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# INDIAN AND CHINESE MILITARY MODERNIZATION – A MEANS TO POWER PROJECTION

SIDRA TARIQ

## Introduction

India and China have seen a concurrent rise as two influential powers in Asia during the last three decades. The world has recognized the substantial economic growth of these two countries. This has encouraged both the states to go for modernization of their respective defence forces in order to ensure their security as well as to project their power in various regions. Both states have, during the last decade in particular, upgraded certain old weapon systems and extensively acquired or developed brand new ones.

Although India's early leaders such as Nehru and K M Pannikar<sup>1</sup> envisaged India as a maritime power, due to India's experience with the European naval powers in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. For many years, India's foreign policy and defence outlook remained land-centric. This was essentially because throughout history land-based threats remained India's major external security concern which is why it was vulnerable to European colonialism. Conversely, the role of Indian Navy largely remained limited due to delayed modernization and lack of doctrinal direction. However, certain recent developments in India's geo-strategic role in greater Asia have altered its position in the global strategic milieu. In contemporary times, India is perceived as an Asian power, if not a global one.<sup>2</sup>

For China, South Asia remained the least economically engaged region for many years. Nevertheless, with the expansion of India's security relations in Asia more recently, the region has gained significant strategic utility, due to which China has also intensified its efforts to expand its alliances and enhance its military power in the region. Simultaneously, both have shown cooperation

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as well, which has been reflected in an increased Indo-China bilateral trade (\$70 billion in 2014), India-China dialogue on Afghanistan<sup>3</sup> and maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).<sup>4</sup>

With the Indian and Chinese attainment of sophisticated and modern weapons, there is a general perception that the two states are entering into an arms race. In the academic literature, “an arms race is defined as a competitive, reciprocal, peacetime increase or improvement in armaments by two states perceiving themselves to be in an adversarial relationship.”<sup>5</sup> The interactive rivalry often results in erosion of confidence, diminution of cooperation and poses a greater danger of war between leading states. The general perception that India and China are engaged in an arms race is true to a certain extent. On the strategic chessboard the competition between them has persisted. Nevertheless, both China and India have cooperated on matters that are vital to their mutual interests and of international significance. The present Sino-Indian relationship is a combination of both balance of power and economic cooperation.

The on-going military modernization in India and China has been an expected development which has been a consequence of their mounting economic and political might aiming at power projection. Even though the present relationship between them has not been perfectly symmetrical or without mistrust, an outright war does not seem likely between them. If the political and military leadership of both states are able to continue basic cooperation, then the chance of an arms race will be considerably reduced.

This paper is divided into four major sections. 1) 1962 Sino-Indian War: Impact on Relationship; 2) India’s Military Modernization; 3) China’s Military Modernization, and 4) Sino-Indian Military Build-up: Power Projection or an Arms Race?

## **1962 Sino-Indian War: Impact on relationship**

The creation of India in 1947 and the People’s Republic of China in 1949 brought to fore certain historical experiences which both countries shared. Both had been colonized by naval based western powers, both had mostly rural and agrarian economies and both had endured painful internal strife and political division.<sup>6</sup>

Given these similarities, India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru believed that the two countries could work together to form an ‘Asian Axis’.<sup>7</sup> This belief was promoted throughout the 1950s. First, in 1954, India and China agreed to the Panchsheel Agreement, a joint declaration that advocated five principles of peaceful coexistence: mutual respect for territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.<sup>8</sup> Second, in 1955, Nehru and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai attended the Bandung Conference in Indonesia. It was a milestone for beginning the Non-Aligned Movement that included representatives from 29 governments of Asian and African nations. At this forum, they sought solidarity for the Panchsheel Agreement from other countries as well.<sup>9</sup>

However, two incidents changed the scenario. In 1950, China reclaimed Tibet, due to which a large geographic and strategic buffer between India and China was removed. The second action on China's part was the construction of a network of roads, during the mid-1950s, along the Indian border. These roads, one of which went through the region of Aksai Chin, would allow the People's Liberation Army (PLA) forces to swiftly deploy and uphold operations against the Indian military.<sup>10</sup> (See Appendix 1 for maps, showing the British lines which did not include Aksai Chin in Kashmir. India unilaterally altered the border in 1954).

The worsening relationship between China and India's colonial attitude culminated in the October 1962 War between them. China captured almost 15,000 square kilometres of the Indian territory. India suffered massive losses of life and territory besides indirect impact on its national psyche and attitude. The crushing defeat that India suffered at Chinese hands led India to change its military and foreign policy. First of all, India considerably enhanced its defence spending. Second, it began a nuclear programme capable of striking and forestalling any such attack from China. Thus, India tested its first nuclear device in 1974. From 1962-1975, there were no ambassadorial relations between India and China.<sup>11</sup> Despite the lingering mistrust, diplomatic contact was re-established in 1976. A visit by a Chinese delegation to India in 1978 and the then Indian Foreign Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's tour to China in 1979 were efforts to normalize relations between them. Rounds of talks held during the 1980s, did not bring about tangible changes in Sino-Indian relations. In 1986, India granted statehood status to the disputed Arunachal Pradesh. This led to mobilization of Chinese and Indian troops along the border while some skirmishes occurred too.<sup>12</sup> During the 1990s, there were some encouraging signs for holding mutual cooperation in economic relations between India and China. In 1992, Consulates in Mumbai and Shanghai were re-opened. In 1993, double taxation agreements in bilateral trade were signed; two-way trade surged to \$52 billion in 2008. China became India's largest trading partner by 2010, and at present, nearly 70 billion dollars annual bilateral trade is carried on.<sup>13</sup>

Despite economic and diplomatic advancements, the mistrust between India and China has persisted which has been mostly reflected through public and media outlets on both sides.<sup>14</sup> Their mutual suspicion has been due to an amalgamation of historical experiences, unresolved border disputes, China's close ties with Pakistan, China and India's respective military build-ups and their efforts to maximize their respective influence in the region.

In short, the agreements have reached at the \$70 billion trade between the two countries including exchange of delegations. However, such steps have so far failed to remove the trust deficit between the two countries.

## **India's military modernization**

It is the pursuit for regional dominance between China and India that has spawned a race for military supremacy and power projection in the recent years. India's increased defence budget and its orders for fighter jets, naval frigates and artillery have made New Delhi the world's largest importer of arms

since 2010.<sup>15</sup> Against China's increasing military might, Indian armed forces are gradually improving inter-operability, upgrading indigenous potentials, developing their kinetic effectiveness and command and control as well.

According to Frost & Sullivan, India will spend \$100-150 billion on defence modernization programmes by 2022. It will also become the fourth biggest defence spender in the world by 2020, behind the US, China and Russia. Unlike the Chinese military, which has domestically produced most of its newest equipment, India imports approximately 70 per cent of its military hardware.<sup>16</sup>

**Table 1**

**The 10 largest importers of major weapons and their main clients, 2010-14**

Exporter	Share of international arms import (%)		Main clients (share of importer's total imports)		
	2010-14	2005-2009	1st	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
India	15	7	Russia (70%)	USA (12%)	Israel (7%)
Saudi Arabia	5	1	UK (36%)	USA (35%)	France (6%)
China	5	9	Russia (61%)	France (16%)	Ukraine (13%)
UAE	4	5	USA (58%)	France (9%)	Russia (9%)
Pakistan	4	3	China (51%)	USA (30%)	Sweden (5%)
Australia	4	3	USA (68%)	Spain (19%)	France (6%)
Turkey	3	3	USA (58%)	South Korea (13%)	Spain (8%)
USA	3	3	Germany (18%)	UK (15%)	Canada (13%)
South Korea	3	6	USA (89%)	Germany (5%)	Sweden (2%)
Singapore	3	3	USA (71%)	Germany (10%)	Sweden (6%)

**Source:** <<http://sputniknews.com/columnists/20150401/1020313631.html>>.

Table 1 illustrates that from 2010 to 2014, India accounted for 15 per cent of all international arms imports. India's weapons imports are almost three times larger than that of its neighbours, Pakistan and China.<sup>17</sup>

Since 2009, the Indian Navy (IN) has stood as the fifth largest in the world with 145 ships. This number is expected to rise to over 160 ships by 2022.<sup>18</sup> The Indian Air Force (IAF) has been acquiring sophisticated fighter jets like the Dassault Rafale as well as support aircrafts like the C-17 heavy lift transport plane.<sup>19</sup>



### **Advancement in the Indian military: An overview of recent defence budgets**

India has embarked upon modernization programmes like replacement and upgrading of its military equipment with an aim to further augment its power in the region.

Between 2005 and 2014, India's defence spending had increased by 39 per cent.<sup>20</sup> *SIPRI Fact Sheet 2015* shows that of the top 15 military spenders in 2014, India moved up from ninth to seventh position.<sup>21</sup> Indian military's modernization project has come after years of under-investment. A look into the military budgets 2012–2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 reveals valuable information about the modernization processes. The capital outlay account of the budget is the most relevant segment of military modernization, showing the procurement of equipment for the Army, Navy and Air Force. The 2012–2013 defence budgets have indicated an increase of 17.63 per cent as against 11.59 in 2011-2012.<sup>22</sup> Around 89 per cent of the total capital outlay was allocated for modernization. The capital outlay budget of the Indian military, with an approximately 72 per cent increase for the Air Force and Navy, showed a preference for the two wings most responsible for force projection abroad.<sup>23</sup>

India's defence budget 2013-14 presented a five per cent increase,<sup>24</sup> while India's defence budget 2014-15 saw a 12 per cent increase in military spending and enhanced the foreign investment limit in the domestic defence industry from 26 per cent to 49 per cent to help rebuild the military.<sup>25</sup> The defence share accounts for almost eight per cent of the overall central government budget for the year 2015-16. With an approximate allocation of Rupees 1,30,874 crore, the Army accounted for 53 per cent of the total defence budget in 2015-16. The Air Force came a distant second with an allocation of Rupees 56,658 crore, [23 per cent] followed by the Navy with Rupees 40,529 crore [16 per cent]. *Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)* received six per cent and Ordnance Factories two per cent of the military budget. Defence-specific measures visible in the budget were the allocation for 'Make in India' initiative, for which Rupees 144.21 crore were allocated. The Indian government's initiative aimed at encouraging companies to manufacture their products in India. The allocation, by far the biggest under the 'Make head', would mostly be provided to two industry consortiums – one of TATA Power Strategic Engineering Division (SED) and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) and the other of Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Rolta India Ltd. – each of which recently earned a contract from the Indian Ministry of Defence to develop a prototype under the Indian Army's Battlefield Management System (BMS) programme.<sup>26</sup>

The analysis of India's last four years' defence budget has revealed that India focused more on the modernization of its Navy and Air Force. Lately, strong initiatives have been taken to enhance foreign investment limit in domestic defence industry.

### **Modernization of Indian armed forces**

India is heavily investing on the modernization of its armed forces. The Indian Army with over 1.3 million soldiers and an additional one million in reserve is the third-largest in the world.<sup>27</sup> It is investing heavily in upgrading its missile defence system. The medium to inter-continental range ballistic missiles from the Agni family have already been operational. India has installed its, supersonic BrahMos cruise missiles in Arunachal Pradesh and the Su-30MKIs at its bases in Assam. The Army has deployed armoured brigades with Russian-origin tanks and Infantry Combat Vehicles in the Ladakh and north-eastern region, and has positioned an additional '10,000 troops in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands' with an already existing amphibious brigade.<sup>28</sup> However, in July 2015, People's Daily, the official newspaper, ran a report which quoted a senior military officer as saying the China did not own any military base abroad, nor did it seek military expansion.<sup>29</sup>

In May 2015, Indian media reported that India was close to finalizing another 'mega military project with Israel for joint development of a medium-range surface-to-air missile system (MR-SAM) for the Indian Army.' Israel is amongst the leading defence suppliers to India, involved in already inked agreements and projects, "worth around \$10 billion over the last 15 years, which range from spy and armed drones to sophisticated missile and radar systems."<sup>30</sup> For artillery up-grading, India will be procuring, 145 ultra-light (155mm M777) howitzers manufactured by British Aerospace (BAE) Systems Inc for around \$660 million, which will be deployed in high altitude areas in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh against China's forward deployment in those areas. In May 2015, BAE announced that the ultra-light howitzers could be partly made locally and proposed to shift its production unit in India in a partnership with a private firm, which is still to be chosen.<sup>31</sup> The Army has also planned to purchase the Bofors guns manufactured indigenously by the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) and enhance its cyber warfare capabilities. In July 2015, India's Defence Acquisitions Council (DAC) approved Rupees 16,900 crore proposals to acquire an initial 428 air defence guns under a 'Buy and Make India' project.<sup>32</sup> The Modi government has also nominated Russian company, Kamov, to manufacture 200 light choppers in India to meet a long-standing requirement of the Indian Army. The Russian company will now make the Ka226 choppers in India to replace the ageing Cheetah helicopters that are deployed on the Siachen glacier. Kamov has already established a company in Bangalore that will manufacture the choppers locally.<sup>33</sup>

The above detail indicates that India has been spending huge funds while up-grading its army aviation and missile systems. 'Make in India' has now become a buzz-word in India.

### **Modernization in the Indian Navy**

The Indian Ocean Region has become a crucial new area for Sino-Indian competition. The Indian Navy, the primary driver of the modernization process has focused on creating a larger fleet without sacrificing quality, while also purchasing support items such as maritime patrol and carrier-launched

fighter aircraft. An article in *Foreign Policy* observed that India is planning to spend almost \$45 billion over the next 20 years on 103 new warships, including destroyers and nuclear submarines. In contrast, China's investment over the same period has been projected to be around "\$25 billion for 135 vessels."<sup>34</sup>

India currently has 9 Sindhughosh class (Soviet Kilo class) and 4 Shishumar class (German HDW Type 209) diesel electric submarines.<sup>35</sup> In September 2012, the procurement of Indian Navy Sponsored (INS) Chakra, a nuclear-powered submarine leased from Russia has placed India into an elite group of countries which operate underwater nuclear-powered vessels.<sup>36</sup> The INS Arihant, India's indigenously designed and developed nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine would become fully operational by late 2016.<sup>37</sup> India has also begun to induct Russian Nerpa-class submarines, which would give its navy a much needed fillip to the submarine fleet while considerably enhancing its sea-denial capabilities. Three Stealth frigates, INS Shivalik (2010), INS Satpura (August 2011) and INS Sahyadri (July 2012) have become a permanent part of India's naval fleet. In 2013, the Navy inducted its latest guided-missile stealth frigate INS Trikand.<sup>38</sup> In order to augment naval surveillance outreach in the Indian Ocean Region, Indian Navy has been engaged in establishing 'operational turnaround bases, forward-operating bases and naval air enclaves'. The Indo-US nuclear deal and regular joint naval exercises have also aimed at containing China's rise in the region.<sup>39</sup> The INS Vikramaditya, a modified Kiev-class aircraft carrier which has been considered to be one of the most significant purchases from Russia, was formally inducted into the Navy in June 2014.<sup>40</sup>

The Indian government has approved the funding for four additional nuclear submarines like the Arihant. An ensuing class of six Ship Submersible Ballistic Nuclear (SSBNs) code named S5, almost twice as big as the Arihant-class has also been approved for development. They would have the ability to carry up to 12 K5 Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) with Multiple Independently Targeted Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) warheads. SSBNs have not been the only nuclear submarines that the Indian Navy would field. In early 2015, the Indian government has cleared a project to build six new hunter killer boats (SSN) for the Navy.<sup>41</sup> India has also been building conventional submarine fleet as well. Under Project-75, six French-Spanish Scorpene submarines are under construction at Mazagon Dock Ltd. The first of these, named INS Kalvari, has recently been 'undocked' and would undergo sea trials in 2016 and would be commissioned into the Navy by September 2016.<sup>42</sup> The Indian Navy has procured many ships in the recent years and that has continued to develop a larger and more modern fleet. However, this modernization process would only show substantial improvement if India's shipyards could increase the rate of production.

The above mentioned information has revealed that India has a plan to spend a substantial amount on the creation of a larger fleet of new ships, destroyers and submarines besides maritime patrol and carrier-launch fighter aircrafts. This would certainly enhance India's sea-denial capabilities.

### **Modernization in the Indian Air Force (IAF)**

Ever since the 1990s, IAF has started acquiring and developing advanced aircraft, weapons, associated technologies and infrastructures. The IAF has consistently received the largest portion of growing capital outlays from 2002- 2012.<sup>43</sup> Despite the large share of the capital outlay budget that the IAF has received, its operational strength has remained limited. Currently, the Indo-Russian joint venture Su-30MKI has been the chief air superiority fighter of the IAF with the capability to carry nuclear weapons. Until August 2014, the IAF had 200 Su-30MKIs in service. Additional MKIs have been ordered to increase the total to 272 for Indo-Russian Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft programme.<sup>44</sup> The Su-30MKI has been projected to form the backbone of the Indian Air Force's fighter fleet from 2020 onwards.<sup>45</sup>

Since 2007, the IAF has been upgrading its MiG-29 fleet. In 2008, India awarded Russia a US\$865 million contract to upgrade its air superiority MiG-29 into multi role MiG-29UPG standard warplanes. According to the deal, Russia would re-arm the twin-engined MiG-29s with air-to-air missiles and the upgraded MiGs would feature increased fuel capacity and would include latest avionics.<sup>46</sup> In March 2010, India and France have finalized a deal to upgrade all of India's Mirage 2000H to Mirage 2000-5 Mk 2 variant with new radar systems, a new weapon suite, missiles and electronic warfare systems. Under the contract, the combat-proven aircraft would be upgraded to next-generation fighter level, which would extend their serviceability for almost 25 years.<sup>47</sup> With its expanding regional influence and power projection, the IAF has been setting up new airstrips and helipads in remote locations. In 2011, IAF has inducted indigenously developed "Light Combat Aircraft Tejas", which would replace out-dated Mig-21 in a few years<sup>48</sup>. It has also signed a deal with Boeing Company for "10 C-17 Globemaster III tactical military transport aircraft worth \$4.1 billion". The C-17 would give the IAF the capability to airlift troops and supplies throughout the Indian Ocean region. In 2011, IAF has also acquired six C-130J Super Hercules from Lockheed Martin, modified for special mission roles for \$1.06 billion.<sup>49</sup>

India has lined up several mega deals which only remain one step short of contract signing. These include two helicopter, contracts with Boeing and the 126 multi-role Rafale fighter deal with France's *Dassault* Aviation worth an estimated \$12 billion.<sup>50</sup> New Delhi would spend close to \$2.5 billion to equip its air force with Boeing's 22 AH-64D Apache Longbow attack helicopters and 15 CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift choppers.<sup>51</sup> A partnership venture of the tanker aircraft deal between Airbus and Tata has been cleared to produce a new series of transport planes for the IAF. This deal, which mandates setting up of a production line in India, has worth \$2 billion. While the initial order has been for 56 aircraft, it would expand to at least 64 on the strength depending upon coast guard requirement.<sup>52</sup> Other non-fighter aircraft sales to India include the American-made Boeing P-8I Orion, which has been utilized for coastal patrolling and anti-submarine warfare and the Israeli-made A-50 Phalcon Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEWC) aircraft.<sup>53</sup>

**Table 2****Military Balance of China, India and Pakistan (2015)**

		<b>China</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>Pakistan</b>
<b>Army</b>				
	Tank	9,150	6,464	2,924
	Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs)	4,788	6,704	2,828
	Self-Propelled Guns (SPGs)	1,710	290	465
	Towed-Artillery	6,246	7,414	3,278
	Multiple-Launch Rocket Systems (MLRSs)	1,770	292	134
<b>Air Force</b>				
	Total Aircraft	2,860	1,905	914
	Fighters/Interceptors	1,066	629	387
	Fixed-Wing Attack Aircraft	1,311	761	387
	Transport Aircraft	876	667	287
	Trainer Aircraft	352	263	170
	Helicopters	908	584	313
	Attack Helicopters	196	20	48
<b>Navy</b>				
	Total Naval Strength	673	202	74
	Aircraft Carriers	1	2	0
	Frigates	47	15	10
	Destroyers	25	9	0
	Corvettes	23	25	0
	Submarines	67	15	8
	Coastal Defense Craft	11	46	12
	Mine Warfare	6	7	3

**Source:** <www.globalfirepower.com>.

Table 2 manifests IAF's present position of military balance of China, India and Pakistan. India has just enough combat capable weaponry to maintain a defensive posture against China, which remains ahead of India in almost all categories. However, India has been spending tremendous funds on the acquisition and development of advanced arms build-up since 1990.

### **Modernization in nuclear field**

India's military modernization of its nuclear forces, particularly the development of a "triad" of delivery capabilities, has been an achievement. Apart from land and air based nuclear systems, India's Navy the *Arihant*, with a second-strike capability to respond to a nuclear attack, would constitute Indian military's third leg of the triad once it would become fully operational by 2016. In 2013, K-15 Sagarika, a Nuclear-Capable Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) with a range of 700 kilometres (435 miles) was successfully launched.<sup>54</sup> The new Su-30MKI fighter aircraft has the capability to be armed with nuclear weapons. The Indian Army has operated several classes of ballistic missiles with different ranges. The Agni series of missiles are capable of hitting major Chinese cities. The latest Agni missile, the Agni-V, had successfully test fired in April 2012. Agni-VI would be a four-stage ICBMs, which has been in the hardware development phase. Agni VI is expected to have Multiple

Independently Targetable Re-entry Warheads (MITRWs) as well as Manoeuvrable Re-entry Vehicle (MaRV). These manoeuvrable warheads would furnish Agni VI with an absolute range, the exact figure of which is currently classified. It would be flight tested by 2017.<sup>55</sup>

India's success in the development of nuclear triad delivery capability would go a long way in providing India with an edge in projecting itself in the region.

### **The impact of India's military modernization on Indian foreign policy**

A stronger military power carries weight in regional and international politics. The Indian defence strategy has almost been clustering around regional politics. The India's pursuit to modernize its defence forces has resulted in changes in Indian relations with other countries, especially the US. A modern Indian military would signify India's greater ability to play its role in maintaining international peace and security. A modernized military would enable India to patrol the Indian Ocean and help facilitate the opening of South Asia's sea-lanes for international trade.<sup>56</sup>

**India in Indian Ocean Region:** India, the world's third-largest energy consumer since 2009, imports 26 per cent of the energy it consumes. Geopolitically, with 7,500 kilometres of coastline and about 1.63 million square kilometres of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), India is the only major power with direct access to the Indian Ocean.<sup>57</sup> An overt sense of 'encirclement' by China through increased presence of the Chinese Navy in the Indian Ocean is emerging in India. It has great concern over the (string of pearls) facilities being arranged for China in the Indian Ocean by allies like Pakistan (Gwadar Port refers), sympathetic states like Myanmar, Bangladesh and island states like the Seychelles — with re-supply port facilities.<sup>58</sup> India has therefore, started modernizing its Navy with an aim to develop its capability to ensure both qualitative and quantitative presence in the Indian Ocean.

India has been keeping an eye on the choke points in and out of the Indian Ocean; in part through its own unilateral deployments, and in part through cooperation with other relevant choke point countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Qatar and Singapore. India has employed a range of bilateral, trilateral and multilateral military drills that hold political and strategic magnitude. It has also entered into symbolic exercises with local minor states. In this category falls "the 'Ind-Indo Corpat' (India- Indonesia Coordinated Patrol) exercises between the Indian and Indonesian navies which have been taking place since 1994, the India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol ('Ind-Thai Corpat') exercise in the Andaman Sea set up in 2006, and the joint naval exercises carried out with the Malaysian Navy in 2008 and 2010. Additional substantive and strategically noteworthy exercises have been conducted with other countries. For instance, since 1993, "joint 'Simbex' exercises, of growing strength and substance with vital strategic implications for presence and choke point control, have been held between India and Singapore, with Singapore providing berthing facilities for the Indian Navy" for entrance and exit purposes from the Indian

Ocean.<sup>59</sup> India's "Look West" policy seeks to pro-actively engage western Indian Ocean littoral states through trade investment as well as through the expansion of security and maritime relations across the Indian Ocean.<sup>60</sup> Since October 2008, Indian Navy ships have been deployed to the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia against piracy issues. India has also signed security pacts with Qatar and Oman and has conducted joint naval exercises with Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa.<sup>61</sup>

**Russia:** After the end of the Cold War, Russia remained India's leading arms' supplier. They entered into many strategic partnerships, military, technical and economic cooperation agreements. Russia has supplied India the Su-30MKI and refitted aircraft carriers, which has given phenomenal advantage to the Indian military.<sup>62</sup> Russia continues to dominate India's market for weapons sale. Moreover, nuclear cooperation between the two has increased during the recent years. Two vital Russian-India nuclear projects are underway. The Kudankulam nuclear power plant is the only nuclear power plant which meets all the "post-Fukushima" safety requirements. The second is awaiting a decision by the Indian government, wherein it has desired to build a new Russian-designed nuclear power plant.<sup>63</sup> Russia has also supported India's candidature as a permanent member of a reformed Security Council.<sup>64</sup>

**France:** It has emerged as India's strongest defence partner in Europe. In 1998, despite condemnation by leading powers in the wake of India's nuclear tests, France refrained from implementing sanctions. In May 2011, the French government ceased all sales of heavy military equipment to Pakistan to ease Indian concerns and to secure military contracts with India.<sup>65</sup> France has supported India to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council.<sup>66</sup> France has also been one of India's leading trading partners in the field of technology transfers. The deal of Dassault Rafale fighter jets is a recent example of their increased strategic partnership.

**The US:** The 21<sup>st</sup> century opened up the portals for a stronger relationship between India and the US. In 2005, the US and India reached a civilian nuclear deal, which enabled India to have access to nuclear technology and keep its nuclear weapons.<sup>67</sup> Since 2002, the US has concluded 15 major arms deals with India worth approximately \$8.83 billion. This figure only accounts for major conventional hardware like transport aircraft, missiles and the like; without the inclusion of smaller sales like Special Forces equipment and small arms.<sup>68</sup> The US arms sales have accompanied more frequent contact between the US and Indian military personnel. The American and Indian navies have been especially dynamic in joint operations. The US Navy pilots have trained Indian pilots in carrier operations, which would be essential as the Indian Navy attains more aircraft carriers. The US has become India's closest partner in terms of joint military exercises.<sup>69</sup> There is a strategic convergence between the US and India. The US President Barak Obama's visit to New Delhi in January 2015 enhanced Indo-US cooperation in defence and nuclear areas.<sup>70</sup> In June 2015, Ash Carter, the US Secretary of Defence, officially visited India. Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and his US counterpart signed the 2015 Framework for India-US Defence Relationship, which builds upon the previous

framework and successes to guide the bilateral defence and strategic partnership for the next 10 years. The framework also recognized the transformative nature of the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI). Both sides agreed to expedite discussions to take forward cooperation on jet engines, aircraft carrier design and construction, and other areas, such as maritime security. Both states have also agreed to pursue co-development and co-production projects that would offer tangible opportunities for American defence industries to build defence partnership with the Indian industries including in manufacturing under 'Make in India'.<sup>71</sup>

To maximize its influence, India has established relations with the choke-point states and carried out joint naval exercises in the Indian Ocean region. India has further fortified relations with Russia and also developed partnerships with France. However, the US strategic partnership with India has been the most significant development in the relationship between the two countries.

### **China's military modernization**

The rise of China's military has been most remarkable in recent times. China is the second largest military spender in the world, having surpassed the United Kingdom in 2008. China's defence budget of 2015-2016 for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been more than three times that of other big spenders such as France, Japan the United Kingdom and nearly four times than that of India.<sup>72</sup> According to data from SIPRI's military expenditure database of 2014, China has increased its military spending by 170 per cent in real terms since 2002.<sup>73</sup>

Beginning in the 1980s, the PLA began to focus more on the role of technology. However, its preparation primarily aimed at local wars. Dean Cheng maintains:

With the rise of Deng Xiaoping...the People's Republic of China (PRC) was no longer compelled to devote its primary energies to preparing for imminent war. This strategic reassessment allowed the PRC to shift its focus to national economic modernization, marked by the Four Modernizations program, which remains in effect. In this revised environment, the main threat to the PRC would come from more limited conflicts, and the PLA therefore prepared for 'local wars,' that is, conflicts not involving the mass mobilization of the nation and the economy, involving lower levels of violence than nuclear exchanges, and which were more likely to occur on its periphery.<sup>74</sup>

Under its ensuing military modernization process, China has been integrating a variety of Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) systems and capabilities. These include not only weapons, such as "anti-ship ballistic and cruise missiles (ASBMs), but also political warfare methods, including legal, public opinion, and psychological warfare techniques". These would complement a modernizing navy and air force<sup>75</sup>. The enhancement of the concept of Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence,



Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) are at the heart of China's military modernization strategy. China is installing "a new generation of C4ISR systems and networks including communications network, data links, intelligence collection systems, navigation satellites and information fusion systems."<sup>76</sup>

China released its white paper on military strategy in May 2015, which underscores China's enthusiasm in the build-up and development of its Armed forces:

The implementation of the military strategic guideline in the new situation, China's armed forces must closely center around the [Communist Party of China] CPC's goal of building a strong military, respond to the state's core security needs, aimed at building an informationized military and winning informationized wars, deepen the reform of national defence and the armed forces in an all-round way, build a modern system of military forces with Chinese characteristics, and constantly enhance their capabilities for addressing various security threats and accomplishing diversified military tasks.....the PLA will continue to reorient from theatre defence to trans-theatre mobility. The PLA will elevate its capabilities for precise, multi-dimensional, trans-theatre, multi-functional and sustainable operations.<sup>77</sup>

### **Advancements in China's missile arsenal**

Missile arsenal is a key component of China's 'counter-intervention A2/AD strategy'. According to the US Department of Defence's (DoD) 2010 Report, 'China has the most active land-based ballistic and cruise missile program in the world.' In 2011, the Chinese military possessed 2000 non-nuclear ballistic and cruise missiles. Its indigenously developed missiles have highly advanced targeting systems.<sup>78</sup> The People's Liberation Army Second Artillery Force (PLASAF) has emerged as a centrepiece of Chinese military modernization plan along with the growth of its nuclear and conventional missile capabilities. China's defence white paper of May 2015 has highlighted PLASAF's role in the modernization process:

PLASAF will strive to transform itself in the direction of informationization, press forward with independent innovations in weaponry and equipment by reliance on science and technology, enhance the safety, reliability and effectiveness of missile systems and improve the force structure featuring a combination of both nuclear and conventional capabilities. The PLASAF will strengthen its capabilities for strategic deterrence and nuclear counterattack and medium- and long-range precision strikes.<sup>79</sup>

China possesses 30 to 40 ICBMs that have the range to reach the US mainland.<sup>80</sup> Its missile arsenal includes silo-based DF-5s, some of which are equipped with MIRVs, DF-31 and DF-31A road mobile ICBMs and older and more limited range DF-4 ICBMs, as well as its theatre-range nuclear missile capabilities. The US DoD's Report of 2015 has noted that:

PLASAF has continued to modernize its nuclear forces through enhancing its silo-based ICBMs and accumulating more survivable, mobile delivery systems. Moreover, it has been advancing its nuclear command, control and communications (C3) capabilities and developing the DF-41, a road mobile ICBM possibly capable of carrying MIRVs.<sup>81</sup>

China established a “direct-ascent kinetic kill anti-satellite capability” to low earth orbit when it hit and destroyed its defunct FY-IC weather satellite in January 2007.<sup>82</sup> China is advancing research and development on a missile defence shield program which constitutes “kinetic energy intercepts at exo-atmospheric altitudes (>80 km), as well as intercepts of ballistic missiles and other aerospace vehicles within the upper atmosphere”.<sup>83</sup> In December 2014, China conducted their third successful test of a new hypersonic missile.<sup>84</sup> Earlier test of hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV) were calculated to have estimated speed of mach—10 around 76800 miles per hour.<sup>85</sup> In addition China maintains a white category of cruise missiles for air, land or sea battle. It includes subsonic, supersonic and tactical cruise missile etc.<sup>86</sup>

For its conventional missile force, Peoples Liberation Army Second Artillery Force (PLASAF) has at least 1,200 Short-Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBM).<sup>87</sup> In August 2013, high-precision Dong Feng-12 (DF-12) SRBM was made part of the Second Artillery. The DF-12 has a re-designation of the 2011 designed M20 tactical SRBM. The M20/DF-12 has ‘built-in counter-measures, including terminal manoeuvrability against theatre missile defence systems.’<sup>88</sup> China has developed the DF-21 Medium Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM) which can effectively target aircraft carriers. This capability has provided China the ability to prevent any naval force from coming closer to its coastline.<sup>89</sup> In an attempt to upgrade the SRBM, the PLA plans to acquire the A300 hybrid rocket system developed by its China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC). It has a range greater than 300km and can engage eight targets in a 20 x 20km area. PLA is set up to acquire indigenously made ‘AR3 artillery rocket system, which uses the 370mm and 280km range Fire Dragon artillery rocket.’<sup>90</sup>

In short, China has vigorously pursued the development of its nuclear and conventional missile capabilities to maximize its force projection and could match or even exceed the US cache of 5500 nukes in the coming decades<sup>91</sup>

### **Modernization of People’s Liberation Army Navy**

In recent years, Beijing has increasingly asserted itself in the maritime realm. Massive modernization in the PLAN began in the mid-1990s and the fleet has gone through a period of rapid change from 1996 to 2006. The quantitative change of the fleet during this time period was modest. By 2006, the qualitative changes to the fleet have been significant. PLAN shifted away from building smaller ships in favour of fewer, bigger and more powerful ships. Between 1996 and 2006, ‘five entirely new classes, featuring displacements from 6,000 to nearly 8,000 tons, entered the fleet’.<sup>92</sup> Since 2004, the PLAN’s surface combatant modernization accelerated immensely. The PLAN has commissioned

no less than 44 new surface naval combatants between 2004 and 2014. “The bulk of the PLAN’s modern surface combatants are composed of four classes: two related destroyer classes, one frigate class, and one corvette class. The PLAN’s main modern destroyers are the six 052C Luyang II-class. Six 052C destroyers have been produced with two commissioned in 2005 and the rest since 2013. These destroyers, the first advanced and indigenous air warfare destroyer China has produced, constitute the core of China’s destroyer fleet. China has evolved the 052C into the more advanced 052D air warfare destroyer.”<sup>93</sup>

In China’s Military Strategy white paper of 2015, the following guideline was provided for PLAN:

In line with the strategic requirement of offshore waters defence and open seas protection, the PLAN will gradually shift its focus from ‘offshore waters defence’ to the combination of ‘offshore waters defence’ with ‘open seas protection,’ and build a combined, multi-functional and efficient marine combat force structure. The PLAN will enhance its capabilities for strategic deterrence and counterattack, maritime manoeuvres, joint operations at sea, comprehensive defence and comprehensive support.<sup>94</sup>

Under its modernization process, the PLAN has amended its manpower policies. It now carries out exercises and deployments to increase skills which are essential for offshore defence and for gaining experience. These steps have amplified PLAN’s ability to commence Anti-Surface Warfare (ASuW), naval air defence and force projection missions. Nevertheless, PLAN’s Achilles heel is its anti-submarine warfare capability. The PLAN seems to be mindful of this failing and has increased the number of ASuW helicopters to allay this paucity.<sup>95</sup> China has also been increasing the geographic areas of operation for its submarines, along with their span of deployment. In its 2014 annual report to the Congress about China’s military and security developments, the Pentagon held that ‘China had 77 principal surface combatant ships, more than 60 submarines, 55 large and medium amphibious ships, and about 85 missile-equipped small combatants. The quality of China’s submarines was lower than those that the US built, but the size of China’s undersea fleet had now surpassed that of the US’ fleet.’<sup>96</sup> In September 2012, the *Liaoning* was commissioned into PLAN. By serving on the *Liaoning*, PLAN service members would gain valuable experience in aircraft carrier operations. In its 2013 Annual Report to the US Congress, The US-China Economic and Security Review Commission reported that:

China had planned to follow the *Liaoning* with at least two indigenously built aircraft carriers. The first likely will enter service by 2020 and the second by 2025. As China’s aircraft carrier force expands and matures, Beijing will improve its ability to project air power, particularly in the IOR and South China Sea and to perform a range of other missions, such as airborne early warning, anti-submarine warfare, helicopter support to ground forces, humanitarian assistance, search and rescue and naval presence operations.<sup>97</sup>

**Table 3****Future trends in PLAN****PLAN Submarine Orders-of-Battle 1990-2020, Total Numbers**

Type	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Diesel Attack	88	43	60	51	54	57-62	59-64
Nuclear Attack	4	5	5	6	6	6-8	6-9
Nuclear Ballistic	1	1	1	2	3	33-5	4-5
Total	93	49	66	59	63	66-75	69-78

**PLAN Submarine Orders-of-Battle 1990-2020, Approximate Percent Modern**

Type	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Diesel Attack	0%	0%	7%	40%	50%	70%	75%
Nuclear Attack	0%	0%	0%	33%	33%	70%	100%

**PLAN Surface-of-Battle 1990-2020, Total Numbers**

Type	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Aircraft Carriers	0	0	0	0	0	1	1-2
Destroyers	19	18	21	21	25	28-32	30-34
Frigates	37	37	37	43	49	52-56	54-58
Corvetts	0	0	0	0	0	20-25	24-30
Amphibious Ships	58	50	60	43	55	53-55	50-55
Coastal Patrol (Missile)	215	217	100	51	85	85	85
Total	329	322	218	158	214	239-254	244-264

**PLAN Surface Order-of-Battle 1990-2020, Approximate Percent Modern**

Type	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Destroyers	0%	5%	20%	40%	50%	70%	85%
Frigates	0%	8%	25%	35%	45%	70%	85%

**Source:** U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission Staff Research Backgrounder, China's Naval Modernisation and Implications for the United States, August 26, 2013

Table 3 shows the future trends in the PLAN. China plans to have about six to nine nuclear-attack submarines and four to five nuclear-ballistic missile submarines, (China currently has only two Jin-class type 094 SSBNs), to be manufactured by 2020. Two of PLAN's conventional aircraft carrier would be operational by 2020. This may limit China's global power projection ambition. However, regionally, PLAN would be capable of achieving the required domination and force projection capabilities in the Western Pacific.<sup>98</sup> In Asia, in comparison to India's aircraft carrier INS-Vikrant, which has the capacity to carry 36 fighter planes, China's *Liaoning* is equipped to carry 50. During the last two decades, China has created a domestic defence industrial base after updating its bureaucracy, establishing quality control and bringing about improvements in business practices. The said arrangements coupled with the ability of Chinese arms manufacturers to integrate with civilian firms have substantially minimized the dependence of the armed forces on foreign

countries. The Song-class submarines and Luyang destroyers are the cases in point.<sup>99</sup>

China has started focusing on the combination of offshore water defence and open seas protection in order to realise its power projection in the South and East China Seas and Indian Ocean region.

### **Beefing up People's Liberation Army Air Force**

The People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) is the largest air force in Asia and the third largest in the world. Currently, it has been undergoing a transformation from a force structured for domestic defence to being able to operate further from China in both offensive and defence roles. China has religiously focused on the modernization of PLAAF, especially from airlift and aerial refuelling capabilities point of view, giving the force extensive reach along China's borders and into the East and South China Seas and other target zones and groups.<sup>100</sup>

A 2010 Report by RAND Corporation noted:

In 2000, of the estimated 3,200 fighter aircraft operated by the PLAAF and PLAN, for example, all but approximately 75 "fourth-generation" Su-27s ("Flankers") imported from Russia and 20 domestically designed and built third-generation JH-7s, were based on the 1950s-era second-generation MiG-19 and MiG-21. China's fighters, moreover, were dependent on ground-based radar or their largely out-dated on-board sensors to locate and identify enemy aircraft, as China had only one operational AEW aircraft. In addition, except for the Flankers, they were limited to within visual-range engagements, as China's domestically-produced aircraft were not equipped with Beyond-Visual-Range (BVR) missiles. China's electronic warfare capabilities were minimal as well.<sup>101</sup>

However, the picture has different view today as PLAAF has fast tracked its modernization process during the last 10 years. In its 2014 Report, the Pentagon maintained that the PLAAF on-going "modernization is taking place at a rate unprecedented in history and is rapidly closing the gap with Western air forces across a broad spectrum of capabilities including aircraft, command and control (C2), jammers, Electronic Warfare (EW), and data links."<sup>102</sup> PLAAF is made up of 'approximately 330,000 personnel and more than 2,800 total aircraft, not including unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).' Of these 2,800 total aircraft, about 1,900 are combat aircraft, 600 of which are up to date (generation 4 and 4.5 fighters). China is also trying to acquire Su-35 aircraft from Russia, along with its 'advanced IRBIS-E passive electronically scanned array radar system.' The Su-35 aircraft should considerably enhance China's air power projection in the South China Sea.<sup>103</sup> China has developed the H-6K variant with new turbo-fan engines for extended range. It is believed to be capable of carrying six land attack cruise missiles (LACMs). Modernizing the H-6 into a cruise missile carrier has given the PLAAF a long-range stand-off offensive capability with precision-guided munitions.<sup>104</sup> China is working on two

major new fighter projects, including the J-20 and J-31 stealth fighters.<sup>105</sup> While most of the PLAAF's newer planes like the J-10 and J-11 are technically domestically produced, the Chinese military industrial complex depends too much on the appropriation of foreign technology.<sup>106</sup> The PLAAF has been forced to retire much of its obsolete equipment, but has gained a significant qualitative improvement in its capabilities. The basic difference between China and India's military modernization processes is China's thriving domestic defence industry. As a result of the integration with its civilian firms, the defence firms have succeeded in making improvements in research and development and production areas. The positive effect of the increased domestic arms production has resulted in increased weapons exports.<sup>107</sup> Unlike India's military modernization process, which has heavily relied on foreign arms suppliers for the latest and greatest military hardware, China has domestically developed and produced many of their modern weapons systems. Defence exports have formed a core part of China's military modernization effort as it greatly facilitates the expansion of Chinese influence. Chinese exports of major arms have increased by 143 per cent between 2005–2009 and 2010–14. China's share of global arms exports increased from 3 to 5 per cent.<sup>108</sup> In March 2013, China surpassed the United Kingdom to become the world's fifth-largest arms exporter.<sup>109</sup> Chinese defence industries have come a long way in producing equipment and creating a strong base for domestic weapons manufacturing to build upon, but it still relies on foreign suppliers, especially Russia, for more advanced weapons technology.

In a nutshell, China has persistently focused on the modernization of PLAAF with the aim to give the force an extensive reach along Chinese borders into the East and South China Seas and other target regions and groups.

### **The effects of China's military modernization on its foreign policy**

China's military modernization has produced two trends in Chinese foreign policy. First, its assertive military power projection has increased in both South and East China Seas to safeguard its own energy security and global trade interests. Second, in many areas Chinese foreign policy has become more moderate as its military has modernized. China's willingness to positively contribute to international peace and stability has maximized. For instance, China not only denounced North Korea's nuclear tests but played a significant role in building multilateral pressure against Pyongyang in 2006, 2009 and 2013 — despite the fact that China has had a long history of political, economic and military cooperation with North Korea. China has also become increasingly positive towards certain global requirements contributing to “naval escort, sea-lane protection, anti-terror cooperation, prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear security,” all of which have been hailed by the international community.<sup>110</sup>

**China's power projection in the South China Sea:** South China Sea (SCS) region has always held strategic importance for being resource rich and

for being a vital maritime route between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. Recent developments in the SCS have established its importance for China's foreign policy, especially when it comes to achieving effective control over its claimed EEZs. The Strait of Malacca has been considered one of China's Sea-Lanes of Communication (SLOC) and has been a chief chokepoint for shipping into the SCS. The Chinese government is concerned over the increased presence of the Indian and American navies along this SLOC.<sup>111</sup>

In 1992, the National People's Congress adopted the Law of the PRC concerning the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone, successfully validating China's claim over the SCS into domestic law. The clashes between Chinese forces and other claimant states increased significantly following the passing of the law.<sup>112</sup> However, with China's escalating economic, military and political clout, other claimant countries viz, Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia and Taiwan have carefully balanced their competing relationship with Beijing. The acquisition of more attack submarines and larger surface combatants has given China a significant military edge over all other claimants, none of whom possess an aircraft carrier.<sup>113</sup>

**Table 4****China's South Sea Fleet**

In addition to the maritime defence from Dongshan to the Vietnam border, this fleet will also be active in the Indian Ocean, a concern for Indian Security establishment. The area of responsibility of the South Sea Fleet corresponds to Cuangzhou MR, and to seaward (including Paracel and Spratly Islands). The HQs of the fleet are located at Zuanjiang, with support bases as Yulin and Guangzhou.

**South Sea Fleet Details**

<b>Submarines</b>	
Nuclear Powered Ballistic Missiles Submarines (SSBN)	1
Nuclear Powered Attack Submarine (SSN)	2
Attack Submarine with Anti-Submarine Warfare capability (hunter killer) (SSK)	18
<b>Major Surface Combatants</b>	
Destroyers with Anti-Ship Missile, hanger & SAM (DDHM)	5
Frigate with Anti-Ship Missile, hanger & SAM (FFGHM)	9
Frigate with Anti-Ship Missile (FFG)	12
Patrol Craft Fast with Guided Missile (PCFG/Patrol Craft with Guided Missile (PCG)	42
Patrol Craft Coastal with Anti-Ship Missile (PCC)	20
Landing Platform Dock (LPD)	2
Landing Ship (LS)	51
Mine Countermeasures Vessel (MCMV)	10

**Source:** Nagender SP Bisht, *PLA Modernisation and Likely Force Structure 2025*, (New Delhi: Vij Books, 2015)

Table 4 shows China's efforts to boost its presence and power projection in the SCS and Indian Ocean region.

The Pentagon's 2015 Report has noted that officially China, 'seeks to ensure basic stability along its periphery and avoid direct confrontation with the US in order to focus on domestic development and facilitate China's rise.' However, Chinese leaders in 2014 demonstrated "a willingness to tolerate a higher level of regional tension as China sought to advance its interests, such as in competing territorial claims in the East China Sea and South China Sea."<sup>114</sup>

**China's enhanced involvement in the East China Sea:** The Senkaku/Diaoyu issue has highlighted China's forceful stance which it has taken on its territorial claims in East China Sea, especially since 2012. At the heart of the dispute have lied eight uninhabited islands and rocks in the East China Sea. They have a total area of about 7 square kilometres and are located in the north-east of Taiwan, east of the Chinese mainland and south-west of Japan's southern-most prefecture, Okinawa. The islands are controlled by Japan.<sup>115</sup> The islands hold significance, as they are adjacent to vital shipping lanes, bid rich fishing grounds and lie near potential oil and gas reserves. They have also been located in a strategically significant position, amid rising competition between the US and China for military primacy in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>116</sup> Within this context, PLAN's modernization process places an increased focus on East and South China Seas.

In short, China's military modernization has influenced its foreign policy in two ways. First, its increased power projection in both South and East China Seas with a view to safeguarding its energy, security and global trade interests. Second, China's active participation in maintaining international peace and stability.

### **Sino-Indian military build-up: Power projection or an arms race?**

China and India do not appear to be engaged in an arms race. They have been instead going through a natural phase as they acquire military power and importance in the international arena.

Although India and China are modernizing their defence forces, yet their inclination in general is to avoid war and extend economic cooperation for the mutual benefit. Tanvi Madan of the *Brookings Institute* has observed the shifting trends in the Indo-China relationship in the following words:

Neither China nor India's relationship with China are what they used to be a decade and a half ago. For one, there is much more high-level engagement, with senior policymakers meeting in bilateral, regional, and multilateral gatherings. The two countries have a number of political dialogues in place, including on Afghanistan and counterterrorism, as well as a defence dialogue and a number of economic dialogues. The countries' border dispute remains unresolved, but mechanisms have been put in place to manage it. They have cooperated in multilateral settings, including on climate change, trade, and global economic governance. Indeed, bilateral



trade has gone from just over \$2 billion in 2000 to 2001 to \$65 billion in 2013 to 2014 and the investment relationship has also grown as well, albeit more slowly. There's also more people-to-people interaction, with close to 800,000 people traveling between the two countries in 2012 — four times the number a decade before.<sup>117</sup>

However, both India and China have been vocal about their sensitivities, recognizing the competitive elements in the relationship, while expressing concern about each other's behaviour in the region. India, on its part, has focused on building up internal strength and external partnerships. Beyond economic growth, India is profoundly modernizing Indian military capabilities. Increased budget has been allocated for improving the border infrastructure, particularly in India's troubling frontiers. Moreover, India has expanded high-level engagement with many of the countries engaged in China's periphery, like Australia, Japan, the US and Vietnam to exert its influence across the region.<sup>118</sup> China has also been increasingly assertive in areas that concern India the most, particularly the Indian Ocean region. However, like India, China has also desired to engage its competitor economically. During Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to India for the first time in September 2014, a border incident highlighted the potentially conflictual side of the relationship. However, the two countries did sign a number of agreements regarding cooperation in the railways sector, on smart cities, as well as did reach understanding on establishing special economic zones in the Indian states of Gujarat and Maharashtra.<sup>119</sup>

Business once again reached at a central stage during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to China in May 2015, where 24 agreements were related to trade, investment, and cooperation in the fields of maritime, railways, space and education were signed.<sup>120</sup> Despite the economic engagements, President Xi's visit to India was accompanied by visits to Sri Lanka and the Maldives (under the aegis of China's 'Maritime Silk Road' strategy) and preceded by Modi's visit to Japan and a visit by Indian President Pranab Mukherjee to Vietnam. Modi's visit to Mongolia and South Korea immediately after his visit to China has indicated the mounting presence of both the countries in each other's peripheries. It has also validated the potential for both countries to leverage relations with third parties to influence the bilateral relationship.<sup>121</sup> The focus on economics and connectivity does not, however, connote that *Realpolitik* would be missing altogether from the future agendas of China and India. Nevertheless, it does not mean that an arms race, which may result in a potential conflict, is in the offing. While the rivalry persists, India-China's economic interdependence, their expanding military capability and a pragmatic approach to foreign policy on both sides would minimize their threat perceptions from each other.

## Conclusion

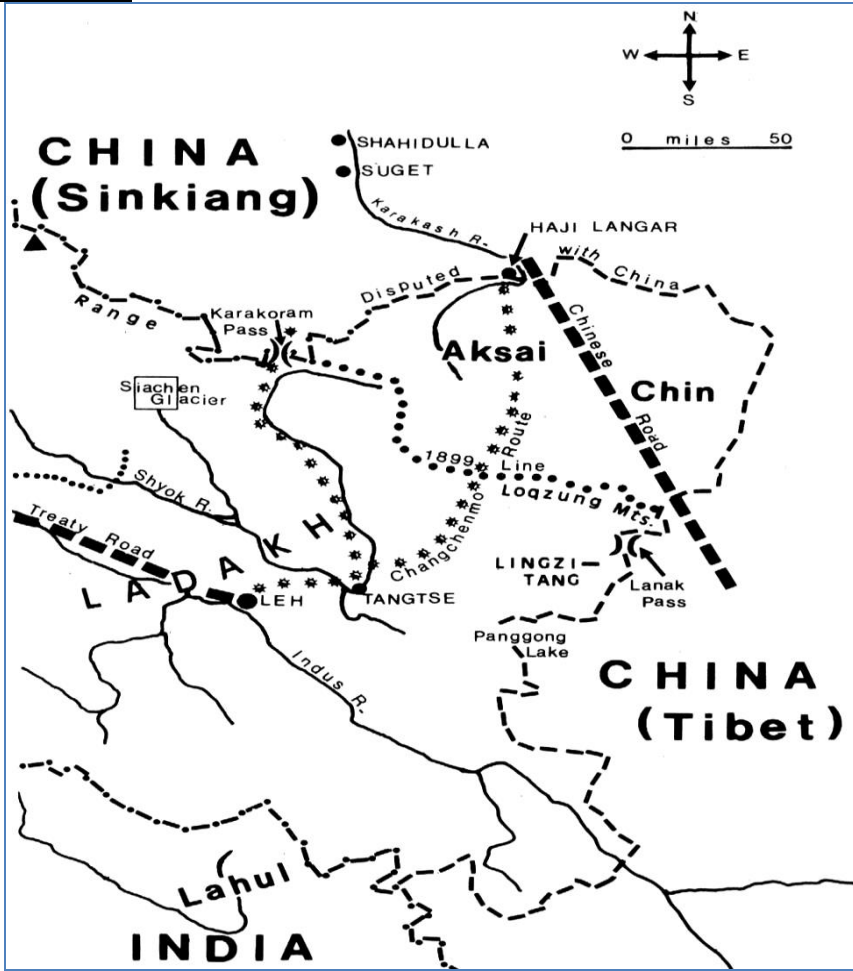
The success achieved by India and China in showing substantive economic growth has encouraged both to go for military modernization in order to ensure their security as well as to project their power. India's land-centric

defence focus has gradually been shifting to maritime strategy. India has sought to become a power in the region in general and in the Indian Ocean region in particular. China has aimed at developing A2/AD capabilities to wield power over the seas and sky close to China. The increased presence of the US in Asia has given a new boost and dimension to the modernization policy which both India and China have been pursuing. Both India and China have been modernizing their missile capabilities and have also been acquiring Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system. India's main focus has been on the development of "nuclear triad". While it has already succeeded in equipping its army and air force with nuclear capability, the commissioning in 2016 of INS Arihant, India's indigenously designed and developed nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine, would complete the nuclear triad. It would augment India's force projection in the maritime domain. C4ISR is at the heart of China's military modernization strategy. It has also developed a forceful nuclear triad, i.e. strategic bombers, land-based missiles and ballistic missile submarines. China has been advancing nuclear C3 capabilities in its missile defence system. PLAN has advanced its ability to initiate anti-surface warfare, naval air defence and force projection missions. The commissioning of naval aircraft carrier *Liaoning* would enhance its air power projection, particularly in the Indian Ocean region and South China Sea, while simultaneously performing a range of other naval missions. PLAAF has been enhancing its capabilities including airborne C2, jammers, EW and data links. China has been increasingly focusing on the development and acquisition of fifth generation stealth combat aircrafts like Chengdu- J 20.

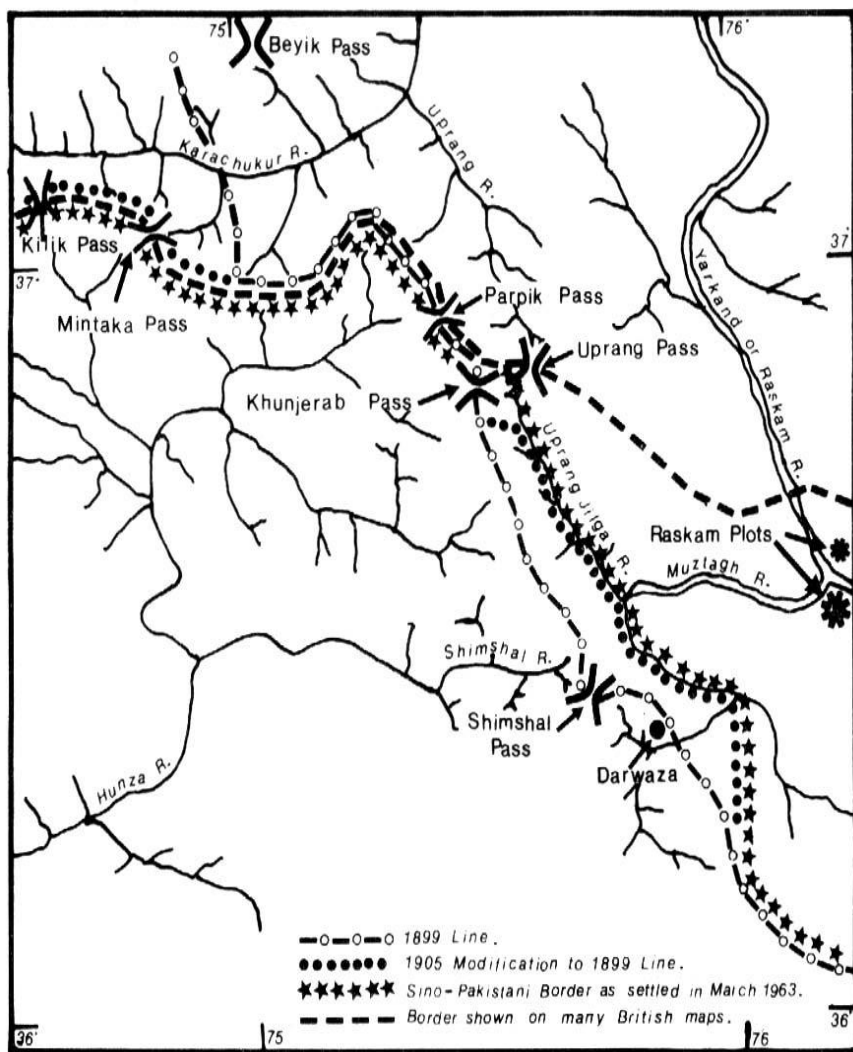
The historical legacy of mistrust between China and India still persists. Both have been engaged in modernizing their respective defence forces, yet the element of cooperation has gained a prominence in their relationship. Their investment on military modernization should not be seen alone in the light of on-going arms race between them. It can be taken as a projection of their growing economic and political power. Despite the fact that both of them have a history of mutual mistrust and suspicion, recent Indo-China bilateral trade pattern has indicated that economic cooperation will take precedence over the existing conflicts and perceived threats. Military modernization, however, would remain a perennial feature.

APPENDIX

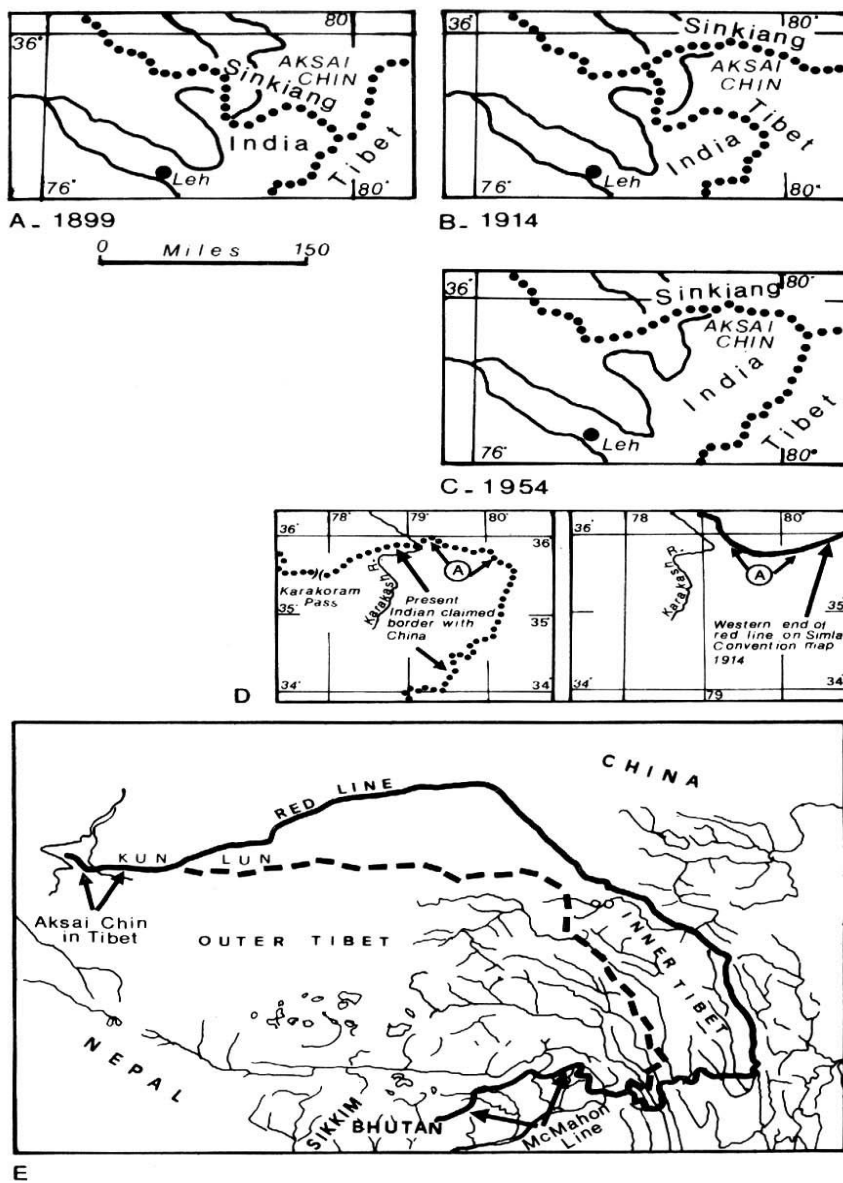
Appendix 1



Map 1 Aksai Chin, Source: Alastair Lamb, Kashmir



Map2. The Western Sector of the Northern Frontier, 1899, 1905 and 1963



**Map 3 The Simla Convention Map and the altered status of Aksai China**

A, B & C. Three stages in the evolution of British and Indian views toward the Aksai Chin. Accepted as the Sinkiang by the 1899 Note (and its 1905 modification), an attempt is made in 1914 by means of the Simla Convention Map to transfer it to Tibet. In 1954, after the Transfer of Power, the Government of India moves the Aksai Chin from Tibet to India, ignoring the fact that in the

years immediately preceding 1947, the British Government of India adhered (if to any line at all) to the 1899 Note boundary as modified in 1905.

D. The north-western end of Sino-Indian border in the Aksai Chin as claimed by India in 1954.

E. The Simla Convention Map. The Sino-Tibetan border (“Red Line”) not only indicates the Aksai Chin border but also the “McMohan Line”.

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# **GREAT POWERS MARITIME INVOLVEMENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN'S SECURITY**

**SUMEERA RIAZ**

*If the world were an egg, Hormuz would be its yolk; Whoever  
is lord of Malacca has his hand on the throat of Venice*

— **Felipe Fernandez-Armesto**

## **Introduction**

This paper reviews Sino-US offshore balancing of maritime interests as an instance of great power politics in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>1</sup> It relies on the realist perspective to argue that clash or overlap of Sino-US maritime interests carries an immense impact on Pakistan's security interests. The argument is based on historical analogy holding that great powers' involvement has been an experience of expediency, opportunism and short-term gain in South Asia which the strong have imposed on the weak. This paper is divided into three sections: 1) Sino-US maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean; 2) Sino-US convergence and divergence of interests and; 3) Implications for Pakistan's maritime security.

## **Sino-US maritime strategy in the Indian ocean**

This section discusses Sino-US and the US' maritime interests and strategy in the Indian Ocean region. First used by Karl Haushofer as *Indopazifischen Raum* in the 1920s, the term Indo-Pacific refers to the Indian Ocean, Western Pacific region, and South China Sea as a single strategic concept.<sup>2</sup> According to Ashley Tellis, both politics and economics join to make a fantastical integration of these two ocean spaces possible.<sup>3</sup> The region, in

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conceptual and dialectical frameworks, constitutes the fulcrum of a global geopolitics — an area of global re-balancing of strategic interests.<sup>4</sup> According to Robert Kaplan, the greatest drama of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that the US — as hegemon of the western hemisphere — would prevent the rise of rival hegemon in the eastern hemisphere.<sup>5</sup> He also asserts that the fight for democracy, energy independence and religious freedom would either be lost or won in the Indian Ocean.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, John Mearsheimer regards China's peaceful rise thesis to be based on incorrect historical analogy. According to him, despite high claims, states are always doubtful about one another's intentions — whether they are revisionist or status quo powers. Moreover, it is equally difficult to distinguish between a state's offensive and defensive military capabilities. Mearsheimer further maintains that China would considerably increase its offensive military power by 2030. Consequently, according to him, as the Sino-US power asymmetry shrinks, the US' maintained strategic primacy in the Asia-Pacific region since 1945 would diminish.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, the present Indian Ocean's security architecture is marked with partnership alliances.<sup>8</sup> If history remains a guide for the future, important lessons could be drawn from China's naval expansion in the Indo-Pacific region.

China's naval projection, at the heyday of Qing dynasty (1644–1912), stretched not far beyond the 'Cape of Good Hope'. Contradicting imperial naval legacy, China's naval growth has drawn attention to Beijing's maritime strategy.<sup>9</sup> As far as the Indian Ocean is concerned, China has already acquired off the shore operational capability. The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) extends its reach as far as the Gulf of Aden and the shores of Libya with Chinese warships making routine port calls in the Middle East. China aspires to build blue water navy which is supported through its operational long-term presence in the Indian Ocean. Simultaneously, China has also increased its participation in multilateral institutions.<sup>10</sup> Its participation in the UN peacekeeping, international disaster relief, counter-terrorism and counter-piracy missions grant a soft image to Beijing's international policy stance, winning China diplomatic favours from several African and Asian states.<sup>11</sup>

However, "the IMF, using the purchasing power parity (PPP) methodology, announced that China had become the largest world economy. By the end of 2014, its PPP-based national product was estimated at \$18.96 trillion, 4.6 per cent higher than the US' \$18.12 trillion. This gap is likely to increase to 25.3 per cent by 2020".<sup>12</sup> China's neighbours increasingly view Beijing's naval projection as a formidable offensive force. Equally interesting to study is the Sino-US competing maritime dynamics in the Indo-Pacific. Washington has considered Beijing's naval modernization as a potential threat to stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Chinese scholars, however, defend Chinese strategy of naval expansion, 'as deriving out of China's trade interests requiring maintenance of blue water navy in the High Seas and not due to any mala-fide intentions of rivalry with the US'<sup>13</sup> As China builds a dominant naval position, its ambitions increasingly clash with those of the US.<sup>14</sup> PLAN's modernization allows Beijing enough military means to lay claim on the Yellow Sea, East China and South China Sea, which supports China's verbal rhetoric.



The US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, was the first US official to express concern about China as a potential source of instability in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>15</sup> In March 2010, Chinese officials warned the US not to interfere in the South China Sea, imposing a no-fly zone in 2013. On 8 April 2014, Chuck Hagel, the US former Defence Secretary, while addressing a press conference on US-China's defence summit, dismissed Beijing's unilateral establishment of a no-fly zone over the disputed islands in South China Sea.<sup>16</sup> Hagel invoked the US defence treaty obligations to defend allies locked in disputes with Beijing. In a press conference with Japanese Prime Minister Shiuzo Abe on 24 April 2014, the US President Barack Obama reiterated American commitment to provide an absolute security to Japan. The US President declared that Article V of US-Japan's defence treaty committed the US to defend all territories under Tokyo's administration, including the Senkaku islands, dismissing unilateral change.<sup>17</sup> Reiterating Beijing's 'indisputable sovereignty' over the islands, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Qin Gang, warned that the US-Japan alliance should be careful not to impinge on China's territorial rights.<sup>18</sup> The statement advised the US 'to respect facts, speak and act cautiously, without taking sides on territory and sovereignty issues and play a constructive role towards regional peace and stability'<sup>19</sup>

China's latest move of land reclamation in May 2015 has provoked a tough US response. The new US Defence Secretary, Ashton Carter, speaking at Honolulu, Hawaii, demanded China's 'immediate and lasting halt to land reclamation'.<sup>20</sup> He declared that the US intended to remain 'the principal security power in the Asia-Pacific for decades to come.'<sup>21</sup> Carter threatened to deploy the US warships and surveillance aircraft within 12 nautical miles of Chinese maritime claim asserting the US will 'to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows.'<sup>22</sup> Asserting Beijing's exclusive sovereignty, Chang Wanquan, the Chinese defence minister, warned the US not to support Tokyo and the Philippines.<sup>23</sup> The Chinese minister expressed Beijing's resolve to use force, if needed, with the incredible will of its military to assemble as soon as summoned, fight any battle and win.<sup>24</sup> However, despite Chinese concerns, on 3 June 2015 Carter took a ten-day tour to partner nations to affirm the US commitment to Asia-Pacific region.

Chinese leaders have defended the Chinese naval expansion as being defensively oriented, terming it 'Far Sea Defence,' holding that the Korean peninsula, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines and Vietnam are China's 'First Island Chain of Defence' in the Western Pacific. Beijing's 'Second Island Chain of Defence' comprises archipelago extension of Guam and Northern Mariana Islands.<sup>25</sup> Restricted currently to coastal periphery, China has built offshore oceanic capability with blue water navy being beyond its territorial periphery.<sup>26</sup> However, recently in July 2015, Zhou Bo, an Honorary Fellow at the *PLA Academy of Military Science*, pointed out in an article that:

Contrary to the fears about China's maritime expansion, the facts on the ground point elsewhere. These 'bases' are found nowhere in the Indian Ocean. The most telling evidence is that the PLA Navy has been conducting counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of the Aden

for five years without any base of its own. Access, rather than bases, is what the Chinese Navy is really interested in the Indian Ocean.<sup>27</sup>

China has sought naval expansion in two key directions. First, beyond the 'First Island Chain' referred to as Washington's 'Forward Defence Perimeter', generally referred to as the 'US great wall in reverse'. Coined by Dean Acheson and Douglas MacArthur in the 1950s, the term implies Japan, Taiwan, Philippines and the islands in between. The US forward defence deployment along the peripheral region has provided for preservation of maritime hegemony in the Asia-Pacific. In 2010, Beijing deployed North and East Sea Fleets through and beyond the 'First Island Chain', and further between the Japanese islands of Okinawa and Miyako in June 2011. China's naval expansion has sought a breakthrough into the US protective shield in order to alter the balance of power which would make the US position unsustainable in the long run.<sup>28</sup> Naval deployment by China led to the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) officials complain about Beijing's restriction of international, in particular, the US maritime and air activities in the near seas. As evidence for the unfolding maritime rivalry, Chinese ships, operating in international waters, 75 miles south of China's new Yalong Bay submarine base on Hainan islands, surrounded the 'USS Impeccable' on 8 March 2009.<sup>29</sup> China's current policy aims at holding down strategic costs for itself while increasing it for rivals in the region.

The 'Second Island Chain' comprises another geopolitical zone of Sino-US competition in the Western Pacific.<sup>30</sup> China plans to stretch its naval influence beyond the Second Island Chain — the Japanese-held Bonin Islands, the US-held Northern Marianas, Guam, Palau and the Carolinas. Its naval submarines creep as far as the waters off Guam — the bastion of the US naval power in Asia-Pacific — making it wary of Beijing's growing naval capabilities, while creating a long-term strategic challenge for the US.<sup>31</sup> China may block access to Korea, Japan and the Philippines, incapacitating the US to intervene in the South China Sea.<sup>32</sup>

Chinese maritime strategy portrays Mearsheimer's offensive positionalist strategy i.e. minimizing gaps in favour of one's own, while increasing gaps with respect to the adversary. China's maritime strategy can be viewed from neo-structural realism that can be interpreted as a mark of offensive positionalism. China's indigenous compulsion of gaining energy security and exogenous compulsion of acquiring security underlie the Chinese drive for naval modernization.

### **Nuclear-powered submarines**

China's naval modernization aims to achieve superiority in maritime strategic nuclear forces. The shift in the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific occurs on account of China's key naval developments: nuclear-powered submarine, missile warships and Supersonic Maritime Strike Aircrafts. China's 'Defence White Paper' has stated that PLAN enhances its nuclear counterattack capability by the introduction of DF-31 and DF-31A road mobile Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) and the JL-2 Submarine-Launched

Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) missiles, launched from nuclear-powered submarine — SSBNs.<sup>33</sup> China has built SSBNs, Type 094, or *Jin* class with improved missile launch, 7,200 miles target capability.<sup>34</sup> Although, scholars invoke prestige and inter-service politics as motivational factors for submarine development, yet *Jin* class-submarines have enhanced China's capacity to deter third party intervention in a regional conflict. The US Office of Naval Intelligence has referred this development as China's Anti Access/Area Denial or A2/AD capability.<sup>35</sup> In addition, improved submarine force would allow China to expand patrol capability in the Western Pacific. China's first-generation Type 092 Xia SSBN is equipped with short-range 1,770 miles JL-1 SLBMs, incapable of conducting an extended patrol.<sup>36</sup>

The development of the credible second strike nuclear capability depends on reducing the probability of detection, enhanced naval sea training and nuclear command and control. *Jin* class JL-2 submarines can evade the US missile defence interception, if launched from certain patrol areas of operation. Ambiguity persists regarding the number of SSBNs China plans to build, their bastions for deployment, command and control in case of crisis and instability.<sup>37</sup> However, the US Office of Naval Intelligence and Quadrennial Defence Review state that China plans to build a fleet of five *Jin* class SSBNs to provide for a near continuous presence at sea, preventing surveillance of area of operations through deployment at Xiaopingdao, Huludao and Yalong Bay.<sup>38</sup>

### **Supersonic Missile Aircrafts and ASBM**

The US forward defence strategy over the past years rested successfully on three carrier task forces positioned in the Western Pacific.<sup>39</sup> China's Naval modernization strains the US to maintain 11 to 12 large-deck nuclear-powered carriers for maritime stability. China's development of long range supersonic maritime attack aircraft supported by nuclear-powered submarines neutralizes much of the US Fleet carriers and expeditionary strike groups' naval capability. Moreover, China's development of the Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles (ASBMs) would be the ultimate naval weaponry which could potentially change the strategic equation.<sup>40</sup>

So far, China has relied on Land-Based Strategic Missiles and SLBMs for nuclear deterrence. However, the US intelligence sources state that Beijing possesses 1500 kilo metre plus range DF-21/CSS-5 solid propellant Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBM).<sup>41</sup> China plans to develop Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBMs), making it a high priority for its military 'Research and Development programme'.<sup>42</sup> ASBMs could hold the US carrier strike groups at risk in the Western Pacific. It seeks to achieve the kill chain of detection, tracking, and guidance including pinpoint accuracy necessary to hit a fast moving target. This requires a prescribed angle of impact to break in a carrier's protective covering or armour.<sup>43</sup> An ASBM with a nuclear warhead solves the accuracy problem. The US Navy implements a strategy of Air and Sea Battle concept to create deterrence. The US aircraft carrier striking forces are ever ready to respond to Chinese aggressive actions against allies in the region.<sup>44</sup> Pivot Asia entails the US naval reinforcement to defend allies by encircling

China along the eastern and southern flanks of the 'First Island Chain' periphery. Moving in Central Command (CENTCOM) from Iraq and Afghanistan in addition to the Pacific Command (PACOM),<sup>45</sup> the US has positioned combat ships at Singapore, the Bay of Bengal in eastern Indian Ocean, and northeast into the South China Sea. It patrols Seventh Fleet to show resilience to China in its support of allies in the region.<sup>46</sup>

In order to contain China, the US has tried to build a strategic ring, mainly by the expansion of its defence treaties which always remained a part of the Indo-Pacific war plan. Western scholars have cited historical evidence to guard allies against Beijing's coercive tactics.<sup>47</sup> The US renews defence treaties with allies for land operations in the region, which Beijing has interpreted as a strategic ring of encirclement.<sup>48</sup> Based at Hawaii, the US Pacific Command monitors the Indo-Pacific.<sup>49</sup> The US plans to shift 60 additional naval fleets and six more aircraft carriers to the region.<sup>50</sup> For example, at the strategic juncture of the Indo-Pacific nexus — the South China Sea, Strait of Malacca, and the Bay of Bengal, the US projects power at Australia's north-western coast. The US has expanded its joint naval exercises with Japan and the Vietnamese navy, the Obama administration has sold arms to the Philippines and built defence ties with India, Singapore, Indonesia and New Zealand.<sup>51</sup>

### **Sino-US convergence and divergence of interests**

The contours of Sino-US power competition in the Indo-Pacific relate to the South China Sea territorial disputes and the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs). Extending in between the Strait of Malacca in the Southwest to the Strait of Taiwan in the Northeast, the South China Sea comprises 250 small islands spreading over an area of two square miles, which are part of either the Paracel or Spratly Islands.<sup>52</sup> The contested region includes:

- East China Sea archipelago atolls/extensions between China and Japan on the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Japan refers to these islands as Senkaku and China as Diaoyu.<sup>53</sup>
- South China Sea claims on the Spratly Islands between China and the Archipelago states of Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia.

The South China Sea has become a bone of contention between the littoral states, China and the US.<sup>54</sup> In a bid to prevent China's expansion of influence, the US global defence strategy seeks to control the resources of the South and East China Seas. The quest for energy security underlies competing claims on hydrocarbon and mineral reserves of the disputed islands' continental shelves.<sup>55</sup> Economic interests lead to the construction of infrastructure facilities increasing regional anxieties.<sup>56</sup> China's claim extends to Senkaku and Ryukyu, located towards its eastern Seaboard on the way to the wider Pacific Ocean in close proximity to Taiwan, based on maps as early as 1914.<sup>57</sup> Administered by Japan, Chinese naval and commercial vessels navigate the islands as an outlet to the sea.<sup>58</sup> Defining the islands as an 'arc of freedom and prosperity',<sup>59</sup> Japan's revised 'National Defence Programme Guidelines' announced enhanced surveillance and reconnaissance operations with additional support for

submarine activities.<sup>60</sup> China, Japan and South Korea heavily depend on the South China Sea for communication and trade with \$5.3 trillion of world trade passing through the South China Sea.<sup>61</sup> The US trade accounts for \$1.2 trillion of this total.<sup>62</sup>

American scholars interpret Chinese regional claims as 'broad and sometimes without total merit.'<sup>63</sup> The United Nations Convention on Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) enjoins upon states to surrender historical claims in favour of the 1982-UNCLOS. The US and China interpret the clause differently. Article 58 of UNCLOS provides freedom of navigation and over-flight within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), while it stresses states to respect the rights of the coastal state, its laws and regulations while availing 'transit passage.'<sup>64</sup> Article 38, paragraph 2 of the UNCLOS defines transit passage as freedom of navigation and over flight 'for continuous and expeditious transit'. This implies that vessels and ships of other states may use the EEZ of a coastal state for transit, but not without consent of the coastal state. China terms surveillance and the US intelligence gathering objectionable and unacceptable as per UNCLOS provisions in Articles 38, 39 and 40. Beijing asserts that foreign warships obtain advance approval before entering the EEZ.<sup>65</sup> Series of incidents strain Sino-US relations over the South China Sea.<sup>66</sup> China resents the US involvement, preferring a bilateral approach for settlement.<sup>67</sup>

Chinese armed force strategy maintains coordinated plans to promote military preparedness alarming, in turn, the US policymakers believe that Beijing aims to disrupt the US military balance which is structured on maintenance of the status quo.<sup>68</sup> The US interprets its strategy as one of defensive positionalist signifying maintenance the gap in the US favour while prevention of it with respect to China. Pivot Asia appears to be counter-effective.<sup>69</sup> President Obama has maintained a clear support for the littoral states favouring Japan against China, while renouncing the earlier neutral approach of previous US administrations. South East Asian states' joint defence collaboration with the US can be interpreted as the US alliances against China.<sup>70</sup>

### **International Sea Lanes of Communication**

SLOCs in the Indo-Pacific region from east to west comprise the South China Sea, the Bay of Bengal extending to the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf as a major transportation route between Far Asia and Europe. Energy procurement along with security of the main supply routes determines the contours of next global power hegemony.<sup>71</sup> The sustenance and growth of Chinese economy invariably depends on free and secure navigation passage for import of energy, raw materials and foreign trade along the SLOCs.<sup>72</sup> China accounts for 20 per cent of global energy consumption, investing \$44 billion in African oil production networks, ranking as the world's second-largest oil consumer surpassing the United States in 2010.<sup>73</sup> Its oil imports from the Middle East and Central Asia would exceed 7.3 million barrels per day.<sup>74</sup> Sino-US maritime collaboration displays in the provision of sea-lane security, counter terrorism, non-proliferation and disaster relief operations.<sup>75</sup> However, China needs to check revisionist ambitions on its economic growth by ensuring safe

passage along three water passages connecting South China Sea with the Indian Ocean along the littorals.

- First is the narrow, five hundred mile long, less than two miles wide passage between Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula known as the Straits of Malacca surrounded by Singapore;
- Second is the Lombok Strait farther towards the south in the Indian Ocean;
- Third is the Sunda Strait cutting along with Lombok through Indonesia towards the south, located in the open waters of the Indian Ocean just to the north-west of Australia.

The US security architecture builds on nuclear deterrence, defence alliances with the littorals and forward-deployment of military forces in the Indian Ocean region.<sup>76</sup> Singapore sits astride the Malacca Strait allied to the US in a defence treaty, building recently a deep-water pier at Changi (an area at the eastern end of Singapore) for the US aircraft carrier operations. The world's most heavily-travelled maritime chokepoint comprises the eastern doorway of SLOCs.<sup>77</sup> Malacca Dilemma refers to 85 per cent of China's oil shipment from the Middle East vulnerable to the US encroachment in case of any war.<sup>78</sup> Clearly, advantage rests with the US superior sea power in the region as Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia and now with India patrolling the SLOC with the US. Realism tends to dictate the US horizontal escalation strategy of building joint naval defence with India, Singapore, Vietnam, Philippines, and Australia. Moreover, multilateral institutions provide a shared ground for the US cooperation with Australia and India in Asian maritime security.<sup>79</sup> Trilateral cooperation entails joint Indo-US-Australia naval strategic collaboration in naval activities.<sup>80</sup> Employing Mearsheimer's analysis, one could discern the US working on the defensive strategy of 'gap maximizer'. The Pivot Asia's strategy is a manifestation of the US additional naval deployment in the region. The Lombok and Sunda Straits offer an alternate naval passage to China. However, the US defence strategic encirclement makes Australia and Japan sit tight in the region. Beijing must maintain military presence in the waters off the northern coast of Australia and Indonesia to ensure safety of passage.<sup>81</sup> Divided into three fleets, North Sea fleet of the Chinese Navy is stationed in the Yellow Sea; East Sea Fleet in the East China Sea; and South Sea Fleet in the South China Sea. Although, Beijing's development of ASBM Dong Feng 21D holding 1,100 nautical miles range can take a large sized US aircraft carrier in one blow, China's naval capability, however, remains inferior to the US. The US bases in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Diego Garcia have provided logistical support to the US nuclear sub-marines, blue-water fleets and multiple carrier strike groups. Employing offensive realism, China has acted as a 'gap minimizer viz-a-viz the US, seeking to minimize power asymmetry while maximizing it with respect to Southeast Asian littorals.<sup>82</sup>

### **Indo-US Maritime Connection: The China Factor**

A combination of traditional and non-traditional threats has converted the Indian Ocean into a zone of international maritime intervention.<sup>83</sup> The 'US

Strategic Guidance 2014' has linked economy and security to developments in the Indo-Pacific, elevating Indian role to a net security provider in the region.<sup>84</sup> President Obama declared US-India relationship as 'defining partnerships in the 21st century.'<sup>85</sup> Within this context, the US Senate Armed Services Committee declared Indo-US joint naval exercises as a 'vital pillar of stability in the Indo-Pacific region.'<sup>86</sup> Indo-US 'Maritime Security Framework Agreement 2006' provides for the US naval technology transfers and co-production of weapons to India.<sup>87</sup> Co-chaired by US-India military cooperation group and India's integrated defence staff, the US Pacific Command supported marine collaboration with India on two prime features: one, Indian naval dominance and military capability, and two, Indo-US common perspective on regional stability through conducting joint maritime exercises.<sup>88</sup>

In the Indian Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India's Far Eastern Naval Command (FENC) overlooks the Indo-Pacific regional security architecture through construction of a new Indian Naval Base *Baaz* at Port Blair. Overlooking the six degree channel, Baaz symbolizes a brilliant strategic location — a bottleneck from where 50,000 merchant ships and 40 per cent of the international seaborne navigation would pass.<sup>89</sup> To supplement Indian naval stretch of influence, the US has delivered India INS Jalashwa and P-8I Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA) with maritime reconnaissance and Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) capabilities. Indo-US maritime interoperability provides long-range surveillance, air interdiction, including airlift and patrolling capability, offering expanded leverage of power and influence to India in the Indo-Pacific. The US strategy works on neo-structural realist balancing against China, while the Indian rationale has sought an informal strategic alliance with the US to contain China. Malabar naval exercises provide for shared sea drills, aircraft-carrier operations and joint amphibious exercises to establish procedural and technological compatibility.<sup>90</sup> While the Indian navy capitalizes on the US nuclear submarine, the US navy has learnt operational capability from Indian diesel-fuelled electric submarines.

Based on rival claims of great power hegemonic ambitions and offshore balancing, Indo-US maritime nexus builds on the history of Sino-Indian contentious relationship history;<sup>91</sup> and energy competition in the Middle East, Central and Southwest Asia.<sup>92</sup> The Indian navy extends its influence as far as Oceania and the South Pacific Rim threatening China. Both resort to internal balancing to maintain independence in foreign policy, while balancing externally against China. The Indo-US overlapping maritime security interests signify a tough security competition which could have dire implications for South Asian regional stability. Power squabble would change the geostrategic landscape of South Asia. China's traditional counter-balancing and preventive strategy manifests in string of pearls strategy in the Strait of Hormuz. Acting as China's node of influence, the string of pearls allows China the diverse acquisition of energy resources. Xi Jinping's Maritime Corridor Belt Strategy bypasses the SLOC via ports constructed along the rim of the Indian Ocean, linked directly through roads to China's mainland. The policy has manifested itself in China's development of commercial maritime bases in the Arabian Sea

in Pakistan (Gwadar, Pasni), in the Indian Ocean Sri Lanka (Hambantota), in the Bay of Bengal Myanmar (Sittwe and Kyaukpyu) and Bangladesh (Chittagong). The Chinese official position defends the ports as commercial in nature serving as trade storage facilities. The US-Indian coalition terms Chinese ports reconnaissance and surveillance facilities along the Indian Ocean Rim. Scholars do not rule out China's naval espionage via the alleged Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) facilities in Coco Islands or via discreet hydrographic research.<sup>93</sup>

The core of China's string of pearls strategy has demonstrated China's strong desire to reduce vulnerability to its key energy imports, protect massive investments, reinforce deterrence and enhance geo-strategic leverage.<sup>94</sup> Chinese navy, however, has not engaged in activities of an overtly military nature on its maritime bases. India and China would counterbalance to prevent domination of one against the other. Indian maritime exercises with the US allies create a reverse string — a necklace of diamonds in the Indo-Pacific.<sup>95</sup> Interesting features of maritime competition can be observed as India excludes China in the Milan exercises involving 15 participants.<sup>96</sup> Indian navy systematically stretches its naval access to Mauritius — 1,200 miles southwest of Addu Atoll in the Maldives, 960 miles off Diego Garcia.<sup>97</sup> To Pakistan's alarm, India can use the atolls as combat base for logistics and reconnaissance using maritime patrol aircraft and Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs).<sup>98</sup> Deployment of combat aircrafts in the southwest expands Indian stretch of naval influence as far as Africa and Alaska.<sup>99</sup> India has held a key position in the PACOM enjoying access to a vast expanse of the Indian Ocean.<sup>100</sup> Indian naval deployment demonstrates appreciation for all key entry and exit points in the Indian Ocean — the Cape of Good Horn in the southwest, the Red Sea to the west, Straits of Malacca, Lombok and Sunda in the east, and the waters around Australia. Indian Far Eastern Naval Command in Andaman and Nicobar allows for India's naval eastward expansion, extending from the Persian Gulf to the Strait of Malacca.<sup>101</sup>

Sino-Indian navies show maritime strategic competition expanding along the southern stretch of the Arabian Sea. India has developed aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines and stealth frigates, sent military satellites to space and established naval bases at Chabahar, Mauritius, Vietnam and Oman.<sup>102</sup> The Chinese counter manoeuvres including joint naval exercises with Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia, defence cooperation with Bangladesh and Maldives, construction of a naval base at Marao Atolls, and a resupply port facility with Seychelles.<sup>103</sup> Defence agreement with Bangladesh allows China's navy access to a re-fuelling station for aircraft in Chittagong, exposing India to be kept under pressure. The Middle Eastern oil accounts for about 67 per cent of India's oil imports, 90 per cent of trade and 75 per cent of oil transportation by the sea. In the event of a conflict, if India tries to choke Malacca strait in the Indo-Pacific, China would be poised to equalize it by increasing its strategic presence adjacent to the Persian Gulf at Gwadar. All these developments would have dire implications for Pakistan's maritime interests and security.



## **Implications for Pakistan's maritime security**

Gwadar Port could unduly draw Pakistan into great power's maritime rivalry, linking it to the 'new great game' fought on the strategic chessboard in close proximity to Central Asia and Afghanistan. According to Selig S. Harrison:

Pakistan has granted China a base at Gwadar, in the heart of Baluch territory. So, an independent Baluchistan serves the US strategic interests. Without Gwadar, it would be difficult to imagine anyone fighting over this unwelcoming deserted and hostile land.<sup>104</sup>

Simultaneously, Gwadar port's inland route raises genuine concern that it would become a tug of war among Pakistan's politicians. Security challenges would further delay if not dampen Gwadar's future prospects. The US grand design aims to neutralize China's geostrategic and economic advantage in Pakistan.<sup>105</sup>

Caught between the devil and the blue sea, the interplay of Sino-US maritime power politics in the Indian Ocean allows for great powers' involvement in the region. Chinese manoeuvres to prevent strategic encirclement that leads to Indian response of maritime expansion in the Arabian Sea, may create a security impediment for Pakistan. The Indo-US maritime collaboration can push Pakistan to counteract by developing a Pakistan-China maritime nexus as a strategic necessity. On the positive side, Gwadar would serve as the farthest seaport from Indian naval bases and airfields. As an additional port further west from Karachi, Pasni and Ormara, Gwadar would provide a strategic edge against Indian maritime dominance. The strategic bottleneck of Gwadar would evade the possibility of Indian imposition of a naval blockade, as was the case in the 1971 war. In September 2014, a flotilla of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy ships made a friendly visit to Karachi, although Pakistan did not allow PLAN bases at Gwadar.<sup>106</sup> These were followed by several other visits of Chinese naval warships.<sup>107</sup> However, Pakistan could face a volatile security threat along its southern borders, along with its regional neighbours Iran and India. Great powers' regional involvement in the Indian Ocean, on the roller-coaster ride of their proxy collaborators, leads to the inherent prisoner's dilemma of overt maritime balancing for regional rivals i.e. India and Pakistan.

Moreover, Gwadar offers financial opportunities as well as strategic challenges for Pakistan. An integral southern tier of China's Silk Road Economic Belt Strategy and a vital lifeline of the proposed \$45 billion Pakistan-China Economic Corridor, as well as the Maritime Silk Route, construction of the port holds a huge potential to transform Pakistan's economic landscape by linking South, Central and Western Asian regions.<sup>108</sup> The development of the economic corridor and the port are mutually beneficial projects, providing Pakistan with a substantial revenue generation resource as a transshipment port for natural resources from land-locked states in Central Asia.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, the port entails the prospects of generating economic activity in Pakistan's under developed hinterland.

Global economy requires the vast oil and gas reserves of Russia, Central Asia, and the Persian Gulf. Over the years, Western Asia has emerged as the energy hub for the rapidly growing economies in Asia-Pacific and South Asia. South Asia's security climate is riddled with undesirable complexities due to external factors.<sup>110</sup> With Pakistan's prime location offshore on the Indian Ocean, China has contemplated numerous energy delivery options, including pipelines and rail/road network connections. With China doubling the present figures of oil consumption by 2025 pooled from the Middle East, Gwadar offers the closest access.<sup>111</sup> Pakistan holds importance to China's bid for energy access both for global and regional influence. Gwadar reinvents Pakistan's role as the most significant player on the global arena. Pakistan's strategic location as a gateway to the West and Central Asia is significant in securing energy routes amid China's growing economic needs.

Gwadar can serve more to China's strategic advantage in the interplay of great powers' quest for energy. Pakistan-China Economic Corridor (PCEC) could serve as the oil and gas outlet for energy reserves of the Middle East. Leased for a period of 40 years and operated by China's Port Holding, China Merchant and Cosco Shipping, ideally, Gwadar would be integrated into China's vision of grand strategy. The port would allow China to emerge as the only great power with access to two seas — Arabian Sea and Western Pacific. Located 72 nautical miles from the Strait of Hormuz, the port would curtail China's sea transportation from 24 to 10 days. Linked to China's western regions, the proposed corridor from Pakistan would reduce China's oil shipment by more than 4,000 nautical miles, allowing overland oil transportation to China. Gwadar would be a feasible strategic solution to China's Malacca Dilemma, overcoming the energy vulnerability amidst Indian Ocean's growing militarization. The upstream land based energy transport route would secure China from external disruptive influences. Gwadar also offers the shortest possible distance from Central Asian energy reserves to the sea outlet in the Arabian Sea. It materializes China's plans to pipe down petrochemicals from Central Asia (Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) and minerals from Afghanistan for sea transportation to China as well as, land transportation through KKH to Western China.

Simultaneously, Indo-US support to the construction of Chabahar, would strain Pakistan's relations with India and Iran.<sup>112</sup> The US fifth fleet exercises a total geo-political control over China's hydrocarbon lifeline in the Persian Gulf. Hence, Beijing's rationale for naval presence in the Arabian Sea is to secure energy investments in Africa and the Middle East. Pakistan may be tempted to provide berthing rights to PLAN warships. Hosting PLAN bases would be in Islamabad's national interest. However, transformation of commercial ports into defendable forward naval bases would require high levels of technical, logistic and strategic expertise. Gwadar has in store a number of ship ready options for China's eventual naval expansion. The port allows China a strategic foothold through the provision of logistics, supplies and repairing facilities to sustain long time maritime operations on the sea. However, China

may find it difficult to defend isolated naval bases from the US or Indian cruise missile strikes or airborne attacks during wartime.

The Gwadar project also faces security impediments for Chinese workers and engineers in the attempt to foil prospects of the energy corridor.<sup>113</sup> In 2004, a car bomb killed three Chinese engineers, two Chinese engineers were kidnapped at the Gomal Zam Dam in South Waziristan, Gwadar airport too came under rocket attack, three Chinese working at the Gwadar seaport were gunned down by unknown attackers at Hub in 2006<sup>114</sup> and three Chinese mechanics were killed in an attack in Peshawar on 8 July 2007. Pakistan has substantial evidence of Indian RAW agents' involvement in the attacks on Chinese workers.<sup>115</sup> Evidently, the Chinese deaths have discouraged private enterprise resulting in a general reluctance to invest in projects in Pakistan.<sup>116</sup> To prevent derailment of Pakistan's economic growth and strategic partnership with China,<sup>117</sup> a task force to ensure foolproof security for Chinese nationals has been formed.<sup>118</sup>

Pakistan has 990 kilometres long coastline west to east, and its EEZ covers 240,000 square kilometres coastal line. Conditional to settlement of the maritime boundary with India, almost 50,000 square kilometre of continental shelf will be added to Pakistan's territory. Islamabad became an active member of US-led multinational Combined Task Force, CTF 150, covering an area of responsibility from Gulf of Aden to the Gulf of Oman, the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea as part of international maritime collaboration.<sup>119</sup> In January 2009, the Combined Maritime Task Forces headquarters in Bahrain formed CTF 151, comprising ships and aircrafts from 20 countries.<sup>120</sup> To reinforce regional maritime security, Pakistan's navy has also instituted multinational exercises called AMAN since 2007.<sup>121</sup> Pakistan Maritime Doctrine entitled 'Preserving Freedom of the Seas' provides for national perspective on maritime security.

Pak-China strategic convergence of interests envisions energy corridor from Central Asia and the Persian Gulf while investing in mega projects in Pakistan. For Islamabad, this is an opportunity to promote trade and expand its economy.<sup>122</sup> Apparently, the realist model frames Indo-US desire to prevent prospects for China's transit route to Central Asia by obstructing developmental projects in and along the PCEC and Gwadar.

Realist balancing frames Indo-US policy designs in Gwadar and Baluchistan. Indian advantageous position in geography and maritime capability allows the US to build political, strategic and economic ties with India, while it maintains fluctuating and fluid security relations with Pakistan. If Gwadar develops, Indian financial stakes in the Gulf centres would be dimmed. Moreover, a full scale operational Gwadar would allow China a speedy access to energy reserves in Africa and the Middle East. Conversely, instability retards implementation of PCEC in the southern belt, which would retard or delay China's economic development and growth. The success of PCEC would make the region a strong foothold for China. The larger global design to engender regional instability would restrict Pakistan's prospects to benefit from the region's wealth. Insecurity in Baluchistan would increase the prospects for Chabahar, forcing China to divert investments from Pakistan. India funds a 200

kilometres long road to link Chabahar to Zaranj and then Herat in Afghanistan bypassing the transit to Central Asia available through Pakistan.<sup>123</sup> Chabahar's development at a fast pace, its well-connected rail/road infrastructure would make the port a better strategic option in the prevalent strategic environment. Iran, India and Afghanistan accord on Chabahar constitute a strategic threat for Pakistan in the post 2014 geo-strategic environment.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has analysed the patterns of great powers involvement in the region, it has argued that Sino-US off-shore balancing of their maritime interests carries immense security implications for maritime regional stability along the South Asian coastal periphery. The Indo-US collusion of maritime security interests has inflated the role of Indian navy in the Indian Ocean region. The move compels Pakistan's counter balancing response to neutralize Indian preponderance along its coastal belt. It has allowed Pakistan to increase its maritime collaboration with China as a strategic necessity. The Indo-US maritime and strategic collaboration increases the propensity for armed polarization along the long stretch of Indo-Pak coastal periphery.

Pakistan has advocated sovereign equality, non-interference, territorial integrity and mutual coexistence. Its leadership is poised to resist hegemonic and dictatorial ambitions of regional dominance from any single state in Southwest and Central Asia. In a recent development, Pakistan's Army Chief Gen. Raheel Sharif highlighted Pakistan's firm commitment to provide for speedy operationalization of Gwadar and the PCEC. Civil-military amicable relations in Pakistan provide for swift implementation of the projects. Pakistan has been committed to implement the grand agenda of Pak-China national rejuvenation, stability and growth. Pakistan's establishment has held that peace and stability cannot be confined to territorial boundaries. It needs to be shared across borders in today's world of trans-border interconnectivity and regional integration.

Embarking on an open door policy of regional cooperation, Pakistan wants friendly relations with all its neighbours including India. With unflinching faith in joint stakes of mutual development, Pak-China strategic partnership offers collective prospects for countering formidable challenges of regional dominance, hegemony and cross-border terrorism in the region. PCEC will prove to be a game-changer, which would empower the three billion people in the wider hinterland of Southwest and Central Asian region. Pak-China strategic partnership offers the prospects for mutual development and growth, dwelling on win-win strategy of good neighbourly relations.

## Notes and References

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# ACCEPTING NUCLEAR INDIA AS A MEMBER OF NSG: CHALLENGES FOR NON-PROLIFERATION AND SOUTH ASIAN STRATEGIC STABILITY

ZAFAR ALI

## Introduction

India is now recognized as a nascent major power and as a 'natural partner' of the US. India is also viewed as a potential counterweight to China's growing power. Since 2004, Washington and New Delhi have pursued a 'strategic partnership'. Numerous economic, security and global initiatives, including the plans for 'full civilian nuclear energy cooperation,' are underway. In 2005, the US and India signed a ten-year defence framework agreement which called for expansion of bilateral security cooperation. In the same year, the US President George Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared to transform this relationship agreeing to establish a global partnership. Subsequently, the US undertook an intense diplomatic campaign to persuade Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) members for an India-specific exemption from the full scope International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and NSG conditionality.

The debate over proposed incorporation of India into the NSG needs to consider several key issues; a) Claimed non-proliferation benefits; b) International non-proliferation norms; c) The likelihood of expansion in India's nuclear weapons programme and; d) Regional impact.

In 2005, the US President Bush and Indian Premier Manmohan Singh agreed to transform the US-India relationship to establish a global partnership. Subsequently, the US began an intense diplomatic campaign to persuade other NSG members for India-specific exemption from the full scope IAEA

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safeguards and NSG conditionality. Full scope safeguard is a requirement under the NSG guidelines for supply of nuclear materials. While backers of the deal expected strategic and commercial advantages, the US administration had chosen India for the containment of rising Chinese power. Michael Krepon of Henry L. Stimson Centre, Washington DC, wrote that 'the deal's backers in the United States expected profits, jobs and a transformed US-India partnership to help counter China's rise.'<sup>1</sup> Fears were raised over the rationale of the deal and perceived objectives fell on deaf ears while the US passed US-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Act in 2008. In early November 2010, President Obama visited India where he announced the US support for India's membership in the Multilateral Export Control Regimes (MECRs) such as NSG, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Australia Group (AG), and the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) in a phased manner, Obama also pledged to remove some Indian entities from the US Department of Commerce's 'Entity List.' The question is whether the states should ignore the non-proliferation commitments made during the earlier Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conferences (Revcons). Wherein they had reaffirmed that new supply arrangement for nuclear transfers, or should they require the recipient to accept IAEA's full scope safeguards and international legally binding commitments not to acquire nuclear weapons.<sup>2</sup> The debate over proposed incorporation of India into the NSG needed to consider several key issues, such as claimed non-proliferation benefits; International non-proliferation norms; the likelihood of expansion in India's nuclear weapons programme, and the regional impact of India's membership of NSG.

This paper attempts to explore whether the acceptance of nuclear India into the fold of NSG would have any negative or positive implications for international non-proliferation efforts and South Asian strategic stability. Pakistan and Israel both, being non-NPT states, like India, would not be comfortable with such discrimination. This observation would be less applicable to Israel due to its non-declaration of its nuclear capability.

## **The evolution of export control and MECRs**

The nuances of the cold war dictated strategic controls for many years. During this period, the Western bloc, led by the US, pursued its containment policy towards the communist countries i.e. Soviet Union, China and their allies. To maintain technological edge, the US-led western camp implemented armament and economic superiority export control regimes centring on Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Strategic Export Control (COCOM). In the early 1950s, the peaceful use of nuclear energy was promoted through Eisenhower's 'Atom for Peace' programme. To prevent further spread of nuclear weapons, negotiations on arms control and disarmament resulted into the NPT which opened for signature on 1 July 1968 and entered into force on 5 March 1971.<sup>3</sup>

The supplier states wanted to reach a common understanding on how to implement Article III.2 of the treaty. Within this context, in 1971, a group of supplier states framed a list of equipment or materials which were especially

designed or prepared for processing, the use or production of special fissionable materials and the conditions and procedures to govern their exports. This group came to be known as the Zangger Committee. The 1974 nuclear test by India revealed that the items transferred for peaceful purposes could be diverted to military use as well. According to Seema Gahlaut, 'the nuclear test by India of 1974 necessitated the creation of an alternate arrangement that would regulate nuclear trade more strictly than the NPT bound Zangger Committee.'<sup>4</sup> This resulted in the creation of NSG. In the 1980s, the use of chemical and biological weapons during Iran-Iraq War spurred the establishment of AG in 1985. The growing availability of missile technology precipitated the formation of MTCR in 1987. Towards the end of the cold war, COCOM was abolished and a new regime which aimed to prevent the destabilization of accumulation of munitions was established in 1995 WA. Under COCOM, control was based on end-user (Communist Countries) whereas under the new regimes, the control was placed on commodities as well as destinations. In the post-Cold War period, there has been a heightened interest in international mechanisms to focus on the supply side of the proliferation chain, in addition to destination and end use. This is the basis of current 'strategic export controls,' which broadly envisage controls on the export of all items specially designed for military use and those with dual application.<sup>5</sup>

### **Current structure of international non-proliferation/export controls**

The current structure of international non-proliferation/export controls is made up of formal and informal arrangements that have a mixed record of failures and successes. While the regimes have similarities regarding membership criteria, non-proliferation objectives and conditions of supply and others, they are different in commodity jurisdiction, while supplementing each other. 'The existing non-proliferation regime is built around a complex web of freely negotiated multilateral arms control and disarmament treaties i.e. NPT, Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), and Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) ....Export control arrangements such as the Zangger Committee, NSG, WA, MTCR and the AG.'<sup>6</sup> They supplement existing formal agreements such as the NPT, CWC and BTWC etc. Moreover, there have been other informal initiatives like Container Security Initiative (CSI), Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and Middle Power Initiative (MPI) which are largely led by the US for the implementation of Washington's nuclear non-proliferation policy.

### **The role of MECRs: An analysis**

Each regime has emerged as a response to some major event highlighting the vulnerability of the current system and weaknesses in preventing proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). One factor behind the 'Atoms for Peace' programme remained to prevent the use of nuclear technology for military purposes through the induction of other countries in the



peaceful use of nuclear technology. To restrict the number of Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) the NPT was formed, which was a complex bargain between the NWS and Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS). Under the terms of the treaty, NWS undertook:

not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.

While the NNWS agreed:

not to receive the transfer from any transfer or whatsoever; of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.<sup>7</sup>

In May 1974, India conducted nuclear tests using plutonium produced by the Canadian supplied CIRUS along with the US provided reactor which was to be used for peaceful purposes only. The Indian nuclear test dispensed a big blow to the NPT and highlighted that technology provided for peaceful purposes could be diverted to weapons programme. This led to the establishment of NSG in 1975. The use of chemical and biological weapons during the Iran-Iraq War precipitated the establishment of AG in 1985 that aimed to prevent the spread of materials and technology that could be used for developing chemical and biological weapons. In the early 1980s, growing availability of missile technology spurred by 'several events, including South Korea's 1978 ballistic missile test, Iraq's attempt in 1979 to purchase retired rocket stages from Italy. Also, India's July 1980 SLV-3 test, and the former German firm Orbital Transport and Raketen Aktien Gesellschaft (OTRAC) 1981 testing of a rocket in Libya, contributed particularly to the US apprehensions about the growing danger.'<sup>8</sup> These events led to the establishment of MTCR in 1987 by Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the US. Another major multilateral regime is WA, which was established in 1996. Towards the end of the Cold War, COCOM was abolished as it had lost its rationale which was East-West acrimony. Within this context, WA was established as a successor to COCOM.

Each regime has a basic set of membership criteria that a prospective state is required to meet. It broadly includes having membership of major non-proliferation treaties and/or regional/international agreements like membership of Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ) and others. The regimes have some common characteristics. For example, they are informal (political) agreements, they are not legally binding, they issue common guidelines for exports of WMD related and dual use items, they issue lists of controlled items that are

periodically revised. Their decisions are based on consensus but allow for national discretion in implementation.<sup>9</sup> The regimes have closed or restrictive membership and no undercut policy except in the case of WA. However, there are neither any formal means of identifying violation by a member nor an institutionalized means of imposing sanctions for such violations. There is also a lack of information sharing within these regimes and their consensus based decision-making process hinders changes that are essential due to rapid technological developments. The following table captures common rules of operation of the four MECRs:

**Table 1****Common Rules of Operation**

<b>Rule/Regime</b>	<b>NSG</b>	<b>AG</b>	<b>MTCR</b>	<b>WA</b>
Informal	X	X	X	X
Closed Membership	X	X	X	X
Consensus	X	X	X	X
National Discretion	X	X	X	X
Annual Plenary	X	X	X	X
Detailed Control Lists of Items	X	X	X	X
Broad Guidelines for Export Conduct	X	X	X	X
Technical Working Groups	X	X	X	X
Episodic Review of Control Lists	X	X	X	X
Episodic Review of Guidelines	X	X	X	X
Rotating Chairmanship	X	X	X	X
Permanent Secretariat	-	-	-	X
Permanent Point of Contact	X	X	X	-
Secured Database of Shared Information	X	X	X	X

**Source:** Seema Gahlaut, 'Multilateral Export Control Regimes: Operations, Successes, Failures and the Challenges Ahead,' in Daniel Joyer, ed., *Non-proliferation Export Controls: Origins, Challenges, and Proposals for Strengthening*, (Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), p.11

Today, proliferation threat is more diverse and increasingly difficult to counter. Goods and technologies with sensitive military applications frequently have legitimate commercial applications as well. Economic liberalization empowers private enterprises at the altar of state control, thus influencing governmental decisions. As mentioned in the US Government Accounting Office (GAO) report, 'the regimes have adapted to changing threats in the past. Their continued ability to do so will determine whether they remain viable in curbing proliferation in the future or not'.<sup>10</sup>

MECRs have played an important role in regulating and controlling the export of sensitive materials to enhance international non-proliferation efforts. They have worked to establish international standards and helped in the prevention of proliferation of WMDs. In January 1992, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), inter alia underlined the importance of effective export controls in preventing proliferation, though one may point out many weaknesses and failures. For example, Iraq's procurement of key components for its WMD

programme, Iran's acquisition of sensitive nuclear materials and India's efforts to circumvent export controls for the acquisition of sensitive equipment from the US and perhaps elsewhere.<sup>11</sup>

### **Why focus on NSG**

Established in 1975, NSG is an informal grouping of 48 countries including the five NPT recognized NWS who are also permanent members of the UNSC.<sup>12</sup> Aim of the NSG guidelines is to ensure that nuclear trade for peaceful purposes does not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices without hindering international trade and cooperation in the nuclear field. The NSG was created following India's explosion of a nuclear device which was a non-nuclear-weapon State. India's nuclear explosion, which demonstrated that nuclear technology transferred for peaceful purposes could be misused.<sup>13</sup> At a time when the NPT and MECRs are severely tested by Iran, South Korea and possibly Syria, opening doors for India's acceptance in the NSG would impact international efforts in reaching a diplomatic resolution of these issues. This could set a precedent for future non-proliferation efforts, and could have an impact on regional environment as well. For India, it appears to be more a matter of prestige, to sit on the high table of nuclear suppliers and thus get a semblance of recognition as a nuclear weapon state. Anil Kakodar, former chairman of India Atomic Energy Commission and Director Bhaba Atomic Research Centre (BARC), reacting to NSG's June 2011 decision on strengthening controls over transfer of Enrichment and Reprocessing (ENR) technology to non-NPT members. He stated that 'the world needs to understand our sensitivities, we cannot be made a pariah all over again.'<sup>14</sup> On the technological level, India's NSG membership would allow access to advanced nuclear materials and technology that could be exploited for the modernization of its nuclear weapons, and commercially it would open up India's burgeoning nuclear market to foreign investments. Majority of the existing NSG member states are also members of other key MECRs. Accepting new members in NSG would therefore facilitate eventual entry into other regimes as well. For this reason, it would also be an important landmark for India's prestige to have a subsequent entry into other regimes.

### **Efforts to incorporate India into MECRs**

Recognizing India as a key to the US strategic and commercial interests in the region, the US has sought to enhance its partnership with India in multifarious fields. Impetus for this new found friendship emerged in the early 1990s following India's economic reforms. The US President Bill Clinton's visit to India in 2000 further cemented the US-India ties. As part of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), signed in 2004, both states 'agreed to expand cooperation in three specific areas; civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programmes and high-technology trade.'<sup>15</sup> The movement towards cooperation in the civil nuclear field was formally endorsed during Indian premier's visit to Washington in July 2005. According to the Joint Statement, President Bush told

the Indian prime minister for achieving full civil nuclear energy cooperation with India as it realizes its goals of promoting nuclear power and achieving energy security. President Bush also pledged that he would seek an agreement from the Congress to adjust the US laws and policies, and that the US would work with friends and allies to adjust the international regimes to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India. The Indian prime minister on his part conveyed that India would reciprocally agree to assume the same responsibilities and practices, to acquire the same benefits like other leading countries with advanced nuclear technology such as the US.<sup>16</sup> The momentum continued and finally resulted in the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. The US had to amend domestic laws especially the Atomic Energy Act 1954 and persuaded other NSG members for India-specific exemption from the NSG conditionality on nuclear trade with states outside the NPT. The Bush administration lobbied intensely and even arm twisted reluctant members of the NSG to support India's specific exemption.

This gradual process continued and the next US president categorically supported India's membership in the MECRs. During his November 2010 visit to India, President Obama announced the US support for Indian membership into four regimes: the NSG, MTCR, AG, and WA, which aim to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological, chemical weapons and de-stabilization through the accumulation of conventional munitions. The US administration launched diplomatic efforts to persuade the NSG members for a favourable vote on India's NSG membership. Prior to the NSG June 2011 plenary meeting, a confidential May 23 US drafted 'Food for Thought' paper, which was circulated to NSG members. This paper offered two options for bringing India into the group. One was to revise the admission criteria 'in a manner that would accurately describe India's situation.' The other would be to 'recognize' that the criteria, known as 'Factors to Be Considered,' are not 'mandatory criteria' and that a candidate for membership does not necessarily have to meet all of them.<sup>17</sup>

Export control is not a stand-alone field, rather it is an integral part of a country's larger political, security and economic infrastructure. The efforts to support India's membership in MECRs suggest that commercial interests and power politics are more dominant than the broader non-proliferation agenda and established norms. The efforts are part of a grand design to build India as a major power for counter balancing neighbouring China. NSG membership could perhaps be a stepping stone for India's bid to gain a permanent seat in the United Nation Security Council (UNSC). On his trip to India in November 2010, Obama announced the US support for India's bid to become a permanent member of the UNSC hoping to elevate the nation of a billion people to 'its rightful place in the world' alongside an assertive China.<sup>18</sup>

After years of discussion on revisiting the guidelines for transference of Enrichment and Reprocessing (ENR) technology, NSG in its meeting on 23-24 June 2011 at Noordwijk, Netherlands, tightened its controls over the transfer of sensitive ENR technology. According to Arms Control Association, 'The main change from the previous guidelines is the addition of the list, known as "objective criteria". Among other requirements, potential recipients of sensitive

technology must be parties to and “in full compliance” with the NPT, and they must be adhering to IAEA safeguards requirements.’<sup>19</sup> Yet India’s NSG candidature has strong support of the US, Russia, France, Britain and Germany and some supplier states are keen to circumvent guidelines of the regimes and indulge in nuclear cooperation with India. For example, the US Assistant Secretary of State stated that ‘The Obama administration remains fully committed to the civil nuclear deal and to all of the commitments that were made during the president’s visit in November 2010.’<sup>20</sup> Later, identical views were expressed by the Russian and French officials also.

### **India as an NSG member: Implications**

NSG was created to reinforce the NPT by establishing guidelines and laying down conditions for supply of nuclear technologies. For commercial and geo-strategic interests, few NSG states have entered into nuclear cooperation with India in disregard to the regime’s guidelines and now efforts are underway to incorporate it as partner country into MECRs. On its part, India has also desired so, in order to gain a place at the high table of nuclear politics. Efforts are made to bring India into the non-proliferation mainstream, in the run up to the 123 Agreement, supporters of the deal has argued that it would benefit non-proliferation. The US companies would fetch their share of the 100 billion dollar pie, address India’s energy needs and create over 27,000 jobs in the US. However, India did not budge, rather its contractual deliberations with other states like France, Russia, Canada and others intensified after the 123 Agreement, whereas the US industry has thus far not benefited. Hi-tech commerce is not a one way street. To be a part of hi-tech trade, states have to abide by the regimes’ guidelines in order to gain benefits. Taking the Indo-US civil nuclear deal as an example, Manmohan Singh had announced that ‘India would reciprocally agree that it would be ready to assume the same responsibilities and practices and acquire the same benefits and advantages as other leading countries with advanced nuclear technology such as the United States.’ In his recent analysis, Michael Krepon maintained that:

Six years later, what do the costs and benefits of the US-India civil nuclear deal look like? First, even with the positive outcome of the 2010 NPT Revcon, non-proliferation norms have been weakened and, at best, will take time to reinforce. The deal has added to the IAEA’s woes and has made the NSG a weaker institution....the notion of India joining the “non-proliferation mainstream,” as advocates of the deal predicted, has been a mirage.... India remains in limbo on the CTBT.... Fissile material production for nuclear weapons continues ....<sup>21</sup>

This manifests what policies India is likely to pursue whether or not it is part of the NSG. Notwithstanding this, NSG’s membership is akin to the Indo-US civil nuclear agreement in its impact on non-proliferation and regional stability. Without signing the NPT, India would become eligible for commerce in hi-tech nuclear trade and gain access to advanced nuclear technology. This

would enable it to divert indigenous resources for enhancing and modernizing its nuclear weapons. It could possibly lead to an arms race between India and China, on the one hand, and India and Pakistan on the other, thus igniting destabilizing tendencies within countries of the region. Michael Krepon has observed that 'it is even harder to stabilize a triangular nuclear competition, as in the case with China, India and Pakistan.'<sup>22</sup> As China seeks to balance the US, India, in turn, measures its requirement against China, and Pakistan takes measures to balance against India. Pakistan voiced its reservations at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) through its envoy, who stated that 'the plan, announced during Obama's visit to India, would further destabilize the volatile nuclear-armed South Asian region.... These developments will amount to a paradigm shift in strategic terms.... The message that such steps transmit is that the major powers can change the rules of the game if it is in their interest to do so.'<sup>23</sup> He also said that the India's NSG membership would enable it to improve its nuclear weapons and delivery capability and as a consequence, Pakistan will be forced to ensure the credibility of its (nuclear) deterrence. China has also objected to the exception being made for a single country - India.<sup>24</sup>

Export control regimes should be more inclusive and should not create any exceptions. Discriminatory policies based on subordinating principles to politics could weaken international non-proliferation institutions and may fuel arms race. In his address to the Conference on Disarmament, Pakistani envoy also said, 'apart from undermining the validity and sanctity of the international non-proliferation regime, these measures shall further destabilize security in South Asia.'<sup>25</sup> The NSG's membership would allow India for an access to ENR materials and technologies that could be used for the improvement and enhancement of its nuclear arsenals. The latest NSG's move to condition transfer of ENR technologies and equipment to NPT membership and IAEA full scope safeguards has probably not been received well in India. An NTI report suggests, 'the move could prevent India from importing the nuclear fuel technologies to bolster its nuclear weapons activities.'<sup>26</sup> Increasingly, it would become difficult to push Iran, Syria, North Korea and other countries towards fulfilling their non-proliferation obligations and would set a dangerous precedent for the countries who gave up their nuclear pursuits as part of the NPT bargain. Commenting on the impact of the 2008 Indo-US deal, William C. Potter, Director Centre for Non-proliferation Studies, Monterey said, 'having rewarded India, a nuclear weapons possessor, with nuclear trade benefits previously reserved to states in compliance with the NPT, what incentives remain for other states to join the Treaty? How can one tighten control on nuclear exports to NPT members of sensitive uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing technology having just created a giant loophole for such exports to a non-NPT state?'<sup>27</sup> Pakistan and Israel who are the other two states outside the NPT and possess nuclear weapons may also demand similar treatment and it would be hard to reject their demands. Pakistan has made its bid for membership of the four principle export control regimes when its National Command Authority (NCA) reiterated Pakistan's desire to constructively contribute to the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons and to the goals

of non-proliferation on the basis of equality and partnership with the international community and stated that Pakistan was keen to join the four export control arrangements.<sup>28</sup>

Since the decisions of the NSG are based on consensus, it would allow India to veto any decisions which are against its interests especially in the context of regional countries. Asif Ezedi argues that 'once India becomes a member of the NSG, it will get a veto over any future proposal to open up trade in peaceful nuclear technology with Pakistan.'<sup>29</sup> The move to bring India into the NSG's fold has all the ingredients of undermining India's commitments to the Indo-US civil nuclear cooperation agreement. As far as 2008 agreement is concerned, NSG could revisit its bargain in case India conducted further nuclear tests but having become a member, India would be in a position to exploit the NSG's consensus rule and block any such move within the group.<sup>30</sup>

## Conclusion

This paper has discussed the challenges for nuclear non-proliferation and strategic stability of South Asia if India is accepted as a member of NSG. International export control arrangements, while preventing proliferation of WMDs should not be allowed to hamper international cooperation in the peaceful uses of technology, including nuclear technology, which is the right of every state. Export control regimes should be more inclusive and should not create any exceptions. There is a need for transparent and non-discriminatory policies towards all states. A criteria-based, non-discriminatory and non-selective approach towards civilian nuclear cooperation would be beneficial for global non-proliferation regime. 'The damage of India's exception is done, but some repair is possible while considering the criteria applicable not only to India, but to all non-NPT States, thereby avoiding further discrimination among them.'<sup>31</sup>

Reacting to the proposed move of incorporating India into MECRS, Pakistan's National Command Authority (NCA) expressed concern over the policies of exclusiveness. The statement issued at the conclusion of NCA's 14 July 2011 meeting, an apex body headed by the Prime Minister and empowered to take decisions on all nuclear and strategic matters of interest, maintained that 'the NCA expressed concern over the continued pursuit of policies that detract from the globally shared norms and rules of equality, inclusiveness and objectivity. The NCA cautioned that such policies represent regression in the non-proliferation regime and tend to erode the strategic balance in South Asia. Pakistan would continue to take appropriate counter measures to ensure its security and to maintain regional stability.'<sup>32</sup>

The US strategic and commercial interests in fostering strong partnership with India are well understood but in so doing the principles set forth by Export Control Regimes must be upheld. Policies based on subordinating principles to politics would weaken international non-proliferation institutions and may fuel arms races. 'If the NSG is to remain effective and credible, member states must respect and uphold their own rules, avoid actions

that feed the nuclear arms race, and strengthen their guidelines to prevent weapons-related nuclear technology from proliferating in the years ahead.’<sup>33</sup>

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# INDIA-PAKISTAN COMPOSITE DIALOGUES: CHALLENGES AND IMPEDIMENTS

AMIT RANJAN

## Introduction

In 2014, after the new government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into power in India, a momentum was built to improve the political relationship between India and Pakistan, but suddenly it lost its sheen. It was not the first time. Since 1950 many times the two countries faced such a situation. After a series of failures, to give a new direction to their bilateral dialogue process in the 1990s, the political leadership shifted from issue-based dialogue to the composite dialogue process because all their issues were interwoven with each other. Until today, they have not achieved any breakthrough.

In May 2014, during the swearing-in ceremony of the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, the head of states from the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Mauritius were invited. Afterwards, from many platforms, the Indian prime minister asserted his policy of 'neighbour first' 'cooperation with all', yet nothing substantive happened between India and Pakistan. As usual in 2014-15, also the two countries engaged in severe cross-border fire which stretched for more than a month<sup>1</sup>, due to which the scheduled talks between the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries had to be cancelled at the last moment<sup>2</sup>. Even during the serious deluge in both sides of Jammu and Kashmir, they did not cooperate. About their political engagements, India and Pakistan, since 1950, have tried various formats of the negotiations like structured, non-structured, people-to-people contacts and others. However, they have substantially failed to resolve any of their bilateral disputes. In the past, however, there had been moments in 1954, 1963, 1972 and 2007 when the

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two countries, after successful rounds of talks, were almost on the brink of sealing a deal over the Kashmir valley.<sup>3</sup> Trying another format in bilateral dialogue, in 1997, they agreed to initiate the 'composite dialogue.' Even this form of dialogue has not yielded any concrete result due to embedded trust deficit, role of domestic institutions and interference of external actors.

This paper surveys the status of progress made in the composite dialogue. It attempts to answer following questions: Why did India and Pakistan fail to move forward in their dialogues? What is the role of domestic institutions and external actors in hindering any result-oriented dialogue between India and Pakistan? This paper is divided into three sections, 1) Composite Dialogue between India and Pakistan: A beginning; 2) Survey of Progress in Composite Dialogue and finally; 3) Composite Dialogue: Challenges and Impediments.

### **Composite Dialogue between India and Pakistan**

This section discusses the origins of the composite dialogue between India and Pakistan emphasizing the programme achieved so far.

According to Oxford Advanced English Dictionary, 'dialogue' is a formal discussion between two groups or countries especially when they are trying to solve a problem, or end a disagreement. Prior to 1997, India and Pakistan were engaged in an issue specific dialogue, in which they attained few successes like the 1950 Nehru-Liaquat pact between then Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Pakistan's Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan; Indus Water Treaty under the aegis of the World Bank in 1960; the two countries agreed over exchange of information about nuclear weapons in 1988; and even on the Kashmir Issue. As a result of issue-specific discussion there were moments in 1954, 1963, 1972 and 2007<sup>4</sup> when a deal over it, was almost done, but derailed by the actors, with stakes in the continuity in bilateral conflicts over the Kashmir Valley.

Despite these breakthroughs, India-Pakistan bilateral dialogue did not progress in the right direction. One of the major reasons for the failure of many rounds of their bilateral dialogue was that during negotiations, over specific issues, both parties used to raise their 'core area of concern'. Most of the times, it had been deliberately done to terminate the on-going bilateral dialogue. In a bid to address that problem, India and Pakistan decided to engage into composite dialogue instead of specific issue-based dialogue. The root to India-Pakistan composite dialogue process dates back to May 1997, when at Male, the capital of the Maldives, the then Indian Prime Minister, Inder Kumar Gujral, and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif mooted the idea of a structured or the composite dialogue process.<sup>5</sup> Based on a compromise approach, the peace process enabled the two countries to discuss all issues including Jammu and Kashmir. India wanted satisfaction on terrorism before talks on other issues could resume. On his part, Nawaz Sharif clarified that Pakistan wanted a dialogue that was comprehensive even if not "composite".<sup>6</sup> By agreeing to it, India disowned what it had earlier conceived. India's reduction of composite dialogue to a single issue of terrorism gave Pakistan an excuse to revert to the Kashmir.<sup>7</sup> It was a compromise in the sense that while India agreed to include

Kashmir in the agenda for talks, Pakistan relented to include terrorism, the two major irritants in bilateral relations. The first round of composite dialogue was held in 1998, but it collapsed due to the limited war between India and Pakistan in Kargil sector in 1999.<sup>8</sup>

Due to the war and political developments in Pakistan, for some time political relationship was stalled between the two countries. The silence was broken when in April 2003, then Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee agreed to meet Pakistan's President General Pervez Musharraf. During their meeting they decided upon the following measures:

1. A ceasefire to significantly reduce military incidents along the Line of Control;
2. Memorandum of Understanding on Confidence-Building Measures in military sector (for example, the establishment of a permanent telephone hotline between the Foreign Ministers, joint agreement on the notification of missile tests and demilitarization of disputed territories);
3. Joint agreement on mechanisms and strategies for combating terrorism;
4. Re-opening and expansion of train routes and bus services; and
5. Resumption of bilateral trade, removal of non-trade barriers and establishment of trade association to promote bilateral trade.<sup>9</sup>

In 2004 composite dialogue process was re-established, following a statement by Atal Bihari Vajpayee that all subjects, including Kashmir could be discussed. From 2004 to 2008, four rounds of composite dialogue were held, before a pause, due to terrorists' attack in Mumbai on 26 November 2008. Later on, as a result of a meeting between Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and then Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari, on the side-lines of the SAARC summit at Thimpu in April 2010,<sup>10</sup> and upon subsequent limited actions by Pakistan, India announced that it would not insist that Pakistan had to fully satisfy Indian demands on terrorism as a precondition for talks. Earlier, Pakistan had countered by questioning India's responsibility for attacks on the Samjhauta Express, the India-Pakistan train service — there was resumption of dialogue.<sup>11</sup> The two states agreed to revive the dialogue without any precondition, and also without the title "composite". The decision was implemented slowly, with Foreign Secretary meetings held in March 2011, meetings of the Home Ministers and then a visit of the Pakistani Prime Minister to India to watch the Cricket World Series Cup semi-final between India and Pakistan.<sup>12</sup> With such goodwill gestures, both states tried to strengthen their economic relationship with the liberal assumption that its spill-over could reduce political animosity between them. In May 2013, democratic transition occurred in Pakistan with Nawaz Sharif took over as the new Prime Minister. A year later in 2014, Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India. The change in India's political leadership led to speculations that tensions could deepen between India and Pakistan but fortunately that did not happen. Yet, both states have not achieved any breakthrough.

## **Survey of Progress in Composite Dialogue**

Though limited steps have been taken to address the disputes, a survey is indeed necessary to understand the India-Pakistan relationship and sketch out its future:<sup>13</sup>

### *Peace and security including Confidence Building Measures*

Once the composite dialogue between two countries began, various Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) were signed between them to ease their bilateral tensions. Historically, the first CBMs between the two countries, was the setting up and working of the Joint Defence Council from 1946 to 1948. During the first Kashmir war<sup>14</sup> in 1947-48, there were a number of examples of how the mutual understanding of the field commanders from both sides (who had worked together until 1947) often helped in sorting out matters and restraining violent actions from both sides. In a way, it laid the very foundations of the entire track of Indo-Pakistan CBMs, which was reflected in a series of bilateral agreements and understandings from time to time.<sup>15</sup> Gradually, both India and Pakistan have managed to put in place some of the most critical CBMs which were in the form of agreements on (a) prohibition of attack against each other's nuclear installations, (b) advance notice for military exercises, and (c) operation of a 'hotline' between the two Prime Ministers.<sup>16</sup>

During Vajpayee's visit to Lahore in 1999, various CBMs were announced, including the initiation of a bus-service between New Delhi and Lahore.<sup>17</sup> This was a step towards increasing contacts between the common people from both countries. In April 2005, Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service was started. In 2008, the frequency of the bus service increased between Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot. It was to operate weekly not fortnightly.<sup>18</sup> As part of CBMs, train services too, later on began from New Delhi to Attari and Munnabao to Khokrapar. The main aim behind the operation of bus and train services was to increase people-to-people contact to ease the tensions between the two countries.

These CBMs were positive initiatives, but could not yield desired results. One of the problems about India-Pakistan CBMs has been that they consume a lot of time to get implemented. For example, the agreement on the prohibition of attack against nuclear facilities was originally conceived during Rajiv Gandhi-Ziaul Haq summit in December 1985. However, it was not signed until December 1988. Then there was a long delay in ratifying the agreement, which occurred on 27 January 1991. The first list of nuclear facilities in India and Pakistan was exchanged on 1 January 1992 while another list was exchanged on 4 January 1993.<sup>19</sup> Secondly, whenever tensions at the border have erupted, the two governments get under pressure to rescind the measures they took under CBMs. Bus and train services have faced lots of problems. In the past these services were terminated though for a limited time period.

### *De-militarization of Siachen Glacier*

This issue, among others, is considered to be the easiest one to resolve because de-militarization of Siachen favours both countries. Yet it has not been

done. Siachen Glacier is one of the most inhospitable and glaciated regions in the world. It receives 6 to 7 metres of annual snow in winter alone. Blizzards can have a speed up to 150 knots (nearly 300 kilometres per hour). The temperature drops routinely to minus 40 degrees below centigrade.<sup>20</sup> The root of this dispute lies in the United Nations mediated ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan in 1949. It delineated the Line of Control until point NJ 9842, after which, it said it would run “thence north to the glaciers”. In 1984, fearful of adverse Pakistani moves, Indian soldiers moved north and eventually occupied the highest points on the glaciers. The ‘Siachen conflict’ was born.<sup>21</sup> Both sides made claims over the glacier, which are based on their interpretations of the vague language contained in the 1949 and 1972 agreements. Pakistan draws a straight line in a north-easterly direction from NJ 9842 right up to the Karakorum pass on its boundary with China. India prefers a north-north west line from NJ 9842 along the watershed line of the Saltoro Range, a southern offshoot of the Karakorum Range.<sup>22</sup>

To address the problem, at a meeting between Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Pakistan’s President General Ziaul Haq on 17 December 1985, an agreement was reached to hold defence secretary level talks on the Siachen issue. The first round of talks was held between 10 and 12 January 1986 at Rawalpindi.<sup>23</sup> After a series of talks held in 1992 India and Pakistan had reached a near agreement on the Siachen dispute after Islamabad assented to record the existing troop positions in an annex, but the deal was never done because the Indian political leadership had cold feet. Pakistan’s proposal indicating in an annexure the areas the armed forces of the two sides would vacate and redeploy, found immediate acceptance among the Indian officials.<sup>24</sup> The Indian delegation was led by N N Vohra, then India’s defence secretary. ‘We had finalized the text of an agreement at Hyderabad House by around 10 pm on the last day’, Mr. Vohra, who is now the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, told the Hindu. ‘Signing was set for 10 am. But later that night, instructions were given to me not to go ahead next day but to conclude matters in our next round of talks in Islamabad in January 1993’. ‘Of course, that day never came’, Mr Vohra added. ‘That’s the way these things go’, he said.<sup>25</sup> After that lost opportunity, until 2014, many more rounds of talks, at various levels, have been held over Siachen but these talks did not yield any tangible results.

### *Sir Creek Dispute*

Sir Creek is a 100km long estuary in the marshes of the Rann of Kutch, which lies on the border between the Indian state of Gujarat and the Pakistani province of Sindh. In 1965, the tribunal, under judge of a Swedish Court, Gunnar Lagergren, was established to demarcate only the northern border of the Kutch-Sindh sector between India and Pakistan. The Sir Creek dispute was a part of the dispute, but was left out of the tribunal’s jurisdiction. The tribunal announced its verdict on 19 February 1968 in Geneva.<sup>26</sup> Later on, both sides had resolved to settle this dispute in a speedy manner, given their obligations under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Any delay in the delineation of the maritime boundary, could lead to the continental shelf of both

countries coming under the purview of the International Seabed Authority.<sup>27</sup> As it was discovered, underneath the Sir Creek estuary, there is a large quantity of oil and gas available, which complicated the dispute. Both sides wanted to get more and more areas to possess available resources. Surveyors from both countries have held various rounds of talks, but have failed to decide over the demarcation of the marshy land.

### *Terrorism*

Terrorism has remained one of the major irritant between India and Pakistan. The seeds were sown by Pakistan after the end of Afghanistan war of 1989, to bleed India<sup>28</sup>, but in the longer period, it is Pakistan, which would be teetering on the edge of abyss, due to radicalisation of its society. Both sides blame the other for rising militancy and acts of terrorism occurring in their respective territories. In the past they have 'tried' to talk about the issue, but have failed to build a consensus over the definition of a terrorist.<sup>29</sup> Earlier, the Pakistan Army had its regulation over the terror outfits but after Pakistan's decision to become a part of the US led Global War on Terror (GWOt), the groups began to attack the Pakistan Army. In those attacks, many Pakistani citizens have lost their lives. With connivance of their sympathizers, the militants have even attacked various military installations. In June 2011, the army was forced to investigate Brigadier Ali Khan for his ties to the militants of Hizb-ul-Tahrir, a radical organization that seeks to establish a global caliphate and thinks that its mission should begin from nuclear Pakistan.<sup>30</sup> Another barbaric act was carried out by the terrorist group Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on December 16, 2014 when in an attack on Army Public School at Peshawar, 144 students and staff members were killed.

The act committed by the terror groups has affected India-Pakistan dialogue and relations. The mayhem that occurred in 2008 in Mumbai has created fissure between the two countries over the issue of terrorism. India has accused Pakistan for giving shelter to terrorists while Pakistan has responded that India has not provided it with enough evidence. On the contrary, Pakistan too alleges Indian intelligence agency in carrying out terrorist activities within its territory. It claims that India funds the Baluch nationalists from its Afghanistan based consulates at Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar and Jalalabad.<sup>31</sup> According to a BBC report, Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) militants had been trained by India and the party had received funds for its activities.<sup>32</sup> The report lacks substantive evidence to prove its contents, but in the past, Indian spy agency did carry out operations inside Pakistan to stop it from supporting Sikh militancy in India. It is public now that I. K. Gujral, after becoming India's Prime Minister closed down all offensive operations against Pakistan, forcing RAW to close down the CIT cells (J and X) that were used for carrying out these operations.<sup>33</sup> Another incident which created tensions between the two countries was blowing of a fishing boat from Pakistan by the Indian coast guards on 31 December 2014. First fishermen were projected as a part of terror groups on a Mumbai like mission, then it was propogandised that they were smugglers engaged in 'illicit transactions in sea'. They had blown

themselves up. The curtains were removed when the DIG of Coast Guard, B. K. Loshali even accepted that he ordered to 'blow the boat off, we do not want to serve them biryani'.<sup>34</sup> Such incidents increase the bilateral trust deficit between the two countries and act as a hurdle to move ahead in their dialogues.

On the positive side, Prime Minister Manmohan and President Musharraf met at the side-lines of Non-Aligned Movement's moot, at Havana (Cuba) in September 2006. They issued a joint statement in which they agreed to create Joint Anti-Terror Institutional Mechanism (JATM) on September 16, 2006, in which both countries pledged to cooperate to deal with terrorism.<sup>35</sup> The JATM is yet to be operationalized because of persisting differences between the institutions of both countries.

### *Jammu and Kashmir*

The Kashmir dispute has been the core<sup>36</sup> issue behind India-Pakistan conflict. Both of them use this as an excuse not to move further in their bilateral relations. There is no dispute over the status of Jammu and Ladakh. Their demography makes them to be a part of India. The conflict is over the status of Kashmir Valley. Both India and Pakistan claim it to be their part.<sup>37</sup> For India, secularism is the guiding principle and it wants Jammu and Kashmir to maintain its secular credentials; while for Pakistan, which was formed in the name of religion, Kashmir is important to complete the promises made to the Muslim population at the time of partition of India. Due to this incompatible goal, the conflict persists and no party wants to compromise on it. Hence, the Kashmir dispute is an ideological, rather than a territorial dispute.<sup>38</sup> The two countries have fought three total wars and one limited war to decide the fate of Kashmir, yet it has remained a disputed territory. Since 1990, there has emerged a third group, which demands freedom from both India and Pakistan. In the past in 1954, 1963 and 1972 there were moments when this conflict could have been resolved, but it remained unresolved. In 2007, the two leaders from both sides had almost agreed over a draft regarding Kashmir issue, but at the last minute, they backed off.<sup>39</sup> Any formula to resolve this conflict would require compromises and adjustments from both sides. The two countries are not yet ready for compromises, therefore, it is difficult to move ahead over this issue, at least, in the near future.

The disputes in this region have become more complicated after the rise of militancy in the 1990s. Its genesis lies in the result of the 1987 assembly elections in which Muhammad Yusuf Shah was representing a polyglot coalition of anti-establishment groups calling itself the Muslim United Fronts (MUF).<sup>40</sup> Voting was rigged in favour of National Conference's candidate Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah. Mohammad Yasin Malik, a 21-year-old resident, was his election manager. Yusuf Shah now goes by his *nom de guerre*, Syed Salahuddin, and has since the early 1990s been the commander-in-chief of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, the largest guerrilla force fighting in the valley.<sup>41</sup> This group attracted and still attracts, aggrieved individuals from the Kashmir Valley. However, before this Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was active in the valley. The JKLF was for a merger of the two sides of the Jammu and



Kashmir and setting up of a buffer state between India and Pakistan. It was led by Amanullah Khan and found its support among the *Mirpuris* living in the United Kingdom.<sup>42</sup>

In 2014-2015 once again this issue flared up the hostility between India and Pakistan. In 2014, Pakistan raised the issue at the United Nations. The National Security and Foreign Policy Adviser to the Pakistan's Prime Minister, Sartaj Aziz, called on the United Nations to manage the crisis situation in Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>43</sup> In 2015, the Pakistan's High Commissioner to India Abdul Basit, in an interview to an Indian media outlet, stressed Kashmir as being the 'core' issue between India and Pakistan.<sup>44</sup>

#### *Wullar barrage Project/Tulbul Navigation*

To resolve the water sharing problem over the Indus River System (IRS) India and Pakistan, under aegis of the World Bank, signed Indus Water Treaty (IWT) in 1960. The IRS comprises the Indus, the Sutlej, the Ravi, the Beas, the Chenab and the Jhelum. India and Pakistan, despite having three wars (1948, 1965 and 1971) and one limited war in Kargil sector (1999), adheres to the IWT. The great example of their cooperation on this treaty is that even in the midst of the 1965 war, Indian payments to Pakistan as part of the Treaty, continued uninterrupted, as did the work of engineers of both countries to control the opening and closing of sluices.<sup>45</sup> Even during the Kargil war and political-cum-military tensions afterwards<sup>46</sup> India has fulfilled its water commitment with Pakistan. However, now the future of this treaty is a question mark. Growing demand of water due to increasing population has created pressure over this resource. Both countries have been competing to get maximum quantity to secure their interests. This has led to disputes over transboundary water resources. The real dispute is over the multipurpose hydro-projects. In 2007, the dispute over Baglihar was resolved through the mediation process. The fate of Kishanganga project has lied with the arbitration court. According to the provisions of the IWT, any party can move to the arbitration court for getting a solution. Another one is Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation project. Indus Commissioner from both countries has held talks on this project but no concrete result has been arrived at. This project is yet in a standstill mode.

#### *Economic and commercial cooperation*

While their political relationship is not improving, India and Pakistan have initiated cooperation in economic sectors. The reason behind economic cooperation is that trade and commerce could generate goodwill which would act as a spill over to address their bilateral disputes. In this they have been guided by successful relations between the west European countries after centuries of war between them. After their economic engagement in various phases, Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Attari became operational in April 2012 for facilitating trade across India-Pakistan border. A study released by the Association of Chambers of Commerce (Assocham) held that with the ICP becoming operational and Pakistan granting the Most Favoured Nation (MFN)

status to India, the annual bilateral trade between the two countries would increase from \$2.6 to \$8.8 billion within next two years. The two countries have decided to have 13 ICPs.<sup>47</sup>

Irritants in economic cooperation are due to commercial and political reasons. Both countries have yet to implement South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA). They are yet to decide the negative list. Then, there is a question mark on Pakistan's not granting Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India. This is a status which members of the World Trade Organisation have given to other members. India has granted this status to Pakistan in 1996.

### **Composite Dialogue: Challenges and Impediments**

This section discusses both the challenges and hurdles to the on-going composite dialogue between India and Pakistan. In 1947, India and Pakistan were born to be conflict ridden.<sup>48</sup> The enmity between them was born with the partition of India in August 1947. Even though the Boundary Commission demarcated the boundary lines between India and Pakistan, many geographical disputes still exist. To address their disputes soon after the departure of the British from the sub-continent, India and Pakistan agreed to set up a tribunal under Algot Bagge, former member of the Supreme Court of Sweden in 1948. The Tribunal submitted its report on 5 February 1950. Among many of the conflicting interpretations, only four of them came before the tribunal where two regarded the western and two looked at north-eastern part of the boundary of East Pakistan.<sup>49</sup> The two countries showed reluctance to implement the tribunal's award, where they lost out.<sup>50</sup> The reason for not acting on the tribunal's report was psychological and ideological, which still dominates in the decision-making process of both the countries towards each other. Partition related violence has dominated the memories of the people from both the countries. Moreover, India-Pakistan relations have also been torn due to the question of identity. Pakistan has feared not only a military defeat by India but the re-absorption of its separate 'Islamic' Pakistani identity within a larger Hindu dominated Indian national identity. Pakistan's threat from India has not only been physical but psychological as well which has been so deep-rooted in the psyche that it has influenced every aspect of Pakistan's foreign and national security policies.<sup>51</sup>

These historical, emotional and psychological reasons, have also affected the rational-theoretical process of negotiations between India and Pakistan.

Theoretically, negotiation is a process which passes through four stages:

- (1) Ripeness of Dispute: In the absence of ripeness, negotiations may not only be counterproductive, but they may also lead to disappointment for all sides, which may in turn cause the dispute to further deteriorate.
- (2) Pre-negotiation: Pre-negotiation has two key purposes: defining the problem and developing a commitment for negotiations. These lead the parties to the third stage: arranging the

negotiations. This stage is useful in presenting the leaders with an opportunity to assess how negotiations might unfold without actually entering into them.

- (3) Negotiation: In this stage, the parties will negotiate and discuss all aspects of the dispute(s) on the basis of the information and data gathered and exchanged in the previous stage of pre-negotiation.
- (4) Agreement: Successful negotiations finally reach the fourth stage i.e. signing of the agreement. It is also possible that negotiations may end without having an agreement and therefore will resume on a later date or be scuttled for a long time.<sup>52</sup>

In the past, a few times, negotiators from India and Pakistan have reached to the last stage but deals have not been reached or the stake holders in both states have refrained them from making any substantial progress. Besides, their method of engagement has also been flawed. There are two existing paradigms of negotiation practiced by the Realists and Liberals respectively: Bargaining approach and Problem-Solving approach. The bargaining approach focuses primarily on states as represented by a group of negotiators who have specific national interests to be achieved. Generally, these interests are assumed to be fixed and unitary while the diplomat's task is to try maximize those national interests that can be achieved. They issue threats and promises concerning rewards and punishment, which are in turn made credible by demonstrating that the states have sufficient capabilities to carry out the punishments and rewards and by establishing a track record that demonstrates their commitment to implement threats and promises. Sometimes, they forgo agreements that will produce benefits greater than the status quo or their next best alternative to an agreement if their potential competitors are perceived to be gaining more than them from the agreement. They will enforce the implementation of the agreement including a unilateral right to renounce and violate an agreement for international institutions in verification and enforcement.<sup>53</sup>

By contrast, problem-solving approach to international negotiations is generally associated with a more liberal or institutionalist stance on international relations theory. The general argument of this perspective is that the goal of negotiation is to solve common problems that parties face and to try find solution to those problems that will benefit everyone. A metaphor frequently employed by Roger Fish is that 'this perspective views negotiations not as a situation in which the two parties sit on opposite sides of the table facing one against another but rather one where both sit on same side of the table facing their common enemy: the problems that need to be solved'.<sup>54</sup>

During their negotiations, the representatives from India and Pakistan have followed the bargaining approach. The reason for following it is the entanglement of their domestic and foreign policies. Unlike realists, who give importance to structures, liberal theorists maintain that domestic institutions and actors too play a significant role in formulating the foreign policy<sup>55</sup> of a country.

Most of the foreign policy related decisions are taken after taking into consideration domestic issues and players.<sup>56</sup>

In the case of India and Pakistan, irredentist and anti-irredentist factors, historical memories and their constructions, the domestic players play a vital role in deciding any policy towards the other. Though domestic actors bank upon peace and improvement in bilateral relationships, their backlash at times can stop the political leadership from improving bilateral relationship between the two states. Then there are external actors too, who actively use one against the other to pursue their own interests in the region.

*Civil-Society Actors:* Civil-Society actors, in various forms and with different agendas, are very active in India and Pakistan. Broadly, they can be categorised into two: Peacenik liberals and Radicals. Peaceniks are represented by many individuals and organizations which are engaged in improvisation of bilateral relationship between India and Pakistan and the establishment of peace between them. They actively support the idea of increasing trade, issuing of more visas to people from both sides and do not want crisis such as cross-border fires. Due to active engagement of peaceniks, people-to-people contacts have been encouraged and many track-II and one-point nine dialogues have begun. Though, the success of this group is limited, yet a significant one. Contrary to this, there are radicals who have a strong stake in the persistence of animosity between India and Pakistan. Jamat-e-Islami (JI), Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) etc. in Pakistan, and Abhinav Bharat in India are active against the other in their respective states. In the past, through their activities, they had scuttled the peace process and bilateral dialogues. Pakistan based groups make cries for carrying out jihad against India. Their acts make Indian right wing to react strongly against holding the dialogues with Pakistan. In 2008, while the composite dialogue was continuing to improve bilateral relations, the terrorist attack in Mumbai occurred. After that, under public pressure, the government of India backtracked from the engagement. Militant Hindu groups have also reacted: Samjhauta Express, the train running between New Delhi and Attari, witnessed bomb blasts carried out by a Hindu group called Abhinav Bharat. Charges against the culprits had been filed and the case was subjudice in Panchkula court.<sup>57</sup>

As a part of civil-society, television channels and newspapers are important institutions in all forms of a given political system. They 'manufacture consent' through dissemination of information and propaganda. In India and Pakistan, the media have played a significant role in creating mass hysteria, generating fear and in increasing tensions. This has been more so in India than in Pakistan because of the presence of large number of private media houses in India. Most of these media houses 'construct' news, according to the taste of their viewers. In 2014, when Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif accepted invitation and attended swearing-in ceremony of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, hysteria about improvisation in India-Pakistan relationship was generated, though some were purported. During tense times, the same media houses behave in a different way by unnecessarily stretching the incidents on the borders. In 2013, when an Indian soldier was beheaded on the India-Pakistan

border, the Indian media unabashedly criticised Pakistan for it and created almost a war like situation between the two nuclear powers. They did such coverage without doing research and analyses of the issue. Barkha Dutt, in her famous essay 'Confession of a War Reporter', first published in *Himal South Asia* in June 2001, illustrated how the Indian soldiers celebrated the beheading of the Pakistani soldiers.<sup>58</sup>

Instead of being and acting as a 'responsible' institution, mass-media in both India and Pakistan reflect the mood of selected people, and terms it 'public opinion'. Then in June 2015, after India carried out an operation inside Myanmar, the media houses started making noises about carrying out similar operations within Pakistani territory. They managed to sell their opinion to the majority of Indians because of the existing historical perceptions about Pakistan. While being vociferous with their views, they had forgotten the fact that unlike Myanmar, Pakistan is a nuclear power.

*Reluctant institutions:* The state institutions from India and Pakistan are reluctant towards the establishment of peace between the two countries. In Pakistan, the Army is the most powerful institution. By constructing a fear psychosis among the people, it has established its supremacy and has ruled Pakistan for over more than half of its existence as a sovereign country. It always projects itself as the protector of country's national-interests. Even during the civilian regime, it is military which takes the final decision over security-related issues. Under pressure from the military, the civilian leadership is compelled to change its statements or even to give up its policies. In 1999, Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif favoured the establishment of peace with India. He invited then Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Lahore, where they signed the famous Lahore declaration. The declaration called for peaceful solution to all bilateral conflicts. The military did not digest it and Kargil occurred. Later on, the disputes between army and civilian leadership resulted in a military coup. Contrary to the military's image, whenever in power, the Pakistan Army has taken steps to improve relations with India. In 2004, General Musharraf pledged to prevent the use of the territory under Pakistan's control to support terrorism in any manner. It was the first direct commitment of this nature since the Pakistani-backed armed insurgency in Kashmir began in 1989.<sup>59</sup> In India also, the institutions have played a significant role in scuttling the bilateral dialogues with Pakistan. In June 2005, Dr. Manmohan Singh declared that Siachen would be a 'symbol of peace' rather than conflict. Though he wanted to seal a deal on it, he was not supported by the then Defence Minister and Army Chief.<sup>60</sup>

*External Actors:* External actors and their search for 'strategic depth' against each other have also played a role in the continuation of their bilateral animosity which hinders bilateral talks. During the Cold War era, the then super powers had a stake in keeping the two countries in a state of permanent hostility to serve their own selfish interests. After the end of the Cold War, new actors like individual states and non-state actors have taken over that job. At present, India and Pakistan are engaged against each other in Afghanistan. These developments do not prepare a conducive environment, for bilateral dialogue. In

the past, both these factors have made the two countries either to pull out from engagement or not to conclude the on-going negotiations.

## Conclusions

This paper has discussed India-Pakistan composite dialogue stressing the challenges it faces along with the hurdles in its way. It holds that the composite dialogue was aimed to make the bilateral dialogue result oriented but it failed to do so. Many times, both states came close to reaching a breakthrough but the role of civil-society actors or institutions from both countries acted as impediments.

With the change in the government in India and Pakistan, expectations arose that the new governments would take new steps to improve this relationship but they were suddenly stuck in a cobweb of problems. This is largely so because the change in government replaces individuals but does not reform the system. The real test of a government's character is at the time of crisis.<sup>61</sup> In 2008, after Mumbai episode, the Indian government ignored the majority's demand of taking military actions against Pakistan and saved the sub-continent from a nuclear holocaust. The nuclear stability and instability paradox was created between the two countries after the 1998 nuclear tests. Now all crises need to be managed tactfully instead of acting in an irrational way. Although many crises have been averted, bilateral talks have suffered. To make composite dialogue a successful exercise, political will would be absolutely essential. The leadership must be ready to accept compromises, make adjustments and assert its decisions, whenever required. Moreover, the institutions engaged in the bilateral dialogue must be assisted and guided to make composite dialogue successful instead of being discouraged or restrained from concluding the dialogue successfully.

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- 1 Firing on India-Pakistan border takes place at regular interval. Who starts the firing is a difficult question to answer. Both sides allege the other for such incident. In the past the two sides did not engage in firing for more than a month but in 2014 winter the cross border firing stretched for more than a month.
- 2 The talk was cancelled because the government in India did not want the Pakistani officials to meet the Kashmiri 'separatist' leaders. Meeting Kashmiri Leaders from Pakistani officials has remained a practice since 1995.
- 3 The bone of contention between India and Pakistan is over Kashmir Valley and not entire Jammu & Kashmir region.
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took place between the representatives of two countries. India was represented by Swaran Singh, while Pakistan was led by Z. A. Bhutto. After five rounds of talks held in India and Pakistan, the two agreed on certain issues and were all set to sign on documents to end the conflict, but at last minute something happened, and issue remained unsolved. Both sides blamed the other for goof up. See Alstair Lamb (1993) *Kashmir :A Disputed Legacy*; (Karachi: Oxford University Press). In 1972 the conflict could have resolved during negotiations at Shimla. See Ramchandra Guha, (2007) *India After Gandhi :The History of World's Largest Democracy*; (London: Piccador). In 2007 there was an agreement between the two leadership over Kashmir issue. As stated by Khurshid Mohammad Kasuri during his interaction with *Times of India* on 24 April 2010 and Jang group's *Aman ki Asha* programme on 23 April 2010. Indus Water Treaty of 1960 was signed due to mediation by the World Bank. Also the two countries resolved their territorial dispute in Sindh-Gujarat border due to mediation from international tribunal.

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# ENDURING INDIA-PAKISTAN RIVALRY: PROSPECTS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DR. RIZWANA ABBASI

*Having kept a neighbouring enemy engaged with another neighbouring enemy, a wise king should proceed against a third king, and having conquered that enemy of equal power, take possession of his territory.*

— Kautiliya, *Arthashastra*, Chapter VI, Book VII.

## Introduction

India and Pakistan are the most uneasy neighbours who have been entangled in a troubled history—replete with perplexed understanding, suspicion and hostility. This region has experienced more wars and tensions than peace ever since their independence in 1947. A series of wars in 1948, 1965, 1971 and 1999 with frequent violation of the Line of Control (LoC) and routine border skirmishes have made this region more volatile than any other one. The conflict between the two states is an enduring one and has held the region back from making strides in the field of peace, development and progress. The study refers to T V Paul's categorization of 'enduring rivalry', where he opines that "enduring rivalry is characterized by a persistent, fundamental and long-term incompatibility of goals between two states which manifest itself in the basic attitudes of the parties towards each other as well as in recurring violent or potentially violent clashes over a long period of time."<sup>1</sup> Holding the common colonial legacy, the two states have set their distinct strategic directions (religious ideas and political goals), which are fundamentally conflicting or

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‘Strategically Orthogonal’ since their partition in 1947. More broadly, the endemic rivalry can be explained based on certain factors for instance, distinct strategic directions and visions (religious and political patterns), legacy of Radcliffe Award (demarcation of boundaries resulting in territorial disputes); convoluted history (facts and realities clouded by sentiments and politico-religious and ideological narratives, bloodshed as a consequence of Hindu-Muslim riots and partition); the two states’ inclination for alignments with extra-regional power and subordinating their policies (external balancing) and their ‘nefarious designs’.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, security-insecurity paradox<sup>3</sup> has been based on misplaced suspicion and competition to reduce power differential to maintain equilibrium and maximize security against each other. Even the similarities, though a few, in the most indices (cultural, similar history, language) have been mired with hostility, antagonism and mistrust. Today, these attributes are embedded in the societies of these two countries as a never ending ‘vicious cycle.’ These realities have made the regional strategic environment and politics enormously complex with a never ending state of affairs. This is why the US President, Bill Clinton, described the region as ‘the most dangerous place on earth’ in 2004.<sup>4</sup>

This paper argues that distinct visions and strategic directions of adversarial states turn their difference into protracted conflicts and interstate clashes. Accordingly, the genesis of the Indo-Pakistan enduring rivalry lies in the distinct strategic directions (religious and socio-political) of statehood which have put regional peace and stability into a bitter situation. Peace in South Asia is dependent on re-formulation of strategic directions (attitudinal change and political compromises) on both sides. Thus, to translate this argument, the study ponders on a few striking questions: What are the causes which increase differences, mistrust and security dilemma between the two states? How and why rivalry did aggravate over time? How can the two states’ divergences be overcome? What are the imperatives and mechanisms for the resolution of this enduring rivalry? The classical realists’ theoretical assumptions of balance of power, material power and defensive realists guidance on states’ intensions towards ‘security maximization’ provide the most powerful and valuable explanation in understanding the Indo-Pak *relational paradox* or simply the enduring rivalry. The liberals’ assumption offers guiding tools for finding solutions to the conflict between the two traditional adversaries.

### **Re-assessing the Indo-Pakistan distinct strategic directions**

Prior to 1947, there were two leading ethnic groups envisioning distinct ideologies with different religious practices under the British rule: The Hindus constituted the majority while the Muslims were in a minority. The Indian National Congress, under the leadership and guidance of Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, which had Hindu majority membership, envisioned the political vision of ‘Greater India’<sup>5</sup> – based on slogans of secularism and liberal democracy. Presumably, guided by the US President Woodrow Wilson’s (liberalism) fourteen points<sup>6</sup>, one of the points, that is, through democracy global

peace can be preserved and creation of international organizations and institutions would place relations between states on a firm foundation<sup>7</sup> — India aspired to build its soft state image through democracy. In parallel, ‘the Greater India Vision’ can be translated and interpreted through the prism of realism — implying that India ‘would play a greater-power role in the world affairs commensurate with its size and power potential.’<sup>8</sup> Cumulative Gandhian and Nehruvian philosophy, ‘Greater India’, [rise of India as a great power — maximization of power and expansionism] is a concept that derives its power from *Kautiliya’s Arthashastra*<sup>9</sup> and *Mahabharata* philosophy<sup>10</sup> which is rooted in power based *Machiavellian* realist school.<sup>11</sup> The manifestation and latent presence of *Kautiliyan* strategic thought cannot be discounted in Indian policy.

On the other hand, Muslim League headed by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in March 1940, expressed the merit of ‘two-nation theory’ and desired for the creation of Pakistan as a separate state for the Indian Muslims. This theory became the foundation of partition of India in 1947, which is that the Muslims and the Hindus by every definition were two separate nations. Therefore, the Muslims should have an autonomous homeland — Jinnah sought self-determination on the basis of the ‘two-nation theory’ and fought the struggle for a separate homeland on religious lines. Significantly, the vision of the League and the Congress was divided even in the disposition of the princely states on strategic, military and economic affairs.<sup>12</sup>

Besides the above differences, during the mid-1940s, Hindu-Muslim riots emerged with acute intensity. Within this context, in 1946, Cabinet Mission sent by the Great Britain proposed that a union between British India and Princely States be established and constitution may be drafted.<sup>13</sup> In August 1947, Britain implemented its earlier decision of partitioning which British rulers realized may bring peace for them. Moreover, when the last British Viceroy Lord Louis Mountbatten failed to address differences between the two major parties because of their distinct vision (Hindu-Muslim clashes) escalated. The religiously and ethnically diverse Indian empire split into two independent and sovereign states: India and Pakistan in 1947. Subsequently, this participation gave rise to territorial conflicts that have shaped the South Asian regional environment. The most significant aspect of the split in 1947 was the conflict in ideology: a Muslim-majority identity versus a Hindu dominated India.

How was mistrust generated between the two states in the first place? First, it is imperative to review, as what had happened after the Indian Independence Act of 1947, which intensified Pakistan’s fear and created irresolvable mistrust between the two states. During the process of partition, 562 princely states had the option to join either India or Pakistan. Out of these, the three princely states decided to stay independent from both India and Pakistan: Jammu and Kashmir in the north, Hyderabad in the south, and Junagadh in the west. While the rulers of the latter two were Muslims, the majority of their population was Hindu and their accession to India occurred, extensively, through Indian military actions. New Delhi, later, legitimized these accessions through subsequent ‘perverted’ referenda. Only Jammu and Kashmir emerged as the most contentious, given its geographical proximity to Pakistan and a

majority Muslim population. The Hindu ruler of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, first chose to remain independent from both India and Pakistan. In October 1947, however, disturbances occurred inside Kashmir. India claimed that it was the tribal forces from Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, which attacked Kashmir, while Pakistan contended that it was the local revolt against Raja's intentions of acceding to India. This conflict turned into a short war between the two states, which lasted until the end of 1948. More so, the riots that followed in 1947-48 left more than a million people dead in six months and displaced over 15 million.<sup>14</sup> Thus, territorial clashes and the overwhelming risk of war in the region greatly affected Pakistani's psyche. Thereafter, Kashmir became a major territorial dispute between India and Pakistan. This event had set a major precedent for enduring rivalry, antagonism and animosity, thus building Pakistani elites' perception and direction against India as an arch-rival.

Moreover, in 1948, India took Kashmir dispute to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and agreed to conduct a plebiscite on Kashmir in order to address the issue according to the wishes of the people of Kashmir. Nevertheless, India did not allow this plebiscite to be held thus bypassing global norms holding that there were substantial interferences by Pakistani military inside Kashmir to incite insurgency. This fact further increased Pakistan's concerns towards India's exceptional lack of sincerity on bilateral issues, thereby giving rise and strength to expansionist and hegemonic designs in the region which were based on realists-guided, 'offensive political pattern'.

Why did Kashmir become an important issue for both India and Pakistan? Both countries have distinct understanding and perceptions of the Kashmir Issue. For Ganguly and Hagerty, India continued to hold that 'incorporating Kashmir was important because Kashmir, a Muslim majority state, would demonstrate India's fundamental commitment to civic, secular nationalism and that a Muslim-majority state could thrive within a secular polity.'<sup>15</sup> This was also central to what Indian believed to be central to the cohesion and integrity of secular India. For India, leaving Kashmir would mean that other states could ask for independence or accession to Pakistan. For Pakistan, the possession of Kashmir signified that 'Pakistan's identity would be incomplete without the incorporation of Kashmir.'<sup>16</sup> First, Kashmir became important for Pakistan for certain reasons: for example, cultural and religious coherence; sources of water – rivers that flow from Kashmir; a valued ecosystem; strategic location – a bridge between Pakistan and China; most importantly, question of human rights and international law. These factors validate that Pakistan's inherited 'strategic culture' became centred on the fear of Indian regional dominance. Here the study refers to Jack Snyder's interpretation of Strategic culture, which means the 'sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses and patterns of habitual behaviour that the members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other.'<sup>17</sup> Second, distinct political vision also contributed in aggravating mistrust and rivalry. For example, the Indian leaders such as Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Nehru until 1947 were not in favour of Pakistan's emergence as a separate state. For them, India and the Muslim

majority provinces in the northwest and northeast, which were to make up an independent Pakistan, would have been a more powerful and successful country, had they remained together because of the geostrategic location and the economic potential of these lands. This validates the realists' guided Greater Indian vision. Then reluctantly in June 1947, they accepted the inevitable Pakistan for two reasons: (1) Independent Pakistan would not last long; (2) In order to avoid the communal violence that could ensure British-withdrawal. As Patel expressed it, 'they had 75 to 80 per cent of India, which they could develop and make stronger according to their genius. The [Muslim] League could develop the rest of the country.'<sup>18</sup> This serves to undermine the argument that an undivided – but internally disunited India might have had a greater influence in the world.

Third, elites' statements and behaviour have also substantially contributed to fortify this rivalry. For example, there was a widespread belief among the Congress that Pakistan's independence would be of short duration and that bankruptcy and lack of sufficient national assets for statehood in terms of buildings and institutions would prompt a return to 'Mother' India and a corrective to unwanted 'vivisection' of 1947. Nehru summarized their view point succinctly: 'we expected that partition would be temporary, that Pakistan was bound to come back to us. None of us anticipated how much the killing(s) and the crisis in Kashmir would embitter relations.'<sup>19</sup> Historically driven radical concepts, like *Akhand Bharat*, and *Hindutva*, populated with anti-Pakistan sentiments. Such ideologies have been extensively used by the political parties and religious extremists in India – apparently to remain relevant in their respective spheres of domestic influence and power. Hindu fundamentalists at the time, further generated extreme anti-Pakistan drive which intensified partition. Cohen confirms that 'Veer Savarkar, then the leader of the militant Hindu revivalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sang (RSS), has opposed partition on the ground that India was a cultural and religious entity with a Muslim minority and that did not merit the privileges of becoming a separate state.'<sup>20</sup> The postulates of this group have been later adopted by the Indian Jana Sangh Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) – leading political parties. Though larger Indian society has not been influenced by such radicals and their ideologues, yet Pakistan has always considered these principles that have motivated the Indian foreign and military policies.

Fourth, the consequences of partition including the distribution of assets also raised fear in Pakistani minds. For example, the first consequence was the recurring sense of Pakistan being discriminated at the time of partition, which stems from the most basic perception: that the country had been treated 'unfairly.' Disputes followed the distribution of military and civil assets between the two states, the precise demarcation of the geographically separated new union of West and East Pakistan, the economic and social imbalance between the two regions, and the poor infrastructure inherited from the Raj. Human rights violations, at the hands of Indians, and the resulting resentment and suspicion between different religious communities, were other consequences. Partition left hundreds of thousands of casualties. The precise figures are not known,<sup>21</sup> but

perhaps more than a million migrants were slaughtered, while the remaining religious minorities experienced discrimination.<sup>22</sup>

A large number of civil servants and military left their families trapped in communal riots and mass migration.<sup>23</sup> ‘About 7.2 million Indian Muslims migrated to Pakistan, forming about one-fourth of the population of West Pakistan [whereas] 5.5 million Hindus and Sikhs left Pakistan for India.’<sup>24</sup> An additional phenomenon was the lack of inherited institutional structures. Most of the developed institutions which the British abandoned went to India. For example, India inherited the state buildings in Delhi and the Parliament. Pakistan had to create alternatives for itself in Karachi. Likewise, the training arrangements for the Indian civil services were inherited by India, while Pakistan had to develop its own. The economic heart of undivided India was Bombay, which of course went to India. More importantly, the distribution of the natural resources of Indus River system between India and Pakistan was linked with the issue of Kashmir. Had the water issues been resolved, the Kashmir question might have not existed in such an acute form. Any solution to the Jammu and Kashmir question is still dependent on the fair distribution of river waters. Within this context, Pakistan identified India from the outset as its principal threat and adversary. The struggle for Pakistan in accordance with the two-nation theory was well founded on the basis of the identity and aspirations of the people, and in accordance with the international normative system as endorsed by the constructivists.<sup>25</sup>

Constructivism advocates influence of ideas, values and norms as a socialization process.<sup>26</sup> If constructivism studies norms as a socialization process in which a ‘logic of appropriateness’,<sup>27</sup> not interests or rational expectations matter, then Jinnah’s struggle for a separate Muslim state falls within this system.

Nevertheless, partition did not yield favourable dividends, rather erupted into violence and bloodshed. The consequence of partition shifted intra-state rivalry into interstate conflict between India and Pakistan. The Indian hegemonic approach and threat of the Indian army posed mounting challenges to Pakistan, including border security which became an immediate concern after independence in 1947. Pakistan professed India as an arch-rival and a hegemonic player focused upon breaking and dismantling Pakistan. Thus, Pakistan’s strategic directions have been guided by these factors: survival as an independent state; Kashmir to be ‘an integral part of Pakistan’ – i.e., Jinnah calling it a jugular vein of Pakistan; looking outward for bridging the power disparity – focusing on external balancing, and India appeared as a clear, direct and existential threat to Pakistan’s security. Whereas in the Indian context, two strands (power maximization and identity) help in understanding Indian strategic orientation and thinking.

### **New wars and intensified rivalry**

Being a smaller state, based on lesser capability vis-à-vis India’s pervasive threat, ‘security-centricity’ became a key component of Pakistan’s ‘scheme of things.’ The pro-west military was firmly in charge of Pakistan’s



security policy, relying on military alliances to counter the Indian threat in the 1950s. Thus, Pakistan adopted a more defensive, liberal and cooperative based policy as was guided by the liberal school, which is, 'cooperation is possible through the international institutions and that states could enter into cooperative relations even if one state gains more than another from the interaction'.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, Pakistan sought to join the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and later the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)<sup>29</sup> for security guarantees to combat the Indian threat. Pakistan's strong alliance with the US provided enough leverage to consolidate its defence link with the West and to build up its conventional forces to meet any emerging threat from India.<sup>30</sup> Based on the liberal's approach, Pakistan believed that it would achieve greater advantage from joining these alliances and would have to pay a higher cost, had it attempted to survive unilaterally. Pakistani state sought in this period to comply with those international rules and norms which were still taking shape and helped guide its behaviour. Pakistan supported global disarmament and arms control in the UN disarmament commission as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 1952-54.<sup>31</sup> It also supported the Irish proposal on nuclear non-proliferation in mid-1958 at the UN.<sup>32</sup> Due to lack of political will, Pakistan initially did not opt for nuclear weapons acquisition. The Pakistani establishment did respond to Indian attitudes and policy with regard to domestic, political and military issues on realist patterns but not in the area of nuclear policy.<sup>33</sup> However, despite these efforts, the SEATO and CENTO alliances failed to render Pakistan with any support when the two states fought a second war, in 1965, over the status of Jammu and Kashmir, resulted in heightened domestic unrest. The war left thousands of casualties on both sides and had considerable implications for Pakistan's defence policy. The question re-opened Pakistan's inferiority in conventional weapons vis-à-vis India. Instead of helping Pakistan, the US banned the supply of weaponry and imposed arms embargo on both states.<sup>34</sup>

As a result Pakistan revisited its policies, first drifting away and later withdrawing altogether from SEATO. This was the time when Pakistan sought to cultivate a firm alliance with China, which later became an important supplier of conventional weapons.<sup>35</sup> Presumably, Pakistan-China bond transformed into a strong alliance after China had fought a war with India in 1962. Sino-Pakistan alliance can be interpreted as, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."<sup>36</sup> Askari highlights that Pakistan began to obtain weapons and military equipment from China towards the end of 1965 or in early 1966. Since then, this relationship has expanded. China has supplied weapons and equipment for three services and has contributed significantly to building Pakistani defence industry.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, Ahmed maintains that the Pakistani military did not believe that Chinese help alone was adequate to counter India's advanced conventional threat.<sup>38</sup> After this war, Pakistan's policy became entirely India specific, focused on the question of its security and survival which built the perception of Pakistani elites. Thus, this event had strengthened anti-India mind-set at the societal level in Pakistan.

Six year after the 1965 war, the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 began as a civil war in the eastern wing of Pakistan and ended up with Indian involvement

resulting in the dismemberment of Pakistan (East Pakistan becoming Bangladesh). This war originated neither from inherited hatred between India and Pakistan, or from dissatisfaction regarding Kashmir but it was instead triggered by open military intervention for reasons of its own. For Khan and Lavoy, the Indian intrusion – ‘blitzkrieg-type operations following a nine months long insurgency and civil war’<sup>39</sup> resulted in the breaking up of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh. Once again Pakistan received no support from its western alliances during this war (as a result of which later Pakistan withdrew from CENTO in 1979). Ganguly and Hagerty confirmed that ‘India’s military plans for an eventual war with Pakistan included the support, training and arming of the ‘Mukti Bahini’ (literally liberation force) composed of disaffected officers from the Pakistani Army and other men of Bengali origin.’<sup>40</sup> India provided substantial support to this organization, which wreaked havoc across East Pakistan during the late summer of 1971, thus exploiting Pakistani Army’s ability to face an Indian military onslaught later that year.<sup>41</sup> East Pakistan was a valuable strategic asset with which Pakistan could have sought to counterbalance India. But it always proved difficult to manage, given the distances involved and the lack of a land corridor between the western and eastern parts of the federation. Bonney argues that the break-up of the federation had positive implications for Pakistan’s security, as it emerged as a stronger and more stable state which could focus its energies more effectively.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, this partition of Pakistan in 1971 provoked a profound crisis for former West Pakistan. General Ehsan expressed his feelings, ‘ever since the creation of Pakistan we have been faced with an existential threat from India and this threat came to the fore ...with the event of 1971 when Pakistan was divided through an Indian invasion and Bangladesh was created.’<sup>43</sup> His further view explains Pakistani military’s understanding and sentiment drove from the above facts. He says:

Mrs. Indira Gandhi said two things which are very instructive: firstly, she said that we have avenged the history of 1,000 years of Muslim rule in India. Secondly, we have proven the two-nation theory wrong, which meant that she was questioning the very existence of Pakistan as a nation. There is something which her father, Nehru, had also said when Pakistan was created: Pakistan is not viable, it’s just a matter of time for this to fall apart and rejoin mother India. So it is this sort of existential threat which non-Pakistanis fail to understand, which drove Pakistan to a security- centric approach in its national policy.<sup>44</sup>

The above concerns of Pakistani elite clearly indicate as to how the 1971 war event reinforced Pakistani perception and belief against India, thus strengthening the anti-India syndrome, which later became a norm inside Pakistan. The disintegration of Pakistan was the consequence of *Indira Doctrine* (the second longest serving Indian Prime Minister 1966-1977 and 1980-1984). *Indira Doctrine* was a manifestation of Indian expansionism, power maximization and realist’s guided material based interests. Later, based on its power maximization notion – The Greater India – India rejected the nuclear non-

proliferation treaty (NPT), calling it a 'discriminatory treaty' and went for so-called Peaceful Nuclear Explosions (PNEs) in 1974 with military elements attached to it.<sup>45</sup> India did so, thus bypassing the global anti-nuclear norms while still accusing the NPT of establishing a form of 'nuclear apartheid.'<sup>46</sup> For many years, India remained a critic of international order embodied in the NPT, challenging it from outside while developing nuclear devices and keeping the nuclear option open until its second nuclear tests in 1998.

What India called PNEs posed a grave threat to Pakistan's security. These tests raised deep concerns in the Pakistani establishment (military and political) and forced them to invest even more heavily in efforts to acquire nuclear weapons to create balance with the much larger and better equipped Indian Army. Regional semi-anarchic system forced Pakistan to survive via self-help based on realists' interpretation of security maximization of a smaller state against powerful adversary. Pakistan thus modified its cooperation based liberal guided policy into 'open option policy' on realist-guided pattern for nuclear weapons. Realists suggest that international anarchy forces states to go for self-help. Waltz maintains that, in the nuclear era, international politics remains a self-help arena.<sup>47</sup> In an anarchic system, states prefer to deal with their adversaries by building up their arsenals of weapons and gaining allies instead of building cooperation towards a greater degree of arms control based on common interests. Thus, Indian PNEs gave official status to then Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's pursuit of nuclear weapons. Finally, Bhutto's government officially approved the building of a nuclear bomb at a Cabinet Defence Committee meeting on 15 June 1974, less than a month after the Indian nuclear tests based on its self-help policy. Based on its 'security-centric orientation', Pakistan built nuclear weapons programme, acquired capability and went for Cold Tests in 1982-1983 to address existential threat coming from India.

The hatred and antagonism were embedded when *Brasstacks* – a large scale Indian military exercise began in November 1986 and was followed up till December in the same year with an offensive operation in a mobile battleground environment. This served to heighten Pakistan's fear that India was planning to invade and destroy its nuclear facilities. 'India used *Brasstacks* to provoke Pakistan into war. The real plan was to attack Pakistan's Punjab province and cut off access to Sindh. This operation continued until mid-1987. The largest Indian manoeuvres occurred in the deserts of Rajasthan, a 100 miles (160 km) from the Pakistani border, in the sensitive regions of Kashmir. Indeed, Indian General Krishnaswami Sunderji (who initiated this exercise) had a plan to provoke Pakistan into war.<sup>48</sup> Sunderji himself stated that 'the *Brasstacks* crisis was the last all-conventional crisis in which India could have used its conventional superiority to destroy Pakistan's conventional and nuclear weapons capability.'<sup>49</sup> By mid-January 1987 armies of the two states were facing each other on the frontiers. Each state perception regarding the other's intentions reached at dangerous point — mistrust aggravated with grounded misperception about each other. At the height of crisis, Pakistani high profile elites transmitted message that 'we would use the bomb if our existence and sovereignty was

threatened.<sup>50</sup> It was the nuclear deterrence which had helped the two states to initiate negotiations on 31 Jan 1987 at a diplomatic level. On 4 February 1987, India-Pakistan consultations agreed to pull out their forces deployed on the border.<sup>51</sup> This incident became another setback to the regional complexities and yet again peace had been exploited miserably.

Within these realities, not long after the Brasstacks, the Kashmir dispute re-emerged. Kashmir, openly rebelled India in 1989. India blamed Pakistan for waging an unconventional or asymmetrical war with India by providing assistance to the Kashmiri Muslims, which the Indian called an act of provoking terrorism. In response, Islamabad insisted that it only provided moral support to the Kashmiri 'freedom fighters.' Indians did not believe Pakistani response and thus; these Pakistani freedom fighters were perceived terrorists in India. This assumption on part of India ushered a new dimension into regional threat spectrum. This crisis and both states' aggressive behaviour again brought the region close to war, for the second time since 1971. The deployment of the forces on a large scale around the Line of Control — the controversial demarcation line between India and Pakistan in Kashmir — proves the above argument. To avoid a war (presumably a nuclear warfare) between the two belligerent neighbours, the US, however, played a decisive role as a mediator by sending Robert Gates, Deputy Director of Intelligence Agency, on a mission to ease tensions.

Pakistan's policy entered a new phase when the Hindu nationalist party, the BJP, gained power in India in March 1998 with an overtly *Hindutva* rather than secular policy. 'The social practices of the BJP elites and decision to go nuclear in 1998 showed the importance of *Hindutva*'s ideology.<sup>52</sup> This situation turned Pakistan's cautious and restrained policies into one of weaponization by testing its nuclear devices second time in 1998. India's nuclear acquisition was focused towards power maximization, regional dominance and international prominence while security aspects had secondary priority. There was a perception in India that after the nuclear tests, India would gain recognition in the international arena.<sup>53</sup> Carranza also argued that 'search for power and international status, rather than security considerations, explained the Indian attitude'.<sup>54</sup>

Turning to Pakistan's response to the Indian nuclear tests, predictable perception regarding India was reinforced by the BJP's electoral propaganda<sup>55</sup> which was based on firm determination to undo Pakistan and regain its control over Azad Kashmir. The logic of Pakistan's nuclear tests (1998) and response was completely Indo-centric seeking to offset India's conventional superiority. These events show that Pakistan's threat perception remained real and evolved over time. Pakistan maintained its claim that its nuclear deterrence is defensive to address the perceived threat from India, and to nullify Indian perception of undoing the creation of Pakistan. Moreover, analysis of Pakistan's pursuit of maximization of security would suggest that it is based on realists' notion of balance of power to guarantee peace with adversary. Atal Bihari Vajpayee later realized that the notion of 'Refocusing on *Hindutva*' was not workable. He visited Lahore to share prospects of peace and stability with his Pakistani

counterpart, Nawaz Sharif, nonetheless, Kargil War and then Pervez Musharraf's military coup derailed the process.

Tensions did not end up here rather became further acute between 1987 and 2002, when India and Pakistan experienced additional four crises. Nonetheless, none of these slipped into a major war – including Kargil war (1999). Yet the argument that the nuclear weapons states do not fight war and that nuclear deterrence minimizes probability of war was severely challenged as the two states slipped into a major post-nuclear misadventure. This war erupted in May-July 1999, limited in its scale and goals, leaving more than a thousand casualties on each side.<sup>56</sup> There were two propositions on this conflict. One group of observers considered that this conflict was associated with the Indian intrusion over the LoC at the Siachen Glacier and Pakistan's intention was to secure better bargaining position over this issue. Pakistan also wanted to interdict strategic road linkage between Srinagar and Siachen to counter repeated Indian interdictions of Neelam Valley.<sup>57</sup> For this group, Kargil was inevitable even in the absence of the introduction of nukes in the region. Whereas, the second proposition is that Pakistan has used nuclear deterrence as a cover or bargaining chip to force India to resume a substantive dialogue on Kashmir,<sup>58</sup> to internationalize the Kashmir cause and reinvigorate freedom struggle.<sup>59</sup> However, by any calculation, crafted hastily, this was the most dangerous confrontation which erupted in the nuclearized environment.<sup>60</sup> Again it was the US' intervention (due to the presence of nuclear weapons in this region) which helped ease the tempers of the two states, thus, pulling the forces back to barracks.

The Kargil conflict ushered a new dimension in the paradigm of nuclear deterrence – the notion of stability-instability paradox<sup>61</sup> and emergence of Indian Cold Start Doctrine (CSD)<sup>62</sup> the strategy of Pro-Active Operations (PAO), and the construct of Two Front War (TFW). The two states nullified the notion and spirit of nuclear deterrence theory thus sliding into a crisis. This was something which had not happened before. Besides Kargil, the terrorists' attack on the Indian parliament in New Delhi in December 2001 was also a dangerous development that brought the two states close to a clash in a post nuclearized environment. India blamed Pakistan that Kashmiri militant such as *Lashkar-e-Taiyyaba* and *Jaish-e-Muhammad*<sup>63</sup> were involved.<sup>64</sup> This event led India to launch 'Operation Parakram' on 18 December 2001 by mobilizing its forces for another war. Presumably, the US intervened to diffuse tension. The irrational move was initiated by Pakistan at Kargil and India's 'Operation Parakram' put the regional peace and stability at enormous risk with international consequences attached to it. India in 2008 further intensified regional security milieu in the form of another border standoff that created a war-like situation in the region and alarmed the US. The US was strongly relying on Pakistan for legitimatizing its mobility in Afghanistan against terrorism. It was unmanageable for the US to allow Pakistan to shift its focus from the Afghan border to the eastern one. Thus the US' diplomatic intervention eased tensions between India and Pakistan.

## **New political doctrines and more complexities**

Furthermore, the event of 9/11 dramatically transformed the international security environment. After the 9/11 terrorists attack on the US, Pakistan became a frontline state in the war on terror in Afghanistan. The 9/11 event favoured New Delhi as it abruptly aligned Pakistan with the Taliban and terrorism, and projected itself as an innocent actor and victim of terrorism. More so, the efficacy and status of Kashmir was considerably marginalized in the light of these developments without creating distinction between freedom struggle and terrorists' activities.

In the post-9/11 environment, Manmohan's era had witnessed better relations with Pakistan for two main reasons: first, Pakistan was busy in fighting war against terror with the US forces in Afghanistan; therefore, it was not an appropriate time for India to initiate any confrontation with Pakistan, Second, Manmohan was also busy in concentrating on domestic political issues and forcefully harnessed Indian economy with global outreach. At the same time, extensive literature contributed by the Indian scholars at home and abroad positioned Pakistan on corner thus aligning it with terrorism phenomenon, building strong alliance with Afghanistan and promoting proxy against Pakistan through the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan. To sum up this argument, indeed the post 9/11 developments and the role of Non-State Actors and terrorists' cross border activities had further exploited the two states prospects for peace and hence, intensified mistrust and derailed the peace process for more than a decade now.

A Hindu extremist, Narendra Modi came to power in May 2014 in India. Modi's foreign policy agenda remained focused on three priority areas for until today: improving India's international ties with key states (especially in East Asia) in ways that will aid its economic development; bolstering India's security with regard to both Pakistan and China, thus pressurizing Pakistan through disengagement; and 'leveraging India's 'soft power' in the West and the developing world to increase New Delhi's global standing and influence.'<sup>65</sup> He introduced Modi doctrine,<sup>66</sup> that postulates forceful maximization of political influence through greater maritime power thereby re-invigorating partnerships from the Indo-Pacific to the Asia-Pacific and hence transformed the Indian "Look East" policy to the "Act East" Policy. India has forcefully re-defined bilateral security partnerships with Japan, Australia, and the US-centric alliances, which are the salient features of this doctrine. Modi has been professing phrases like peaceful development and expansionism in the contemporary environment. Based on its expansionism notion, this doctrine seems more domineering, dangerous and aggressive in the regional context, which is likely to exert enormous pressure on Pakistan.

In the recent past, India did not restrain itself from constructing a global narrative populated with strong anti-Pakistan sentiment alleging Pakistan for harbouring and promoting terrorism inside India. Pakistan responded consistently that 'India has provided material support, through Afghanistan, to the insurgents in Baluchistan and parts of the Federally Administered Tribal areas in the north-west and is now unhappy that instead of a responding to peace

overtures, India is ratcheting up the anti-Pakistan rhetoric.<sup>67</sup> Thus, Pakistan had been categorically denying such allegations referring to rendering enormous sacrifices in the war on terror along with the US and global forces since 2011. Empirical record indeed shows Pakistan's recent renewed efforts in reformulating stringent border security policy against terrorists in form of operation Zarb-e-Azb.<sup>68</sup> The political and military leadership has pronounced this year – 'a year of great victory against terrorists.'<sup>69</sup> Indeed, the successful dividends resulted in reduced attacks, domestic stability, improved relations and intelligence sharing with Afghanistan and the US.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has made efforts and aspired to build peace and warmer relations between India and Pakistan. However, Indian provocative behaviour fortifies uncertainty and complexity. The Indian Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Rajyavardhan Rathore recently stated that Indian strikes in Myanmar (Indian army conducted cross-border strikes on two insurgent camps in Myanmar)<sup>70</sup> were a message to all the countries, including Pakistan and groups harbouring 'terror intent' that India would strike at the 'place and at a time' of its choice. He highlighted that, 'a terrorist is a terrorist and has no other identity. We will strike when we want to.'<sup>71</sup> Modi, during his two-day visit to Bangladesh in June this year not only accused Pakistan of spreading terrorism (revealing no evidences) in India but also confirmed that India had played a part in the break-up of Pakistan in 1971, while presenting the 'surrender picture' of General Niazi signing the Instrument of Surrender with General Arora.<sup>72</sup> Indian leaders' provocative statements of this kind have increased Pakistani masses' anti-Indian sentiments. At the political level, in response to Indian recent aggressive statements, both the Houses of Parliament in Pakistan passed unanimous resolutions thus 'vehemently condemning the irrational behaviour and hostile statements against Pakistan from the Indian ruling leadership. Such statements confirm Pakistan's belief about the past and present Indian involvement in destabilising Pakistan.'<sup>73</sup> The members in the resolution re-affirmed Pakistan's firm resolve to never allow any country to violate its territory under any pretext.<sup>74</sup>

While Pakistan is pointing fingers at *Research and Analysis Wing* (RAW – Indian intelligence agency) for spreading, sustaining and supporting terrorism in the country,<sup>75</sup> India is restating its allegations that Islamabad is doing little to prosecute the November 2008 Mumbai attackers.<sup>76</sup> These ideas, misperception based on misplaced suspicion, and attitudes of the elites are further undermining the peace process and complicating regional politics. This is how Pakistan-India rivalry is enduring and it is not going to fade in the next few decades. Though, India has shifted its focus from Pakistan to a more globalized form, but Pakistan's security calculus is still strongly hinged upon the Indian threat.

## **Mechanism for peace and conflict resolution**

The paper has highlighted some previous models and constructs that could help resolve current problems in this region to which the present study has called 'modelling history for finding solutions of contemporary problems'. For

example, the agreements such as Indus Basin Treaty (1960), Tashkent Peace Agreement (1965), Rann of Kutch Agreement (1968), Shimla Agreement (1972), and Lahore Declaration (1998), were significant arrangements based on liberal framework to build cooperation and peace between arch rivals. Nevertheless, all the agreements and peace mechanisms failed except the Indus Water Treaty, which was concluded with the help of the World Bank. The Tashkent peace agreement was initiated with the Soviet support following the 1965 war. It stipulated that relations between India and Pakistan should base on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the other. The Shimla agreement was initiated in 1972, which renounced the use of force as a means of settling outstanding disputes and both states agreed to resolve their issues bilaterally. However, implementation of these agreements remained poor. The agreements failed because of the two main reasons. First, powerful India had never demonstrated political will to negotiate on the final status of Kashmir and did not allow third party mediation. Second, the revisionist India always desired to exploit peace and vulnerabilities of a smaller adversary to maximize its own hegemonic gains and political influence in the regional security construct and global political affairs based on its realist guided Greater Indian vision.

The significant questions which lingers are: How can these two states overcome their enduring rivalry and develop normal neighbourly ties? How can mistrust be reduced, conflicts be resolved and peace be secured between India and Pakistan? First, this study has found that the fundamental problem lies in the distinct strategic and political directions of the two states, which preserve asymmetric relationship. Powerful and hegemonic India works on realist guided revisionist motives based on its 'Greater India Vision' to dominate the regional securitization order. In pursuit of these goals, India has demonstrated hard power and intrusive approach with its immediate neighbourhood mainly Pakistan. Pakistan has considered India as an existential threat and has been trying to maximize its security to outweigh the Indian threat, regional imbalance and Indian hegemonic designs. This process has generated and intensified security dilemma and security-insecurity paradox with increased suspicions, mistrust and anti-state sentiments. It has been argued that India as a larger country with strong regional economic and so called democratic credentials, needs to modify its Kautiliya guided realist learning curve from its policy against Pakistan to initiate steps towards normalization of its relations with Pakistan.

Indeed, the chequered history of Pakistan-India relations is mired by unresolved territorial issues. Thus the rivalry would persist unless the two states demonstrate serious efforts to initiate a peaceful and workable mechanism towards the resolution of their territorial issues. Sir Creek and Siachen are not complicated conflicts when compared to Kashmir. The Indus Water and Rann of Kutch Model offer guidance towards the resolution of these disputes. Nevertheless, India is not ready to accept third party involvement, which is the major stumbling block in this context. The study strongly assumes that bilateralism failed to yield any favourable dividends in this region. Therefore, liberal framework offers a strong security mechanism towards the resolution of



these conflicts through third party mediation. Liberals believe that ‘the international system and peace and stability are not dependent on the balance of power between states but on international law and institutions.’<sup>77</sup> They rightly claim that ‘institutions settle distributional conflicts, assuring that gains are equally distributed.’<sup>78</sup> Thus third parties, such as the United Nations, the European Union and stronger states like the US through their diplomatic efforts and direct intervention can help resolve these issues.

The issue of Kashmir is the most complicated one with no end in sight. The most plausible and relevant approachable solution for Kashmir was Pervez Musharraf’s four-point agenda – a gradual withdrawal of troops, self-governance, no changes to the region’s borders and a joint supervision mechanism.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless, Indian elites abandoned the whole idea. India’s cold responses showed that it was not ready to compromise or accept any solution for Kashmir. The greedy and revisionist states generally do not aspire to cooperate, negotiate on resolution of the territorial issues or go for peace mechanism while they aim at engaging a smaller adversary in crises or war like situations. It makes logical sense that India may not be able to attain its greater India status until it resolves the issue of Kashmir under the framework of international law — considering the aspirations, will and status of the people of Kashmir. The people of Kashmir should be given the right to decide their destiny in a fair and free plebiscite under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions of 1948. . Without the help of international institutions and the US, the issue between the two states will aggravate further mistrust and exploit peace in the nuclearized region. Any effort towards peace process would remain fruitless unless the issue of Kashmir is addressed seriously based on self-determination.

To facilitate the above process such as resolution of enduring conflicts, there are certain areas, which indicate ‘implicit ways of convergence’ for both India and Pakistan. Bilateral integration and Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) would reduce mistrust and modify intensified behaviour of the two states against each other. How would this process be materialized? The bottom up model approach would help build graduated trust and minimize differences. For example, sincere focus on the developmental goals through areas such as trade, poverty alleviation, joint education mechanisms, sharing of health practices and facilities, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief management, freedom of the seas – suppression of crimes like piracy in a joint manner — can help mitigate mistrust between the two states. Indeed, the enablers for conflict resolution that could bring both states close on areas of shared concerns could be: Social factors contributing to the genesis of both states’ rival identities which led to such intractable security disputes in the first place, which can play a vital role in conflict resolution Cultural perspective may provide ways to integrate history, memories and elites’ constructed perceptions in both the countries. Peaceful normative framework would help the two states in lessening their tensions and eliminating the trans-national terrorists’ activates who could threaten the region. Terrorism is a common threat, which demands combined efforts and spirit to be rooted out from the region. The trust deficit in addition to the incongruity of material power has an equal important socio-cultural aspect

that is often neglected and seldom gets enough recognition. The states' elites and leaders have to choose more rational and diplomatic way of transmitting political messages or communication and avoid blame-games. In addition, geographical contiguity, interdependence on natural resources such as water and food resources would help lessen the tensions and reconcile old wounds.

It is argued that the interests of Europe, the US, Russia and other countries are going to make their presence permanently visible in the Asia-Pacific region (because Asia is considered as a strategic hub as the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy lies in this region) in this century which offers new avenues for cooperation to these two rival states. The US with its centric alliance in the Asia Pacific may continue to encourage India towards the resumption of a dialogue between India and Pakistan. Instead of creating imbalance by rewarding India (a non-NPT nuclear weapon state) with material support through the Indo-US nuclear Deal, armaments and naval platforms, new delivery and surveillance means,<sup>80</sup> the US can help construct a security mechanism to address the two states, insecurity and political complexities. Track-II diplomacy can help reinstate official talks. Nevertheless, Track-II holds no significance in the absence of governmental dialogue. Presence of nukes and democratic rule in both the countries offer an environment that could be conducive to reinstate CBMs and trade links. The two states have to modify their strategic behaviour and attitude to learn from each other's strengths and best practices. Undoubtedly, nuclear weapons would continue to play a role in the national security policy of these two states as these weapons did maintain fragile peace and prevented outbreak of a conventional or total war since 1983. Introduction of nuclear weapons, advancements in nuclear delivery mechanisms and rising arms race, instead, do not stabilize the region, but contributes to the escalation of these states insecurities in the absence of dialogue and CBMs. However, both states need to clearly establish understanding, neither use of total force is feasible nor is the concept of total victory achievable in the nuclear domain.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has revealed that the root causes of divergences between the two states lies in the disputed territorial issues and distinct directions demonstrated in their different political and religious goals, ideas, elites' perceptions, statements and convoluted history. The study has validated the adequacy of realists' assumption in the context of India that is the powerful actor, which has focused on attaining a global status through forceful maximization of political influence and material power thus undermining the bordering state's security concerns. Pakistan's security environment has been defined clearly by Indian status quo oriented behaviour (historic rivalry, defence expansion and its hegemonic role). The regional strategic environment, in which Pakistan has perceived India as an existential threat to its security and survival has defined Pakistan's strategic thinking and culture. The leaderships' aggressive behaviours and divergent attitudes which are based on misplaced suspicions are closely tied to the respective identity discourse of the two states. The security dilemma and divergence has been created predominantly at the

elites' level which has shaped the strategic culture of the two states thus creating impediments that impede the formation of 'security communities' in South Asia.<sup>81</sup> For Pervaiz, 'the elites have manipulated socio-cultural myths to spread animosity between the populations of both states.'<sup>82</sup> It is imperative for the elites of the two countries to stop demonizing each other and start cooperating for the mutual benefits of the people and towards resolution of the territorial conflicts.

The territorial conflicts, mainly the issue of Kashmir, are a fundamental one that deepens security dilemma, increases mistrust and probability of war between the two states. The most plausible and relevant approachable solution on Kashmir is based on the liberal framework that favours international institutions and law. The liberal framework offers a strong security mechanism towards the resolution of these conflicts through third party mediation. Finally, both India and Pakistan should talk about their future, not wars and must devise strategies to avoid uncertainty that could lead to fateful conflict. To avoid conflict between the two states, a bottom up approach should be followed, re-open all areas of cooperation, build deeper economic integration and cooperation in the present globalized environment for the people inhabiting in both states.

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