is critical, as also the need for communication systems to be interoperable between services and interfacing between modern and legacy systems. He stressed that the communication systems should be based on the Internet Protocol (IP) network but pointed out that the IP system has vulnerabilities, too. He further stated the need for wideband and large bandwidth to enable transfer of large amount of data to include video and audio in real time. He also opined that the systems should be based on Open Standard Architecture (OSA) for enabling future scalability and upgradability. To meet future requirements,

he proposed the Software Driven Radio (SDR) and cognitive radio, which would use OSA hardware but be driven by software to produce several frequencies and different waveforms as per the requirement. The cognitive radio, he said, would automatically lock on to the frequency used by the friendly forces. He further looked at futuristic concepts like incorporating the self-healing capacity in the systems. He pointed out one critical area i.e. the need to import the hardware component as this is not produced in the country.

Mr Naresh Chandra Sharma, head, Production, Tata Advanced Materials Limited (TAML), focussed on the production of composites and their application for the aerospace sector in terms of improving payload and range. He mentioned that some civilian aircraft use composites extensively such as the A350 (52 percent), Boeing 787 (50 percent). He also mentioned some of the major projects in which TAML is involved, supplying composites for platforms such as the A350, Dhruv helicopter and LCA project. He brought out the need for high investment, establishing facilities and procuring equipment, requirement of trained and skilled human resource, maintaining low cost, high quality and prompt delivery. Amongst the critical problem areas he identified were the high cost of imported material and the long and cumbersome certification process.

Mr Ashok Atluri, Chairman and Managing Director, Zen Technologies Ltd, said that though the present defence set-up in the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is one of the most MSME friendly ever, self-reliance is still a distant goal. He noted that the benefits of government policies have been limited to a few large industrial houses and have not percolated down to the MSMEs and that the MSMEs with strong capabilities are struggling to make a meaningful contribution, especially in high innovation and critical technology areas. He recommended helping the MSMEs to make meaningful contributions in the field of defence through steps such as:

- Considering SMEs not only as part of a supply chain, but also whether they can deliver the complete product.
- Creating a separate department in the MoD to focus on self-reliance.
- In the “Make” category, the criteria for empanelment are financial. The MSMEs have strong objections to this. The criteria should be technical capability and the ability to deliver.

- Inclusion of “Buy MSME” as a high priority category, especially for low value procurements within the Vice Chief’s powers.
- Making an exception, if and only if, the indigenous content is more than 70 percent and the product successfully clears the trials and the vendor is an MSME.
- The MoD has to take note of the problem where Indian MSMEs have developed the technology by investing large amount of money, but face competition from DPSUs tied up with foreign suppliers. This kills indigenous technology. Procedures should be relaxed to make MSMEs the lead bidders.
- Financial criteria should be relaxed.
- R&D support should be given to the MSMEs.
- Break down the project into smaller manageable chunks and give it to other suppliers.
- Invite the MSMEs for larger projects, and let them form consortia. Let there be no lead bidder requirement in that.
- Support the MSMEs financially if the company has the capability to deliver.
- Increase the number of “Make” projects. Don’t leave them only for strategic projects, but include low value products also.
- Even in the large “Make” projects, 20-30 percent should be given to MSMEs.

Wg Cdr Vishal Nigam, CAPS, made a comparative study on the Chinese and Indian aviation industry. He attributed China’s success in the field to the institutional evolution which was backed by the emergence of capitalism, creation of markets and an efficient ecosystem, where the private industries were spearheading the global supply chain and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) were doing the same in the logistics and financial supply chain. He mentioned that structural changes were made to increase interaction between the industry and the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). China’s short-term aim was to embrace high end technology through partnership and alliances and its long-term aim was to upgrade capability through internal R&D. In the area of investments, he stated that China’s aggregate expenditure on defence R&D increased to 13 percent of the total defence outlay and that the share of spending on R&D in

the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 1.7 to 1.8 percent. As a result, China's defence industries are able to generate capital from the stock markets. On the role played by the external factors, he said that most of the equipment and knowledge was sourced from Russia, such as the Su-35, IL-76, and programmes on aero-engines. He elaborated on China's quest to develop aero-engines indigenously such as the WS-10, WS-13 and WS-15, but most of them are derivatives of Russian engines.

On the Indian side, he identified the main problem as short-term goals overriding long-term plans. He pointed out that there was a 25-year gap between the Marut project and the LCA and stated that in R&D spending, the government's share is 70 percent with 30 percent by the private industry. He also highlighted that there has been no innovation so far from the 39 Ordnance Factories (OFs) and that their order books were overflowing while the potential of private industry remains unused. He stressed that primarily the problems were inadequate policy interventions and an inability to have all the stakeholders onboard.

The main theme of the presentation of Air Mshl Tyagi (Retd) was how to energise the Indian aerospace industry in conjunction with a well-defined DPP. He notified that the core of DPP-2006 had been retained in DPP-2013 and the changes have mainly been made in the offset policy. He stated that the DPSU-DRDO combination has failed to deliver or to leverage India's "big buyer" status. Eschewing the general perception about the DPP as a cumbersome procedure which leads to delays, he mentioned that procurements are based on the user's long-term plans and qualitative requirements. Technical evaluation and field trials are conducted independently by the users. The major change in DPP-2013 was in the procurement categories i.e. Buy (Indian), Buy and Make (Indian), Make, Buy and Make and Buy (Global). In the opinion of the speaker, the change was only cosmetic in nature. He pointed out that there are no nominations for maintenance of ToT, and delegated financial power has been enhanced. Moreover, the procedure for Buy and Make (Indian) has been further streamlined in DPP-13. Amongst the shortcomings in the DPP, he identified the nomination of the production agency, rigidity of the Services Qualitative Requirements (SQRs), and in

implementation, since all provisions that are being made available are still not being put to use.

India's technological self-sufficiency is obviously not in the interest of foreign vendors. He mentioned the problem where the entire ToT linked with procurement goes to the DPSUs due to nominations, which has made DRDO emerge as a buyer of technology. He recommended that policies should be drafted keeping this point in mind and the difference between 'know-how' and 'know-why' should be considered. The DPSUs prevent development of a suitable ecosystem. Pointing out the shortcoming of offset management, he said that the OEMs have some concerns vis-à-vis the current offset management policy. As far as the government's role is concerned, there is total reliance on the public sector. He put forth a few policy recommendations:

- Targets for the indigenous content for Buy (Indian) and Buy and Make (Indian) cases should be set at realistic levels.
- Procedure for change of offset offerings and Indian Offset Partners (IOPs) should be simplified.
- Downsizing DRDO and making R&D an integral part of the industry.
- Freeing the aerospace sector from industrial licensing requirements.
- Restricting the government's role to policy formulation and implementation.
- Liberalising the procedure for change in the offset proposal.
- Permitting transfer of offset credit.

In the closing address delivered by Air Mshl VM Khanna, AVSM VSM, Director General (aircraft), he mentioned that in recent years, numerous equipment procurement contracts of the IAF have been finalised. He stated that India was the eighth largest defence spender in the year 2013, with the IAF receiving a hiked share. This has led to increased opportunities in the aerospace sector for industry, especially for private industry, in the fields of development, production and sustainment support for the aerospace sector. He emphasised the need to combine the capabilities of the public and private sectors for achieving self-reliance in defence production. He also talked of the

existing challenges such as limited access to defence technologies, especially in areas of advanced avionics, metallurgy, composite materials and armament systems which are closely guarded by foreign OEMs. However, recent acquisitions by Indian companies have brought in know-how that was otherwise not accessible to them. He stated that the aerospace industry is capital intensive as in the initial high growth phase, capital needs to be injected rapidly. Hence, the industry needs to be prepared for long gestation programmes, stringent airworthiness certifications and quality requirements.

Shri Gurpal Singh, principal advisor, CII, mentioned the need for tax holidays, relaxing FDI regulations and an industry friendly export and import regime. He also emphasised on the need for R&D funds being made available to the private sector. He mentioned the importance of developing certifications for airworthiness of ordnance. He concluded that co-development and cooperation should be the keywords for the aerospace sector and that there was a strong need to develop capacity building for India to emerge as an aerospace and defence export hub in the future.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Salient recommendations made during the two-day seminar are as follows:

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the aerospace sector could be increased but determined on a case by case basis.
- Emphasis should be on technology development rather than buying technology. In this regard, the government should invest, encourage, and support R&D in the defence sector.
- There should be greater investment in R&D by the industry, both public and private. The government should financially support R&D in the aerospace sector by the private industry.
- The government should encourage joint ventures and co-development between the foreign OEMs and Indian private industry. In this regard, the proposal to deal with the transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force through a joint venture between a foreign OEM and a private sector company in India is a step in the right direction.
- The government should offer tax incentives.

- The government should encourage export in defence products through favourable policies.
- Efforts should be made to make Indian MSMEs part of the global supply chain in the aerospace sector as it will help in acquiring technologies and skills.
- The hurdles faced by the MSMEs in India in the aerospace sector are high capital cost, low volumes, and long gestation period of projects. The MSMEs need to be supported financially. Further, an enabling policy environment should be created by the government.
- Nomination of a production agency in defence procurement should be done away with.
- Transfer of offset credits should be permitted in the DPP.
- A national level strategy is required for creating the ecosystem for the aerospace industry. In this regard, establishing an Aerospace Commission at the national level should be considered.
- The aerospace sector is not a preferred field of study at the university level. There is a gap in the university curriculum and the requirements of the aerospace industry. The government should initiate measures to counter this.
- The government should leverage the big buyer status in the aerospace sector to its advantage. Policies need to be framed accordingly and the role of the government thereafter should be restricted to implementation of policies.

# INDIA'S STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT: APPLICATION OF GRAND STRATEGY

PRATEEK KAPIL

In a nutshell, grand strategy is fundamentally a choice; it reflects a preference for a future state or condition in the strategic environment. Therefore, strategy at the state level can be defined as the art and science of developing and using the political, economic, socio-psychological and military power of the state to create strategic effects that protect or advance national interests in the environment in accordance with policy guidance. Strategy seeks synergy and symmetry of objectives, concepts, and resources to increase the probabilities and favourable consequences of policy success and to lessen the chances of policy failure.

Strategy applies in the realm of the strategic environment, which is characterised by greater or less degrees of chaotic behaviour and complexity – VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity). The environment can be addressed at different levels of strategy. It has an inherent internal-external dialectic – a duality that produces successive interactions and results in multi-ordered effects. The international environment and domestic environment are representative of this dialectic. Rational and irrational choice,

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Prateek Kapil is a Research Associate at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

chance and probability, competitors, allies, other actors, technology, geography, and nature are all part of the strategic paradigm.

### **PREMISES OF STRATEGY**

- Strategy is proactive and anticipatory, but not predictive. It is clear on facts, assumptions and possibilities.
- Strategy is subordinate to policy. Political purpose dominates all levels of strategy. Policy ensures that strategy pursues appropriate aims in an acceptable manner. In short, strategy pursues appropriate aims, and strategy informs policy of the art of the possible.
- Strategy must be consistent with the particular context and the strategic environment's nature.
- Strategy maintains a holistic perspective.
- Strategy creates a security dilemma for the strategist and other actors. The strategist must determine if the end-state justifies the risks of initiating action, and other actors must decide whether to act and in what manner.
- Strategy is an inherently human enterprise. It is more than an intellectual consideration of objective factors. The role of belief systems and the cultural perceptions of all actors are important in strategy's formulation
- Friction is an inherent part of strategy. It is the summation of all the differences in how strategy is supposed to work versus how it actually unfolds when implemented.
- Strategy is hierarchical. Just as strategy is subordinate to policy, lower levels of strategy and planning are subordinate to higher levels of strategy. The hierarchical nature of strategy facilitates the span of control.
- Strategy has a symbiotic relationship with time.
- Efficiency is subordinate to effectiveness in strategy.
- The purpose of the strategic appraisal process is to clarify and express interests with specificity; determine the intensity of interests; evaluate information, assumptions, and inferences to identify what is important to those interests; determine all strategic factors; and choose key strategic factors on which to base a strategy.

- Finally, strategy is expressed in terms of ends (what, using verbs), ways (how) and means (preferably quantifiable resources).
- The validity of any strategy can be tested by checking the inherent logic of suitability, feasibility and acceptability. The strategist may also find that the answer to one or more of these questions is somewhat nuanced and ambiguous.
- Another part of validating the strategy is the assessment of the probable consequences of success and failure. Risk may not be avoided but it can be accounted for.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Secretary, Ranjan Mathai, falling short of stating it explicitly, describes India's grand strategy as the strategy of comprehensive national transformation.<sup>2</sup> The foreign policy and national security apparatus of India has to facilitate this comprehensive national transformation of the country at large. The desired end-state of this transformation includes economic and human development in the country, centred around 10 odd megacities, thousands of 1<sup>st</sup> tier cities and towns and a sustainably viable rural agricultural economy; homogeneity of the modern state with insistence on democracy, education, science, civil liberties, rule of law and freedom of expression across the territory is paramount without trespassing on the religious, cultural, historical and linguistic sensitivities of the citizens; preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Indian state with effective defence modernisation without destabilising the guns vs butter equilibrium. This can be achieved by ceding certain powers of military strategy, defence acquisition and organisation directly to the armed forces, while retaining civilian control over funding, and political control. And having a decentralised Indian state with a primary role for private enterprises in economics and for local governance and states in politics which further has to be overseen by a supportive central government retaining the responsibility of regulation, facilitation and provision of public goods like health, security, social security, infrastructure and foreign affairs.

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1. Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (2008), Ch10, pp. 150-157.

2. Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai, IRIIS-IAIS Seminar, IIC, December 2012.

Internationally, the operative phrase for India has often been strategic autonomy and strategic restraint. It is difficult to believe that a middle power with a large number of domestic pulls and pressures can afford the luxury of true strategic autonomy. Strategic autonomy is a misnomer because all sovereign nations are looking for strategic autonomy. That, in fact, is a basic corollary of sovereignty. It is the exercise of that autonomy to make clear strategic choices that is functionally important. India is looking to become a pole in the international system, with economic power the driver, in the next half century. This has to be backed by open economic policies of free trade and a stable regional security environment, communication channels and international transport infrastructure. This requires India to engage proactively with the international institutions which formulate the rules of the international system, for example, the Group of 20 (G20), World Trade Organisation (WTO), Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and UN Security Council (UNSC). India cannot afford to work with the pre-set rules; it has to look to influence them in its favour and to its advantage. Although a certain degree of flexibility is indispensable, this process involves making clear choices (of allies, adversaries and interlocutors), cutting deals, and immense give and take. It also involves having a clear idea of the ends, ways and means. The Doha dialogue and the stalemate on agricultural subsidies and market access provide good examples. It is a case of the Indian government successfully influencing the international system in its favour with a clear understanding of ends (free and fair market competition), means (multilateral negotiation) and ways (invoking the unfair subsidies to farmers in developed rural economies)

Militarily, India is involved in asymmetric conflict with two traditional nuclear adversaries: Pakistan and China. The Indian response to repeated Pakistani aggression and support of terrorism has been calibrated and restrained despite Pakistan continuously supporting proxies under the nuclear threshold. Possible Indian responses to this Pakistani strategy could be speeding up, first and foremost, as many judicial proceedings as realistically possible pertaining to excesses in Kashmir, more effective ways of crowd

control and providing designated areas in the state for peaceful protest, a focussed aggressive public relations strategy highlighting the Indian state's commitment to the Kashmiri economy, culture and administrative independence of the state government and political actors, mobilising international pressure with increased insistence on the US and China establishing the culpability of Pakistani backed terrorism, the long-term objective of recognising the Line of Control (LoC) as the international border, increased bilateral trade and intelligence services' interaction, all of which are potential game changers. Strategising for Kargil-like localised conflicts under the nuclear threshold has to be initiated in preparation for a response to a Mumbai-like aggression again. It is my opinion that the threat of nuclear escalation has been overstated, but limited conflict in the event of extreme provocation should not be ruled out, at least for effective signalling and posturing.

The relationship with China is more nuanced with a variety of factors affecting the desired outcomes. China is a continental power and possibly a global power. The relationship has come to be defined by increased economic cooperation. The litmus test for this economic bonhomie has to be the three issues of trade imbalance, increased Chinese investments in the Indian economy and Chinese support in reform of the IMF and World Bank along with cooperation in WTO and climate change negotiations. The cooperative relationship can turn on its head on the issues of different political and legal systems, cultural and linguistic barriers and Indian expansion in the East Asian region. Although the Prime Minister (PM) has been categorical in saying that there is enough space for both countries to coexist, tangible steps have to be taken by both countries to assuage each other's insecurities. India's strengths in relation to China are a more representative political system, a growing knowledge economy supplemented by a greater diffusion of the English language, a demographic dividend conditional on whether India can train them into a competent human resource (this would require greater investment in education and job creation, particularly in manufacturing and infrastructure). China, on the other hand, is an economic behemoth, with great nationalist zeal and labour work ethic; it is ahead on all counts of human development, barring certain

political rights and civil liberties, and it has succeeded in executing the "Beijing consensus" model which Deng Xiaoping called socialism with Chinese characteristics but which outsiders would assert is just capitalism with an efficient public sector and better state regulation. The role of the state in China is an evolving process which has to be closely monitored.

Militarily, the Chinese possess a tangible asymmetric advantage over India. It is pertinent to note that China has resolved most of its boundary disputes barring the one with India. This reluctance, although strategically obvious, underlines the bottom line in China's view of its geopolitical relationship with India. The commitment to border talks and status quo has to be commended on both sides but the stalemate is a reflection of the inherent inevitability of mistrust between two giant neighbouring sovereigns in the absence of any institutionalisation of the peace dividend. In a lot of ways, the situation is similar to the relationship France and Germany shared in pre-war Europe (barring the possibility of frequent conflicts owing to the advent of the nuclear age) and we all know what it took to resolve that. Let's hope both nations can learn from that episode of history and leapfrog conflict directly to institutionalisation of peace. Failing that, India needs to follow a strategy of classical balance of power. That is where the Indo-US relationship comes in. A formal American alliance is critical to India's security in the coming century. At this point, I want to explain why I choose to make such a general sweeping statement. It is important to note that India, although a nuclear power with competent armed forces, is primarily a developing country with monumental socio-economic problems. Currently, the Indian state is reluctant to make overt alliances because it wants to project strategic autonomy and emphasise flexibility. This strategy, seemingly prudent, is restrictive in reality. India is at a stage of evolution where it needs a socio-economic transformation, with daylight separating development and independent power projection as priorities. Having said that, increased development and formal alliances will provide alternative ways of power projection in the near future; they will also be an essential investment to achieve a long-term end state of independent power projection. In the coming few decades, India needs to delegate or outsource some of its security posturing and problems

to a power comparable to that of China. There is only one nation in the international system which can do this right now: the United States of America. This is not to say that the alliance has a simple mono-causal genesis: after all, the US-China themselves are inter-connected and calibrating their relationship in complex ways with influential voices like Henry Kissinger even calling for a Pacific community similar to that of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) (inclusive of China). In this scenario, what an Indo-US alliance will achieve is that it will subsume into a US-China relationship with the US clearly capable of negotiating with the continental giant on an equal and fair footing. This is not an undesirable outcome for India, at least for the next few decades. India needs this alliance to focus on the goals of development, investment, entry into the UNSC and other influential multilateral regimes, privatisation, common values of democracy, rule of law, state-Centre relations and human development. It will form a buffer for India in dealing with its primary security issues with the US taking the lead in organising the security architecture for the region. American primacy is not necessarily a bad thing for India in a short run because a lot of political and normative ground work has gone into the strategic relationship already. The recurring talk of stepping up the relationship has to be finally put into action.

Edward Luttwak says that strategy does not follow a simple linear logic and, in fact, follows a paradoxical one because all strategy should account for how the adversary, environment and other actors will react to it. The first question India needs to ask itself is whether it is happy with the status quo, including Chinese backing of a three-headed regime in Pakistan with a clear strategy of proxy war against India; Chinese dismissiveness of traditional criteria of boundary dispute resolution like geographic barriers and determinants, continuity and legitimacy of legal documents, inheritance of territory and treaty obligations from colonial masters unless mutually renegotiated – a principle which has been followed by independent nations all over the world; Pakistan's blocking of the formation of a South Asian trade block, with Afghanistan as a stable credible actor; and China's single-minded capacity building which can be used either assertively or to reform China from within into a responsible balancer in the international system . If the answer is

yes, then India can surely continue its present policies of “strategic autonomy” and hope that the contingencies of history will eventually be favourable to its case. If the answer, however is no, it remains to be questioned how the environment and the other actors will react to an Indian strategy of an alliance with the United States.

Firstly, the credibility and conditionality of the US assurance will be questioned; herein the onus lies on both India and the US to institutionalise their alliance in tangible incremental steps. Consequently, India's rise as a responsible nuclear democratic power is an incentive for the US to reciprocate. The litmus test of the Indo-US relationship is India's foregoing some strategic autonomy and US support of India in terms of technology, capital and expertise. A stronger American control and assertiveness over Pakistan on the issue of terrorism and Afghanistan is critical to this relationship. These two issues can be exact issue areas where the US can induce India into a stronger bilateral partnership. Positive results on these issues will also make it very difficult for India to resist a stronger bilateral relationship with the US. The *quid pro quo* may involve India having to be clearer on issues of democracy promotion, well regulated free market domestic reforms and Indian support to the American diplomatic tangles in West Asia. The principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) remains an irritant but Indian policy can be case-specific in this case. Over time, a greater American military involvement in the subcontinent could be a game changer after enough trust has been built in the relationship. India's military incentive lies in the greater American and its allied expertise in disruptive and game changing war technologies and home security best practices. These technologies will be a boost to the Indian Navy and Air Force – they are critical to any asymmetric warfare, with the Indian Army to be used mainly in special operations and resilient defensive positions. The full potential of the army as an offensive ground force should be used only as a last resort in exceptional circumstances. Western competence in these areas is to be thoroughly adopted with suitable adjustments for Indian realities. If India wants to sincerely pursue the Look East strategy, it may also not be a far-fetched geopolitical idea to link the geographical space of the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

The Chinese and Pakistani reactions to such an Indian strategy of an alliance with America are consequential to any calculation. The Pakistani reaction might follow a similar pattern in intensifying the political and economic partnership with the Chinese, especially in the sensitive areas of Kashmir, Aksai Chin and the disputed India-China border. Pakistan will also try to disrupt the South Asia project and try to divert the greater American involvement in the region to spill over to the issue of Kashmir. America might use the strategic partnership with India to influence the Indian stand on the Kashmir issue. However, this may not necessarily make it incumbent on India to demonstrate discomfort or displeasure. As confidently asserted by the PM to President Obama on the latter's visit, India does not shy away from the K word. The Indian redline is simply that it can only be achieved by a peaceful bilateral dialogue after a legal institutional dismantling of the cross-border terrorist network preceded by speedy conviction in a handful of ongoing terrorism cases. The question of nuclear escalation is an overstated one in my opinion because there is still the possibility of a limited localised conflict under the nuclear threshold (like it happened in Kargil) and an open pre-declaration of such a doctrine will strip the adversary of the legal, moral and operational justification for initiating such an escalation in the event of hostilities. It is often said that unimaginable destruction has often been closely prevented in South Asia due to the Indian restraint. But the question that beckons is: can a nation-state legitimised on the basis of the prime responsibility of securing its citizens perpetually absorb terrorist attacks of such nature? Shouldn't there be cases where Pakistan shows restraint even in the event of a localised Indian military retaliation to a terrorist attack with demonstrable evidence of Pakistani patronage? Turning to the positive aspects of the Indo-Pak dynamic, the wild card in the relationship comprises people-to-people relationships. This aspect of the relationship has always been a wild card. The Indian and Pakistani people are the same in so many ways except for the one central dispute originating from religion. The inherent difficulty of religious debates is that they seldom have linear rational solutions. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a classic example of how no amount of conflict negotiation and political creativity can ever result in a solution acceptable to all the

parties. The only possible solution is tolerance and stable coexistence with a legally signed treaty of well-defined rules of engagement. This, in turn, can only be achieved by an inter-faith dialogue backed by a committed government-to-government action. In fact, this state of stable coexistence has to be reinforced by external international actors and multilateral organisations.

The Chinese reaction to the strategy of the Indo-American alliance is of paramount importance. An Indo-US alliance on the face of it might directly threaten China. But a closer look will reveal that it will put India in the shadow of the United States. China would stop looking at India as a direct adversary but almost as a “corollary power” (if you allow me the liberty of coining this term) of the United States. In my opinion, this will lead to the Sino-Indian relations being defined more by the larger systemic Sino-US relations. That eventuality is a preferable end-state for India, because the US-China relationship is not directly antagonistic. Their economies are fundamentally inter-linked, and with China holding large amounts of US government securities, major American international corporations have outsourced their manufacturing to China. The US has been extremely cautious about Taiwan which, in turn, has been integrated economically with the Mainland with huge investment linkages, China has shown signs of agreeing to the One China-Two Systems principle. Also, strategically, China will stick to the 24-character strategy of Deng Xiaoping and not take radical steps in the near future, at least till certain goals of national transformation are tangibly achieved. An Indo-US alliance should be looked as a necessary reinforcement to prolong this state of affairs. With respect to the success and nuances of this strategy, it is very important that India exercises extreme caution on the Tibet issue. From an Indian point of view, socio-economically nothing will benefit the Tibetans more than being part of a huge efficient economy such as China and the onus lies on China to provide the acceptable political (the exact nature of the political system depends on the Tibetan-Chinese bilateral negotiations) and cultural environment for the return of the refugees. India, on its part, can only provide asylum without a temporal deadline and nudge both parties to conduct periodic negotiations. Any adventure on the part of the Indians on this sensitive Chinese nerve might provoke a disproportionate Chinese

reaction, undermining the Indian standing and power credentials in the region. The Indians should go so far as making the right noises for the Chinese ears on this issue. Nuance on this issue can enable India to effect more concrete Chinese accommodation on its core strategic objectives of Kashmir, Tawang and the like.

The Chinese strategy to unsettle this Indo-US strategy might include penalising trade ties with India, exerting political pressure on India and, most importantly, increasing incursions on the border issue. It is important that India holds its nerve in these circumstances and the Indian military response is assertive yet nimble-footed. It has to have a mixture of *quid pro quo* land grabs which can be later negotiated for land swaps. This would be prudent only in case China initiates speculative incursions for the precise objective of land grabbing. As K. Subramanyam<sup>3</sup> puts it and this is especially true for the Sino-Indian military relationship, in a nuclear era, the role of the military would become, essentially, preventing wars from breaking out through appropriate weapons acquisitions, force deployment patterns, the development of infrastructure, military exercises, and defence diplomacy. This is a far more demanding task than peace-time operations in a pre-nuclear age. The American alliance is a critical bulwark for India to execute this with credibility and risk-averseness. The domestic weaknesses of the Pakistani and Chinese state systems provide an inherent internal restraint on the two countries to react adventurously. The significance of this last line cannot be emphasised enough.

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3. K. Subrahmanyam, "India's Strategic Challenges", *Indian Express*, February 4, 2012.



# THE TIBET ISSUE UNDER CHINA'S NEW LEADERSHIP: CHANGES AND CONTINUITIES

TSEYANG LHAMO

## THE CURRENT NATURE OF THE TIBET ISSUE AND CHINA'S LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

The only substantial mechanism paving the way towards an amicable solution to the ongoing Tibet issue has been the direct dialogue held between the representative of the Dalai Lama and the representative of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The dialogue initially commenced in the year 1979, and the recently held round of talks in 2010 resulted in no agreement or common ground between the two sides. The dialogue was carried forward amid serious doubts and scepticism over China's true intention towards seeking a feasible solution to the Tibet issue. Recently, two Tibetan envoys who participated in the negotiation with China resigned due to the failure of the dialogue to germinate any concrete solution, expressing their frustration over the lack of positive response from Beijing amid the ongoing exacerbation of the situation in Tibet, simultaneously expressing their helplessness as Beijing was not reciprocating any of the concessions and sacrifices made by their side. However, keeping the hopes alive, the Tibetan government-in-

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Tseyang Lhamo is a Research Associate at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

exile, known as the Central Tibetan Administration, signalled that it is ready to engage in a meaningful dialogue, anywhere and at any time.

The situation in Tibet has become alarming after the 2008 uprising in the Tibetan inhabited areas, followed by an unprecedented form of protest of self-immolations, seriously galvanised the situation. The continuing vicious cycle of repression and resentment in Tibet is manifested in the increasing number of Tibetans setting themselves on fire. Since 2009, 107 Tibetans have undergone self-immolation including 28 in November 2012 just before and during the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Sadly, 90 of them died. Such a high toll is perhaps unprecedented in recent world history. Though most of the self-immolators were monks, their ranks include the full spectrum of Tibetans – nomads, farmers and students – from all three Tibetan regions of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo, including the capital city of Lhasa.<sup>1</sup> These cases of self-immolation, even in Nepal and India, clearly highlight Beijing's failed policy in Tibet, and also question the legitimacy of the PRC's rule over Tibet.

On November 2012, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) convened the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress to mark its once in a decade leadership transition. The Communist Party Politburo's Standing Committee was reduced in number from nine to seven. The former President Jiang Zemin, although 86 years old, continues to wield considerable influence as his followers dominate the current Standing Committee. Its implications in terms of policy trends and directions may be difficult to point out now but it suggests that the trajectory of economic reform associated with a form of state capitalism is likely to continue. Unlike his predecessor Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao handed over the positions of both Party general secretary and chairman of the Central Military Commission to Xi Jinping.

The consequences and significance of the leadership change in China are historic. The regime change has marked for the first time that China chose a new leader after achieving incontestable status as the second largest economy in the world. Under the new leadership,

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1. The statement of the Tibetan government on the 54<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tibetan national uprising day held on March 10, 2013, at <http://tibet.net/2013/03/10/statement-of-sikyong-on-54th-tibetan-national-uprising-day/>

China is likely to become the wealthiest nation on the earth and may achieve global political influence comparable to that of the United States. For the global media, this has been for the first time that China's leadership change outranks a US presidential election as the most newsworthy and most watched political event.<sup>2</sup>

The incoming leadership was commonly labelled as the "Fifth Generation Collective Leadership". Xi Jinping became the first among equals, as he was elected general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Xi, 59 is a "princeling" who is the son of a former close comrade of the late Chairman Mao and is a graduate of Qinghua University, where many of China's top leaders have been educated. Li Keqiang, 57, who was elected as vice premier and is a protégé of the outgoing President Hu Jintao, is a graduate of Peking University, with a degree in Law and Economics and he is considered to be a specialist on China's economy. The duo were elected to the helm of affairs amidst significant internal challenges: enormous disparity in wealth and huge disparity between the cities and peripheries, social unrest triggered by many causes, environment degradation (a majority of China's fresh water sources are damaged and China recently became the world's largest carbon dioxide emitter) and corruption, as well as external challenges like the falling demand for Chinese exports, territorial disputes with numerous neighbouring nations like Japan, the Philippines and India, to name a few, and the world's growing suspicion of its military intentions – all of which taken together, potentially hinder China's peaceful rise. To elaborate further, mounting corruption is regarded as a central threat: as the outgoing President Hu Jintao clearly pointed out, corruption, if not handled properly, could prove fatal to the Party, even cause collapse of the Party and the fall of the state. The Bo Xilai incident not only caused irreparable damage to the Party but also highlighted the gravity of this issue.

The domestic challenges to the new leaders are aptly described by Clifton W. Pannell as follows: China has a host of social ills and issues resulting from its earlier policies related to demographic planning, the rural-urban divide and the shift from a socialist to a more market-driven economic strategy as economic reforms were introduced and

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2. P. H. Yu, "What Kind of Leader Will Xi Jinping Be?", *American Foreign Policy Interest: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy*, vol. 34, no. 6, 2012, pp. 295-305.

implemented. This shift reduced support for rural health care and educational opportunity even when economic growth was providing more prosperity, and led to regional imbalances that both reflected, and led to, an increase in inequalities between the interior and coastal locations.<sup>3</sup> Though much has been discussed, debated and analysed about the implications of the leadership transition domestically on China's foreign policy and its relations with nation states of the international community, its implications and prospects for the Tibet issue under the new leadership have remained unexplored and seldom discussed by policy analysts. Hence, this article attempts to analyse the likely hopes and continuities for the Tibet issue under China's new leadership.

### **HOPES OR OPTIMISM FOR THE TIBET ISSUE UNDER CHINA'S NEW LEADERSHIP**

The international community enthusiastically followed the Chinese leadership transition, the consequent election of new leaders and the change in the constitution of the Standing Committee: who would be directly responsible for the policy formulation and the overall functioning of the nation whose international stature has been much elevated and which wields significant influence in the world arena? Considering that China has become a favourite destination to engage with, particularly economically, for a large number of nations, the likely policies of either continuation or change under the new leadership during the span of ten years pertaining to each nation's interests or stakes has been under close watch by the interested entities. Likewise, the Tibetans (referring to the Tibetan government, Tibetans and supporters of Tibet's cause) are no exception, and they too kept China's new leaders under a magnifying glass, subjecting them to strict observation. It is important to note that Xi's father Xi Zhongxun was one among many other liberal minded leaders who believed in meaningful reforms. In an interview with BBC, the Dalai Lama recalled Xi's father as a close friend, who had a liberal view and approach to the ethnic minorities. Some believe that junior Xi may gradually step into the shoes of his father to maintain his family legacy.

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3. Clifton W Pannell, "China's New Leaders: Perspectives on Geographic Trends and Realities", *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, vol. 53, no. 6, 2012, pp. 702-712.

Broadly speaking, China's top leaders holding significant positions can be categorised as hardline ones and relatively liberal or moderate ones in terms of their policies towards the minorities. The outgoing leaders like Hu Jintao fall under the hardline category, sacrificing the minorities' rights for the nation's stability and security, or, in other words, prioritising the nation's stability and security, with strict suppression of the national minorities. However, incidents like the 2008 uprising in Tibet which can be aptly labelled as a national uprising by its spread and intensity, the anti-China protests and frequent disruption of the Beijing Olympic torch relay, and the series of self-immolations in Tibet since 2009, reaching up to 107, as per a Tibetan government source, are clear manifestations of Beijing's unsuccessful hardline policy in dealing with the minorities and the failure on China's part to anticipate the discontent of such magnitude among the Tibetans within, and outside of, the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). On a personal note, irrespective of the 24-hour close monitoring and surveillance by the watchful eyes of the security personnel, the closed circuit television, plenty of spies and informants being infiltrated and the overall repressive environment, coupled with being fully aware of the consequences of their actions, the Tibetans in Tibet regularly resort to protests which requires great courage. This clearly shows the height of discontentment and despair on the protesters' part. Thus, there is a pressing need for Beijing to urgently rethink its policies if stability and security are what China really aspires for.

Whether or not Beijing is aware of the significant lapses in its policy of dealing with the Tibetans, there are some indications which point towards this. One of the open and rare criticisms of Beijing's policy towards Tibet came in an interview of Professor Jin Wei who has specialised in ethnic and religious affairs at the Central Party School, which specifically trains officials for future leadership posts in the Communist Party, in the *Asia Weekly*, published in Hong Kong. Saying that it is a mistake to treat religious and nationalities issues as "political" ones, Jin Wei implied that due care had not been taken by Beijing when she advised that the new leadership "must exercise caution in dealing with Tibet-related work". In a rare assertion, Jin Wei acknowledged that the Dalai Lama is a "key figure in Tibet-

related issues”, adding: “The Dalai Lama is viewed as a ‘Living Buddha’ by six million Tibetan people and how China deals with him affects the feelings of thousands and thousands of Tibetans. We cannot simply treat him as an enemy”. Following her close study of Tibet, Jin Wei acknowledged the importance of both Tibetan Buddhism and the Dalai Lama to the Tibetan people and referred to the need for the Chinese leadership to “untangle religion and politics; and carefully judge the psychological needs of the Tibetan people. The Tibetan people have been influenced by religion for thousands of years, forming a ‘heavily spiritual and light on materialism, heavy on the next life and light on this life’ national identity.” Professor Jin Wei called for restarting talks with the Dalai Lama’s representatives, and even gave a framework for this dialogue, suggesting a discussion on allowing the Dalai Lama to visit Hong Kong or Macau purely in his capacity as a religious leader. Jin Wei also indicated that a visit to Tibet at a later stage should not be ruled out.<sup>4</sup>

Professor Wei’s comments were in huge contrast with the policies held by the Chinese Communist Party, and her comments clearly reflect how she understands the nation’s ethnic minorities in a precise manner, a sort of understanding which is very much lacking in the central government. Her opinions would act as one of the best alternatives to the present failed policy and poor understanding of the minorities. Even though her comments were published in Hong Kong rather than Beijing, one can be sure that her views had surely come to the notice of the Chinese government. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that she expressed these views without any backing. Interestingly, Professor Jin Wei’s views about the benefits of resolving the Tibet issue or its positive impacts over Xinjiang and Taiwan greatly contradict the popular view among Chinese officials that making concessions on Tibet could have an adverse impact on stability as well as territorial integrity and sovereignty. It is vital to point out here that her earlier study of development aid in Tibet attracted attention outside China, as she argued that the government funding to the area had failed to make a contribution to genuine economic growth, saying that many of the programmes failed to

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4. “Beijing Expert: Resume Negotiations to Resolve the Tibet Issue”, *Asia Weekly*, vol. 27, issue 22, 2013.

factor in the cultural contexts and relied on government-oriented measures.<sup>5</sup> Such findings vividly reflect what actually went wrong in the much acclaimed or propagated economic development of Tibet by the Beijing government. She rightly pointed out that Beijing should pay attention to the specific conditions on the ground in Tibet.

A moderate debate on the Tibet policy is going on even if only among scholars and academics. For instance, a group of scholars from different Party organisations who convened for a symposium on ethnic policies in Beijing a couple of years ago, had expressed strong concern about the need for protection of “cultural diversity” in the ethnic policy and raised the issue of “deficiency in trust in minority people in mainstream society” but they did not specifically refer to the Tibet policy and the Dalai Lama.<sup>6</sup>

Recently, there have been some instances which pointed towards China possibly considering a softer approach towards Tibet though no substantial policy shift in the above direction has appeared officially. Discussion about a softer approach to the Dalai Lama in Tsolho, the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai (the Tibetan area of Amdo) emerged on a Chinese website and also from Tibetan sources in the area after three meetings were held in a monastery in Chabcha (Chinese-Gonghe) and the provincial capital of Xining. A draft document presented at the meeting at Xining has been circulated and discussed on Chinese social media networks, including Weibo-micro-blogging websites having nearly 200 million readers. A Tibetan-in-exile who has monitored the online debate, stated that the level and depth of the discussions at the meetings, which seem to have involved officials, are extremely unusual. Another proposal followed a discussion about police presence and strong security at monasteries, linked to patriotic education campaigns. Tibetans at the meeting suggested that monasteries should be allowed to operate without so much scrutiny and management from outside, except in cases of politically ‘unstable’ monasteries. Concerns were expressed by the participants at the meeting about the “ultra-leftist” religious policy imposed since 2008, which has led to “Lamas, masters, monks and nuns having to make unimaginable derogatory statements

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5. “New Challenges to Tibet Policy from Inside China”, at <http://www.tibetpolicy.eu/new-challenges-to-tibet-policy-from-inside-china/>, accessed on September 10, 2013.

6. Ibid.

against the 14<sup>th</sup> incarnation of the Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso.”<sup>7</sup> Chinese authorities in the Tibetan-populated areas of Qinghai and Sichuan are allowing monks to openly venerate the Dalai Lama as a religious leader but not as a “political” figure, according to sources citing official statements introducing the “experimental” new policy. Photos of the Dalai Lama can be displayed and no one is permitted to criticise him by calling him names, putting an end to the denigration of the Dalai Lama.<sup>8</sup> The new approach in Qinghai implies that the experiments or attempts were considered to prevent further Tibetan self-immolations provided that there is a direct correlation between the self-immolations and an intensified campaign against the Dalai Lama in Tibet and strict state control over the Tibetan religion and culture. This has been particularly evident following the imposition of increasingly restrictive measures in the eastern Tibetan areas of Amdo and Kham, where most of the self-immolations have occurred. Virtually all the Tibetans who self-immolated since 2009 had called for the Dalai Lama to be allowed to return home.<sup>9</sup> Thus, completely ruling out favourable policy changes towards Tibet under the new leadership may not be a wise conclusion.

Now taking into consideration other factors, there is a widely held view that the existence of certain identifiable factors within China may involuntarily generate policy changes towards the Tibet issue. To elaborate further, critical events like the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests have served to ingrain the fear of instability, as have high and rising annual levels of (especially rural) unrest on a scale that is simply mind-boggling, with 180,000 officially recorded ‘mass incidents’ reported in 2010 alone. Not only are these incidents rising significantly year on year (from 8,700 in 1994 to 90,000 in 2006) but also given that they are official figures from the Ministry of Public Security, their numbers could be potentially much higher.<sup>10</sup>

Another factor is the impact of advancement in communication technology and the burgeoning media sector: China’s Internet users-

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7. Ibid.

8. “Tibetans Allowed to Revere Dalai Lama,” by *Radio Free Asia*, at <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/CHIN-01-270613.html>

9. “Caution Over Possible Shift in Tibet Policy,” at <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2013/07/caution-over-possible-shift-in-tibet-policy/>, accessed on September 10, 2013.

10. Chris Ogden, “Beyond Succession: China’s Internal Security Challenges,” *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2013, pp. 193-202.

netizens touched 513 million at the beginning of 2012 – twice that of the United States, representing 22.5 percent share of total global users.<sup>11</sup> This factor highlights many new challenges for the Beijing government in terms of restricting dissemination of information in the era of the information revolution, needless to mention the much criticised China's Internet censorship. In addition, a growing number of people in China are turning to Tibetan Buddhism in search of spirituality. Large numbers of Chinese devotees from Mainland China come every year to Dharamsala to learn about the Dalai Lama's teachings and Tibetan Buddhism. For instance, more than 1,000 Mainland Chinese had attended sessions of Buddhist teaching by the Dalai Lama in Bodh Gaya in the year 2011. Additionally, Xi's wife Peng Liyuan, is a Buddhist herself and hosted the first world Buddhist forum in China. These factors combined may push policy changes or build pressure on the government.

### **CONTINUITY IN BEIJING'S POLICY TOWARDS THE TIBET ISSUE**

There is a majority perception that Beijing would most probably stick to its old policy of tackling separatist movements in Tibet and Xinjiang as a law and order issue rather than with meaningful engagement with a dissident leader at the political level. The eight provinces with a majority Muslim and Tibetan population are not represented in the Political Bureau or in the Standing Committee. In China, decision-making means a collective decision of a small group of top level officials who together constitute the leadership of China. The CCP general secretary today is first among equals rather than a paramount leader like Mao Zedong or Deng Xiaoping. Xi Jinping needs to build strong support among his colleagues in the Politburo Standing Committee, the Central Military Commission, the CCP Central Committee and other top level bodies, before initiating major policy changes. On top of that, China's decision-making at the highest level is also consensus-based. Thus, the collective and consensus-based leadership indicates that China's top leader cannot make policy by himself. As a result, the question of how reform minded an individual leader is, doesn't hold much relevance, since he cannot

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11. Ibid.

easily push through reforms on his own. Even if Xi Jinping wanted to bring meaningful changes, he would have to tackle a vast security and government apparatus that has been geared up to deal with the Tibet issue as well as overcoming heavy internal resistance.

According to a report in the Hong Kong newspaper *Ta Kung Pao*, Xi Jinping, in a speech to Tibetan delegates during the National People's Congress held on March 2013, referred to economic development as a prerequisite for stability in Tibet, and, at the same time, emphasised on being constantly vigilant about ethnic problems, sensitive religious issues and sudden waves of Tibet's independence sentiment. He spoke about greater protection for Tibet's culture and religion as well as about supporting economic development.<sup>12</sup>

Analysts have expressed little hope that the incoming leadership will take any bold initiatives on Tibet. Elliot Sperling, an expert on the history of Tibet and Tibetan-Chinese relations at the Indiana University, told *The Diplomat*, "In the short term, the Chinese leadership is unlikely to loosen its harsh policies in Tibet. Especially when there's a leadership change occurring, it is incumbent on the incoming leaders to show strength with regard to what are called China's core interests, one of which is Tibet." China has always strongly opposed any kind of external intervention in its internal affairs. Notably during the past decade, China has become far more assertive, like threatening countries that criticise its human rights records, and issues relating to democracy, and Tibet and Xinjiang, with punitive economic repercussions. The Chinese Communist Party has appointed a new head to the United Front Work Department, the organisation in charge of the Tibet policy. The Tibet policy is under the charge of Ling Jihua, a protégé of Hu Jintao. Under Hu, China's approach towards Tibet was overwhelmingly security oriented toward including stability and pressurising other nations not to engage with the Dalai Lama.

## CONCLUSION

The prospects for the Tibet issue under the new leadership revolve around two not so strictly polarised opinions: policy continuation

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12. Talk by Mr. Claude Arpi on "New Leadership and the Tibet Question" held at IDSA, at <http://idsa.in/event/TalkbyMrClaudeArpi%20>

or policy change. Though both perceptions sound logical and hold equal weightage, the author personally envisages, even at the risk of sounding too optimistic, a policy change with regard to the Tibet issue, putting forward the aggravating situation in Tibet and the stalled nature of the Beijing-Dalai Lama dialogue as the rationale behind such a conclusion. In the light of the wave of self-immolations taking place in different parts of Tibet, there is the emergence of the underlying fact that China's current Tibet policy of economic development, with continued political repression, is not working or, in other words, the government cannot claim a legitimacy base on sheer economic development in the absence of political, social and cultural rights, and the new, incoming leaders need to realise the urgency of the situation and initiate meaningful reforms to prevent further deterioration. With new leaders assuming power, it is an opportune moment for China. However, how soon the policy change will be initiated and the nature and magnitude of the change, would be something to wait and watch for.

Additionally, some sources say that there are suggestions that Xi Jinping has set up an internal team to review the Tibet policy, and the possibility of a change in policy cannot be ruled out. One should also consider that nowadays, the Chinese people, particularly the intellectuals and the younger generation, are more aware of the Tibetan situation, and, many of them have courageously called for meaningful engagement with the Dalai Lama, having realised that China's attitude towards the issue to Tibet has a direct bearing on China's domestic stability and international standing.

China, now with a much elevated international status, should make sincere efforts on its part to settle the Tibet issue, as doing so would benefit both contesting parties. The conventional view among Chinese officials is that the demise of the present Dalai Lama would automatically solve the Tibet issue; that they have a tight grip over Tibet and in all likelihood, they would appoint the next reincarnation. They believe that they hold all the cards, but they seem to have clearly not gauged that the demise of the Dalai Lama, before there is any agreement over the Tibet issue, may actually prove detrimental for China. The Dalai Lama is revered by the Tibetans in Tibet as well as outside Tibet. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the Dalai

Lama's word is treated as gospel truth by all Tibetans. He is not only a Nobel Laureate and a well-known international figure but also has the standing of a colossus. Hence, finding a sustainable and realistic political solution to the issue of Tibet during the Dalai Lama's lifetime would enhance China's stature in the international arena and would assist in materialising China's ambition of becoming a world leader with the attached legitimacy as a consequence of its ability to behave responsibly with regard to the Tibet issue.

# RISE OF CHINA AND ITS FOREIGN POLICY

RAJ MONGIA

## INTRODUCTION

The vast majority of Indians is worried about China's rise and considers it a security threat, an opinion poll has revealed, with the results exposing a serious trust deficit between the Asian giants. The survey, conducted by the Lowy Institute for International Policy and the Australia India Institute, found that 83 per cent of Indians considered China a security threat. A possible war with China was rated a "big threat" by almost three in four respondents. Reasons included China's possession of nuclear weapons, competition for resources, and border disputes. Even though China is now India's largest trading partner, just 31 per cent of Indians agreed that China's rise had been good for India.<sup>1</sup>

Both India and China, two of the most populous countries in the world, have been moving up the ladder, militarily, economically, and politically, but each has its own priorities, strategies, successes, and failures. These have been discussed and continue to be discussed in detail on several platforms. Today, these two countries are masters of their own fate and are well on their way to take their rightful place

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**Wing Commander Raj Mongia** is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. <http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/1512978/chinas-rise-fuels-mistrust-among-many-indians/>, accessed on July 15, 2013.

as leading economic powers in the international comity of nations. China is undoubtedly far ahead of India in the development story. China was able to rise again, reversing the 500 years of economic decline. This has been largely due to its cohesion as a society and its hardworking citizens. The government also paid attention to the education and health of its citizens. The new criterion for superpower status is not weapons but the economy as well (as the collapse of the Soviet Union proved) and China is well on its way to reaching that status. The remarkable rise of China in the last three decades has had mixed global reactions. While many countries have welcomed this rise, some other nations, especially some of China's neighbours and even the US, have viewed it with concern, if not consternation. What does this rising China signify for India? How do India's leading companies feel about dealing with China on trade and technology issues? How much of a threat is China for India, given its none-too-smooth relationship with the former and China's unqualified support to Pakistan in the strategic field. Would the Indian Ocean be the scene of stiff confrontation between India and China? Or is the "China threat" an exaggeration or hype as some would hold?<sup>2</sup>

### **CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY**

China's foreign policy strategies seem to vary depending on where one looks. In Asia, it is the dominant power, driven by its desire to retain that position and balance American influence in the region. Asia is where many key Chinese security, economic and strategic interests are at stake, and Beijing is assertive in protecting them. Outside the region, China's position is rather ambivalent. The global economic crisis has reinforced its envied position as the world's fastest-growing economy and challenger of American power. It is now much more difficult for China's leaders to sustain their rhetoric that China is still merely a developing country focussing on its own domestic issues. While internal stability and security remain a top priority, Beijing has certainly been more confident in its international standing relative to the United States and the European powers. Yet how far it is willing or ready to take that confidence is not immediately clear.

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2. <http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2012/12/18/how-does-india-perceive-chinas-rise/>, accessed on July 20, 2013

As its neighbours increasingly rely on trade relations with it, China has shown growing confidence in flexing its muscles to claim territories it sees as rightfully Chinese. Its hard line against Taiwanese and Tibetan independence shows no signs of weakening, and it has also escalated its sovereign claims to contested waters in the South China Sea and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. In 2010, Beijing drew much criticism for supporting an embargo on rare earths against Japan after a Chinese fishing boat operating in Japanese waters collided with a Japanese Coast Guard vessels. Such territorial aggression intensified in June 2011, when Vietnam expressed outrage that its fishermen and oil exploration vessels were being harassed and attacked by Chinese patrol vessels in the disputed waters in the South China Sea.

#### *Protecting Regional Interests*

China has key energy, security and strategic interests in Asia: from claims to Taiwan, Tibet and other maritime territory in the South China Sea, to preserving North Korea as a buffer against American power in the region, and securing energy resources in Central Asia. At the same time, its ties with many neighbours remain strongly driven by historical relations—based on both friendships and grievances. The relationship with Japan remains fragile, and resentment against the Japanese invasion of China during World War II is still evident across many Chinese online forums. Meanwhile, friendly relations with some of Asia's regimes often combine with Beijing's national interests to clash with the kind of behaviour the Western powers expect China to display as a 'responsible stakeholder'.

Beijing's historical friendship with Myanmar, for example, is as strong a factor in its diplomatic shielding of the country's military junta as Chinese geopolitical interests there. China similarly defended North Korea's aggression when it apparently sank a South Korean vessel in March 2010, killing dozens. Beijing appears to be willing to take pains to retain this Cold War era ally as a bulwark against US military dominance of the region and the rise of Japan's military. North Korea, of course, is also a key trade partner and would present a massive border-security problem should its regime collapse. All these concerns are close to the hearts of Chinese leaders,

even though some in China are proposing working more closely with the United States, Japan and South Korea on strategies regarding the Korean peninsula. To make matters worse, Chinese policies in the region retain a historically hierarchical structure where bilateral relations take precedence over multilateral political arenas such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). For centuries the Chinese saw theirs as the 'Middle Kingdom' at the centre of the world, surrounded by humble tributary states in the region. That elitist world view is still extremely potent, especially with China's current rise after a long period of internal strife.

It would be a mistake, however, to take the view that China is completely ignoring international pressure for it to cooperate on global issues or to improve human rights in the country. Beijing is not deaf to the negative press it receives abroad, but it is also loath to be talked down to and 'lose face'. Memories of more than a century of Western pillaging and bullying are still fresh, and Chinese leaders have deep-seated suspicions about Western moves to pressure it into cooperation. Such actions are often viewed as attempts to undercut its rise, a scepticism that may well be fuelled by growing China-bashing in the United States. If the Nobel Committee's decision to award the Peace Prize to dissident Liu Xiaobo was intended to pressure China into acknowledging its shortcomings in human rights, the plan totally backfired. Beijing responded with a bristling tirade against Liu, the Nobel committee and much of the West, complaining about outsiders who "cling to the Cold War or even colonial mentality".

### *Policy-Makers and Stakeholders*

China's single-party rule and the complex diffusion of power between the state and Party mean that its politics lacks the transparency of Western democracies and remains difficult to scrutinise from the outside. It is nonetheless important to note that although the top body of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Politburo Standing Committee, remains the country's decision-making hub, a number of other official and non-official entities are increasingly influencing and shaping policy. The People's Liberation Army (PLA), for example, appears to be an increasingly independent and influential entity; its actions and strategies are sometimes not totally aligned with

the central government's goals, often resulting in confusing foreign policy signals. As a key political institution, the PLA is controlled by the party's Central Military Commission (CMC) but the extent to which the central leadership coordinates with the PLA's decision-making process is not at all clear. In early 2011, the PLA tested its new stealth fighter plane just as the Sino-US military-to-military relationship resumed, striking an uncomfortably confrontational note during US Defence Secretary Robert Gates' visit. The PLA has also not shown enthusiasm for strengthening military ties with the United States — in contrast to the high spirits on both sides for President Hu Jintao's state visit to Washington in January 2011. There have been similar incidents in recent years. In January 2007, China caused international alarm and drew condemnation when it carried out a surprise anti-satellite missile test; both the apparent ignorance of the Foreign Ministry about the test and the unexplained delay in the official reaction led to speculation that the civilian leaders were not fully apprised of the military's plans.

Foreign policy-makers should be aware of the networks of relationships among various arms of the CCP, the State Council and the PLA, as well as marginal players such as an increasingly vocal body of 'netizens', academics and researchers, and businesses with large stakes overseas. All these groups have their own, often competing, views on matters such as the Sino-US relationship, Japan, and how much China should cooperate within the framework of the United Nations on human rights and the sanctioning of rogue regimes such as North Korea and Iran. Some researchers believe that newly influential foreign policy actors are pursuing a 'less submissive' Chinese approach, taking the view that China should more actively defend its interests internationally, although that stance still faces some resistance from conservative leaders who believe that China should avoid claims to international leadership. While foreign observers may not be able to fully penetrate the network of Chinese policy-makers, it is crucial to be aware of such pluralism and evaluate the potential interests of different groups.

### **CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN TRANSITION**

China's foreign policy is driven by a domestic agenda. The Chinese

leadership continues to focus on the economic and political transformation of the country. The Chinese foreign policy aims to secure the country's economic development and territorial integrity. In addition, the Chinese Communist Party hopes to strengthen its legitimacy through a sophisticated foreign policy, putting China on the world stage as an influential player, and creating stability for the nation. Political developments contradicting or hampering these goals are perceived as threats. In this sense, the North Korean nuclear brinkmanship is a headache to China's foreign policy. Traditional balance of power politics continues to influence the foreign and security policy thought of many decision-makers, because sovereignty and territorial integrity have to be guarded. This line of thinking is most clearly seen in the organisation of Chinese foreign policy around the concept of the so-called multipolar world. Because of the unease with the supremacy of the last remaining superpower, especially after the American-led war in Iraq, many Chinese foreign policy thinkers hope that other poles like Europe or China itself will counter-balance the hegemon. But this concept is not put into political action. In fact, China does accept the supremacy of the US, because good relations with Washington have strategic value for the general transformation process. The deadlocked conflict across the Taiwan Strait is all about sovereignty and legitimacy. Because of the increasing militarisation of cross-strait relations and mutual exclusive claims by both sides, the conflict poses a dangerous threat to peace and stability in Asia. However, this conflict could be defused with patience and good statesmanship because of the cultural nexus and the strong economic integration of both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

September 11, 2001, highlighted globalised terrorism as a threat in China as well. China joined the global fight against terrorism and utilised the opportunity to crack down on local separatists in the autonomous region of Xinjiang. Generally speaking, China stresses on the importance of addressing the root causes of terrorism rather than fighting it solely via military means. Lately, China has become sensitive to the proliferation of nuclear weapons as a threat to its own security and would possibly support a more effective global regime of arms control in the field of missiles and weapons of mass destruction.

As China has more nuclear-armed neighbours (Russia, India, Pakistan and North Korea) than any other country, this is an important topic.

### *Multilateral Approach*

China supports the multilateral approach which has become part of Chinese foreign policy, although there are many reservations regarding questions on topics that could have an effect on Chinese sovereignty. China backs both the strengthening of international organisations and adherence to international law, taking on increasing responsibility in regional crisis management and the avoidance of violent conflict. The preventive shuttle diplomacy and the multilateral arbitration efforts on China's part in the rising nuclear crisis in North Korea, as well as the country's deployment of troops for technical and medical support in UN peace-securing missions are examples of this policy. Though in the past China concentrated on the development of bilateral relations, the country's leaders now focus on a multilateral approach.

Even the fixation on the last remaining superpower is decreasing. Chinese foreign policy no longer focusses solely on the USA, a practice formerly worked to the bone, but rather takes a pragmatic approach towards Chinese-American relations with the goal of conflict management in mind. At the same time, ties with the European Union (EU) are being fortified. In this spirit, Beijing published a policy paper on the EU for the first time in October 2003. During his visit to Europe in May 2004, the then Prime Minister worked hard to further develop this relationship. Talk about a strategic partnership has entered the political jargon of Beijing and some European capitals. But the concept still needs to be crafted in greater detail. In the future, China could act as an intermediary in diminishing the widening gulf between the industrial and developing countries. In 2003, China took part in the G-8 Summit, though consciously as a developing country. During the world trade round in Cancun in the same year, the G-20 presented itself as an articulate group with the potential to block multilateral trade negotiations if it is decided that the industrialised countries neglect the interests of the developing world. The further development of cooperation among India, China and Brazil, the defining countries of the G-20, is not only going to

shape the multilateral trading system but also the future of global governance in general.

### *Regional Arrangements*

The main themes of Chinese foreign policy are peace and development, which also secure China's own development. A peaceful and stable environment is necessary for China in order to reach its goal as a "modestly well-off society"; the Chinese Foreign Ministry, therefore, strives to build up productive multi- or bilateral relations with countries in the region. Reform-oriented Chinese politicians and their advisors support advanced economic integration and the development of new forms of cooperative security. China presents its economic and political rise as advantageous for all of Asia and hopes to dispel the current fears of its neighbours. The Chinese government is successfully working towards acquiring the reputation of a responsible regional power as well as a motor for growth, supporting among other things, stronger economic integration. In October 2003, China and ASEAN signed a contract on friendship and cooperation, bringing them one big step closer together — the prospect of a free trade zone by 2010 is in sight. Involvement is growing stronger in Central Asia as well, mainly through further development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). This regional organisation, which aside from China and Russia, also handles four Central Asian Republics, has a secretary's office in Beijing with the former Chinese ambassador in Moscow as general secretary. The development of a political infrastructure is financed by Chinese and Russian funds. Tapping into Central Asia's energy resources is part of this strategy. More intensive economic and political cooperation has also been arranged with former friend and rival India, and the remaining border conflicts are settled via negotiation. Relations with Pakistan remain good.

Despite many obstacles, regional economic cooperation has also pushed forward the development of the regional security architecture. Regional cooperation is necessary in confronting security policy challenges; this applies to the struggle against the causes of security risks as well as to warding off serious threats. The regional security architecture in Asia should be understood

not as a fixed institution but rather as a security policy process or the coexistence of several processes. Institutionalisation can be implemented slowly, starting with a security policy dialogue and through confidence-building measures. The outcome of the process leads to a transformation in the relations between countries and simultaneously changes the conditions within countries themselves, as shown in the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and also in the European integration process. The regional security architecture in Asia could also develop in this way. But unlike Europe where the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the European Union (EU) and the OSCE remain the backbone of the security system, Asia does not yet have its own region-wide organisation. There is a notable amount of interest in China vis-a-vis Europe's regional security system as well as its corresponding process. China has already taken up cautious contact with NATO, whose planes bombed the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in 1999, and wishes to initiate a dialogue.

Even if a functioning cooperative or fully collective security system is still lacking, ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation have at least taken the first steps to push this process forward. The planned economic integration of a large part of East Asia is considered an important prerequisite for closer political cooperation. But there are further conditions for an effective cooperative security arrangement: these are that regional norms and rules based on internationally recognised principles must be created and implemented. This is a very difficult step for the Asian countries. Lack of trust and large cultural differences are significant causes of this problem. The complex and conflict-filled relationship between China and Japan is a further hurdle in the path to a cooperative security architecture in Asia. Initiatives and structures that promote adherence to laws should be implemented. Participating nations that have difficulty adhering to, or implementing, the necessary measures should receive support. Tension and problems between countries should be approached in a problem-oriented and pragmatic manner. Additionally, the security needs of all participating nations should be taken into serious consideration.

### **COMMON PERSPECTIVES: INDIA AND CHINA**

Rivalry between the Asian giants should not be exaggerated to the point that it overshadows genuine attempts to manage the relationship between the two countries. According to one school of thought, the main challenge that China poses to India is geographic and incidentally strategic. There is also an alternate view that India has much to learn from China and much to gain from economic cooperation with China to achieve the objective of broad-based development. In the journey towards prosperity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, China should be looked upon as India's partner and both countries should work together to make the transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world as smooth as possible. India must understand China better and cooperate with it in the international fora, and China, on its part, should accept the importance of India in tackling international issues of common interests like global warming and a new global financial architecture. At its present level of strategic strength, India does not have the option of following a hostile and confrontational attitude towards China. It must accept the fact that there are problems between the two countries which can lead to confrontation in the future and should prepare for that day. Meanwhile, cooperation and trade with China are indicated. In the international arena, China could indeed be an ally in the two countries' common interests, like global warming, energy needs, etc. Diplomacy and trade should be the present policy while acquiring strategic strength should be a long-term policy to deal with any future confrontation, if such a contingency arises.<sup>3</sup>

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3. Ibid, accessed on July 22, 2013.

# REGIONAL SECURITY SCAN: INDIA

**MANMOHAN BAHADUR**

South and Southeast Asia are the 'happening' places in world politics. India finds itself in a turbulent region that is a challenge to its government as it endeavours to improve the well-being of its masses. The term 'regional' has to be seen in the context of the aspirations of a proud India and its people who have a rich heritage and whose influence in yesteryears extended a great distance beyond its shores. Thus, as India looks beyond its borders for influence and raw materials to ensure its growth and development, it runs up against the other powers of the region who are also in the fray for similar reasons, most notable amongst them being China. But it is necessary to give a sense of dimension to the term 'regional' in the first place.

Regional, in India's context, can encompass an area enclosed by a circle which extends from the Strait of Hormuz in the west to just beyond Myanmar in the east, and China in the north to Sri Lanka in the south. Expanding the horizon a bit, it could go almost up to Central Africa in the west and reach Japan in the east and from Mongolia in the north extend right up to Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. This classification is important, for if it is the latter, then one is looking at addressing a geographical area that has the strategic objectives of India's neighbour, China, in the so-called 'first island chain' and

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Air Vice Marshal **ManmohanBahadur** is a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

'second island chain.' However, the fact remains that with a long-term view to laying claim to the natural resources of the Antarctic and Arctic regions, India has a permanent base in the former and has become an observer in the Arctic Council of the latter. So, India's canvas to plan for its security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is indeed vast.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has been termed an Asian century as it has the four largest economies of the world: China, Japan, India and some put America also in this grouping due to its all round presence in the area. More than half the world's population resides in this region and it is an area of history's biggest socio-economic changes and associated challenges. Asia has many nuclear weapon states and it has been a region of proven nuclear proliferation. The AfPak region has been christened as the epicentre of global terrorism for very good reason and is also a hub of the narcotics trade that is bedeviling the countries of the region, India included. Most unresolved disputes in the world are in Asia and all long wars since 1945 have taken place around India (Korea in the 1950s, Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s, Afghanistan's invasion by the USSR in 1979 and the seven-year Iraq-Iran conflict took the better part of the 1980s). The 1990s saw the short but sharp Gulf War but the end of the last century and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> witnessed Afghanistan and Iraq embroiled in conflict with the Americans for very different reasons. Asia is also a region through which the energy faultlines of very many developing and developed economies pass, entailing alongwith major issues of security.

It would be appropriate to revisit the ingredients of security as a base before scanning the security environment proper. First, there is sovereignty, in terms of physical security, followed by societal factors which include food, energy, water and internal peace. Internal peace itself has sub-sets of homogeneity (or otherwise) of social structure, religion, economic balance, employment (or unemployment) *et al*, contributing to the overall sense of security felt by the citizens of a state. Technological advancement, or the lack of it, has increasingly become a cog when evaluating the security environment and one cannot but emphasise the absolutely vital importance of cyber security in today's age. Availability of technology has another dimension and that is technological asymmetry; in today's world, technological asymmetry is a death knell for the technologically handicapped nations, and the

advanced countries, through denial regimes, are ensuring that they retain the exclusivity of their progress. The responsibility to protect the Global Commons is slowly but surely assuming an important place in the security dialogue and very soon it could become a handmaiden for the proponents of 'interventionism' whose activism is becoming ominous for the world order and established Westphalian states. When taken as a whole, all these points have a bearing on the strategic autonomy of a state in the present world.

Recent events have underscored the variations in the underpinnings of conflicts in the world. Discord and clashes have taken place on issues of territory, ideology (Communism v/s democracy), economic reasons, religion, governance models (autocratic v/s representational, and the Arab Spring comes to mind as an example) and on human security issues. Power blocs have had an important say in conflicts post World War II. In the Cold War era, besides the two power groupings of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, China maintained its own aspirations by not being part of either group as did India which was a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). But it is a polycentric world today, with the USA being the main power broker, China being a distant second and a large number of smaller powers to complete the picture.

## **CHINA**

In India's attempted power sphere, China looms as a large competitor for reasons ranging from border disputes to economic competition. The first is the territorial issue which seems intractable given the stands taken by the two countries, the latest Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) post the Indian Prime Minister's trip to China in October 2013 notwithstanding. Is the Border Defence Cooperation Agreement (BDCA) signed during the visit the panacea India is looking for? The views on the BDCA are varied but enough OpEds have been written on this, conveying the disparate viewpoints.

It's a cliché that in politics there are no permanent friends. For all its professions of friendship, China is moving in a focussed manner to advance its technological capabilities, and in the bargain, achieving technological asymmetry of an order that should be considered a

security threat to India. Technological asymmetry breeds arrogance and it is in India's interest that this gap not be allowed to widen any further. The two nations are also in an economic competition as they modernise. The bilateral trade is expected to reach US\$ 100 billion by 2015 but the worrying factor is the massive trade deficit that has been built up over the years. The trade deficit in 2008 was US\$ 11.18 billion which increased to US\$ 15.87 billion by 2009 and US\$ 20 billion by 2010. Today, the trade imbalance stands at US\$ 37 billion and is only expected to increase.<sup>1</sup>

As part of its peaceful rise, China has developed strategic ties with most of the nations in India's vicinity through its economic power. While no sovereign power can be denied this right, the pattern has been disconcerting as it gives a clear picture of its attempt to isolate India. China's Defence White Papers are an indication of the direction that it is taking in international affairs. One of its professed intents is that its national defence policy is "defensive in nature." Andrew Scobell, a noted Sinologist, has characterised it as born of its strategic culture of offensive defence.<sup>2</sup> And, for the first time, in the 2004 version, China felt confident of stating that in "local border wars," the type India would likely be engaged in, it would aim for "command of the air".

No discussion on China would be complete without discussing its Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy with respect to the first and second island chains. The development of the DF 21A anti-ship ballistic missile, aimed primarily to counter American sea power that is centred around its carrier battle groups, has forced the US to devise its air-sea battle concept. How does China's A2/AD strategy affect India? India too is in the South China Sea for oil as well as to build its relations with Japan and countries in that region as part of the Look East policy. Though not aimed at China, the policy is sufficiently 'imaginative' to inject an element to keep the Chinese

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1. Sujay Mehdudia, "Widening Trade Deficit with China not Sustainable," at <http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/widening-trade-deficit-with-china-not-sustainable/article5160816.ece>, accessed on November 06, 2013.
  2. Andre Scobell, "Cult of Defense and Great Power Dreams: The Influence of Strategic Culture on China's Relationship with India," in Michael R Chambers, ed., *South Asia in 2020: Future Strategic Balances and Alliances*, Report of the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, November 2002, at [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2002/ssi\\_chambers.pdf](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2002/ssi_chambers.pdf), accessed on November 1, 2013, p. 329.

engaged. Engaged they have been, as evident from the threatening noises that came out in the Chinese press at India's oil exploration off the Vietnamese coast. In the final analysis, India's perceptions about China are influenced by economic considerations, the border dispute, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) transfers to Pakistan, its fast growing cyber warfare capability and its fast developing maritime capability and space prowess. However, the rise of China presents both countries with a historical tryst which depends on how they perceive their rivalry: as a mutual challenge or as a mutual threat.

### PAKISTAN

Pakistan's presence in India's calculations and daily life conversations is omnipresent. The discord is based on territorial disputes, Kashmir and the proxy war that Pakistan is waging, and an almost visceral opposition to India and anything Indian. The numerous peace initiatives like 'Aman ki Aasha' of *The Times of India* and the common Pakistani's love for Indian films will not be able to usher in the desired peace; hoping for that is fallacious, for, as Shekhar Gupta (Editor of the *Indian Express*) once said in a TV interview on the same subject, "If the Iranians love Michael Jackson for his music, it doesn't mean that they love America as a corollary!" The discomfiture of the Pakistani establishment with respect to terrorism is reflected in their confused reaction to the killing of Hakimullah Mehsud, leader of the Pakistani Taliban. Pakistan may be rejoicing internally, as he was their scourge too, but his death has been condemned by them though under the garb of a blow to the peace process that Pakistan was supposedly initiating with the Taliban.<sup>3</sup> So, for India, the message is clear: it can expect no respite from the periodic sub-conventional strikes that take place against its people and establishments. The impending withdrawal of America from Afghanistan in 2014 is a cause for further suspense on how events and politics will play out. While a stable Afghanistan, friendly to India, would be welcome, it is perhaps naïve to expect that Pakistan would accept this scenario to play out in this fashion. The Indo-Pak relationship has been a simmering pot

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3. This reaction has been widely reported in the press. For example, see Tim Craig, "Drone Kills Taliban Chief Hakimullah Mehsud; Pakistan Accuses U.S. of Derailing Peace Talks," November 1, 2013, at <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/11/02/world/asia/pakistan-taliban/>, accessed on November 21, 2013.

of hostilities which can only be solved with statesmanship and firm political handling.

### **SRI LANKA**

India and Sri Lanka have a traditionally friendly relationship which has come under a lot of strain post the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) wipe-out and the ending of the Tamil insurrection. Obviously, the inhibiting factor for India is the Tamil aspect and India's own internal politics. As an example, the Sri Lankan armed forces personnel have been sent back from the training establishments in Tamil Nadu and it is believed that Sri Lankan officers who had come to India's Defence Services Staff College, after their repatriation to Sri Lanka, were sent to the Pakistani Staff College within a week of their return. What a loss, is all one can say. The fallouts of the Indian prime minister's absence at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held at Colombo in November 2013 would be seen in the coming years. There are also the Pakistan and China factors in the Indo-Sri Lanka relationship and India's hesitancy is driving the Sri Lankans to their camp. Whether India's cultural pull can hold the Sri Lankans is a moot point.

### **MYANMAR**

India did some good forward thinking, and despite international criticism, its engagement with the military junta in Myanmar that started in the late 1990s is now paying dividends. For once, India was not week-kneed. In fact, this was acknowledged by a China expert, Dr David Burgess of the US Air Force's (USAF's) Air University, when he came to speak to the faculty at the Centre for Air Power Studies in October 2013. The putting on hold of the China aided Myitsone Dam project in 2010 was a good indication of a partial weaning away of Myanmar from the Chinese. However, as per news reports, efforts are on to restart the work [this was on the sidelines of the 10<sup>th</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) - China Expo held on September 3, 2013 in Nanning, China].<sup>4</sup> Be that as it may, the very fact that the military junta heeded local protests was itself a good sign of a move away from China, as the project is

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4. Zin Linn, "Burma: Will the Myitsone Dam Project Resume?" September 10, 2013, at <http://asiancorrespondent.com/113155/burma-will-myitsone-dam-project-resume/>, accessed November 2, 2013.

basically to provide 90 percent of the energy requirement of Yunan province and is the first of seven such dams on the Irrawaddy in exchange for US\$ 17 billion over 50 years (it would, in the bargain, lay waste the downstream rice producing areas).<sup>5</sup> So much for Chinese economic clout!

### **BANGLADESH**

Indo-Bangladesh relations have had a yo-yo journey, depending on the political party in power there. Presently, the Awami League is in the saddle, but its image of being pro-India may actually cause it serious credibility problems, as seen from the violent protests against the sentencing of the accused in the 1971 genocide trials. The delay by India of the Teesta water accord, once again due to internal politics (opposition from the West Bengal government), and lack of clout on the part of the central government, did India no great good. Support to the northeast insurgents has waned, once again due to a friendly government in Dhaka, but one cannot foretell the future. Illegal migration into the northeast states continues, and is a ticking social time-bomb for India.

### **OTHER NEIGHBOURS**

Hitherto, Nepal had a very cosy relationship with India but for a variety of reasons, this has soured. Bhutan is still pro-India though the recent withdrawal of the fuel subsidy by India created some fissures in the relationship; luckily, better sense prevailed and the fuel subsidy was reinstated; one only hopes that this has not dented the Indian image too much. The island nations of Mauritius, Seychelles and Maldives are important for India and it needs to play its cards well to thwart the Chinese, who have already got what they euphemistically call “support bases” for their ships.

For India, thus, the possible scenarios depend on how China plays its cards (and, of course, how India plays its own). Would China coerce its neighbours and in the process, try and undermine the influence of the Americans or would it be openly assertive? Would issues essential to its stated sovereignty like Taiwan, Tibet and the Uighur militancy force its hand internally, resulting in an external

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5. Ibid.

fallout for its neighbours? All these are questions that India needs to ponder over as it goes about the task of improving its economy.

### **AMERICA'S ROLE**

America has been the security provider in the Gulf area due its dependence on the region for oil. But this is tending to change as there are other issues that would impinge on the amount of interest that the Americans would have in the area. Central to this is the fact that US dependency on Gulf oil will reduce drastically as it exploits its shale oil reserves in the decades to come. It has the second largest shale oil reserves in the world while its shale gas reserves are the fourth largest.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, China and Pakistan also figure high on the list. The melting of the Arctic cap and the opening of the Arctic sea route from China's east coast to Europe, which is 4,000 nautical miles shorter than the traditional routing via the Indian Ocean, will change the geopolitics of the region. With 13 percent of the world's oil reserves and 30 percent of gas, it is a bonanza waiting to be exploited.<sup>7</sup> America is also an Arctic nation, due its state of Alaska and one would expect it to exploit its share too. So, a reduction in American interest in the Gulf would result in a power vacuum, which would be filled by China due its already established outposts as part of its String of Pearls strategy and also born of the need to be the security provider for its oil imports which would be still very large in 2030.

### **GLOBAL THREATS**

A regional scan would be incomplete without a mention of the global threats as these would have a spinoff into the Indian subcontinent also. They can be classified under four broad heads and their sub-parts. First is technology, which is an aid in normal times but would be a threat in case of asymmetry, while cyber threats could cripple a nation. Second, societal challenges in the form of differences in ideology and/or religion and spilling over of intra-state imbalances into other countries would be threats with their own unique dynamics. It needs to be remembered that in July 2013, the Buddhist-

6. See <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-11-12/u-s-nears-energy-independence-by-2035-on-shale-boom-ia-says.html>, accessed on November 26, 2013.

7. Report "Arctic Oil and Gas," at [http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Arctic\\_oil\\_and\\_gas/\\$FILE/Arctic\\_oil\\_and\\_gas.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Arctic_oil_and_gas/$FILE/Arctic_oil_and_gas.pdf), accessed on November 27, 2013.

Rohingya Muslim conflict in Myanmar spilled over into India with bomb blasts at the holy Buddhist site of Bodh Gaya in northern India; the alleged sacrilege of religious books in some corner of the world earlier resulted in turbulence in India too. Third, a new phenomenon in the form of 'international activism' and interventionism in other countries on the basis of 'human security' has reared its head. While interventionism by the so-called 'international community' has taken place in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt and Syria in various overt and covert forms, India should not be smug in the belief that it cannot happen here; India has its own problems and the country better be wise to oppose such interventionism. Stretching this thought further, the Global Commons could also be used to further own interests by the powerful countries that have their own agendas. Lastly, disparity in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or wealth of a country would result in migration of population, as we see from Bangladesh into northeast India, from Southeast Asia towards Australia, as also from Africa to Europe.

In this security environment, what would be the outlook of the major players? Would America engage China or try to contain it? Would it be even possible to contain it, given the momentum its economy has gathered, in which case it might just try to balance it? What about China itself? Would it engage the US and, thus, undermine it? And what about its relations with India? Would it try to engage it as an equal or undermine its standing by hyphenating it with other countries of the region? And what should India's role be? While staying non-aligned, should it engage China, cooperate with the USA and maintain a finely balanced relationship with these two nations as insurance against any possible reversals?

## CONCLUSION

While the Indian national leadership evaluates and tackles the external security environment, there are many daunting challenges in the internal security ambit too. Issues of law and order, economic disparity amongst the masses, unemployment, low literacy levels *et al* have to be addressed, as also the lack of a defence industrial base that strangles India's strategic autonomy. In the final analysis, India would have to ensure comprehensive national development,

self-reliance and maintain credible deterrence by engaging with its neighbours in a relationship of cooperative peace to move forward in its aim of improving the living conditions of its masses.

Something that should make every proud Indian cringe is the cover of *The Economist* in its March 2013 edition – a cat (India) seeing itself as a tiger. What is worse is if the world feels that India is actually a cat but tolerates its view of being a tiger. India has many things to worry about and address concerning its security, and it better do that fast.

# THE ACCESS – ANTI-ACCESS GAME IN EAST ASIA

**ARJUN SUBRAMANIAN P**

The East Asian theatre is emerging as a region where there are frequent military confrontations. The territorial disputes are the pivot of all recent tensions in the region. China, backed by its increasing economic and military might, is turning more assertive in its claims. The disputes might be regional but any military flare-up has few chances of being limited to the regional players. This is because of the security architecture in the region, in which the United States is an important external actor. This is a cause of major concern for China, particularly in the event of a possible non-pacific reunification of Taiwan with the Chinese Mainland or a war with Japan over the island dispute. At present, the US is the only power that could challenge the Chinese military supremacy in the region. Back in the 1996 Taiwan crisis, the US had deployed two of its aircraft carriers as a signal to China of its resolve to maintain the status quo in the region. Ever since, China began to develop an Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy with the sole aim of preventing the US military from intervening in any conflict in the region involving China. This paper looks at the Chinese and US military strategies that are evolving in the region. Specific focus is given to the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) bomber aircraft force which has been modified to fire

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**Arjun Subramanian P** is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

long range Air Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCMs) to threaten the US military bases around China, and the future measures that the PLA might take to deny access to US forces in the region.

For the last couple of decades, China has been developing asymmetric capabilities as part of its A2/AD strategy to challenge the US ability to project power. Its A2/AD capability rests on highly capable land attack ballistic and cruise missiles, aircraft with standoff strike capability, shore-based; ship-based anti-ship cruise missiles; and a large submarine force assisted by improving networked-surveillance – architecture which includes advanced radars, satellites and highly capable air defence systems. Its Anti-Ship Cruise Missiles (ASCMs) are a mix of Russian and indigenously produced (based on the Russian ASCM) missiles. Cruise missiles like the SS-N-22 and SS-N-27 are specifically designed to strike aircraft carriers and other large ships. These missiles have a combination of very high supersonic terminal velocity, ability to perform complex terminal manoeuvres, low trajectory and very high accuracy enabled by terminal active homing sensors which could potentially defeat any ship-borne defences. These potent missiles are fitted in China's destroyers, missile boats and submarines and can even be delivered by air which increases the sanitised area. The Chinese are also developing the Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM) to target aircraft carriers at longer distances.

As a counter to the Chinese A2/AD, the United States military is undertaking various measures to overcome the challenges posed by the Chinese strategy. However, this type of challenge is not new to the United States, as during the Cold War, it faced a similar challenge from the Soviet Union. The United States then adopted a dispersal strategy in dealing with the Soviet challenge. Hence, the US has sufficient experience in dealing with this type of challenge. Now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the challenge remains the same, except that the source of that challenge has geographically shifted a little towards the south. The US armed forces have, since the time of World War II, grown into an expeditionary war-fighting force. Studying the operational strategy adopted by the US in the past wars since World War II, it can be observed that the US primarily depended on its Carrier Battle Groups (CBG) and theatre air bases around the battle theatre to

launch operations.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese A2/AD strategy aims at denying these facilities to the US forces. The Chinese forces would attempt to prevent the CBGs from approaching within striking distance of China and its assets, and also deny the US force access to the land bases around the country.

The US strategy to ensure the ability of its forces to project power and maintain freedom of action in the global commons and contested environments is termed as the Air Sea Battle (ASB) concept. This concept is being implemented in East Asia and it is the military component of the larger US policy of 'pivoting' to Asia. The US is working on a number of technology-based solutions towards implementing the ASB strategy and it seems that particular emphasis is given towards ensuring the freedom of action of CBGs in restricted environments. However, another major challenge is ensuring access to the theatre bases. Towards this, the US is applying the strategy of dispersing its bases around China. This would complicate the Chinese A2/AD by increasing its targets and the requirement of enormous resources to strike these dispersed, but vital targets. This strategy would give an advantage to the US forces to launch strikes from multiple vectors from the scattered bases spread around the Chinese Mainland. This would force the PLA to allocate its resources to various theatres across the war fronts, preventing it from pursuing focussed and concentrated operation in the primary theatres. Overall, the dispersal would reduce the vulnerability of US land-based theatre bases and would possibly thin out the weight of a Chinese attack in any particular front.

### **THE US STRING OF PEARLS**

Presently, the US military has deployed its assets and personnel in bases around China in Japan, Guam, the Philippines, Saipan, South Korea and Australia. It is further expanding the number of military bases and facilities around China. The latest link: a small airstrip on the tiny Pacific island of Saipan. The US Air Force is planning to lease 33 acres of land on the island for the next 50 years to build a "divert

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1. John Stillion and David T. Orletsky, *Airbase Vulnerability to Conventional Cruise-Missile and Ballistic-Missile Attacks; Technology, Scenarios, and US Air Force Responses* (RAND Corporation, 1999).

airfield” on an old World War II air base there.<sup>2</sup> American jets would use the small airstrip in case access to the US super-base at Guam “or other Western Pacific airfields is limited or denied,” according to an air force document on the project.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the site on Saipan, the air force plans to send aircraft on regular deployments to bases ranging from Australia to India as part of its bulked up force in the Pacific. These plans include regular deployments to the Royal Australian Air Force bases at Darwin and Tindal, Changi East air base in Singapore, Korat air base in Thailand, Trivandrum in India, and possibly bases at Cubi Point and Puerto Princesa in the Philippines and airfields in Indonesia and Malaysia, according to a top US Air Force general.<sup>4</sup> And there are plans to enable the US Navy greater access to Australian naval bases.<sup>5</sup>

In 2010, the Pentagon arranged for new or expanded access to facilities in Vietnam, Singapore and northern Australia. Combined with existing bases in Japan and Guam and a treaty granting US troops “invitational” access to the Philippines, the Pentagon has managed to essentially cordon off the Western Pacific. Under that deal, around 1,000 US Marines will rotate through existing Australian facilities in Darwin, on Australia’s northern coast. Paired with the navy’s new high-speed transports, the Darwin Marines could back up Marines stationed in permanent US bases in Japan. Not coincidentally, Japan and Australia have both begun standing up their own, brand new amphibious forces modelled on the US Marines. The US Navy will benefit from increasingly close ties with Vietnam and access to the deep water port at Cam Rahn Bay, which is big enough to accommodate an aircraft carrier.<sup>6</sup> The US Navy is in the process of deploying four Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) in Changi Naval Base,

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2. John Glaser, “The US is Encircling China With Military Bases”, Anti-War Blog, August 22, 2013, at <http://antiwar.com/blog/2013/08/22/the-us-is-encircling-china-with-military-bases/>

3. “US Encircling China with Military Bases: Report”, PressTV.com, August 2013, at <http://www.presstv.com/detail/2013/08/22/319882/us-encircling-china-with-military-bases>

4. Glaser, n.2.

5. Ibid.

6. David Axe, “US Counters Chinese Bases”, *The Diplomat*, November 14, 2011, at <http://thediplomat.com/2011/11/u-s-counters-chinese-bases/>

Singapore<sup>7</sup>. All these developments indicate that there is a clear shift in the US military's focus from the West to the East with an aim to counter the Chinese threat.

### THE CHINESE LIMITATIONS AND OPTIONS

The Chinese have to a great extent improved their anti-ship capability, but their ability to strike potential hostile military bases around China is somewhat restricted by the range of their weaponry. China has already deployed several Short Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs) across the Taiwan Strait. However, these missiles do not have the required range even to strike key military bases in Japan. These SRBMs are primarily meant for targets in Taiwan.

The strategy of China to fight a war around its periphery is to have the capability of launching strikes against vital targets from the safe sanctuary of its well defended landmass and, hence, the Chinese emphasis on developing long range and standoff weapons to perform this task. China has an advanced ballistic missile programme. The US National Air and Space Intelligence Centre (NASIC) says that "China has the most active and diverse ballistic missile development program in the world."<sup>8</sup> In the last decade particularly, China has tremendously improved the accuracy of its ballistic missiles. The DF-21C is reported to have an accuracy of around 30 metres (m) and the DF-15C has an accuracy of around 15 m.<sup>9</sup> Hence, technically, China has the capability to develop longer range ballistic missiles for conventional precision strikes. However, operationally ballistic missiles are not suitable for large scale conventional strikes despite having sufficient accuracy to perform this role. The main problem is the enormous number of ballistic missiles required for conventional strikes which increases the cost-effect ratio. Because of this aspect, for effect-based strikes, high precision ballistic missiles, when used in limited numbers against high value targets, make better military sense.

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7. Jermyn Chow, "First US Littoral Combat Ship *USS Freedom* Arrives in Singapore", *Straits Times*, April 18, 2013, at <http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/singapore/story/first-us-littoral-combat-ship-uss-freedom-arrives-singapore-20130418>

8. "Ballistic & Cruise Missile Threat," National Air and Space Intelligence Centre, 2013, at [http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/nuclearweapons/NASIC2013\\_050813.pdf](http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/nuclearweapons/NASIC2013_050813.pdf)

9. Duncan Lennox, *Jane's Strategic Weapons Systems*, Issue 55, 2011 (Surrey, UK).

The other option would be to employ strike aircraft, with mid-air refuelling, to strike targets at longer ranges. The major drawback of this option would be the possible high attrition, particularly at longer ranges, where the chances of early detection of the strike packages are high. The only other platforms in the Chinese arsenal that can perform this role are the few guided missile destroyers (for example, the Type 052D). However, the ability of the few guided missile destroyers to perform this task is questionable in view of the large number of bases separated by large distances and the overwhelming capability of the enemy naval forces. Owing to these complexities, China seems to be adopting a more practical method for this task by equipping its military with long-range bomber aircraft capable of firing Land Attack Cruise Missiles (LACMs) at standoff range. The advantage this method offers over the others is cost-effectiveness and less likelihood of high attrition as it fires the missiles at standoff range. It is cost-effective due to several inherent characteristics of the platform and the cruise missile. The aircraft is a reusable platform unlike a long range ballistic missile; also, a bomber aircraft can carry multiple cruise missiles, enabling higher tonnage of explosives delivered over the target with precision.

The PLAAF recently took delivery of 15 new H-6K bomber aircraft, which are capable of carrying 6-7<sup>10</sup> cruise missiles that could be fired at standoff range.<sup>11</sup> The H-6K, an updated version of the H-6 bomber, is a medium-sized craft designed for long-range attacks, standoff attacks and large-area air patrol. The H6-K also manoeuvres more deftly than the H-6 and requires a smaller crew to operate it. The most visible departure from the H-6 is the H6-K's nose, where a nose radome has replaced a navigation cabin. Military expert Fu Qianshao says that the H6-K's nose should greatly improve avionics, search and detection, navigation, fire control and weapon precision. The H-6K has a larger engine inlet than the H-6, which may mean that the newer bomber's engines have greater thrust.<sup>12</sup> According to Dr. Carlo Kopp, it could be the Saturn D-30KP-2.<sup>13</sup> If so, the H-6K would also have a greater maximum takeoff weight and payload

10. Dr. Carlo Kopp, "XAC (Xian) H-6 Badger", *Air Power Australia*, 2007 (Updated April 2012). Available at: <http://www.ausairpower.net/APA-Badger.html>

11. Chen Boyuan, "H-6K Bombers Delivered to PLA Air Force", *China.org*, June 22, 2013, at [http://www.china.org.cn/china/2013-06/22/content\\_29197824.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/2013-06/22/content_29197824.htm)

12. *Ibid.*

13. Kopp, n.10.

than the H-6.<sup>14</sup> The key aspect here is the ‘standoff’ factor enabled by the combined range of the bomber and the cruise missiles it carries. The most likely candidate for the H-6K would be the indigenously produced CJ-10 ALCM variant.

The CJ-10K is the air variant of the CJ-10 ground attack cruise missile that was supposedly developed from the DH-10 (DongHai-10). The DH-10 itself was reportedly based on the Russian Kh-55 missile.<sup>15</sup> In addition to the conventional role, the missile is said to have nuclear capability. China has nearly 750 theatre and tactical nuclear warheads in addition to more than 200 strategic missile warheads.<sup>16</sup> Going by the payload capacity of the missile, which is 350 kg<sup>17</sup>, it could possibly be assigned for tactical nuclear weapons delivery. Going by this, the Chinese have the capability to deliver nuclear weapons on the US islands in the Pacific. According to one report by the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, at least 20 H-6 bombers have been modified for nuclear attack missions and up to 15 air-launched DH-10s are armed with tactical nuclear warheads. It is reported that China is developing the next variant in the CJ series, the CJ-20, which is expected to have a range of 2,200 km and nuclear capability.<sup>18</sup>

The H-6K, reportedly has a combat radius of 3,500 km and the CJ-10A has a range of 1,500-2,000 km.<sup>19</sup> With this combined range, the platform could cover the entire South Asia, Southeast Asia and Guam.<sup>20</sup> The US military is preparing Guam to be one of the primary bases for operations east of the island. Besides the H-6 K, it is reported that the H-6 M is also capable of carrying the CJ-10 ALCM.

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14. Boyuan, n.11.

15. Zachary Keck, “Can China’s New Strategic Bomber Reach Hawaii?”, August 13, 2013, at <http://thediplomat.com/2013/08/can-chinas-new-strategic-bomber-reach-hawaii/>

16. Bill Gertz, “The Warhead Gap: China’s Tactical and Theater Nuclear Force Levels Revealed by Russian General”, *The Washington Free Beacon*, November 9, 2012, at <http://freebeacon.com/the-warhead-gap/>

17. Dr. Carlo Kopp and Martin Andrew, “PLA Cruise Missiles: PLA Air-Surface Missiles”, *Air Power Australia*, 2008 ( Updated April 2012), at <http://www.ausairpower.net/APA-PLA-Cruise-Missiles.html#mozTocId838105>

18. Ian Easton, “The Assassin Under the Radar: China’s DH-10 Cruise Missile Program”, Project 2049 Institute, at [http://project2049.net/documents/assassin\\_under\\_radar\\_china\\_cruise\\_missile.pdf](http://project2049.net/documents/assassin_under_radar_china_cruise_missile.pdf)

19. Noam Eshel, “Chinese Air Force Gets More H-6K Strategic Bombers”, *Defence Update*, June 25, 2013, at [http://defense-update.com/20130625\\_h-6k-bombers-delivered-to-pla-air-force.html](http://defense-update.com/20130625_h-6k-bombers-delivered-to-pla-air-force.html)

20. Range measurements done using Google earth ruler tool.

The primary military nodes the US has built up around China are mostly air bases, troop deployment areas and naval bases. In the future, China, could give importance to the cruise missile as it is a suitable weapon to target these facilities. John Stillion and David T. Orletsky, in their paper "Airbase Vulnerability to Conventional Cruise Missile and Ballistic Missile Attacks; Technologies, Scenarios, and US Air Force Responses" have analysed and elaborated on the advantages of using cruise missiles for strikes against air bases and troops concentration. As per their analysis, the use of sub-munitions would ensure greater effect in causing damage, and cruise missiles, because of their aerodynamic characteristics and lower speed, would be more suitable for the programmed dispersal of the sub-munition payload.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, defending against cruise missiles is a tough task. Cruise missiles are hard to detect as they fly at low altitude (most of the cruise missiles have terrain hugging capability) and the trajectory of a cruise missile is hard to predict unlike a ballistic missile as it mostly flies a circuitous path and its Radar Cross Section (RCS) is very low and, hence, the burn through distance is much less for low frequency early warning radars, which reduces the reaction time of the defences.

### **VULNERABILITY FACTOR**

However, this capability of China has its weaknesses as well. For instance, the opening strikes by the US and its allies in a possible conflict would be on high value military targets in China with an objective to degrade their ability to launch strikes against own forces. Among these targets, key air bases where the offensive squadrons are deployed and the forward operational bases, will be the primary focus of US forces. There are no hardened shelters in any of the air bases in China where H-6 variants are deployed.<sup>22</sup> All the bombers are parked on the tarmac which makes them highly vulnerable to enemy strikes. Several of these bomber bases are closer than 1,500 km radius from the coastal waters. Hence, most of them are within the striking distance of the US SSGNs (guided missile attack submarines) armed with the sub-launched Tomahawk cruise missiles. If sub-munition

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21. Stillion and Orletsky, n.1.

22. This statement is based on the satellite maps (Google earth) of Chinese air bases where H-6 variants are deployed.

warheads are employed, it would take less than a dozen cruise missiles per airfield to damage the bomber fleets parked in the open.<sup>23</sup> The counter-air strikes could come from US stealth bombers as well. According to Dr. Carlo Kopp, the B-2s are capable of penetrating the Chinese air defence envelope.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, this Chinese capability has the potential to disrupt and affect US operations in a conflict.

### THE NEXT STEP

What could possibly be China's next step towards improving its ability to deny US forces access to the theatre bases? A possible step could be acquiring SSGN capability. The 2013 edition of the US Department of Defence's *Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China* stated, "In the next decade, China will likely construct the Type 095 guided-missile attack submarine (SSGN), which may enable a submarine-based land-attack capability".<sup>25</sup> A submarine is hard to detect and has high chances of penetrating the enemy waters to conduct strikes. It wouldn't be a difficult task for China to develop a sub-launched version of the DH-10 LACM and integrate it with their future SSNs (nuclear powered submarines). A future Chinese SSGN force will pose a major challenge to the US forces to maintain access to the theatre bases in a conflict scenario.

### CONCLUSION

While the strategies and counter strategies continue to evolve, the edge will always be retained by the side that has a lead in technology. The US is leading in the technology front, while the Chinese are trying to catch up. However, at present, the Chinese lack the ability to design and manufacture core technology which is critical for any future weapon programme. The Chinese depend heavily on Russian technology for their military hardware, be it submarines, aircraft, aero-engines or other high-tech hardware. Moreover, Russian technology is still behind Western technology. In this domain, and several others, history seems to be repeating itself as far as the US is

23. This number is assumed based on the calculations done by airbases avulnerability on the cruise missiles required to effectively strike the aircraft deployed on the bases of the size of US military airfields in Japan.

24. Dr. Carlo Kopp, "Almaz S-300 – China's 'Offensive' Air Defense", International Assessment and Strategy Centre, February 225, 2006.

25. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/type-95.htm>

concerned. But the outcome of the struggle for dominance depends on which side plays the game well.

Another key factor is the number of allies in the region and the share they add to counteract the other side. In this aspect too, the US has the lead at present. Despite China's effort to propagate its 'peaceful rise theory' and 'benign power' concept, it is losing out to the US in this aspect owing to its assertive and aggressive policies in dealing with the territorial disputes. Hence, the US would continue to gain access to the theatre bases whose number might increase in the future.

# ANALYSING CHINA'S BORDER DISPUTE RESOLUTION WITH SOUTH ASIAN STATES

SANA HASHMI

South Asia, as a region, has always ranked high in importance in China's foreign policy calculations. Since its inception on October 1, 1949, China has had enduring interests in South Asia which is basically a derivative of the subcontinent's location on China's southwestern flank, next to the troublesome Tibetan and Xinjiang regions.<sup>1</sup> One of the primitive determinants of China's South Asia policy was its border disputes with countries of the region. China shares land borders with five South Asian countries, namely, Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan. These five South Asian countries got involved in latent boundary disputes with China as soon as the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established and the colonialist power left the Indian subcontinent.

With the founding of the PRC, one of the most important legacies inherited by the new government comprised the relatively ill-defined boundaries of China.<sup>2</sup> However, China which is famous for its expansionist policies in Asia, has resolved almost all its border

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Sana Hashmi is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. William J. Barnds, "China's Relations with Pakistan: Durability Amidst Discontinuity", *The China Quarterly*, No. 63, September 1975, pp. 463-489.
2. Chin-kin Lo, *China's Policy Towards Territorial Disputes: The Case of the South China Sea Islands* (London: Routledge, 1989), p.1.

issues with the South Asian countries, except Bhutan and India. Negotiating borders with some countries of South Asia became one of the foremost tasks for China in the early 1960s. The 10-point Declaration of the Bandung Conference held in 1955 coupled with China's Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence laid down the foundation of China's border dispute resolution with Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is in this context that this article examines the pattern of China's border dispute resolution with Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan and underpins the motivation behind the rapid process of dispute resolution with these countries. The article further tries to study the implications of China's border agreements with these three countries.

### **CHINA-NEPAL BORDER DISPUTE**

From China's point of view, a small Himalayan and landlocked state, Nepal, holds immense importance. China-Nepal diplomatic relations were established on August 1, 1955. Nonetheless, Nepal had a disagreement with China over their shared border. In March 1960, with the view to resolving the border issue, the Prime Minister of Nepal, Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, along with a strong delegation, paid a friendly visit to China. The visit resulted in the signing of an agreement to delimit the boundary line between Nepal and China which paved the path for the China-Nepal border treaty, signed on October 5, 1961, in Beijing. This border treaty made Nepal the first South Asian country to have a mutually agreeable border treaty with China.

#### ***Demarcation of China-Nepal Boundary***

The boundary between China and Nepal extends for 1,414.8 km, touching seven counties in Tibet, from Drenthang township of Dinggüe county in Shigaste prefecture to Purang county of Nagri prefecture.<sup>3</sup> After signing the 1960 preliminary agreement, both sides showed their respective maps and a lot of discrepancies were identified. The agreement facilitated the establishment of a China-Nepal Joint Commission consisting of an equal number of delegates

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3. Chitra K Tiwari, "China-Nepal Border: Potential Hot Spot", in Bruce A. Elleman, Stephen Kotkin and Clive Schofield, eds., *Beijing's Power and China's Borders: Twenty Neighbors in Asia* (ME Sharpe, 2012), p. 205.

from China and Nepal to survey and reach a consensus on the matters of alignment, location and maintenance of 79 border demarcation markers. In the final settlement, China acceded to most of Nepal's demands and Nepal received control over ten of the eleven disputed sectors; whereas China received control over the other disputed sector.<sup>4</sup>

While the entire China-Nepal border was demarcated agreeably, with Nepal getting most of the land, the problem over the exact ownership of Mount Everest became a bone of contention. The Chinese map verified that the mountain was within the rightful Chinese territory, whereas the Nepali map showed it on the boundary line between China and Nepal. In the end, the Chinese side agreed to follow the Nepalese delineation which shows the mountain on the boundary line, with the northern slope belonging to China and the southern slope belonging to Nepal.<sup>5</sup> On January 20, 1963, a boundary protocol was signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Chen Yi and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Nepal, Tulsī Giri to mark the completion of the demarcation process.

### *Tibet: Driving Force for Border Dispute Resolution*

Tibet has always been an important factor shaping China's relations with its neighbouring countries, particularly India, Nepal and Bhutan. As soon as China invaded Tibet on October 7, 1950, it left no stone unturned to make its neighbours recognise Tibet as an integral part of China. On September 20, 1956, Nepal, through a formal treaty arrangement, recognised Tibet as a part of China. Seemingly, the rapid conclusion of the China-Nepal border treaty was largely driven by political upheavals in Tibet in 1959. On March 10, 1959, anti-Chinese protests erupted in Lhasa which were responded to by the Chinese crackdown. Serious violations of human rights by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) led the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, along with thousands of Tibetan, fleeing from Tibet and seeking refuge in India. Many Tibetan refugees also began to cross the border to take refuge in Nepal. Moreover, the Khampa rebels,

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4. M. Taylor Fravel, *Strong Border, Secure Nations: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 92.

5. Tiwari, n. 3, p. 210.

armed and trained by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in guerrilla warfare, began their hit-and-run activities against the Chinese military fortifications from across the Nepalese border.<sup>6</sup> When the Tibetan revolt threatened China's territorial integrity in 1959, the strategic context of China's territorial dispute with Nepal changed fundamentally and a stabilised border and friendly relations with the Himalayan state were considered much more important than any disputed territory.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, securing borders with Nepal became one of the foremost priorities for China in the 1950s. The border treaty was an indication of Nepal's obligation to restrain the Tibetans from using Nepal's territory to carry out anti-Chinese protests, to restrict the movement of Tibetans at the border, and take severe action against Tibetans caught while crossing the China-Nepal border. Reflecting the internal security in Tibet, China took additional measures to eliminate tensions with Nepal by both countries agreeing to withdraw 20 km from each side of the border to create a demilitarised zone.<sup>8</sup>

#### *India: Involvement and Response*

While Tibet was the primary reason for the China-Nepal border dispute, India's proximity and friendship were also partly responsible for China's speedy conclusion of its border treaty with Nepal. China's interest in Nepal suggests that it tried to outshine India by signing a series of agreements with Nepal, particularly the economic aid agreement and border treaty. Interestingly, when China and Nepal were in negotiations for demarcation of their common border, India was invited to be a part of the process, for the simple reason that India-China-Nepal converge at a tri-junction on both western and eastern ends of the borderline. However, India refused to attend the talks. Consequently, the tri-junction has still not been fixed due to the ongoing India-China border dispute.

As far as India's reaction to the China-Nepal border treaty is concerned, it was a mixed one. On the one hand, a defined border between China and Nepal was a welcome step for India as it would

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6. Warren W. Smith Jr., *China's Tibet? Autonomy or Assimilation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008).

7. Fravel, n. 4, p. 92.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

keep a check on the Tibetan refugees coming to India via Nepal; and on the other, India accepted it with some suspicion. Many in India regarded it as yet another example of the new technique being developed by China to impress upon its Asian neighbours that there was no outstanding problem between them and China which could not be settled through negotiations and that China was keen to settle such problems peacefully.<sup>9</sup>

### *Ramification of China-Nepal Border Treaty*

The China-Nepal border treaty has strengthened their relations. The economic aid agreement which was inked in the wake of the border agreement and granted aid of US\$ 10 million was evidence of the success of their negotiations. While the border treaty proved to be a landmark step in China-Nepal relations, the constant cross-border movement of Tibetans continues to be an irritant. Besides this, Nepal is considered to be the backyard of India and the yet to be demarcated tri-junction continues to raise several questions on the applicability of the China-Nepal border treaty.

### **CHINA-PAKISTAN BORDER DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Pakistan established diplomatic relations with China in 1951 and became the first Islamic country and third non-Communist country to recognise the PRC. In the early years of their inception, its membership of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO), coupled with its pro-American stance was a sticking point in China-Pakistan relations. Interestingly, the meeting of Zhou En-lai and former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Bogra, on the sidelines of the Bandung Conference, helped them to allay their apprehensions. Additionally, in the 1950s, China's problems with India such as differences over Tibet, inability to resolve the border dispute, and the general attitude of rivalry in Asian politics persuaded China to seek a closer working relationship with a Pakistan hostile to India in order to keep New Delhi as preoccupied as possible within the subcontinent and, thus, reduce its ability to challenge

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9. Barnds, n. 1, pp. 79-93.

China.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, one of the major obstacles in the way of China-Pakistan bonhomie comprised the differing perceptions of their common border. Given that the China-Pakistan border had never been properly delimited through any formal arrangement, Pakistan inherited the latent border dispute with China from British India at the time of partition in 1947, but it erupted into the open only in 1949, when the PRC was established.

### *Negotiations, Signing and Demarcation of China-Pakistan Border Agreement*

China, which was reluctant to enter into negotiations with Pakistan in the 1950s, began to engage Pakistan in the early 1960s. A provisional boundary agreement was signed by Chen Yi and Pakistan's Minister of External Affairs, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on March 2, 1963. The border agreement stated that "with a view to ensure peace and tranquility on the China-Pakistan border, the Governments of China and Pakistan agree to formally delimit and demarcate the boundary between China's Sinkiang and the contiguous areas the defence of which is under the actual control of Pakistan, mainly for the development of good neighbourly and friendly relations between China and Pakistan but also to help safeguard Asian and world peace".<sup>11</sup> The agreement had an important clause with regard to the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir. Article six of the agreement stated that in the case of the settlement of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan, the negotiations on the boundary between China and Pakistan will be revived, so as to sign a formal boundary treaty to replace the existing agreement.<sup>12</sup>

According to the maps published in China before the border settlement with Pakistan, about 4,000 square miles of territory controlled by Pakistan, in addition to 36,000 square miles of territory lying in Indian-controlled Kashmir, has been shown as a part of China.<sup>13</sup> The China-Pakistan border runs from the Pamir junction of Afghanistan, China and Pakistan to the Karakoram

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10. n. 1, pp. 463-489.

11. *The Boundary Agreement between China and Pakistan, 1963.*

12. Ibid.

13. Nasim Ahmed, "China's Himalayan Frontiers: Pakistan's Attitude", *International Affairs*, vol. 38, no. 8, October 1962, pp. 478-484.

Pass. The only border Pakistan had with China was in Hunza, Gilgit and Baltistan, part of the old Jammu and Kashmir state and at present part of Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK).<sup>14</sup> As a follow up to the border agreement, the joint border demarcation commission was set up which held its first meeting in May 1963.<sup>15</sup> In the final settlement, China kept the roughly 5,309 sq km that it contested in Shaksgam Valley and transferred control over some 1,942 sq km of territory in the Oprang Valley to Pakistan, which also maintained control over an additional 1,554 sq km of territory it already held.<sup>16</sup> China abandoned its claims to Hunza, and Pakistan also received grazing areas in the Prang and Bund Darwaza Valleys, Kharachanai salt mine and the town of Sokh Bulaq; additionally, Pakistan kept control over three-fourths of K2 as well as six of seven disputed mountain passes.<sup>17</sup> The task of demarcating the China-Pakistan border was accomplished on March 26, 1965, when both sides signed a protocol.

#### *Motivating Factors for China-Pakistan Border Dispute Resolution*

Both the internal and external environments in the 1960s persuaded China to move towards resolving the border dispute with Pakistan. The severe crackdown on the Tibetan revolt of 1959 by the Chinese government ruined the image of China and the international community began to perceive China as an aggressor. For China, the China-Pakistan border agreement confirmed its image of a country ready to resolve the boundary issue peacefully and through negotiations with smaller neighbours.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, settling borders with neighbouring countries was one of China's ways of establishing its unopposed control over Tibet. With defined frontiers, China was successful in gaining its immediate neighbours' support for proving its legitimacy over Tibet.

China's continued stalemate with India vis-à-vis their border dispute also proved to be significant for laying the foundation of the

14. Ibid.

15. P. L. Bhola, *Pakistan-China Relations: Search for Politico-Strategic Relationship* (Jaipur: RBSA Publishers, 1986), p. 5.

16. Fravel, n. 4, p. 116.

17. Ibid.

18. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Significance of Pakistan-China Border Agreement of 1963", *Pakistan Horizon*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1986, pp. 41-52.

China-Pakistan border agreement, in general and their all-weather friendship, in particular. It was speculated that the rapid conclusion of the China-Pakistan border agreement was one of the results of the 1962 India-China War. Emerging from a sense of urgency initiated by the 1962 India-China border conflict, the China-Pakistan border settlement formally commenced the friendship between Beijing and Islamabad in earnest.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the India-China border clash coupled with the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir paved the path for new foreign policy vistas for China and Pakistan. China, which had just had an armed clash with India in October 1962, wanted to benefit from India's differences with Pakistan and also the ambiguity vis-à-vis the status of Kashmir. In essence, not only were China's perceptions of factors intensifying the Pakistanis' sense of insecurity extremely accurate, but it also correctly gauged the Pakistanis' feelings over the Kashmir dispute.<sup>20</sup>

Like China, Pakistan also had several reasons to find a solution to their border issue at the earliest. The primary motivation for Pakistan was to avoid any armed confrontation with China. Pakistan's then President Ayub Khan stated at Lyalpur in March 1963 that he had known for a long time that if China and India did not resolve their border disagreements, fighting would break out between them and when it became clear in 1960 that no solution was being reached, he directed the Pakistan Foreign Office to take up the question of border demarcation with China.<sup>21</sup> Apparently, given that Pakistan was also involved in a protracted conflict over Kashmir with India, it wanted to take advantage of the India-China deadlock on the border front. Overall, India and Pakistan fought four wars. The first war was fought in October 1947 which is also known as the First Kashmir War. As a consequence of the outbreak of the war, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, Hari Singh signed the instrument of accession with the Indian government in October 1948 and the Indian Army moved into the state.<sup>22</sup> With the intervention of the UN, a ceasefire

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19. Christopher Tang, "The Sino-Pakistan Border: Stability in an Unstable Region", in Elleman, n. 3, p. 219.

20. Cheema, n. 18, pp. 41-52.

21. W. M. Dombell, "Ramifications of the China-Pakistan Border Treaty", *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 37, no. 3, Autumn 1964, pp. 283-295.

22. "1947-48 War" at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in\\_depth/south\\_asia/2002/india\\_pakistan/timeline/1947\\_48.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/south_asia/2002/india_pakistan/timeline/1947_48.stm), accessed on September 30, 2013.

was declared in January 1949, resulting in the division of Kashmir into two parts: the northern and western part came under Pakistan's control whereas the northeastern, central and eastern parts came under India's administration. Pakistan maintained that signing the border accord proved its *de facto* sovereignty over Kashmir. Hence, Pakistan's border dispute resolution with China was imperative for Pakistan to acquire legitimacy for its control on POK.

Moreover, the 1947 War with India made Pakistan realise the importance of having robust foreign military ties. The motivating factor for Pakistan for resolving its border dispute with China was also its search for security concerning India. The settlement of the border between China and Pakistan provided China and Pakistan an opportunity to establish a closer military association. In fact, in the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 and the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, Pakistan received covert support and aid from China and there were also reports of the movement of Chinese troops along the Indo-Pakistan border.

### *India's Response*

The China-Pakistan border treaty was not accepted by the Indian authorities as India regards Kashmir as disputed territory between India and Pakistan. Though the agreement stipulated that the demarcation line would not prejudice India's claims or interests pending the final settlement of the Kashmir dispute<sup>23</sup>, the Indian government stated that in the name of the agreement, Pakistan had ceded some territory of Kashmir to China in 1963. The Indian government had declared that these territories formed part of the former state of Jammu and Kashmir, and India had "sovereignty" over them.<sup>24</sup> In protest against the border agreement, India lodged a formal complaint to the UN in a form of a letter and interpreted the agreement as violating the Security Council Resolutions of January 17 and August 13, 1948, and January 5, 1949, on Kashmir.<sup>25</sup> However, Pakistan disregarded India's letter to the UN by calling it a part of a

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23. Luke T. Lee, "Treaty Relations of the People's Republic of China: A Study of Compliance", *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, vol. 116, no. 2, December 1967, pp. 244-314.

24. n. 1, pp. 478-484.

25. Dombell, n. 21 pp. 283-295.

systematic and sustained campaign of propaganda against Pakistan.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, according to the perception of the Indian leaders and Western powers, the agreement overshadowed the minimal prospects of the discussions on the status of Kashmir.

### *Ramifications of the China-Pakistan Border Agreement*

While the China-Pakistan border agreement evoked protests from countries like India, the US and the USSR, as expected, it drew favourable results for both Pakistan and China. The border agreement enhanced their cooperation in almost every sphere, ranging from trade relations to military cooperation. The year 1963 also witnessed the signing of the civil aviation agreement between China and Pakistan which allowed Pakistan International Airlines to fly to Canton and Shanghai. Furthermore, in the wake of the China-Pakistan border settlement, the first formal trade agreement between China and Pakistan was also signed in 1963, and both countries granted the status of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) to each other in the same year. The 1963 border agreement also facilitated the construction of the highest international road in the world, the Karakoram Highway, which was completed in 1978.

All said and done, of all China's border dispute resolutions, its border dispute with Pakistan has been the most controversial. The involvement of Kashmir in the process fuelled political tensions among India, Pakistan and China. The cost of the dispute resolution was relatively high for India to bear. It visibly weakened India's relations with both China and Pakistan. Nevertheless, it was the starting point of the China-Pakistan never-ending friendship.

### **CHINA-AFGHANISTAN BORDER DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

The China-Afghanistan border runs from the frontier of the Wakhan Corridor which is located on the northeastern front of Afghanistan to the Tashkurgan Tajik autonomous county which is a part of Kashgar district in the province of Xinjiang. Chen Yi, while on a visit to Kabul in 1960, expressed China's keenness to resolve its border dispute with Afghanistan.

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26. [http://www.bhutto.org/1957-1965\\_speech45.php](http://www.bhutto.org/1957-1965_speech45.php), accessed on October 30, 2013.

On March 2, 1963, China and Afghanistan proclaimed that both countries would begin formal negotiations to resolve the border differences. From the Chinese perspective, the crux of the negotiations was the determination of the Afghan-Soviet-Chinese tri-point, which itself was linked to China's claims to the Pamir mountains controlled by the Soviet Union; whereas Afghanistan sought Chinese recognition of its sovereignty over the Wakhan Corridor, over which China had laid claim of sovereignty.<sup>27</sup> After a round of talks on June 17, 1963, China accepted the Line of Actual Control as the basis for delimiting the border, thus, abandoning any claim to the Wakhan Corridor; as a reciprocatory gesture, Afghanistan made no public reference to the location of the disputed tri-point.<sup>28</sup> On November 22, 1963, Chen Yi and Afghanistan's Minister of the Interior, Al-Qayyum, signed the China-Afghanistan border treaty in Beijing. As soon as the demarcation process was completed, a boundary protocol between China and Afghanistan was signed on March 24, 1965.

#### *Xinjiang: Driving Force for China-Afghanistan Border Treaty*

Though China did not earn any tangible gains from the China-Afghanistan border treaty, it was successful in securing its border essentially when Xinjiang was undergoing ethnic unrest. As violence and volatility in Xinjiang increased, Chinese leaders instantly moved towards the rapid settlement of the China-Afghanistan shared border. China was of the opinion that instability in Afghanistan would fuel unrest in Xinjiang and further deteriorate the situation in its restive region. Besides this, the Chinese government also feared that arms and ammunition might be supplied to the separatist groups in China from neighbouring states.

#### **CONCLUSION**

China resolved many of its lingering border problems in the early 1960s. Barring India and Bhutan, China's borders with the countries in South Asia had been satisfactorily defined by 1965. As far as Bhutan is concerned, China has tried to resolve its border problem,

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27. Fravel, n. 4, p. 118.

28. Ibid.

but nothing substantial has been achieved so far. In fact, due to its close proximity to India, Bhutan is yet to establish diplomatic ties with China. While the disputes with Bhutan and India remain in China's list of unresolved border disputes, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan became three of the first few countries to resolve their disagreements over their common borders.

Interestingly, the trajectory of China's border dispute resolution with these three countries displays two peculiar trends. First, China offered concessions in all three border disputes, giving away more than half the contested land. Second, generally, the demarcation process takes many years, but the demarcation of the borders of China with these countries was completed in just a few years. This rapid demarcation shows China's readiness to resolve its disputes with these countries.

The timing and implementation of all the three agreements were commendable and crucial. Clearly, when the Chinese leaders were faced with one of the gravest internal challenges in the form of the Tibetan revolt of 1959, China took actions to secure its borders so as to stop the cross-border movement of Tibetans, mainly with Nepal. Importantly, border agreements with these countries helped to prove China's legitimacy over Tibet. Unrest in Xinjiang also affected China's foreign policy shifts. For instance, China's border agreement with Afghanistan was clearly the result of unrest in Xinjiang.

India's relations with these countries, coupled with its influence in the South Asian region apparently acted as an external determinant in China's border dispute resolution with Nepal and Pakistan. Though China has always denied that India has played a role in its decision-making process vis-à-vis its frontiers, India was visibly present in the Chinese psyche. The dominant role played by India in the Bandung Conference persuaded China to establish friendly relations with the Asian countries by resolving the differences among them. Clearly, border dispute resolution was the first step for China towards the realisation of its dream of curtailing India's influence in the South Asian region. Additionally, while the India-China border dispute is yet to be resolved, its border dispute resolution with the other countries of the region

has helped China to woo the countries of South Asia. And to say the least, China's dispute resolution model has been successful in helping China to project its benign image and establishing its foothold in the region.



# BREAKTHROUGH IN GENEVA

**SHEEL KANT SHARMA**

It is just 10 days since Iran and its interlocutors reached an interim deal in Geneva and its implementation has commenced with the announcement of a visit by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the heavy water reactor project at Arak. The interim deal is about a temporary freeze, as a first step, in the progress of diverse aspects of the Iranian nuclear programme but is of considerable significance even as a first step. This is because of the agreed links in the initial steps, with marginal softening of sanctions and the promise of no more of them. The deal also lays down in a comprehensive package the goal of negotiations and a process towards that goal – which has been on the cards for many months. An inkling of the progress was felt when Iran and the IAEA accepted a work plan on November 11, 2013, to resolve outstanding issues. The subsequent negotiations in Geneva among the Foreign Ministers of Iran and the P-5 plus Germany till the wee hours of November 24, 2013, were hard and intensive. Foreign Minister Zarif tweeted on the conclusion of these negotiations that “there is white smoke”.

This was more than just eloquence on his part, using a metaphor from the Vatican’s practice of the election of the pope. The interim deal comprised concise minutiae with a bland title, “Joint Plan of Action”, entirely concentrated on Iran’s nuclear programme and related sanctions – and was nowhere near closure on either. Yet it is

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**Sheel Kant Sharma** is a former Ambassador of India to Austria & Permanent Representative to UN Office in Vienna & IAEA.

mostly and unquestionably seen as a breakthrough. The moot point for an analysis of its impact is whether this breakthrough would give renewed focus and the much needed spurt to global non-proliferation prospects or whether it must be seen from the prism of a historic transformation of Iran's relations with the West and profound strategic implications for the region and beyond.

The agreed goal of negotiations consists of a comprehensive agreement ensuring an exclusively peaceful nuclear programme in Iran and lifting of all the sanctions by the UN Security Council, the US and European Union (EU). That goal will be reached by a reciprocal step- by- step process, assisted by adequate transparency to IAEA inspections, involving stopping, curtailing, and partial dismantling of Iran's existing and planned uranium enrichment capacity, facilities and activities; conversion and dilution of existing stocks of enriched uranium, more or less irreversibly, under effective safeguards, against its military use potential; and a freeze on the project for a plutonium production reactor. Iran will be enabled to enjoy rights to peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and agreed closure of the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC's) file on its nuclear programme.

Interim first steps towards that goal will be taken within six months and essentially comprise Iran's ceasing of uranium enrichment above 5 percent, converting half of the existing 20 percent enriched gaseous uranium to metal oxide and diluting the remainder to less than 5 percent, thereby delaying any return to further enrichment; conversion of new 5 percent enriched gas to metallic form; no reconversion and no new locations for enrichment; halting of further advances at the Natanz and Fordow enrichment plants; and no progress with the Arak heavy water reactor project. All these will be under enhanced monitoring by the IAEA, which includes daily access for inspections of enrichment activities, plus information about the Arak project and uranium mines and mills. These measures can temporarily limit Iran's ability to get closer, even while negotiations are under way, to achieving the required quantity of 90 percent enriched weapons grade uranium, including the potential for covert activity.

Iran, in return, will receive proportionate, limited sanctions relief from the US and EU, marking marginal concessions with

regard to oil sales to Iran's customers, releasing sales revenue held abroad, suspending sanctions on Iran's petrochemical exports, auto industry, oil related insurance and transportation costs, gold and precious metals, and licensing spares for safety of civil aviation. Up to \$ 7 billion may accrue to the Iranian economy thanks to the sorely needed sanctions relief over the initial six months; and there will be no fresh sanctions by the US, EU or Security Council.

This interim deal has produced unprecedented commentary, analyses, assessments of far-reaching import and even dark warnings about its pitfalls. Its text is a far cry from the hundreds of pages of the 1987 Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty between Reagan and Gorbachev. That has not, however, prevented comparisons between Iran's President Rouhani and Gorbachev. The document says nothing about the Middle East anywhere but is being assessed to have the potential to bring the region on the verge of a historic transformation and reordering of alliances. Parallels have been drawn with the Kissinger-Nixon 1971 opening with China, and visions have been conjured of an abiding thaw between the US and Iran. Iran's Gulf neighbours, not mentioned in the text, are concerned about its praxis even as they voice nervous welcome and applause.

As regards the document, it cloaks itself with "nothing is agreed till everything is agreed". Reciprocal measures agreed to by both sides are still elements of 'voluntary' first steps. The authors are careful, as Foreign Minister Zarif puts it, in spinning out the text, which, as a product of hard work, is largely left to speak for itself. Nonetheless, forebodings among the US right wing and Israel are unabated about Iran's stringing out on its voluntary undertakings and President Obama's premature releasing the hold of ever tighter sanctions. The detractors argue that the stiff sanctions have brought Iran to negotiating for some reprieve, without any change of heart on its nuclear plans.

It is the success of sustained and quiet diplomacy which has been in the works between the US Administration and Iran for most of the current year that makes both cynics and optimists go overboard. It evokes a sigh of relief from scary portents of military action which loomed large last winter. The caution and understatements with which the authors of this delicate accord have related their

achievement back home, particularly in the US, Europe and Iran, is in strong contrast with the hyperbole about the unfolding of a historic denouement. Caution may have much to do with the extreme cynicism about Iran in the US Congress, for instance, and the deep historical misgivings and hurt within the psyche of “the Iranian nation”, for which as President Rouhani pithily observed, the accord “marks a starting point for a new experience”.

Both sides in Geneva realised that they have considerable stakes in making progress on the first steps. The dismal record of the on-off diplomatic efforts over the past decade-plus is bound to hound the process. In the beginning, one must remember, when reports had first appeared in 2002-03 about a secret industrial scale uranium enrichment facility and related activities in Iran, the nation took time to admit it. And when it finally did, that confirmed the worst suspicions of Iran’s detractors; suspicions which gained strength through the IAEA findings in 2003 when the IAEA stumbled upon not only a huge construction project at Natanz but other undeclared facilities too where a number of activities began to unravel related to uranium enrichment. And Iran’s response to IAEA questions came, to quote then Director General (DG) of the IAEA, Mohamed El Baradei, “grudgingly, piecemeal”. Iran’s explanations about non-declaration of such activities and denial of their suspected weapons’ purpose cut no ice.

Thus, started a period of protracted mistrust in the West and defiance in Iran about what Iran projected as willful lack of understanding and offence shown to Iran and its people’s capabilities. From what Iran had originally called pilot scale facility and studies, it progressed to build thousands of centrifuges to enrich uranium, defying mounting pressure by the IAEA and sanctions by the UN Security Council – more secret facilities and suspected weapons related work began to emerge from the welter of Iran’s denials and lack of transparency. The admission of the construction of a second enrichment plant buried under the mountain near Qom at Fordow and progressively advanced centrifuge construction at both Natanz and Fordow aggravated distrust even as attempts continued at negotiation at a political level to resolve all issues, first by the European states (the UK, France and Germany with the EU),

then with the addition of China and Russia in the team and, finally, the US too since 2006.

Amidst fruitless attempts to make diplomatic headway throughout the period since 2006, talk by the US and Israel of military action to prevent an Iranian bomb lent a precarious edge to the situation. Iran's boast of thousands of centrifuges, successive IAEA reports about tons of low enriched uranium stocks and the inability of the IAEA to remove doubts about Iran's claims of peaceful intent created a dangerous impasse. This experience of the past decade plus has hardened sceptics in the West and pushed Israel to view Iranian forays in the talks as subterfuge for making it to the bomb, a la North Korea – a stance which has not changed even after the change of guard in Tehran earlier this year and the vastly softened narrative and openness of Iran's leaders. Israel insisted on calling the new and moderate Iranian president "a wolf in sheep's clothing". This credibility gap about Iran in Israel and the hardline members of the US Congress and its security establishment is what the breakthrough in Geneva has to contend with.

The joint plan of action spells out a number of voluntary undertakings by Iran to allay the fears of the sceptics and to ensure that while negotiations for a comprehensive solution are under way, Iran gets no closer to weapons grade uranium, overtly or covertly. Also, enhanced transparency requirements of the IAEA, if honoured by Iran, as promised, will serve to marginally increase the time available for action in the case of Iran's much feared breaking out from its obligations under the NPT to rush to build a weapon. Stopping of 20 percent enriched uranium production and conversion of about 195 kg of the existing stockpile to either metallic oxide or downblending it to less than 5 percent may add a month or two, while daily inspections at Natanz and Fordow may serve to sound the necessary alert. Full transparency about uranium mines and mills may contribute to detection of any covert activity at another location. While these are arrangements to build confidence, the clear time-bound process for taking these steps should reduce the scope of delaying tactics.

As regards the concern about Iran's opening a plutonium route through a 40 MW heavy water research reactor, the elements in

the Geneva document are designed to halt progress to completing that project and furnishing of what is called DIQ or design related information sought by the IAEA. Iran has, in the past, not agreed to give this information, hiding behind the 1974 safeguards agreement, according to which, such information can be demanded only 180 days prior to the introduction of nuclear material. This provision was revised by the IAEA Board during the 1990s to remove any time lag between the start of a project and furnishing of design information. The Geneva document indicates that Iran may now provide such advance information to the IAEA. This, in turn, will help the Agency to devise appropriate inspections for the heavy water reactor. Thus, the irradiation of fuel in that reactor and its burn up to produce plutonium could be tracked. Besides, since Iran has no reprocessing facility so far and even a suspected covert activity could be within the probability of detection, the fears about a plutonium route are assuaged to a fair extent. These assurances can build the atmosphere for negotiations to move forward.

Moreover, what should weigh in favour of the process is having to choose between honouring the process envisaged in the interim deal and the alternatives thereto i.e. the inexorable slide to military action and mounting conflict, tension and unceasing attrition. The chemistry visibly seemed reassuring at Geneva among the Iranian team led by Foreign Minister Zarif and their counterparts from the US and Europe as well as China and Russia. The emerging optics, preceded by months of back channel contacts between the US and Iran, is favourable and gives ground for hope.

As for the hyperbole of visionary commentators; it brooks moderation so as to avoid extraneous stuff frontloading the process. Take, for instance, the talk about reordering the Middle East – it is too early to imagine that a *modus vivendi* with Iran on the nuclear question will be at the expense of many decades of close US and Western ties with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. President Obama had certified to the Congress in March 2012, during the deliberations about implementing of tighter sanctions on Iran's oil trade, that the global oil market would be robust enough to prevent spikes in prices due to loss of Iranian oil. The step by step process will still depend on the continuation of these sanctions on Iran's oil export until "all

is agreed”: which may be inconceivable without the cooperation of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. As for those dreaming of Iran’s instant mainstreaming in the global oil trade, the feasibility of that is hard to imagine after years of stagnation, let alone the legacy of vexed political problems of the past decades.

The longstanding relationships, therefore, of the US and its European allies with the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia are more likely to endure. On the contrary, the improvement of Iran’s relations with the US and EU may have a beneficial impact on its neighbourhood – the more Iran engages globally, the greater will be its responsibility for maintaining good relations with the neighbours. Rouhani has already made friendly gestures to neighbours, and has mild rhetoric for Israel, distancing from Ahmadinejad’s boastful and offensive language. Early signs are visible of warming with Turkey too. Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif is reaching out to Iran’s Gulf neighbours and Saudi Arabia. In an interview to *Al Jazeera*, he made considerable effort to affirm Iran’s goodwill and good neighbourly interest in the region for which he insists the accord’s success will contribute.

Iran may eventually be able to obtain a better deal than what it was ready to settle for in 2003; when there were fewer sanctions and it had offered a freeze at a cascade of just about 164 centrifuges but as part of a grand bargain—which was spurned by the Bush Administration. The supreme leader has endorsed the interim deal despite the scepticism of the hardliners. He may see the present breakthrough as the way to Iran’s entering the mainstream of the global economy as against the rising punitive cost and continued isolation for the sake of a risky breakout capability. Iran may finally concede what Rouhani was ready to do in 2003, including acceptance of the IAEA Additional Protocol, which the Majlis had subsequently put under suspension. The Geneva Accord now has explicit language recognising the Majlis’ role in a manner similar to the role of the US Congress. The turnaround, thus, may have come due to the US, France, and other members of the P-5 +1 team giving due regard to Iran’s demand for dignity and self-respect instead of the unceasing punitive thrust of 2003-05. This seems to have made all the difference as reflected in the welcome given to Zarif back home, amidst uplifting music and images of centrifuges and

reactors on TV. The follow-up to the interim deal, thus, should have a fair amount of win-win for all.

As far as India's concerns go, there is the familiar rumble of a vaulting scenario building among commentators about the impact of Iran's return to the mainstream of the world economy and India's bright prospects from the transformation which may come about. Since it is for Iran and the US to do the heavy lifting, with support from the other P-5 and EU as well as the Gulf, going to town about what's-in-it for India at this juncture lacks tact and runs the risk of incurring the charge of looking for a free ride. A forthcoming, positive and forward looking stand, as reflected in official comments, should go a long way.

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