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AGNI

STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

OBJECTIVE

AGNI is the journal of the Forum of Strategic and Security Studies [FSSS]. The aim is to use this instrument to explore the perceptions and developing logic on strategic issues, that have a bearing on global stability and harmony, from a wide range of analysts, policy makers and academics world wide, who influence strategic thought in their countries or region, so as to create greater awareness and a wider understanding of the elements giving drive to formulation of State policies and responses.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The FSSS shall publish, solicited or unsolicited, studies by experts or groups conducting them, on strategic issues that have a direct or indirect bearing with immediate or long term implications, on regional or global security.

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EDITOR'S PAGE

Despite persistent threats from various Jihadist groups operating across the borders besides the local Maoists, country has by and large been peaceful, which is remarkable. Kashmir has been an exception where Jihadist are creating chaos despite permanent deployment of large contingents of the army. An innovative political approach is surely overdue.

The Chinese political-economic activities in our backyard are a matter of great concern as we are unable to stop the sly march of China undermining our influence in South Asian countries and threatening our national security.

In this issue:

Ramtanu Maitra in his article on China's economic expansion and imperatives behind it notes: In recent years since the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) became center of its foreign policy strategy, China has put in a lot of effort in making its presence felt in Africa and the Middle East. In accessing the Middle East, China has developed a railroad link that goes through western China in to the Central Asian countries to reach Iran. That land access, however, has its limitations. The amount of Chinese goods that are going into the Middle East is well beyond what the railroads can handle. In other words, trade with the Middle East will be primarily carried out through sea traveling through the Indian Ocean. China is also developing a Pakistani port, Gwadar, close to the Iranian borders on the Arabian Sea, and a 2300-acre Special Economic Zone around it, as an importation hub for oil, gas and other products that the western part of China would need in the future.

Alok Kumar Gupta writing on India-Japan relations observes: India and Japan relations in the recent past have acquired a new dimension in the wake of India's Act East Policy and aspirations of both India and Japan in the newly emerging

world order as well as the regional order in East Asia. The rise of China as a new global power and its economic relations with both these countries has been further determining factors for the recent spate of convergence between the two countries. Accordingly, there have been visits and counter visits by heads of both these countries to each other to provide a booster dose to their already growing relations. India's Act East Policy and Japan's aspirations to diversify its economic portfolio beyond China necessitated their interaction to facilitate investment and technology transfer. There could be many more areas of cooperation between the two countries. There is no dearth of complementarities between the two for interactions. They have also revealed their aspirations to build Global Partnership for 'Peace and Prosperity' in the world. Undoubtedly, both are in dire need of each other and hence they need to enhance their economic engagement and global partnership.


N Bhatia in his article on Kashmir observes: What needs to be done to resolve the insurgency problem is a very complex, intricate and sensitive issue and the shortest answer for that could be the 'good governance' by both the state and the central governments. We need to ensure quality education from primary school upwards, eradicate corruption, win over hearts and minds of the local masses with appropriate civic actions, psychological war (psywar) themes, creation of jobs, development of tourism, fruits including dry fruits and cottage industry and provision of the medical, health, sanitation, vocational training, electricity and connectivity with people. BUT, by far the MOST important issue in any insurgent environment would always be 'the winning of the hearts and minds' of the antagonized masses.

We need to dominate international border/line of control (IB/LOC) and destroy terrorist hide outs and training and logistics bases across in the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) and rest of the Pakistan.

Jai Kumar Verma in his detailed analysis on China-Pakistan relations says: Initially China- Pakistan relations were driven on ancient proverb that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Islamabad uses Beijing as a counterweight to India, while China supports Pakistan to keep check on India and encumber its progress. Pakistan was separated from India on the basis of failed two nation's theory and

after its independence; both countries fought three full scale wars, excluding attack by Pakistani troops on Kargil. As two nations theory was not viable and religion alone cannot keep the states and regions together, an important part of Pakistan i.e. East Pakistan was separated, and a new nation with the name of Bangladesh, was born. Pakistan alleges that Bangladesh was created only because of assistance rendered by India and it does not agree with the hard fact that the new nation was born, because of atrocities perpetrated by Punjabi dominated West Pakistan and after the elections it refused to give the rightful claim of residents of East Pakistan. Pakistan army, which projects itself as the saviour of Pakistan and its ideology, has waged a low intensity war against its eastern neighbour. Pakistan is conscious that India is more powerful in conventional warfare hence it developed nuclear warheads to threaten India. Nonetheless, Islamabad is also aware that possession of nuclear warheads is one thing, but its use is dangerous, hence it wants to have protection of some powerful country, which comes to its rescue in case of hostility with India. Previously it depended on United States, now it claims that China is Pakistan's all weather friends.

Nilofar Suhrawardy writing on the role of media in India Pakistan diplomacy comments: Diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan has recently hit headlines because of the Kartarpur corridor. Interestingly, this issue has received mixed reactions on whether it may or may not contribute to improvement of diplomatic ties between the two countries. And this draws attention to speculations voiced about Indo-Pak relations through coverage accorded to the same by media in both the countries and across the world. Undeniably, the role of media, that is media power, cannot be undermined, sidelined and/or ignored with respect to any issue. In this paper, an attempt shall be made to delve on this aspect that is media power with respect to nature of Indo-Pak relations.


Major General
Afsir Karim (Retd)
Editor

CHINA'S LONG-TERM INDIAN OCEAN PRESENCE STRATEGY

BY

RAMTANU MAITRA

...
Iadmit that geographically speaking India has a special role to play in stabilizing the Indian Ocean region and South Asian region. But [for the Indian Ocean], 'backyard' is not a very appropriate word to use for an open sea and international areas of sea. ... If the Indian side views the Indian Ocean as its backyard, it cannot explain why navies from Russia, the United States, and Australia have the right of free navigation in Indian Ocean.

—Senior Captain Zhao Yi, associate professor at the Institute of Strategy of China's National Defense University

THE KRA CANAL, KYAUKPHYU, HAMBANTOTA, GWADAR, DJIBOUTI...

China's spectacular economic performance during the last four decades has brought that country to the forefront of all trading nations. China's per capita GDP, which was US\$155 in 1978, grew to US\$8,836 by 2017, adjusted for inflation. In 2009 China surpassed Japan to become the second-largest economy in the world, and in 2010 surpassed Germany to become the world's largest exporter. In 2013 China's trade exceeded that of the United States, and it became the biggest goods trading nation on the planet.

China's economic performance and the imperatives behind it largely drive Beijing's foreign policy and overarching long-term geopolitical strategy in the Indian Ocean and across the globe. The most populous nation on earth, China lacks the raw materials that are among the building blocks of an industrial economy; its existence as a growing

economy is thus fundamentally dependent on ever-expanding networks of trade and commerce.

ECONOMIC DRIVERS

China accounts for a significant portion of the global trade in natural resources. It is the largest importer of crude oil in the world, accounting for some 17 percent of global crude oil imports. The country is also the biggest importer of iron ore by a significant margin, accounting for more than 67 percent of total global iron ore imports (Japan, the second-biggest iron ore importer, accounts for a mere 8.5 percent of total imports). Aluminum, coal, copper, natural gas and oilseeds such as soybeans are also significant imports; and the last two are growing rapidly. China is also a significant importer of electrical and electronic machinery and equipment, including computers, integrated circuits and optical, technical and medical equipment—this broad category makes up about 35 percent of China's imports.

First among China's top four exports are machinery, specifically electronics, and transportation equipment (nearly 50 percent combined). Furniture and textile products are also top exports—China is the largest cotton spinner in the world, and its textile industry, which employs 300 million people, is the biggest globally in terms of overall production and exports. Rubber, plastic and metallurgical products are also major, and fast-growing, components of China's export trade.

China's import-export imperatives are clear. A brief review of the country's geographic location rounds out the context for Beijing's strategy. China is bordered by 14 countries—Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Russia. China is connected to those countries by land. Across the seas, China's neighbors include eight countries—North Korea, South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia.

While a large part of China's trade takes place through the Indian Ocean, China does not have a direct access to that body of water, which comprises at least one fifth of the world's total sea area. The Indian Ocean is bounded by Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, India's

coastal waters, the Bay of Bengal near Myanmar and Indonesia (the eastern Indian Ocean) and washes the coastal areas of Australia further south. It also provides access to the oil and gas-rich Middle East region through one of its bays, the Arabian Sea.

OIL CHOKEPOINTS: THE INDIAN OCEAN CORRIDOR

Because of its vastness and its bays, the Indian Ocean, which comprises more than one-fifth of the world's total sea area, offers China, along with and its littoral states, the critical sea trade routes to the Middle East, Africa, Australia, and South Asia. It also provides access to the oil- and gas-rich Middle East region through one of its bays, the Arabian Sea. The Indian Ocean is not only host to vital international trade routes; the region contains a number of the world's most important strategic chokepoints, including the Strait of Hormuz—a strait between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman—and Malacca, through which 32.2 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum are transported per day, more than 50 percent of the world's maritime oil trade (*Center Stage for the 21st Century: Rivalry in the Indian Ocean: Robert Kaplan - March 16, 2009*).

China's only access to these essential routes is through the Malacca Strait, the narrow waterway connecting the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) and to the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean) that is one of the world's busiest channels. Nearly 100,000 vessels pass through it annually; accounting for about one-quarter of the world's traded goods. Oil shipments through the Strait of Malacca supply both China and Indonesia, two of the world's fastest-growing economies. This strait is the primary chokepoint in Asia, with an estimated 16.0 million b/d flow in 2016, compared with 14.5 million b/d in 2011. Crude oil generally makes up between 85 percent and 90 percent of total oil flows per year, and petroleum products account for the remainder (*World Oil Transit Chokepoints: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA): July 25, 2017*).

Fully 80 percent of China's vital oil imports come through the Indian Ocean-Strait of Malacca passage. Beside the Strait of Malacca, the vast amount of China's oil (as well as that of, Japan, India, South Korea, and Singapore) also passes through another chokepoint, the Strait of Hormuz. A major part of China's strategy of engagement, including

developing and building port facilities, along the Indian Ocean's shores is focused on keeping these extremely important sea lanes free of any single nation's—or group of nations'—control.

China is at the same time working to bring in oil and gas from distant lands by through land-based pipelines to feed its growing energy demand. Separate crude oil pipelines from Russia and Kazakhstan to China illustrate efforts to increase overland supply. In 2015 the Russia-China crude oil pipeline started expanding to double its capacity from 300,000 to 600,000 barrels per day (b/d) by 2016. At the same time, construction was finished on the 440,000-b/d Myanmar-China oil pipeline, which bypasses the Strait of Malacca, transporting crude oil from Kyaukphyu in Myanmar to Kunming, China. The crude oil for this pipeline will be supplied by Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern and African countries. However, these land-based pipelines can serve only as supplemental supply routes; China is and will remain heavily dependent on the sea lanes via the Strait of Malacca and the Strait of Hormuz to bring in the bulk of its oil (*2016 China Military Power Report: U.S Department of Defense: China's Energy Strategy*).

REACHING WESTWARD: A MARITIME SILK ROAD FOCUS ON AFRICA

Beyond its oil requirement to keep the huge economic machine growing, China has now become a leading trading nation. Its overall annual export is close \$ 2.1 trillion and annual import is about \$1.6 trillion. Although much of its exports and imports—about \$2.1 trillion and \$1.6 trillion respectively—travel through the Pacific and the South China Sea, in the future, China has plans to significantly expand in a big way its trade with both Africa and the Middle East in the future. To achieve that objective, China will have to depend more and even more on the Indian Ocean.

During a visit to Indonesia in October 2013, China's President Xi Jinping addressed the Indonesian Parliament, proposing to join efforts with countries in the region to build a new "maritime silk road." At the time, Xi's statement was considered a bid to enhance maritime partnership with China's Southeast Asian neighbors to overcome territorial disputes and usher in opportunities for cooperation. Subsequently, the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) became one part of China's Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB). The MSR aims to reach Europe, originating from cities

on China's southeastern coast and using a system of linked ports and infrastructure projects. The planned sea route begins in Fuzhou, China, and goes via Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and East Africa. Along the African coast, China plans to develop ports in Kenya, Djibouti, Tanzania, and Mozambique. The MSR would then continue from the African coast into the Red Sea and through the Suez Canal to the Mediterranean. After passing Athens, the road terminates in Venice, where it joins the land-based "belt" route (*China and The Maritime Silk Road: Dan Blystone: Investopedia*).

AFRICA: CHINA'S ECONOMIC FOCUS

In recent years since the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) became center of its foreign policy strategy, China has put in a lot of effort in making its presence felt in Africa and the Middle East. In accessing the Middle East, China has developed a railroad link that goes through western China in to the Central Asian countries to reach Iran. That land access, however, has its limitations. The amount of Chinese goods that are going into the Middle East is well beyond what the railroads can handle. In other words, trade with the Middle East will be primarily carried out through sea traveling through the Indian Ocean. China is also developing a Pakistani port, Gwadar, close to the Iranian borders on the Arabian Sea, and a 2300-acre Special Economic Zone around it, as an importation hub for oil, gas and other products that the western part of China would need in the future.

Since the beginning of this millennium, from being a relatively small investor in the continent, China has risen from a relatively small investor in Africa to become Africa's the continent's largest economic partner. China-Africa trade amounted to US\$174 billion in 2017, a huge increase from just over US\$10 billion in 2000. Chinese foreign direct investments in Africa have has risen from US\$10 billion in 2010 to over more than US\$60 billion in 2017.

Speaking to the *China Daily* on the sidelines of the 6th Conference of Chinese and African Entrepreneurs at Beijing last September, President of the African Development Bank (AfDB), President Akinwumi Adesina noted: "There's a perfect alignment between the Belt and Road Initiative and the 'High 5s' of the African Development Bank Group. The Bank is already discussing with China Development Bank about formulating

large-scale projects, which can fit in the both of the frameworks.” The “High 5s” are: to (1) Light up and Power Africa; (2) Feed Africa; (3) Industrialize Africa; (4) Integrate Africa; and (5) Improve the Quality of Life for the People of Africa. (*“Africa is the place to be,” African Development Bank President tells Chinese business leaders at the China-Africa forum: Africa Development Bank: Sept 5 2018*).

A McKinsey June 2017 McKinsey & Co report of June 2017 pointed out that “Chinese firms operate across many sectors of the African economy. Nearly a third are involved in manufacturing, a quarter in services, and around a fifth in trade and in construction and real estate. In manufacturing, we estimate that 12 percent of Africa’s industrial production—valued at some \$500 billion a year in total—is already handled by Chinese firms. In infrastructure, Chinese firms’ dominance is even more pronounced, and they claim nearly 50 percent of Africa’s internationally contracted construction market.” (*Dance of the lions and dragons: Irene Yuan Sun, KartikJayaram, Omid Kassiri: McKinsey & Co: June 2017*).

The report concluded that the China’s investments in Africa are bound to grow. “We interviewed more than 100 senior African business and government leaders, and nearly all of them said the Africa-China opportunity is larger than that presented by any other foreign partner—including Brazil, the European Union, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

“But exactly how quickly will the Africa-China relationship grow in the decade ahead? We see two potential scenarios. In the first, the revenues of Chinese firms in Africa grow at a healthy clip to reach around \$250 billion in 2025, from \$180 billion today. This scenario would simply entail ‘business as usual,’ with Chinese firms growing in line with the market, holding their current market shares steady as African economies expand. Under this scenario, the same three industries that dominate Chinese business in Africa today— manufacturing, resources, and infrastructure—would dominate in 2025 as well.” (*Dance of the lions and dragons: Irene Yuan Sun, KartikJayaram, Omid Kassiri: McKinsey & Co: June 2017*).

MIDDLE EAST: CHINA'S SOURCE OF ENERGY AND INVESTMENT

In addition to the African continent, in recent years, China has focused on enhancing its relationship with the Middle East in recent years. In 1996, almost two decades after China's economic miracle had begun to take shape, China's then-President Jiang Zemin visited the Arab League, and the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum was established in 2004. In the most recent years, China has put a lot of effort into making its presence felt in the Middle East. China has developed a railroad link through western China into the Central Asian countries to reach Iran. That land access, however, has limitations. The amount of Chinese goods that are going into the Middle East is well beyond what the railroads can handle.

According to SanamVakil, a visiting fellow at the U.S-based Hoover Institution's Working Group on Islamism and the International Order and a senior consulting fellow at Chatham House's Middle East and North Africa Program, China's historical foray into the Middle East is captured by the old adage that "everything happens in threes." According to Vakil, China's push to the Middle East has taken three drives. The first took place during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) where when the infamous Silk Road linked the commerce of East and West. The second occurred during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) when Zheng He, an admiral and a court eunuch, commanded an armada that brought him as far as Persia and Egypt. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Mao government, as a second- world power, tried to lure many of the third world countries of the region out of the warm embrace of the United States, albeit unsuccessfully.

President Xi Jinping's 2013 announcement of the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative designed to expand links between Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe by recreating the ancient Silk Road trade routes by land (the Belt) and sea (the Road) is the third such initiative. The OBOR vision is designed to invest \$4 trillion in infrastructure development linking 70 global countries through the creation of new ports, roads, railways, and pipelines. Such connectivity will enable Chinese companies to reap the gains from construction contracts and from long- term export opportunities into these markets. Investment comes in the form of loans allocated by the Asian Investment Infrastructure Bank (AIIB),

the Silk Road Fund and the New Development Bank. (*China & Middle East: Regional Rebalancing: SanamVakil: The Hoover Institute: Oct 4, 2018*).

In the coming decades, China will become even more dependent on Saudi Arabia's petroleum. Saudi oil exports to China exceeded those to the United States for the first time in 2009, and the kingdom's exports to five Asian countries (China, Japan, South Korea, India, and Singapore) amount to more than three times that of Europe and North America combined. By 2030, the Chinese National Petroleum Corp. estimates that Chinese demand for oil will reach 13.8 million barrels per day, while U.S. oil imports are expected to continue to dwindle in the era of fracking. In shifting its oil export focus, Saudi Arabia is joining the world's major Muslim powers (including Nigeria, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey, and others) that have deepened their economic ties with China over the past decade. (*China rewrites the rules on how to rise in influence in the Middle East: Daniel Wagner: South China Morning Post: Feb 01 2018: SCMP*).

However, China is not looking at the Middle East as only a source to meet its energy demand. It is also seizing the opportunity provided by the Middle Eastern nations to diversify their economies. Saudi Arabia and Jordan are both in discussions with Beijing to harmonize their development plans with the Belt and Road Initiative. In the case of Saudi Arabia, this alignment of strategic visions has translated into a strong commercial signing package signed during King Salman's March 2017 state visit to Beijing, totaling \$65 billion of in bilateral agreements in the oil, space, and renewable energy sectors. Further, Egyptian collaboration with China on a new Suez Canal cooperation zone is underway. In Duqm, Oman, Chinese capital inflows transformed a backwater fishing village into a \$10.7 billion "Sino-Oman Industrial City" featuring an oil refinery capable of processing 235,000 barrels per day. (*China Smells Opportunity in the Middle East's Crisis: Daniel Kliman, Abigail Grace: Foreign Policy: June 14 2018*).

It is also important to note that by keeping its relations with the Middle Eastern nations explicitly commercial, China has so far succeeded in enhancing its relations with the Arab states and, at the same time, growing its ties with Israel and Iran.

CHINA'S PLANS TO PROTECT THE INDIAN OCEAN TRADE ROUTE

Given its growing relations with the African nations, in general, and the Middle East, China is bound to make sure that the trade routes to these two areas of great importance remain secured. It is likely that China's growth in the Middle East, which had long been under the U.S. geopolitical dominance, could evoke provoke geopolitical tensions with the United States. Besides its massive presence in the Persian Gulf waters, the United States has a wide-ranging presence in the Indian Ocean. For instance, the U.S 5th Fleet, based in Bahrain, whose area of operations encompasses the southern coast of the Middle East, Pakistan, and the Horn of Africa, is a fully Indian Ocean fleet.

In addition to its presence in Djibouti on the Gulf of Aden, with an access to an airhead and port facilities, the United States has a very strong naval presence in Diego Garcia. This atoll

Diego Garcia atoll in the heart of the Indian Ocean is a British territory and on a long-term lease to the United States. This The United States has used the base was used during the U.S-waged Gulf War of 1990-1991 and the anti-terrorist war in Afghanistan and Iraq. "For this purpose, 16 separate units were located on Diego Garcia, including a naval support base and a strategic bomber airfield base, the point locations for guided missile submarines and a nuclear weapons storage. The base was important both for maintaining tight control of the oil streams from the Gulf into South Asia, Southeast Asia, and North Asia, and for curbing China's military rise and the presence of the Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean." (*American Military Base on Diego Garcia: What's Next? Nina Lebedeva: New Eastern Outlook: Dec 1 2016*).

THE LAND-BRIDGE HEDGE

As China grew, Beijing realized that the prime necessity to sustain such growth is to make sure not to remain too dependent on the overcrowded and narrow Malacca Strait for its access to the Indian Ocean. Blocking the Chinese vessels by closing off the Strait at a time of conflict could take a very serious toll on China's overall economy within a very short period of time. In 2003, then-President Hu Jintao identified the need to mitigate what he termed China's "Malacca Dilemma."

Subsequently, China has taken a few steps to alleviate the problem. As part of its Belt and Road initiative, China is developing several major new routes that are likely to reduce China's dependency on the Malacca Strait as a conduit for all its oil imports. One route is China's trans-Myanmar oil and gas pipelines. As part of its Belt and Road initiative, China is developing several major new routes that are likely to reduce China's dependency on the Malacca Strait as a conduit for oil imports. One route is China's trans-Myanmar oil and gas pipelines. A gas pipeline was already opened in 2013. An 771-km oil pipeline, 771 km-long connecting Made Island in Myanmar's Rakhine State to Kunming, the capital of China's Yunnan Province, was inaugurated on May 2, 2017. It is estimated that some 22 billion tons of crude oil and 13 billion cubic feet of natural gas will pass through the pipelines annually.

China is also planning to develop two other land-bridges— – including an oil pipeline and a railway— – linking ports on the west and east coasts of the Malay Peninsula. However, the proposed railway is now under on hold. Since these land-bridges would be able to meet only a small percentage of China's annual demand, in 2015, Chinese and Thai officials had reportedly signed the a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the a canal project proposed to be built through the Kra Isthmus in Thailand. A pipedream for centuries, the recent resurgence of proposals for the Kra Isthmus Canal is largely a result of China's Maritime Silk Road Initiative and cooperation from a section of Thailand's business community. In 2013, the Kra Canal was officially integrated into the One Belt and One Road (OBOR) initiative. China would be one of the biggest beneficiaries if of the proposed deep canal capable of transporting the world's biggest oil tankers, container ships and bulk tankers (directly from Thailand port to its final destination overseas bypassing transit through any third country) becomes a reality.

The Kra Canal project envisages two important deliverables— – it is seen as a substitute to the Malacca Strait and aims to establish a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). (*Thailand's Kra Canal project: Prospects and Challenges: Shelly Mahajan: South Asia Program at Hudson Institute: May 14, 2018*). It is only expected that following the construction of the canal, should it ever actually materialize, China will be a major partner in ensuring its security.

KYAUKPHYU

Kyaukphyu, is a coastal town on the Bay of Bengal in Myanmar's western-most state of Rakhine, is the site of another strategic effort by Beijing to reduce its reliance on oil and gas imports through the Strait of Malacca.

In 2016, subsidiaries of China's CITIC Group Corporation, including China Harbor Engineering Company, won contracts for two major projects in the town— the dredging of a deep-sea port, and the creation of an industrial area in an accompanying special economic zone (SEZ). The port project was valued at the time at \$7.3 billion. However, Myanmar's National League for Democracy (NLD), the ruling party, has pared down the Chinese involvement in that project. When a fresh agreement was signed in August this year 2018, the Myanmar government reduced the value of the deep-seaport project to \$1.3 billion. Media reports indicate this reduction was over concerns that the project may turn out to become a debt trap.

Significantly, should be noted that Myanmar did not just hand over the project to China. According to U KanZaw, who also served as chairman of the Kyaukphyu SEZ project tender selection committee, told *The Irrawaddy* in an exclusive interview: "We invited tenders from international developers. Frankly speaking, we didn't want China to come, but Hong Kong developers submitted tenders. We expected U.S. and E.U. developers to come, but they didn't." (*Kyaukphyu SEZ Project Awarded to China for Lack of Options, Ex-Minister Says: HtetNaingZaw: The Irrawaddy: Aug 6 2018*).

China remains committed to the Kyaukphyu projects primarily because the town is the terminus of a \$1.5 billion oil pipeline and a parallel natural gas pipeline running to Kunming, capital of southwestern China's Yunnan Province. Unlike the other port and industrial zone projects related to Kyaukphyu, construction on the pipelines moved forward despite significant local opposition. They were constructed built between 2010 and early 2015 by China National Petroleum Corporation and Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise—both state-owned firms—with the former the majority stakeholder. The gas pipeline entered went into operation in 2013 and can send 12 billion cubic meters of gas to China annually. After a two-year delay, the oil pipeline finally began

operating in April 2017. It can reportedly carry some 22 million barrels of oil per year, which amounts amounted to about 6 percent of China's 2016 oil imports. The pipeline project is part of a strategic effort by Beijing to reduce its reliance on oil and gas imports through the Strait of Malacca.

Building a deep-sea port at Kyaukphyu makes immense economic and strategic sense for China in its drive to develop its inland provinces. Shipping goods from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and India to Kyaukphyu and then overland to Yunnan could save thousands of miles. It would be far more efficient than sailing all the way through the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea to ports along China's southern and eastern coasts, and then traveling overland to China's western provinces. Not surprisingly, in December 2017 State Councilor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Xi Jinping agreed during a meeting in Beijing to establish a new China-Myanmar Economic Corridor connecting Kyaukphyu and Kunming. (*Kyaukphyu: Connecting China to Indian Ocean: Gregory: Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative: April 4, 2018*).

SECURING THE INDIAN OCEAN PASSAGEWAY: HAMBANTOTA

Developing the Hambantota port was had been under discussion in Sri Lanka for decades, but the location was not considered suitable till until Sri Lanka elected a president who came from that area. Soon after he took power in 2005, he President Mahinda Rajapaksa became keen to develop the port along with an international airport, a new town, a conventional center and a highway extension. He brought in the Chinese investment, and the first phase of the port was developed through a \$ 307 million loan from the Export-Import Bank of China at a 6.3% interest rate. Despite the fact that failure of the port was written all over the project from the beginning. More, more borrowed loaned money from China was sunk into this destined-to-fail port.

One year after it opened in 2010, a huge rock on in the seabed was still blocking vessels from entering. Even after it the rock was blasted away at a great expense, the port attracted only 34 ships in 2012. Still, Chinese investment continued to pour in over during the following four years, as further loan agreements were signed and the cost of the

project sky rocketed, according to the Sri Lankan Ministry of Finance's annual reports. (*The story of Hambantota Port: a flunking token of political corruption: Eva Grey: Ship Technology: Sept 18 2018*). In 2017, according to Sri Lanka's Ministry of Shipping and Ports, 183 ships arrived. Out of these ships, , of which 175 ships were cargo ships.

The weak economic rationale behind building the port which resulted in steady operating losses, coupled with payment of loans to China, brought Colombo to its knees. Last In December 2017, the government of Sri Lanka formally handed over of the strategic port of Hambantota over to China, which will take control of the facility on a 99-year lease under what is called the Concession Agreement. Hambantota International Port Group (HIPG) and Hambantota International Port Services (HIPS), two new companies set up by the China Merchants Port Holdings Company will manage operations in Hambantota Port. Reportedly, China Merchants Port Holdings Company agreed to pay \$1.12 billion for an 85 percent share in Hambantota.

GWADAR

Located at the southern tip of Pakistan on the Makran Coast on the Arabian Sea and close to the Iranian border, Gwadar was once a small fishing village. Now, part of China's alleged \$ 60 billion investment in infrastructure in Pakistan to link up China's western Xinjian province to the Arabian Sea, east of the Strait of Hormuz, Gwadar Port has become a very important nodal point for China to secure the passageway to the Persian Gulf.

Gwadar port, now under construction, is located close to the mouth of the Persian Gulf just below the Straits of Hormuz. Gwadar port is being built in phases. When completed, it will have three 200-meter-long berths and one Ro-Ro (roll on-roll off) facility. At present the port has the capacity to handle 50,000 deadweight tonnage (DWT) bulk carriers drawing up to 12.5 meters. (*Pakistan's Gwadar Port: A New Naval Base in China's String of Pearls in the Indo-Pacific: CSIS Briefs: April 2, 2018*). The port is being developed by the China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC), to which it was leased by the Pakistan government for 40 years in April 2017. The final expansion of the port and ancillary systems will be undertaken by the Chinese.

In addition to developing the port, the China-Pak Investment Corporation has bought the 3.6-million square foot “International Port City” to house the Chinese workforce, and will establish a financial district and build a gated community for the anticipated 5,00,000 Chinese professionals who will be located there by 2022, according to a report in *The Economic Times*. The proposed city will be a financial district that Beijing is planning to set up in the Pakistan’s port city to house Chinese workforce.

It is evident from these reports that Pakistan has allowed China to establish a massive presence at a highly commercially strategic location. However, reports indicate that such presence is more than building a large commercial port with a Chinese colony, it also has a strong military element. Last January, *The Washington Times* reported that China is constructing a military base in Pakistan as part of greater power projection in the Indian Ocean. The facility will be built at Jiwni, a port close to the Iranian border on the Gulf of Oman and a short distance up the coast from Gwadar. Plans call for the Jiwni base to be a joint naval and air facility for Chinese forces, located a short distance up the coast from the Chinese-built commercial port facility at Gwadar, Pakistan. (*China building military base in Pakistan: The Washington Times: Bill Gertz: Jan 3, 2018*).

DJIBOUTI

Last July, China opened its first foreign military base at Djibouti. The base includes a naval port, large helicopter base, and accommodation for 10,000 troops. Establishment of the base was a big step for Beijing, which had long decried foreign bases as the domain of Western imperialists. (*China’s new network of Indian Ocean bases: David Brewster: Lowy Institute: 30 January 2018*).

In May 2017, the \$590 million Doraleh Multipurpose Port project, started in 2015 and jointly financed by Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA). and China Merchant Holding (CMHC), was inaugurated. The port is one of four new ports in the Horn of Africa nation co-funded by China to establish Africa’s largest free-trade zone that can handle \$7 billion worth of goods every year, a statement by the port authority said. The bulk terminal of at the Doraleh port can handle 2 million tons of cargo a year and offers space to store

100,000 tons of fertilizer, and grains and warehouses for other goods, the statement added.

A few minutes' drive away from the commercial port at Doraleh, China has built a military facility for its People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). "From this new vantage point, the PLAN is able to overlook one of the most important maritime chokepoints in the world—: the Gulf of Aden, specifically the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, through which an estimated 12.5 to 20 percent of global trade passes every year. (The narrowest part of Bab-el-Mandeb is only 18-miles wide.) The proximity between port and base reflects the integration of Chinese commercial and military interests as part of a strategy to project power abroad, even while Beijing maintains the guise of noninterference." (*China's Strategy in Djibouti: Mixing Commercial and Military Interests: Blog Post by Guest Blogger for Elizabeth C. Economy: April 13, 2018*).

Beyond these locations where China's presence have has emerged in a significant way, China Beijing has also cast its shadow over the Republic of Maldives. One likely reason why China is keen to bring Maldives under its wing is because the archipelago, about 1,000 km southwest of Sri Lanka in the Indian Oceans, sits at one of the key points for sea routes that extend from Asia to the Middle East and Africa.

Until 2011, Maldives was not a priority in China's foreign policy; Beijing did not even have an embassy in Male. Following But following Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit in September 2014, the relationship grew fast. China's presence, especially in Maldives' tourism sector and infrastructure building, has expanded. It; the country has replaced Europe as Maldives' largest source of tourists. China is funding and building mega large infrastructure projects, including the Friendship Bridge linking Male to Hulhule Island and a 1,000-apartment housing project on Hulhumale, a suburb built on reclaimed land. (*The China-Maldives Connection: Sudha Ramachandran: The Diplomat: Jan 25, 2018*). President Xi also assured the Maldives president that China would support the development of the Youth City in Hulhumale' and the development of the Ibrahim Nasir International Airport (INIA). President Xi, in his remarks, noted, noting that China wishes to establish a "Future-Oriented All-Round Friendly and Cooperative Partnership" with the Maldives.

Recently, new political leadership in Maldives has questioned Chinese generosity, claiming that Beijing was in reality laying a debt trap for the Maldives that would lead to China having a major say in its internal affairs. This is not altogether unlike to what happened in Sri Lanka.

CONCLUSION

Despite the ebb and flow in China's bilateral relations with the Indian Ocean littoral states, it is a foregone conclusion that over the coming years, as China's economic and military muscle gets stronger, and its trade volume rises further, China will continue to take measures to ensure a the smooth flow of its trade. That will inevitably mean projection, but not necessarily execution, of naval power in the Indian Ocean region.

In addition to the Djibouti and Jiwani, China may choose to establish full-fledged naval bases, or even bases from where which submarines could operate. China is a huge economic power and, while its military muscle may not be comparable to that of the United States' or Russia's, it can overwhelm most of the littoral states. It is fair to assume that with its zeal to grow aided by its economic and military muscle, China will be able to set up major bases along the Indian Ocean coastal areas.

There are some tell-tale signs that such a plan is already at in the works. An *Asahi Shimbun* article last in January 2018 pointed out that China is waging a submarine sales offensive to nations with Indian Ocean coastlines. It noted that Bangladesh, Pakistan and Thailand have either purchased or have agreed to acquire Chinese submarines. The article said China is reportedly offering these submarines at a bargain price, enticing the nations to buy those.

Bangladesh was first to take advantage of the cut-price submarines, offered by China by acquiring two used Ming-class diesel-powered vessels in 2013. Bangladesh began operating them in March 2017. One local military source put the cost of each submarine at \$100 million, or one-tenth of the price of a new European submarine. In April 2017, Thailand agreed to purchase two newly constructed subs in the Yuan class, which is two classes more advanced than the Ming sub. A Thai government source said each sub will cost about 13.5 billion baht (47

billion yen, or \$424 million). Defense Minister Gen. PrawitWongsuwan said it is far less expensive than submarines of other countries. Bangkok is also considering purchasing two more. During Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan in 2015, it was proposed that Islamabad acquire eight Chinese submarines. The next year China confirmed that such a plan existed; they will be Yuan-class subs, four of which will be constructed in Pakistan. (*China making new inroads in Indian Ocean with cheap subs: The Asahi Shimbun: Jan 15, 2018*).

While there is no question that all these coastal nations need submarines to provide security to its their coastlines, purchasing Chinese submarines means these nations must also install repair and supply facilities that match specifications required for handling the Chinese vessels. This gives China the option of asking that its submarines be allowed to temporarily berth there for repairs or to acquire weapons. Once a submarine is purchased, the nation in question must rely on Chinese naval officers and technicians for instructions on operating the vessel. Those personnel could also play a key role in gathering vital information, including seabed mapping, as China strives to improve its submarine naval capabilities.

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**MISSING LINK IN INDIA-JAPAN RELATIONS:
BUDDHISM AS A TOOL FOR CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT**

BY

ALOK KUMAR GUPTA & VANDANA MISHRA

It was in the year 1916 that the first Nobel Laureate of India, Rabindra Nath Tagore expressed his feeling about Japanese deep sense of respect for Buddhism and consequently, the place of its origin, i.e. India. He told the Japanese audience: “While travelling in a railway train I met, at a wayside station, some Buddhist priests and devotees. They brought their basket of fruits to me and held their lighted incense before my face, wishing to pay homage to a man that had come from the land of Buddha. The dignified serenity of their bearing, the simplicity of their devoutness, seemed to fill the atmosphere of the busy railway station with a golden light of peace. Their language of silence drowned the noisy of the newspapers. I felt I saw something which was at the root of Japan’s greatness.”¹

Such was the cultural heritage of India and Japanese sense of appreciation and devotion towards not only Buddhism but also towards India that Rabindra Nath Tagore was totally moved by. The gesture accorded by the Japanese priests were totally unexpected and Tagore reached the conclusion that the welcome: “....which flowed towards me, with such outburst of sincerity, was owing to the fact that Japan felt the nearness of India to herself, and realized that her own heart has room to expand beyond her boundaries and the boundaries of the modern time.”²

One can only imagine the extent of ties that India and Japan once had on account of sheer Buddhist connectivity. The society happens to be always in a state of flux so are the nation and the nation-state. Both

India and Japan have undergone tremendous transformation since the days of Tagore and so is the case of Buddhism regarding its status, outreach and practices. India ignored and abandoned its rich cultural heritage of Buddhism and Japan experienced its expansion through the development of numerous small and big sects. It is only in the recent past that India has started working on enhancing its cultural connectivity through the exploitation of its rich Buddhist heritage. It is in this context that history may repeat itself if India once again works towards the revival of everything that relates to Buddhism. The author thus attempts to explore the recent visit to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Japan for the 13th Annual Meeting and endeavours at building cultural connectivity between the two countries.

NARENDRA MODI'S VISIT TO JAPAN—ASPIRATIONS AND IMPERATIVES

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the eve of his visit to Japan on October 26, 2018 described that India and Japan are a “Winning Combination” and reiterated that the island nation was India’s most trusted partner in its economic and technological modernization. He put it emphatically that India’s partnership with Japan was of great substance and purpose. Modi said, “We have a special strategic and global partnership. Our ties with Japan, both economic and strategic, stand completely transformed in recent years. It is today a partnership of great substance and purpose. It rests on the strong pillars of India’s Act East Policy, and our shared vision and commitment to a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.”³ October 28-29, 2018 meeting of Modi with Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the 12th meeting since his first visited Japan as PM in September 2014. The Annual Summit-level meetings between India and Japan stands institutionalized by now since its inception in 2006 with the October 2018 being 13th Annual Meeting. The frequency of visit establishes the imperative of convergence between India and Japan. Both need each other, and there cannot be any doubt about it.

India and Japan relations in the recent past have acquired a new dimension in the wake of India’s Act East Policy and aspirations of both India and Japan in the newly emerging world order as well as the regional order in East Asia. The rise of China as a new global power and its economic relations with both these countries have been further determining factors for the recent spate of convergence between the

two countries. Accordingly, there have been visits and counter visits by heads of both these countries to each other to provide a booster dose to their already growing relations. India's Act East Policy and Japan's aspirations to diversify its economic portfolio beyond China necessitated their interaction to facilitate investment and technology transfer. There could be many more areas of cooperation between the two countries. There is no dearth of complementarities between the two for interactions. They have also revealed their aspirations to build Global Partnership for 'Peace and Prosperity' in the world. Undoubtedly, both are in dire need of each other and hence they need to enhance their economic engagement and global partnership. The October 2018 meeting was well conducted and concluded to this effect.⁴ However, it seems that they are failing to take account of their soft power potentials which could help them towards supplementing their aspirations for economic engagement and strategic interests towards playing a constructive role in global politics, trade and commerce. Both these countries need to explore their potentials in their cultural assets and religion as well which could grease their economic engagements on a permanent basis.

INDIA'S CULTURAL POTENTIALS

Fact remains that intellectual traditions, cultural richness and vibrant ideas which originated in India have influenced and inspired people all over the world. Historical accounts also suggest the worldwide recognition and appreciation of India's cultural engagements that flourished at the hands of emperors and traders. The cultural engagements during those days were related to the exchange of art and artifacts, exhibitions, tourism and pilgrimages which was facilitated owing to trade relations and *vice versa*. However, the history of colonized past, destructions, wars and the external challenges of meeting the demands of modernization eroded the originality and uniqueness which was the very soul of the nation. The whole world got engaged in a cut-throat competition to enhance military might and in this wave culture, values and the core ideals subsided and India was not an exception to this phenomenon. In India, cultural richness and importance associated with religion, tradition, cuisine and indigenous values were either lost in the midst of time or completely exported to other nations. However, the recent phase of international relations has witnessed a growing resurgence towards building cultural relations among the nations through the

instrumentality of public diplomacy and nation branding. The leadership within India has begun to realize the importance of capitalizing on the cultural assets and using it in their foreign policy discourse and simultaneously enhance the credibility of a nation. In the wake of growing consciousness about the assets and the urge for branding the nation, most of the nations are framing innovative strategies to create a brand of their uniqueness and increase their presence in the markets of the world. They are trying to build the connectivity on the foundations of cultural relations that have got lost in history. Previously, cultural relations which were a part of individual and group initiatives got subsumed within cultural diplomacy which is more formal and government oriented. The international image of a nation is no longer only shaped by the military might, but other aspects of cultural activities have become more pronounced on the international platform.

It is in this context of the growing importance of cultural connectivity and consequent emphasis by different governments on cultural diplomacy that the author intends to explore its role in India-Japan relations. A substantial population of Japan practices Buddhism which travelled there from India as discussed in detail below. India is the country of origin of Buddhism with rich cultural heritage of everything that belongs to this religion and way of life. Hence, it makes it imperative to understand how Buddhism could be leveraged in India's relations with Japan? This paper is an endeavour to explore the points of contact between India and Japan so far Buddhism is concerned and suggests the ways and means in which it could be harnessed for greater and better economic engagement.

ROLE OF CULTURAL CONNECTIVITY IN FOREIGN POLICY

The conduct of foreign relations by different countries of the world has witnessed the emergence of innovative tools like public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and soft power etc. Countries are increasingly resorting to 'nation branding' for attracting tourists and investors from across the world. Cultural assets play a vital role in Nation Branding of a state as it creates attraction among the people of other countries. Countries are making efforts to enhance the economic benefits and there is urgency for peace and stability which has acquired prominence over other hard power issues. However, in the name of increasing cultural connectivity the efforts have been limited to boasting about the past,

exchange of symbolic gifts and visualizing about the future. People, as well as government, are least concerned about developing those age-old traditional assets. It has not gained momentum in the hands of leaders and foreign policy makers. In spite of signing of the new technological projects, old assets are falling apart and the remains are also in shambles. Having cultural assets is an opportunity to showcase the world not only of the richness but also as a way to promote peaceful interactions and trustworthy relations and simultaneously develop its uniqueness. Cultural connectivity is a domain of international relations which helps to change the perceptions of people towards others and thus builds contacts at the level of institution, leaders and followers and people. When the similar initiatives are enhanced by the government, it contributes towards enhancing cultural diplomacy which is an important tool of soft power expansion. Although the importance of military and hard power cannot be ignored in conducting foreign policy but the deployment of cultural assets and creating cultural diplomacy is a new dimension that needs to be developed. Interstate dialogue among the cultural members, leaders, scholars and cultural experts can be an important starting point for building relationships.

Presently, the continuous international visits, bilateral and multilateral meetings, holding of important summits, initiating the projects aimed at solving some international issues and fair sharing of global commons have dominated the international scene. This, in turn, increased the international profile of India among the comity of nations. Although simmering discontents, doubts and differences prevail over the success and implementation of the foreign policy goals, it has surely encouraged and incited the foreign policy experts and scholars to put their heads together to discuss the intricacies of foreign policy. Some optimism regarding the cultural assets are visible in recent years, but more activism, enthusiasm and clear vision are required to renew the assets and build India's international image and personality. The resurgence of cultural diplomacy has challenged the conventional mode of formulating foreign policy on the foundations of hard power and maintaining relations by military allies.

Thus, it makes it obvious that a country exploits its cultural resources and uses it for nation branding through instrumentalities like public diplomacy and cultural relations, which in turn creates the soft power (the power to attract others) of the country. It is by the soft power that

a country is facilitated towards building stronger relations with those countries with whom it has economic and other interests. Buddhism is once such cultural and religious asset at the hands of India. It could be cultivated and used effectively towards building stronger ties with countries where there are substantial followers of Buddhism. It could also be used to attract those countries which may not have Buddhists followers but are generally experimentative.

BUDDHISM IN JAPAN

One of the very strong threads that connect India and Japan is the rich philosophy of Buddhism and the followers of Buddhism. However, ever since it was introduced in Japan, it has undergone several divisions, so much so that it is next to impossible today to comprehend clearly as to how many different sects of Buddhism exist. It was introduced to Japan as a part of the diplomatic mission of Korea in the 6th century AD. East Asian route of trade and influence ran from northern China through the Korean peninsula and across the Korean straits to Japan.⁵ Initially, the arrival of Buddhism was met with the major political struggle between pro and anti-Buddhist groups. After the conflicts with Shinto, Japan's native religion, the two religions were soon able to coexist and even complement each other. Buddhism in Japan is considered to be founded by Prince Shotoku.⁶ However, it was firmly established in due course of its evolution. Buddhism brought with it loads of cultural and other things to Japan. Among those were the political structure, advanced technologies and sophisticated cultural practices. Buddhism was also instrumental towards introducing music, dance, a new writing system and above all, elaborate Buddhist art in Japan. The entire gamut of things that were introduced to Japanese life through Buddhism almost revolutionized different aspects of Japanese life. Today, according to one source thirteen schools of Buddhism exist in Japan and the majority of the population profess to be Buddhist. However, most sources refer only to two major streams of Buddhism in Japan, i.e. Pure Land Buddhism and Zen Buddhism. According to yet another source, six schools of Buddhism emerged in Japan in the 7th and 8th centuries and all but two of which have disappeared. The two schools that still have some following are Hosso and Kegaon.⁷ It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of different sects of Buddhism in contemporary Japan. However, there are about 80,000 temples with some 150,000 priests as well as several colleges dedicated

chiefly to Buddhist studies.⁸ The largest is the Nichiren sect with about nine million followers. The Zen sect has 4.5 million members. Most Japanese Buddhists sects embrace beliefs of Mahayana Buddhism which preaches salvation in paradise for everyone rather than focussing on individual perfection.⁹ Zen Buddhism became popular with Japan around the 12th century; in particular with the warrior class who liked its strict discipline. Zen is the most well-known among the westerners although Nichiren also has a considerable following in the West where it actively works for world peace.¹⁰

As stated above Prince Shotoku is usually credited with the development of Buddhism in Japan and is regarded as “father of Japanese Buddhism.” He made Buddhism the state religion by constructing major Buddhist temples such as Horyu-Ji near Nara. Under Shotoku, Buddhism became the state religion. Accordingly, scriptures, art and craftsman were brought in from Korea and Japanese monks were sent abroad to study. Temples were founded, monks were ordained and ceremonies were held publicly. He encouraged it by building several Buddhist temples; sending the monks to other nations for the study of Buddhism; facilitating study of Buddhism as a way of life in Japan itself. Therefore, even cursory glances over different sects of Buddhism in Japan suggest that Buddhism experienced an amietotic division in Japan. Summing up one may view broadly that Buddhism exists into three different sects in contemporary Japan: first, Buddhism of Jodo Shinshu; second, the one practiced by the followers of NichirenDaishoku sect; and the third is Zen Buddhism. Buddhism had to suffer a severe setback in the 16th century when many temples were destroyed in Japan. However, Buddhism was firmly entrenched by that time in spite of the efforts of demolition and destruction it continued to survive, develop and flourish. The popularity of Buddhism increased during the Heian period and Kamkura period. Today, the very existence of some different sects in Japan suggests that it is quite deeply entrenched into the population of Japan. According to *World Fact Book* of USA there are about 66.8% of total population of Japan are following Buddhism.¹¹ According to 2012 Report of *PEW Research Centre* nearly 9.4 % of total Buddhist population of the world are in Japan which constitutes 36.2 % of the Japanese population. According to the same report Japan is having the third largest Buddhist population in the world with 45,820,000 people as followers of Buddhism. According to another source Japan’s 50% of the population are followers of Buddhism and their exact numbers are

8,965,000.¹² It makes it quite obvious that one can neither be sure about the exact number of Buddhist sects in Japan nor can be assured of the exact population of Japan following Buddhism. However, the fact remains that Japan does possess substantial followers of Buddhism belonging to the Mahayana tradition which could be a potential source of religious tourism to India. India being the “country of origin of Buddhism” has great leverage which is being discussed below.

BUDDHISM AS INDIA’S LEVERAGE

As stated above, Buddhism is one such culture that spiritually originated in India. The philosophy of Buddhism started with the teachings and practices of Gautam Buddha who was born in Lumbini in Nepal but attained his Nirwana (Enlightenment) and spread his sermons and preaching in India. Thus, India is considered to be its country of origin. Many places associated with Gautam Buddha are the rich heritage of India. It gradually spread to other nations through the efforts of emperors and various diplomatic missions. It spread to Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan, China, South Korea, Japan and most of the Southeast Asian countries. Contemporary world has several ramifications of Buddhist practices and followers. Most of the populations in Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bhutan and Sri Lanka follow Buddhism. India though cannot boast of a large Buddhist population, but it is a spiritual enlightening place for Buddhist all over the world.

The important places related to Buddhist heritage like Bodh Gaya in Bihar, and Sarnath, Nalanda, Rajgir, Kushinagar, Kapivastu (India Nepal border), Vaishali, Shravasti and Kaushambi are situated in India. These places have been prominent pilgrimage centers for Buddhist followers from all over the world. India is a global market of 450 million Buddhists. Buddhist Stupas and temples of India dates back to over 2000 years. Actual corporal relic casket of Buddha is in Patna and another relic stupa is in Vaishali. There are high-quality relics in museums in Sarnath, Bodh Gaya and Patna.¹³ According to estimates, one of every six visitors to India visits Bodh Gaya, and many of them also travel to other sites of Buddhist pilgrimage.¹⁴ It is true that India has great leverage in terms of being the cradle of this philosophy and religion as well as cultural heritage at different centers of Buddhism. Firstly, although Buddha was born in Nepal, India is the spiritual birthplace of Buddhism because he received the enlightenment in

India itself. Secondly, the sacred place of Buddha's enlightenment has emerged as an international tourist center and Buddhist from all parts of the world visit this place as stated above Bodh Gaya in Bihar. Thirdly, most of the Southeast Asian Nations are Buddhist nations and the relations can be developed on the basis of commonality that we have a large number of Buddhist shrines and the neighbouring nations have a large number of followers. The Buddhist population in other parts of the world are thus religious diaspora in a limited sense. Fourthly, the global message of Buddhist philosophy took birth in India and was later on patronised by the emperors and then spread to other parts of the world. Fifthly, one of the oldest centres of Buddhist learning such as Nalanda and Takshila exist in India and are once again being revived as modern centers of great learning. Sixthly, most of the Buddhist nations have been shaped and influenced by India, so the intermixing of cultures enables the countries to pave the ground for cross-cultural awareness. It will also pave the way for smoother economic relations in the future. Seventhly, the philosophy of Gautam Buddha is not limited to suit the needs of a particular nation, but it is humanitarian in spirit. It incorporates a philosophy that is based on interdependence and cooperation. Last but not least, India can also advance strong neighbourhood policy with the help of Buddhist connectivity as most of the strong followers of Buddhism are there in its immediate and extended neighbourhood. The philosophy, heritage, spirituality, art and culture associated with Buddhism are the major source of attraction in the Buddhist following nations. In spite of having negligible population of Buddhist, India is revered across the world for being the spiritual land of Buddhism, and thus the leverage.

CULTURAL CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN INDIA AND JAPAN: ROLE OF BUDDHISM

It is quite fascinating to trace the journey of Indian culture, languages and scripts across South and East Asia. Travellers, traders and messengers from India took with them the essence of our culture, travelled across many countries and left a lasting impression. Amazingly, some remain in those countries long after they perished in India.¹⁵ India has been a mystic land in the eyes of most foreigners across the world. Japan, on the other hand, is known to India for its cultural, civilizational as well as scientific and technological achievements. It is the land of devotion to action, the grandeur of thought and depths of philosophy

expressed in the beauty of gardens, Haiku poetry, painters' brush and vibrations of Zen.¹⁶ The history of cultural interaction between the two countries goes back officially to AD 552 when thousands of Buddhist sutras written in Sanskrit were translated to Chinese and from China, they were taken to Japan first during the Prince Shotokutaishi, who drafted the Seventeen Article Constitution, first in the world. Since then there has been an exchange of scholars between the two countries on some occasions.

Consequently, India and Japan are by now linked to Buddhism in a number of different ways. Most important being that the Buddhist followers of Japan visit India for pilgrimage. Buddhist and Japanese Scholars have been translating the Buddhist text in each other's language for the consumption of their followers. They are also linked as far as construction of temples and Buddhist shrines are concerned in Japan. Great scholars visited Japan to understand their Buddhism and also spread Indian practices in Japanese Buddhism. Therefore, it requires to be explained in detail the linkages and point of contacts between India and Japan in the field of Buddhism and the related practices.

Japan is hugely indebted to India for its development and spread of Buddhism. Historically, the spread of Buddhism was facilitated because of its patronization by the then state of India. It was patronized by emperor Ashoka and he sent many monks to the other nations and kingdoms to spread the message of Lord Buddha and the scriptures of the Buddhist texts. During the 6th century A.D Bodhisena, an Indian Buddhist scholar and monk had helped in the transmission of Buddhism in Japan. He performed eye opening of great Buddha at Todai-Ji temple in Japan.¹⁷ He was also appointed as the chief priest of Nara's famous Toda-Ji Temple and taught Sanskrit; Prakrit and Indian Philosophical thoughts which facilitated the translation of Buddhist scriptures in Japanese. A merchant adventurer Tokubei was so obsessive about visiting Tenjiku (Heavenly land for Japanese which is India) that he took the name of Tenjiku Tokubei out of pride and reverence for India. Gradually relations between India and Japan changed from Buddhist centered Tenjiku to trade oriented and strategic one. A stone tower in Ryonse-Ji temple bears an epitaph with words "South Indian Brahman priest from Tenjiku." References are found in literature about the word "Tenjiku." It was a name given to India by

the Japanese. It is known as “heavenly land.” Gradually Nara became a great center of learning and cultural activities. Now this place has evolved into a major Buddhist site in Japan.

Most of the eminent leaders such as Rabindra Nath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Vivekanand, Subhash Chandra Bose J. Krishnamurthy have been directly or indirectly associated with Japan. OkakuraTenshin was a Japanese scholar and a contemporary of Tagore who stayed in India for nine months and visited all the Buddhist sites. He has also written a book *Ideals of the East* and was completely mesmerized by the speech of Swami Vivekanand at the conclave of world religions in Chicago. Professor Suenaga, the first Japanese Sanskritist in India in collaboration with Prof. Raghu Vira established an academic institute named “International Academy of Indian Culture” or “SaraswathiVihar.” This was also the first institute to start the scholarships for international students to study in India. His son Prof. Lokesh Chandra is also a prominent scholar of the Vedic period, Buddhism and Indian arts and is the director of International Academy of Indian Culture.¹⁸ Lotus Sutra is a Buddhist text that was originally written in Sanskrit and was nowhere found in India but is the most revered text of Japanese Buddhism. Nishidatsu Fuji, a Japanese scholar, was a close friend of Mahatma Gandhi who had gifted him the three monkeys which symbolizes speak no evil, hear no evil and see no evil.¹⁹ The chairlift ropeway in Rajgir, one of famous Buddhist sites, is also gifted by the Japanese monk Fuji Guruji.²⁰

According to Kenji Hiramitsu, Japanese ambassador to India while addressing a gathering in Andhra University said that India’s greatest gift to Japan was Buddhism. He also said that India is one of the favoured destinations for the country’s citizens, with Indian cultural ethos intrinsically appealing to them.²¹ The year 2007 was announced as the 50th anniversary of India-Japan Cultural Agreement as the Indo-Japan Friendship and Tourism Promotion Year. Therefore, there are ample evidence of strong and deeply entrenched ties of Buddhism and things related to Buddhism between India and Japan, which need to be harnessed to have better integration and use it towards the furtherance of national interests in the field of economy and security.

GROWING CULTURAL INFLUENCE OF JAPAN IN INDIA

The efforts of cultural engagements between India and Japan begin

with the spread of Buddhism and exchange of priest and scholars from both the sides as discussed in the previous sections. The first cultural agreement was signed in 1956 in which both the nations agreed to facilitate for the understanding of each other's culture through the books, periodicals and promotions of cultural exhibitions.²² India's earliest documented direct contact with Japan was with Todaji Temple in Nara where the consecration or the eye-opening of the towering statue of Lord Buddha was performed by an Indian monk, Bodhisena, in 752 A.D.²³ Japan-India Association was set up in 1903 and is the oldest international friendship body in Japan. Scholarship system for the overseas students was also formed in 1951.²⁴ However, concerns were raised in post-independence India for protection, promotion and revival of Buddhist heritage and Buddhism in India as India itself was lagging behind regarding the development of its Buddhist sites and other related infrastructure. The real work started with the rise of cultural diplomacy that the government of India along with many other states started thinking about the ways to promote and use India's leverage towards building cultural connectivity. First, let us take account of what is happening to enhance the cultural connectivity with Japan so far as shared Buddhist heritage between the two is concerned. The initiative is being taken by both the Central and State governments of India.

Firstly, Worli Naka is one of the busy commercial districts in Mumbai which has the city's oldest Buddhist temple, Nipponjan Myohoji. It was established in 1956, Nipponjan Myohoji is directly linked to more than 700 years old prophecy by 13th Japanese Buddhist monk Nichiren who said that the ultimate salvation of humanity contaminated by all that was evil and impure lay in western heaven of India, the country that was home to Buddhism. Nichidatsu Fuji who belonged to Nichiren Buddhism came to communicate Lotus Sutra in India that was written originally in Sanskrit. Visitors from all ethnicities and nations come to meditate and take darshan.²⁵

Secondly, it was with the efforts of Gandhi and Fuji that many Shanti Stupas were built all over India. Even the prayer at Sewagram Ashram starts with the Buddhist chanting of *Nam Myoho Renge Kyo*. However, many of these stupas are not being managed properly and not connected properly. Therefore, now concern is being raised along the Indian leadership about the development of Buddhist circuit.

Thirdly, related to the development of the Buddhist circuit, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar has asked Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for the technical support to establish high-speed rail link known as Peace corridor linking all the Buddhist states. It will link the major sites of Nalanda, Rajgir, Bodh Gaya and Vaishali. With the development of this corridor, all the major tourist spots will be easily accessible to the tourist both from Japan and other countries.

Fourthly, Japan International Cooperation Agency is also assisting to link Patna, the capital city of Bihar through a four-lane road corridor Gaya, Bodh Gaya, Rajgir and Nalanda. During the meeting, Nitish Kumar has also requested Japan's foreign minister for introducing a direct flight from Bihar to Japan for the convenience of Japanese tourist visiting the land of enlightenment and emancipation.

Fifthly, India has taken the initiative to revive the ancient Buddhist centers of learning like Nalanda and Taxshila in Bihar. Japan has readily supported the reconstruction of Nalanda University and has agreed to provide financial assistance. The University stands established and is well on its forward march.

Sixthly, Varanasi which is an important Buddhist site as Sarnath is located in this vicinity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chosen Varanasi as his constituency to contest his election to the 16th Lok Sabha. He also asked for Japan's help for the development of heritage city of Varanasi.²⁶

Therefore, there is a concern as well as initiatives to fulfill those concerns within the Indian political leaders and policy analysts to explore India's rich cultural heritage and use the same in furtherance of building cultural connectivity. However, this time when Prime Minister Modi visited Japan on October 28-29, 2018 their negotiations and MoU revolved around only economic and strategic relations. This is a cause of concern as the relations between nation-states must be built on a permanent basis or on a long-term basis. It must not be based on the personality or personal relations of leaders in either country; rather it must be institutionalized. Accordingly, both India and Japan could have made an effort to further explore the opportunities of enhancing their cultural connectivity to strengthen their economic and strategic ties.

IMPERATIVES OF INDO-JAPAN CULTURAL RELATIONS

Cultural relations are the weakest link in the chain of relationships between Japan and South Asia. There are ample opportunities for building close cultural ties with India among the South Asian countries but it is not even up to the mark. The Japan Foundation is the key government-funded vehicle for officially promoting Japan's culture overseas. Although the Foundation opened its first South Asian office in New Delhi in 1993, its commitment to India and the region remains low.²⁷ The Japanese government's low level of attention to the region was highlighted in a report by an official Japanese mission sent to South Asian countries in 1993 to appraise cultural relations. The report recommended that Japan seriously consider expanding its cultural activities in these countries.²⁸ In the new millennium both the countries have worked towards enhancing their cultural ties which have been mentioned in the previous section. However, there still is work to be done on both sides to strengthen cultural ties.

Firstly, there is a need for expansion in scholarship and teaching, and new programs need to be developed so that the people of the region have a stronger working knowledge of Japan and how they can move most effectively to maximize mutual benefit. South Asian professionals such as engineers, scientists, and managers who seek to work with Japanese counterparts should have some knowledge of the Japanese economic system, administrative structure and culture.

Secondly, a wall of stereotypes distorts perspective on both sides. One way of breaching this wall is through tourism. Japan may be too expensive a country for ordinary Indian and South Asians to visit, and South Asia is not a popular overseas destination for Japanese tourists and sojourners. A limited perception of what the region offers presents a barrier, although India is promoting itself in Japan as a tourist destination.²⁹ Buddhism has tremendous potentials to promote religious tourism with consequent improvement in general tourism. According to one estimate Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Indian Ministry of Tourism said, "We are receiving a minuscule number of Buddhist tourists, just 0.005 percent of the total Buddhist population in the world, despite being a key pilgrimage destination for millions of practicing Buddhist around the world. The idea is, even if we can remove one zero and make it 0.05 percent that will still bring in billions of dollars into our tourism economy."³⁰ Promoting Buddhist tourism is thus one of the

many initiatives to tap into the Japanese travel industry. According to the same source in 2016, the Japanese tourist arrivals was at a total of 208,847 while the number stood at only 29,032 back in 1981, and 75,000 in 1995.³¹ Dubai generated considerable wealth by promoting tourism and similarly India could boost tourist inflow which will have potentials to create a host of low-skill opportunities in the hospitality sector and beyond. Therefore, it makes it quite obvious that the initiative has led to the considerable expansion of Japanese tourism in India; yet tremendous requires to be done to further give it a strong boost.

Thirdly, people-to-people ties between the people of Japan and India are very warm and are on an upward trend. According, to a poll published by the Pew Research Centre, Japanese people view India the most favourably of the other major Asian countries, with 63 percent of Japanese having favourable views of India. Indians also view Japan more favourable than other Asian countries, with 43 percent having favourable views of Japan.³² This is suggestive of the fact that the people of both these countries have positive perception which could be further promoted for people-to-people exchange and develop cultural connectivity.

Fourthly, India has poor infrastructure of road and rail network even though it has been improving. India along with number of Buddhist heritage sites, boasts as many as 32 World Heritage Sites and two Biodiversity Hotspots, but connectivity with many of these areas are still underdeveloped. Transportation is made cumbersome by a network of roads that are badly in need of repair. Trains are in need of upgradation and better maintenance, and waterways remain a highly neglected mode of transport despite India's abundance of rivers. Many sites are also overcrowded. India earmarked Rs. 200 billion for National Investment and Infrastructure Fund" including tax-free bonds.³³ However, tremendous need to be done in this area as it is the backbone of religious and other tourism and that too at an unprecedented speed.

Fifthly, in 2017, Nalanda University has signed an MOU with Kanazawa University which is designated as "Super Global University" of Japan for academic collaboration. Both the Universities have decided to facilitate various exchange programmes of students, scholars and research projects. Nalanda is a world known heritage city and the land

of Buddha across the world. This was an excellent that requires to be further supplemented with creations of Buddhist Centres of Learning and Research at both these universities along with student and faculty exchange program.

CONCLUSION

Although cultural relations have been the dominant and starting point of the relationship of the two nations but in the contemporary world, it has received a severe setback. History is replete with the cultural and intellectual interactions and engagements between both the nations. Many poems have been composed by Rabindra Nath Tagore praising Japan. References have been found in literature when Japanese considered India as the “heavenly land”. Although Japan-India association is the oldest international body of friendship was established in 1903 itself, but no remarkable achievement and advancement are visible in the contemporary world. Both these countries need to rethink to revive it.

Although the historical connections of India and Japan are of great significance and extend tremendous opportunities to both the nations but it is necessary to involve the civil society, people, students and scholars and other people who are indirectly related to the foreign policies. Besides the commercial benefits and constructing of innovative strategies, it is also important to nurture the natural affinities and remove the natural barriers between them.

The domain of cultural connectivity should be extended beyond the commercial benefits to include educational, intellectual and developmental concerns. The universities along with other state and non-state institutions of both nations should extend the opportunities to international students, scholars and researchers to increase the people-to-people contact. The exchange of innovation and creativity in all the areas should be a major concern of both the nations.

Marketing techniques is an extremely important domain which is often ignored by the government. The intellectual, philosophical and historical treasure that is present in the form of Buddhism should be developed to enhance the international prestige of India. The humanity, reverence, aesthetic appeal and acceptability of Buddhism in other nations may be cultivated to enter other areas of cooperation. Appropriate strategies,

innovative technologies, the cooperation of private business, the cooperation of government and other service sectors are instrumental in creating awareness and developing and advertising the heritage sites. The enhancement of pilgrimage tourism would not only lead to infrastructural development but it will also open up the employment opportunities and skill development programmes in the region. Most of the Buddhist sites in Bihar as well as in other states of India are still unexplored and people are not aware of their historical and cultural significance. The development of these sites can be done only through proper coordination among all the sectors.

For cultural diplomacy to flourish, cultural institutions need to be redesigned along with proper planning and implementation of the programmes. The experts, scholars, archaeologists need to cooperate with national leaders and international personalities. India and Indians need to move beyond the feeling of cultural superiority and it should be looked towards as strategy for innovation and development and that creates an understanding among the different nations.

Therefore, Modi's visit to Japan has been immensely successful from the viewpoint of strategic and economic engagement between India and Japan but nothing featured in their interactions related to cultural connectivity. Undoubtedly, it is under his leadership that India's forward march to enhance its cultural connectivity across the world has been initiated but then it looks it stands marginalized from the agenda of the government. There are tremendous scopes of reaping benefit through cultural connectivity so far as India's goal of emerging as a superpower or a developed state is concerned. Within cultural connectivity, Buddhism is the largest and biggest source of cultural heritage and continues to be its leverage given the widely spread followers in different countries on the globe including Japan.

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THE KASHMIR CONUNDRUM AND INDIAN IMPERATIVES TO JIGSAW PUZZLE

BY

N.N. BHATIA

The marriage between the North Pole- the Peoples Democratic Party or the PDP of Mehbooba Mufti and the South Pole PM Modi's Bhartiya Janta Party or the BJP is over. At the first instance, this marriage of inconvenience should not have been solemnized as that did not last beyond even the honey moon period.

THE KASHMIR CONUNDRUM

Who has suffered the most? - Obviously the Kashmir, the Kashmiriyat and the Kashmiri people including the worst sufferers 'the Kashmiri Pandits' who became refugees in their own country, and state's emotional and psychological integration with our country. The next BIG institutions that suffered have been the armed forces, the local and the state police and the central police organizations/ forces (CPOs/CPFs) like the CRPF and the BSF and other similar forces. It is unprecedented that 356 officers (including 52 colonels and 80 battalion commanders) have approached the Supreme Court as both in the Manipur and the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) the states and the central governments have failed to take steps to protect against FIRs, CBI investigations and prosecution while agitated local elements want withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFPSA). While the smallest human right violations by the security forces are highlighted, the human rights of the security forces violated by the terrorists and misguided elements are ignored even while the soldiers are not at fault. The serving and retired armed forces personnel feel victimized as even after retirement they are haunted by so called extra judicial

killings in the disturbed areas and summons is issued against them even after many years of their retirement. This is adversely affecting security forces morale, their combat effectiveness and the civil-military relations. Our men in uniform show utmost restraint while brutally being stoned in the valley by the misguided 'azadi' seeking youths on the behest of some selfish and corrupt politicians financially, morally and militarily supported by the Pakistani government, the army and the hateful premier intelligence agency of the Pakistan 'The/ Inter-Services Intelligence' or the / ISI. While some misguided locals stooges of the Pakistani military and intelligence services go hoarse shouting, pelting stones, lynching soldiers of the Indian Army and the CPOs conducting counter insurgency and sanitization operations, blatantly ignoring the human rights of the soldiers that should be matters of grave concern for the central and state governments and our judiciary. India may have the dubious distinction perhaps where against its armed forces working under extreme state imposed restraint have the maximum numbers of the FIRs lodged. We also have the dubious distinction, where a patriotic citizen wanting to hoist tricolor in Srinagar or elsewhere in the valley on the Independence Day could be lynched and killed by the violent mob carrying endless ISIS and Pakistani flags, shouting anti-India slogans and withdrawal of the AFSPA, that grant special powers to the Indian security forces to carry out operations in the 'disturbed areas'!

The J&K has three distinct parts- Jammu, prominently Hindu dominated region south of Pir Panjal ranges, Kashmir predominantly the Muslim dominated region from where by cleverly planned Pakistani sponsored Muslim atrocities affluent Hindu Pandits were forced to migrate out of the state and the Ladakh region where majority is of the peace loving Buddhists. The insurgency in the J&K is primarily limited in the valley while both Jammu and Ladakh regions are mainly peaceful. Out of the 22 districts in the state, 10 each are in Jammu and Kashmir regions while 2 are in the Ladakh region. The Kashmir region has 10 districts, namely Anantnag, Kulgam, Budgam, Shopian, Pulwama, Ganderbal, Srinagar, Bandipura, Kupwara and Baramulla and out of these, Shopian, Bandipura, and Kupwara and Baramulla areas are the worst affected by the militancy. So, it is apparent that militants and azadi hysteria is mostly localized with in the valley but magnified by the Indian and the Pakistan media as if the entire J&K was in the grave turmoil.

What needs to be done to resolve the insurgency problem is a very complex, intricate and sensitive issue and the shortest answer for that could be the 'good governance' by both the state and the central governments. We need to ensure quality education from primary school upwards, eradicate corruption, win over hearts and minds of the local masses with appropriate civic actions, psychological war (psywar) themes, creation of jobs, development of tourism, fruits including dry fruits and cottage industry and provision of the medical, health, sanitation, vocational training, electricity and connectivity with people. BUT, by far the MOST important issue in any insurgent environment would always be 'the winning of the hearts and minds' of the antagonized masses.

We need to dominate international border/line of control (IB/LOC) and destroy terrorist hide outs and training and logistics bases across in the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) and rest of the Pakistan. Drone, aerial, field radars, satellite and human intelligence, surveillance, patrolling and domination to destroy Pak sponsored militants/terrorists and their camps and logistics dumps through relentless counter insurgency and surgical operations is the only viable option at this advance stage of the insurgency in the valley. We may need to regroup villages close to IB/LOC at a distance to ensure logistic support, shelter and updated intelligence to infiltrating terrorists is denied by providing security to these regrouped villages as was done in Mizoram during insurgency in mid 1960s. We have sizeable local population support and by appropriate civic actions and psywar themes, good governance, creation of jobs and eradicating corruption, we can win over those sitting on the fence and thus isolate minority supporting the Pak sponsored terrorism and proxy war.

We need to launch all out diplomatic and financial war against Pakistan and tell it firmly not to let us bleed for we are capable to let them bleed through billion cuts in Sindh, Baluchistan, North West Frontier Province now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) in the way worst than what they are able to do to us.

Lastly, it is not the military alone that can resolve the issue. Multi-prong good governance at the village, tehsil, district, region, state and the national level, focusing on the political, economic and the social aspirations of the people and making the international community

aware of the Pakistani sponsored terrorists' atrocities are the need of the hour. All along, manageable psywar themes through proper media management need to be ensured to become a force multiplier.

HOW KASHMIRIYAT WAS ADVERSELY AFFECTS?

Till independence, Kashmir was the most peaceful and insulated state of the undivided India with its pristine beauty, rich cultural heritage, Sufism, fruit orchids and tourist trade that was for centuries exploited by the Kashmiri Pandits and the corrupt state's bureaucracy. Immediately after the independence, the Kabilies and the Pashtuns from the erstwhile North West Frontier Province covertly recruited and supported by the Pakistani regular army invaded Kashmir capturing territory short of Budgam air field to annex Srinagar. It was then the Indian offensive was launched and by the time ceasefire was imposed, 2/3 of Kashmir became part of India while 1/3 was illegally held by Pakistan named dubiously by Pakistan as Azad Kashmir (AK) but by India as the POK. Ever since, the typical shy, simple, very religious Kashmiri has been quickly emotionally swayed by the Pakistani propaganda leading to four wars between India and Pakistan, endless border skirmishes and military stand offs and some Pak paid and sponsored Kashmiri elements ever blaming their misfortunes to Hindus and the successive Indian governments. Therefore, the Pakistani sponsored insurgency and terrorism in the state also termed as proxy war is basically an aberration rather than any facet of the 'Kashmiriyat' that brewed up due to the Indian apathy and the Pakistani military dream. The youth is confused as with increasing population, poor education, no jobs and violence for the last seven decades has been successfully battered by the Pakistani propaganda and psywar.

THE JIGSAW PUZZLE

While Pakistan harps on plebiscite in the Kashmir; the international community understands that the UN Resolution 47 on the plebiscite pre-conditioned withdrawal of all the Pakistani forces from the entire Kashmir including the so called POK or AK, as the then Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir had signed legal document 'The instrument of Accession' to India under the provisions of the Indian Independence Act 1947.

Let us be very clear on one issue-neither Pakistan nor India have the military, economic, diplomatic and political capabilities to liberate and annex parts of the Kashmir held by each other as adversaries. The large chunk of POK has been gifted by the Pakistan to its Chinese friends who are now constructing mega strategic infrastructure rail-road-port project the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor/ (CPEC) worth \$62 billion linking the Chinese Western province of Xinjiang with the Gwadar port in Baluchistan. With huge Chinese strategic interest and investment, it would be a pipe dream for India to get back the disputed Indian territory of the POK acceded by Pakistan to China.

The other solution could be to accept the present LOC as the International border between the two countries and let POK be the part of Pakistan and the rest as the Indian Kashmir. But this is neither possible to the political parties in power in both the countries that will lead to their Waterloo. It is also not acceptable to the Kashmiris as many families had been divided and seek emotional reunion and so also to the azadi seeking elements.

The harsh truth is that some hard core Kashmiris from heart of hearts want their pipe dream 'azadi' or independence from both India and Pakistan to come true. This is not acceptable to India as the former ruler of the Kashmir had signed legally 'The Instrument of Accession' with India. Also, the UNSC Resolution 47 had two options only-accede either to India or Pakistan and the third option of azadi ever since is not admissible. Nevertheless, Pakistan's all out support even to the azadi activists is mainly aimed to let India bleed from the thousand cuts. They also hope at the end, they will be able to prevail up on the azadi elements to join with Pakistan.

So as of now, India has no viable thinkable and possibly workable solution to liberate POK. Nor has the Pakistan any capability even with connivance and support of China to either capture or liberate Kashmir for the azadi sycophants. While General Bipin Rawat, Indian Army Chief has stated country's capability to fight at two fronts (Pakistan and China), we in reality lack the wherewithal, international support, financial strength, defence budgetary constraints, political will and offensive diplomacy. Even with Imran Khan of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) becoming the Prime Minister, after the initial euphoria dies, relations will be governed by the Pakistani Army's roll call. If

Imran Khan chooses not to tow the military lines, he will end up like another Nawaz Sharif as the Pakistani army's survival as the elitist outfit exists only in spreading India centric phobia. Pakistan spends 18% of its expenditure on defence which is 3.2% of its GDP while India's defence budget is 7% of its total expenditure and in the last budget it was 1.58 % of its GDP- sadly the lowest since 1962 Sino-Indian debacle. While PM Modi dreams taking India to moon by 2022, yet its armed forces are woefully short of modern guns, ammunition, aircraft, equipment and officers. The Indian Army is short of 9000 officers and many combat arms are under strength, adversely affecting the combat effectiveness. Notwithstanding these stark deficiencies, Pakistan and its bosom friend, China and India are nuclear powers. While the nuclear press button in China and India are held by the political masters, the Army chief holds the same in Pakistan and Pakistani generals are notorious for their military misadventures!

Therefore, the harsh reality is that India in the present geo-politic scenario has to be combat ready both for the nuclear, conventional and long drawn insurgency war on both the fronts and so also keep embroiled in the Maoist threats in the hinterland covertly supported by our both adversaries whose combined strength is immense against India's minuscule resources. While Indian economy, industrial and defence base and infrastructure are way ahead of Pakistan, we are far far behind that of China.

IMPERATIVES FOR INDIA

- China has global market and India is its one of the largest customers. In the social media it is viral that if India stops purchasing Chinese goods for a few months, China's economy would crash, hence its incapability to attack India. To do that, besides national pride, our own production and quality in every field must improve and country must head for self-reliance./ / 'GO Swadeshi' and 'Make in India' should be the new revived Mantras to/ cripple/ the Chinese economy. Will that be possible as from needles to refrigerators, air conditioners, ROs, fans, TVs , mobiles, computers, cars,/ dishwashers, washing machines-name a thing that China does not produce/ / on which every household in our country is so dependant!/ India also must maintain high growth rate

ensuring macroeconomic stability. With \$51 billion surplus trade this year with India, can China be adventurous against India withstand trade and economic war launched by India!

- AFPSA can only be withdrawn once militancy is contained and there is no necessity to deploy the army and routine law and order situations can be handled by the local police and the CPOs which is, as of now NOT the case in Kashmir or even Manipur.
- According to Anshuman Rao in the Asian Age dated 22 Aug 2018, rather than creating 'Congress Mukt Bharat', BJP is heading towards a 'Job Mukt Bharat'. BJP had promised creating 1.2 crore jobs every year but merely created 4.16 lakh jobs in 2017 while 1.55 lakh and 2.31 lakh found jobs in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Jobless youth is the highest explosive material lured to pick up gun and become the insurgent or the Maoist. Caste arithmetic and corruption, inequitable distribution of wealth, where few rich become richer and poor become poorer add fuel to fire in spreading terrorism. Creation of jobs, equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities and good governance will go a long way in ending terrorism.
- Our armed forces are still under the/ bureaucratic/ control of the babus who have no basic knowledge about matters military. There is, therefore, a strong case for having the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) who should directly report to/ the/ Minister of Defence on matters military. The intra service and inter service rivalries would be curbed once CDS is appointed. At presently it appears the non- military national security advisor (NSA) has usurped the power of the CDS.
- With tensions all along its borders and presence of the big powers submarines and warships, amazingly India did not have a full time defence minister in its cabinet till the reshuffle in the cabinet on 3 Sep 2017 when Ms Nirmala Sitharaman was appointed as the Defence Minister of India in the back drop of standoff between China and India over Doklam! Our National Security needs to be seriously addressed.
- The recent Parliamentary Committee Report under BJP MP Murli Manohar Joshi has blamed Modi government for

compromising with India's safety and security preparedness level down to 1962 when India suffered crushing defeat against China.

- India must improve its military capability. Rather than raising more ill equipped formations and units, India needs to sharpen its combat forces taking Israel as the role model. The Mail Today of 23 Jul 2017 reports that the Indian Army has critical shortages of ammunition that may last only 10 days as the/ Ordnance/ Factory Board has failed to deliver ammunition. Also, all our DRDO/ HAL projects are painfully slow to develop and produce warlike equipment, tanks, guns, combat aircraft, ammunition and explosives.
- With the recovery of huge oil in the South China Sea, China has laid territorial and judicial claims over it which have been contested by the/ adjoining/ countries/ especially the Vietnam who is supported by the US, Korea, Japan, Australia and India. Since India has some drilling interests, to counter India, last year, the Chinese submarine along with three warships were reportedly lurking in the Bay of Bengal, posing threat to our eastern coast. To counter Chinese naval threat in the Bay of Bengal, the tripartite,/ India-US-Japan's Malabar naval exercise was the right snub to China. Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore,/ Philippines, Vietnam and South Korea could also perhaps be included in these naval/ maneuvers/ to isolate and blunt Chinese move. In this direction, the/ US/ has proposed Australia-Japan-India-USA alliance to contain China while all pro-peripheral countries supporting and contributing towards the success of this alliance. With right thought and with an eye on its advantages, India should make the maximum out of this policy to contain China and get the most benefit out of it. Significantly, China's major oil supplies from the Middle East pass through the choke points of Straits of Malacca very close to Andaman & Nicobar Islands where our tri-service Andaman & Nicobar Theatre Command is located that can choke these supplies and bring our adversaries to their knees. But such actions can escalate to war as well.
- We need to prevail upon the US, the EU, Russia, the Commonwealth, the ASEAN, the SAARC, Japan and South

Korea to declare Pakistan as the terrorist state. The US has rightly cancelled recently the \$ 300 billion military aid to Pakistan for training and operationally and logistically supporting the Haqqani, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and other Islamic terror groups to carry out cross border attacks in India and Afghanistan.

- India should initiate diplomatic war against the hegemony of China and its nexus with Pakistan and North Korea and subscribe for India, South Korea, Australia, European Union (EU), and the US,/ Central/ Asia and Japan and other like-minded/ countries/ as one bloc. The ASEAN, SAARC, Commonwealth, G20, UNSC, look east, look west,/ Central/ Asia and the Middle East are the countries India must cultivate besides the traditional friends like the US, UK, EU and Russia to galvanize support against the/ belligerency/ of the Pakistan and China as was done before the 1971 War of liberation of Bangladesh.
- India needs to highlight to world the human rights violations and subjugation of democracy in the Pakistan and the POK and in the Chinese autonomous regions of the Tibet and the Xinjiang, high lighting the suppression of human rights in Tibet, the Xinjiang, Uygur and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Regions where lately, the most intriguing development has been the atrocious treatment meted to the unfortunate Muslim minorities concentrated in China where 10 lakh Muslims are imprisoned in transformation camps and their children sent to orphanages to change their belief in their religion and customs. China has put ban on halal meat and atrocities and human rights violations on the Muslim and the Christian minorities are on the increase BUT Pakistan on the threshold of the Muslim world leadership as a vassal state of China is keeping quiet over these issues. While Pakistan is in the habit of raking and magnifying small Muslims related issues in India relentlessly. China on the other hand being a clever emerging super power wants India's support for fighting US trade war! We need to highlight these issues discreetly and diplomatically in all forums.
- We could/ discreetly/ train and support their dissident elements like Mukti Vahini to fight for their liberation from

their oppressive masters.

- India should think changing its stance over Tibet and project the world how the Chinese have suppressed their independence/ and human rights. We should also highlight diplomatically China's designs to grab Arunachal Pradesh, parts of Ladakh, South China Sea, Taiwan and suppressing dissidents in Hongkong. With economic corridor coming up, IS and Muslim fundamentalists can easily sneak into Xinjiang causing unrest.
- India must improve relations with its neighbours-Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Burma, Sri Lanka,/ Mauritius/ and/ Maldives/ giving them liberal industrial, military and economic aid helping/ in developing their/ infrastructure/ and prevail on Sri Lanka with international diplomatic pressure to stop sale of Hambantota port to China and the SAARC and the ASEAN countries are weaned away from such Chinese influences. Many feel India should stop big brother policy over them.
- We must diplomatically prevail on Russia to regain its erstwhile/ super power/ status and distance itself from China. No one can deny that erstwhile Soviet Union was India's greatest ally during the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 War.
- India organised ASEAN-India Car Rally in 2012 from Singapore/ winding its way through 8 of the 10 ASEAN countries before finally ending in New Delhi, covering about 8000/ km./ We need to develop this as road cum rail route to counter/ China's/ One/ Belt/ One Road/ initiative and promote trade, transit and tourism/ amongst the ASEAN countries.
- Most of the monetary support for Hurriyat and Lashkar supporters in the valley comes through hawala and LOC trade. We need to ruthlessly curb such illegal transactions taking speedy legal action.
- Relentlessly carry out surgical strikes on the known terrorist camps in POK and their routes of ingress.
- We need to develop lateral and horizontal roads and rail network crisscrossing our entire land borders with Pakistan and China with alternate routes, for the faster movement of goods for the locals and troops and their logistics support.

- Both the Pakistanis and the Chinese are the world's most notorious hackers. We need to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) and measures to protect our public, defence and private domains from their attacks, counter them and deface their sensitive sites. Pakistan and China are notorious in honey trapping Indians on sensitive assignments and the armed forces through beautiful Urdu/ English speaking girls on WhatsApp and Face book. We need to guard against such cyber and information technology (IT) crimes.
- India needs to strengthen collection of real time actionable strategic, tactical and/ battlefield/ intelligence. We have failed to implement/ Henderson/ Brook Report on 1962 War or/ Krishnaswamy/ Subramanian/ Kargil/ Review Committee Report and optimize our combat effectiveness. All means of intelligence gathering and its interpretation -humint, techint, satint and IT should be dovetailed and we must have adequate numbers of/ translators/interpreters of the dialects in which our adversaries communicate.
- India must pursue relentlessly through economic and diplomatic initiatives to be the member of the UNSC and the NSG even though/ vehemently/ opposed by China. China needs to learn that India is not its enemy but another democratic, secular and progressive state wanting to improve its economy and standards of living of its masses with dignity. Poverty, ignorance and dismal health care are their common enemies that need to be eliminated jointly and universally.
- The BRICS comprises the emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, that has carved a niche in the world's geopolitical order. In today's G-20 countries' forum, the BRICS countries are playing a formidable role in shaping the macroeconomic policy. In 9th BRICS Summit hosted by China from 3-5 Sep 2017, the Doklam standoff was achieved due to Indian pressure of boycotting the Summit. PM Modi's key note address reiterated, 'SABKA SAATH, SABKA VIKAS'. The BRICS, the Indian Ocean Rim Countries Association (IORA), the ASEAN and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) are the other forums to pressurize China, Pakistan and North Korea to mend their ways.

- In a vibrant democracy like India print and electronic media plays pivotal role as fourth estate. But we must ensure our media does not get hysteric day in and day out blasting and sensationalising reporting which is counterproductive. We must be objective, constructive in our reporting with appropriate psywar themes for own people and our enemies and refrain on winning war or cricket world cup through hysterical media/ reporting.
- Many military thinkers feel, since India, Pakistan and China are nuclear powers; chances of long drawn conventional war are minimal. However, short swift wars and skirmishes to take local strategic or tactical advantage cannot be ruled out.
- Persuasive bilateral dialogue(s) can resolve nagging issues and not using force or proxy war. India needs to take genuine peace initiative and dialogue to remove bilateral irritants.
- Proxy wars can get escalated into full-fledged conventional war and that would mean for India playing to Pakistani army's tune.
- We lack ability to fight war at two fronts if border skirmishes, proxy war, surgical strikes or forward policy get out of control and turn in to conventional war, India lacks ability to fight combines of China and Pakistan. India, Pakistan and China are all three nuclear states and threat of nuclear confrontation would always exist in conventional and proxy war(s) scenarios.

Last but not the least, genuinely winning the hearts and minds of the locals in Kashmir valley, improving education, job opportunities, tourism, cottage industry, good governance, development, weaning away the masses from the terror groups and relentless counter insurgency operations are the keys issues to integrate dissident elements in the main stream. The last one can be effectively done by the armed forces BUT the rest have to be done by the state and the central governments respectively. The country must ensure that the Indian Armed Forces have optimised combat effectiveness as they are committed to protect our national security at all costs. As vital instrument of the state, operating in most difficult insurgency environment, our judiciary should not think differently about the human rights of the enemies of the state vis-à-vis the soldiers

fighting them. Our armed forces have always protected our nation from the external and internal threats as their primary duty and have been on the forefront in internal security duties, counter terrorist operations and in disaster mitigation with fair play and humane approach that every citizen can swear by. Nothing gives more joy and pride to serving and retired veterans when one got WhatsApp messages during floods in Kashmir two years back or now in Kerala as under-

‘All the temples, mosques and churches here are drowned in water BUT God came wearing uniforms to save us.’

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CHINA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS: CPEC MAY BE A DEBT-TRAP

BY

J.K. VERMA

Sino-Pakistan relationship, which started because of animosity towards India, soon developed in diverse fields. China full-filled, 70 percent of Pakistan weapons need. Besides weapons, China also provided technology, designs, material, equipment and knowhow to produce missiles, and in 1990 Beijing sold more than thirty M-11 missiles which are capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Pakistan manufactured missiles based on Chinese designs at National Defence Complex facilities in the Kala Chitta Dhar mountain range near Islamabad. Pakistan constructed Khushab reactor, with Chinese assistance, which plays a vital role in the production of plutonium. Beijing also provided 5,000 ring magnets which are helpful in the high-speed rotation of centrifuges. Pakistan was able to construct Chashma Nuclear Power Complex and plutonium reprocessing facility with vigorous assistance of China. Beijing also helped Pakistan in various international forums including United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), while Islamabad assisted Beijing in decimating Muslim terrorist outfits in XUAR and protected China in OIC and NAM meetings. Islamabad is passing from a grave economic crisis and China promised to invest more than \$50 billion in CPEC, which Pakistan considered a big relief although it will prove a debt-trap. There is no permanent friend or foe in foreign relations and China is using Pakistan as a proxy against India. In case of war between India and Pakistan China will not jump in war hence Islamabad should shun terrorism and try to concentrate in the development of the country.

Initially China- Pakistan relations were driven on ancient proverb that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Islamabad uses Beijing as a counterweight to India, while China supports Pakistan to keep check on India and encumber its progress. Pakistan was separated from India on the basis of failed two nation's theory and after its independence; both countries fought three full scale wars, excluding attack by Pakistani troops on Kargil. As two nations theory was not viable and religion alone cannot keep the states and regions together, an important part of Pakistan i.e. East Pakistan was separated, and a new nation with the name of Bangladesh, was born. Pakistan alleges that Bangladesh was created only because of assistance rendered by India and it does not agree with the hard fact that the new nation was born, because of atrocities perpetrated by Punjabi dominated West Pakistan and after the elections it refused to give the rightful claim of residents of East Pakistan. Pakistan army, which projects itself as the saviour of Pakistan and its ideology, has waged a low intensity war against its eastern neighbour. Pakistan is conscious that India is more powerful in conventional warfare hence it developed nuclear warheads to threaten India. Nonetheless, Islamabad is also aware that possession of nuclear warheads is one thing, but its use is dangerous, hence it wants to have protection of some powerful country, which comes to its rescue in case of hostility with India. Previously it depended on United States, now it claims that China is Pakistan's all weather friend.

The leaders of both China and Pakistan claimed that their friendship is "higher than mountains, deeper than oceans, stronger than steel and sweeter than honey" but both the states have glaring difference. China is a communist capitalist country while Pakistan is an Islamic fundamentalist nation. Pakistan was one of the first few countries, which recognised Peoples Republic of China in 1950. Both countries became close to each other as both fought wars with India.

China, which is progressing very fast and emerged as the second largest economy in the world, considers India as its potential competitor. Both India and China already fought a war in 1962, and have serious border disputes at several places. Besides border disputes both countries have several irritants, including water dispute, China obstructs India's membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) passes through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir which is integral part of India hence India objected its construction.

CPEC is an important part of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is the favorite project of Chinese president Xi Jinping. There are several other tribulations also, including India's special relations with Bhutan, China's assistance to Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) Chief Masood Azhar in United Nations Security Council. China also mentions that India had given shelter to Dali Lama and hundreds of his followers and alleges that Tibetan refugees are carrying out terrorist activities in Tibet. There are several other disagreements between two Asian giants but the foremost is the suspicion against each other. Hence China is instigating Pakistan to create troubles in India and unfortunately Pakistan has created/assisting multifarious terrorist outfits which are involved in terrorist activities in India.¹

Sino-Pakistan relationship, which started because of animosity towards India, soon developed in diverse fields. China wanted to sell its armaments and Pakistan which is not producing anything but desires to snatch Kashmir and take revenge from India, purchased Chinese weaponry in huge quantity. Beijing also supplied nuclear and missile technologies to Pakistan, which generated confidence against more powerful India. China also helped Pakistan in various international forums including United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) etc. Islamabad also assisted Beijing in decimating Muslim terrorist outfits, which were creating trouble in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). China continued its oppression in XUAR against Muslim Uyghur community, but Pakistan has never raised this issue in any international forum, not only this Pakistan also protected China in Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) meetings. Islamabad also shielded Beijing in Non-Aligned Movement's (NAM) meetings, on its actions in South China Sea.

In the relationship between Pakistan and China economic and commercial aspects also became important but the foremost consideration remained the security. China also invested and committed to invest much more in several infrastructure projects in Pakistan and as the latter is not getting Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) from other countries is welcoming Chinese investments. Beijing which has deep pockets will project Pakistan as a model to other countries for making investments in infrastructure projects.²

At present China's economy is slowing down and it is not advisable to invest all money inside the country, hence Beijing wants to invest money abroad. Pakistan is a prudent choice, as it is not only a neighbouring country but because of terrorism it is being isolated and needs support at several fields, therefore it is easy to control the country. China also tries to win over Pakistan as it will impede supply route to US led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) troops in Afghanistan.

Pakistan military and political leaders can enhance their image in the public by claiming, that they brought such huge foreign investment in the country. In view of rampant corruption, army and political leaders will make their cut, while China will use this massive infrastructure for exporting its goods to Pakistan and other countries.

Pakistani army, politicians and Beijing, all will propagate about the perceived threat from abroad hence the poor and radicalised masses forget their poverty, internal problems and mounting foreign debt including Chinese loan.

CPEC is passing through troubled areas, where even Pakistan army is unable to provide security to Chinese, hence Beijing is assisting Masood Azhar founder and leader of the UN-designated terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed in United Nations, so that diverse terrorist outfits headed by him, Hafiz Saeed and others do not obstruct Chinese projects. China by assisting terrorist leader is safeguarding its personnel and projects.

BACKGROUND OF CHINA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Pakistan- China relations commenced from 1950, when Pakistan severed its diplomatic relations with Republic of China –Taiwan and established its diplomatic relations with People's Republic of China (PRC). The relations between both the nations strengthened and China provided military, financial, diplomatic, technical and moral support to Pakistan and both countries mull over the other country as an important strategic confederate.

The diplomatic relations between both the counties were established on 21 May 1951, and in 1956 Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, signed the Treaty of Friendship with Pakistani Prime Minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy. In 1963 one year after India-China war, Pakistan

surrendered Trans-Karakoram Tracts to China to settle border disputes and strengthen relations.

After resolving border disputes in 1963, China started military support to Pakistan from 1966 and a strategic alliance was constituted in 1972, one year after dismemberment of Pakistan. The economic co-operation between both the countries started from 1979. China emerged as the biggest supplier of armaments and the third-largest trading partner of Pakistan. China also assisted Pakistan in improving its civil nuclear power- reactors.

Pakistan claims China as its ‘all weather friend’, and maintaining good relations with China is an important aspect of Pakistan’s foreign policy. Pakistani President General Zia-ul-Haq visited China in 1986 and in 1989. Both Pakistan and Cuba supported China after Tiananmen Square protests. Pakistan also supports China against Taiwan, human right violations in the country including Tibet. Both countries have a free-trade agreement. China’s exports to Pakistan in 2017 were \$18.25 billion, while Pakistan’s export to China was reduced to \$1.83 billion. Pakistan also helped China by arranging historic visit of U.S. President Richard Nixon in 1972.³

Pakistan is the only Muslim country, which has nuclear weapons and surplus manpower. Beijing is using Islamabad to enhance its impact on Islamic countries of Middle East and Central Asia. Pakistan has also surrendered huge areas of Kashmir to China.

DEFENCE COOPERATION INCLUDING TRANSFER OF BALLISTIC MISSILES

A recent report of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reveals that Pakistan has emerged as the 9th biggest importer of armaments, and China which full-fills 70 percent of Pakistan weapons need, became the foremost exporter of weaponry after surpassing United States. Now US supplies only twelve percent of the total weapons import of Pakistan. SIPRI further mentions that China became the fifth biggest exporter of arms by increasing 38 percent weapons sale in last five years. Beijing exported weapons to 48 countries; nonetheless Pakistan remained the biggest importer of Chinese armaments. Pakistan, which

is a primary global consumer of Chinese weapons, purchases about 30 percent of China's arms exports. Bangladesh and Myanmar are two other main importers of Chinese arms and ammunition after Pakistan.⁴

Pakistan is leaning towards China as USA is putting more restrictions, and the strategists in Islamabad feel that Washington is becoming closer to Delhi, because of multifarious reasons. The trend of moving towards China took momentum, when US Congress blocked sale of eight F-16 fighter jets to Islamabad. As sale of F-16 was blocked, Pakistan moved towards JF-17 fighter jets. US suspension of two billion dollars military aid also reduced US arms supply to Pakistan. US is pressing Pakistan to stop assistance to Afghan Taliban, especially Hikmatyar group, but Pakistan military which wants to install puppet government in Afghanistan, is not adhering to US requests. The continuous assistance to Afghan Taliban especially Hikmatyar groups has deteriorated US Pakistan relations, which also abridged US arms supply to Pakistan. Besides weapons, China also provided technology, designs, and knowhow to produce missiles, and in 1990 Beijing sold more than thirty M-11 missiles, which are capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Pakistan also manufactured missiles based on Chinese designs at National Defence Complex facilities in the Kala Chitta Dhar mountain range near Islamabad. The effective range of the missile is 2,750 KMs.⁵

Just few days before the scheduled visit of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and General Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to South Asian nations including Pakistan, US countervailed \$ 300 million assistance to Pakistan. Both Mike Pompeo and General Dunford visited Pakistan in the first week of September 2018 and met Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and others. Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood remarked that it was not assistance but it was a reimbursement of the money, which Pakistan spent in improving the regional security. Nonetheless, this scraping of the assistance further deteriorated US-Pakistan relations. It will be a big jolt to Pakistan as it is facing a severe economic crisis. Although this US action will push Pakistan more towards China but it was essential as Pakistan was continuing its assistance to terrorist outfits especially Haqqani network, which is constantly attacking US led NATO forces as well as Afghan troops.⁶

China also gave HQ-16 air defence missile systems and A-100 rocket launchers, while VT-4 tanks are in the pipeline. China sold JF-17 fighter jets, which were similar to F-16, at a much lower cost and later gave permission to build the aircraft in Pakistan and permitted to export it also. China also supplied drones and its design to Pakistan, again in 2016 Beijing sold eight attack submarines to Islamabad worth \$5 billion, which was the biggest arms sale by China. The submarines were supplied by China Shipbuilding Trading Company and China gave loan on low interest rate. China also agreed to supply Chengdu J-10B fighter jets, which has features resembling to F-16C most advance versions. Chengdu J-10B has more advance radars and stealthy features than F-16C.⁷

China has not only supplied armaments, but in several cases gave designs and permission to export these weapons. Beijing also provided space technology to Islamabad. China also launched joint projects with Pakistan, including JF-17 fighter aircraft, K-8 Karakorum advance training aircraft, AWACS systems etc. Beijing provided license to produce Al- Khalid tanks, which are similar to Chinese T-90 tanks. Both Chinese and Pakistan army conducts joint military exercises. China is also constructing Gwadar Deep Sea Port, which will provide an opportunity to Beijing to initiate warships and submarines in Indian Ocean.⁸

Beijing is increasing the military might of Islamabad as Pakistan army is helpful in curbing the terrorist outfits supporting Uighur Muslims in Xianjiang region of China. Beijing which considers Delhi as its potential competitor, is encouraging Pakistan to carryout terrorist activities in India, so that the latter spends its money and energy in handling terrorists. China enhanced Pakistan's military capability to inculcate confidence in Pakistan military and contain India. China helped Islamabad in producing 20, CH3 Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), which initiated production of UAVs in Pakistan.

CHINA'S ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

Pakistan mischievously propagated that its nuclear programme was a reaction of India's Pokhran nuclear test of 1974. In fact after creation of Bangladesh in 1971, Pakistan decided to equip itself with nuclear warheads to counter India's supremacy in conventional warfare. Pakistan

army, which has usurped maximum resources of the country, has created an illusionary threat from India, decided to possess nuclear warheads, which will provide the requisite security to Pakistan. Islamabad's nuclear programme commenced from 1971 while India's nuclear programme got momentum from 1987.⁹

China helped Pakistan in construction of nuclear infrastructure, when US and European countries put stringent restrictions in obtaining equipment required in enriching uranium and in procurement of plutonium. China has given Pakistan designs, material, equipment and knowhow to produce nuclear warheads. One American nuclear expert even mentioned that without Chinese assistance there was no Pakistani nuclear programme. However, China also utilised nuclear design stolen by Pakistani nuclear scientist A Q Khan from a European enrichment plant. Pakistani scientists had gone to China and got rigorous training, China also gave design of the CHIC-4 device to Islamabad. Pakistani scientists including AQ Khan used Chinese designs for Pakistani nuclear plants. Analysts claim that on behest of China, North Korea supplied Liquid-fuelled ballistic missiles to Pakistan in lieu of the information pertaining to the uranium enrichment.¹⁰

Chinese also helped in the construction of Khushab reactor which plays a vital role in the production of plutonium. China also provided 5,000 ring magnets which are helpful in the high-speed rotation of centrifuges. Pakistan was able to construct Chashma Nuclear Power Complex and plutonium reprocessing facility with active assistance from China.

According to an estimate at present China has 280 nuclear war-heads and Pakistan possess 130-140 nuclear war-heads, while India has approximately 110-120 nuclear war-heads only. Pakistan is working hard to enhance its nuclear arsenal and it is anticipated that in 2025, it will possess more than 220 nuclear war-heads.

CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR MAY SOUR PAKISTAN CHINA RELATIONS

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an important segment of One Belt and one Road Initiative (BRI), *under which Beijing has pledged to invest more than \$50 billion. Islamabad is passing from*

a grave economic crisis and it desires that Saudi Arabia and China bailout the country from the prevailing economic calamity. Pakistan's economic condition is deteriorating as US has suspended the financial assistance, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not coming, the import has increased while export is dwindling, foreign remittances are also reduced. Hence huge Chinese investment in CPEC is crucial for the country.

The CPEC will connect Kashgar to Khunjerb and Gwadar as well as the Central Asian countries. Gwadar port which is strategically located will work as a significant trade centre for China. At present 60 percent of Chinese oil is transported through Persian Gulf to Shanghai commercial port of China. The ships cover long distances, hence China intends to use Gwadar Port which will reduce time and distance.

China promised to set up several industries pertaining to household appliances, telecommunication, textiles, garments, minerals, fertilizers etc. China will establish industrial parks with infrastructure including electricity, water and parking. China with massive population and less arable land gave utmost emphasis on agriculture. Chinese companies will capture agricultural farms, fruit gardens on the name of mechanization, use of fertilizers, seeds, livestock etc. Chinese will establish fruits and vegetables processing units and will also create massive storage and transportation facilities, so that agricultural products can be exported to China. Beijing will also built fiber optic cable in the country and link it with Chinese media so that Chinese culture can be disseminated.¹¹

The investments hungry Pakistan, without analyzing CPEC in details, projected to the masses that country's economic problems will be over through CPEC. The contents of the project were not made public to avoid criticism and condemnation. However as information about CPEC is trickling down, it is clear that China which has deep pockets, surplus manpower and raw material, will utilise these in CPEC and will grab all mega projects at higher prices and will give loan to Pakistan on higher interest rates and when Pakistan will not able to repay the loan, China will occupy strategic projects and arable land.¹²

Sri Lanka lost Hambantota port while Maldives was forced to sign not only free-trade agreement with China but also lost one island to China.

Beijing has constructed mega infrastructure projects in developing countries but the projects are lying idle and countries are finding difficult to repay the loans.

CPEC would link land-locked recalcitrant Xinjiang autonomous region from Gwadar port and most of the rail and road would be constructed by Pakistan. According to an estimate Pakistan will end-up paying \$90 billion by 2030 to China. It is difficult to visualise how Pakistan will repay such a hefty amount. In CPEC around \$35 billion will be spent on power sector and China will be charging Rs. 8.50 per kilowatt while prevailing rate is Rs. five. China will be claiming 17 to 20 percent assured return. In view of large scale power theft, China will not able to recover the assured return and it will be a big pressure on Pakistan. According to reports Pakistan owes \$19 billion to China and the CPEC loan will be \$14 billion hence Pakistan's total public debt is estimated to \$90 billion by June 2019. Pakistan has already mortgaged diverse fixed assets including few roads, airports and radio and television stations to International Monetary Fund (IMF).¹³

Chinese companies have taken tax concession and all major projects of CPEC will go to Chinese companies as there will be no competition and no global tenders. Chinese companies will charge more, will not give employment to local people and will use Chinese raw material. Pakistani industries will not able to compete with Chinese cheap material and the industries will die their own death.

There is lot of resentment against Chinese companies and Chinese personnel in Balochistan, and Pakistan occupied Gilgit and Baltistan (POGB) from where CPEC will be passing. Hence Pakistan raised two divisions to protect Chinese assets and personnel; it will be an additional expenditure. Most of the power plants planned in CPEC are coal based, which will enhance pollution level. Corruption is a major issue in Pakistan and there will be massive embezzlement, which may hamper the progress and optimistic results of CPEC.

China has export oriented economy and it needs lot of minerals. Analysts feel that Beijing is eyeing on the unexploited mineral resources of Balochistan and POGB. POGB has lot of water resources and avenues of power generation which China will need to sustain its manufacturing industry.

The intellectuals and economists are complaining that CPEC will be harmful for the country and the masses are also against it hence the exhilaration about CPEC is dwindling and resentment is increasing. Chinese are realising the opposition, hence now Beijing is dealing more with Pakistan army and less with the civilian government. There are reports, that now China is also reconsidering its investments and recently it has not released funds for few projects including an important railway project of nine billion dollars. Few smaller projects including power projects are also shelved because of financial constraints. Chinese private companies and banks are reluctant to invest as they are not sure about the repayment. Islamabad had also rejected the Chinese proposal to build Diamer Bhasha dam because of unfavourable provisions.

The contents of agreement of CPEC are kept closely guarded secret and in 2015 governor of State Bank of Pakistan accepted that he is not aware about equity, or debt in the project. The cabinet also informed that the government is not aware about the quantum of grant, loan or equity in the CPEC. It indicates that civilian government is kept in oblivion from CPEC agreement and all powerful army, which is totally dependent to China, was in the forefront.

A Pakistani senator gave a prophetic statement in 2016, when he mentioned that China will be another East India Company and will bankrupt several Pakistani companies and CPEC will prove a 'national Calamity'. Pakistan will become a satellite state of China and will be dependent on several small items also.

China projects CPEC as an economic project while Pakistan accepts the strategic importance of CPEC. China will get entrance to Indian Ocean as well as to the gargantuan markets of Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia, while Pakistan will become closer to China, which may work as counter to its archrival India. As China's major oil supply comes from Indian Ocean its day to day survival depends on this route. US navy and its allies keep a watch on the "aggressive moves" of China. Beijing also fears that US works on the policy of 'containment of China' with its allies including Japan, South Korea, Australia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Taiwan, Philippines, Singapore and India hence it also wants to keep few allies with it including Pakistan on its side.¹⁴

China is quite stringent in realising its debts and cash-starved Pakistan has not analysed the agreement well, which is drastically in faovour of China. Beijing will occupy Gwadar port and several other immovable assets of Pakistan, under the garb of non-payment of debt. China made it clear, that CPEC is a financial adventure, and there will be no donations in it, although it will help in stabilizing faltering Pakistan. Islamabad mentions that it is not a debt-trap but it is an investment. Nonetheless, if it is an investment then, how China will get the desired return on its mammoth investment. Pakistan's financial condition is precarious even before the start of CPEC, what will happen once China will start realising return of its enormous investments. Pakistan which is habitual defaulter in repayment considers that China has to bail out again and again as the country is working as a counterweight against India. However the hardliner in Pakistan cautions, that there are major differences between democratic US and communist China. Beijing will snatch several areas of Pakistan if it defaults in repayment.¹⁵

The analysts mention that BRI and its principal project CPEC are strategic projects and China is extrapolating them as economic project with malafide intentions. The venture will benefit only to China both financially as well as strategically, while all other counties especially Pakistan will emerge as a big loser.¹⁶

WAY FORWARD

There are more than 21 million Muslims in China including 11 million Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang region, besides Xinjiang, Muslims also reside in Qinghai, Ningxia and Gansu regions. Chinese government has put stringent restrictions on Muslims and large numbers of Muslims are kept in detention centers and re-induction camps. Muslims are not allowed to keep fast in the holy month of Ramzan and there are restrictions on keeping beards etc. China wants to crush Muslims but there is lot of resentment and Uighurs have also constituted few separatist outfits namely East Turkestan Islamic Movement, World Uyghur Congress, Turkistan Islamic Party, East Turkestan Liberation Organisation etc. and are demanding a separate nation. Besides these separatist outfits Islamic State and Al Qaeda are also trying to arouse Islamic sentiments among Chinese Muslims. Although Pakistan army may like to help Chinese in crushing Muslim's uprising but there are large number of terrorist outfits and their splinter groups in Pakistan

and Afghanistan which Pakistan army has no control and they will continue providing weapons and training to Uighur secessionist elements. There are several training centres where Pakistan army, serving and retired personnel impart training to terrorists. After obliteration from Iraq and Syria, Islamic State is trying to establish itself in Afghanistan as well as in Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan (FATA). It will be dangerous for the region including China. Hence it is in interest of China to pressurise Pakistan to discontinue assisting terrorist outfits and dismantle vast infrastructure created to train terrorists. Once ISI destroys the terrorist infrastructure, assistance to Uighur separatists would also be curbed automatically.

At present China needs Pakistan to contain India and relations with US are tense but soon China may inculcate cordial relations with India and US, and at that time China would abandon Pakistan. Hence Pakistan must stop nurturing terrorist outfits and put the country's finance and energy in the economic development of the state as there is no permanent friend or foe in the foreign relations. China will also not like to be tagged with Pakistan which has faced three coups and several phases of unrest. Hence Islamabad must change its policies and stop abetting terrorism.

China should stop shielding Masood Azhar, Chief of Jaish-e-Mohammed (J-e-M) in United Nations Security Council against his declaration as a global terrorist. Masood Azhar and his brother both are terrorists and if China continues assisting Pakistan and its numerous terrorists, soon it will be branded as helper to a terrorist state.

The Trump administration is tightening Pakistan as the latter is continuously assisting terrorist outfits which are attacking US forces in Afghanistan. The financial assistance given by US is either suspended or revoked. In this way if China continuously helps Pakistan the relations between US and China will also become tense. Both US and China are already engaged in terse trade war. US has also imposed sanctions against the Chinese Equipment Development Department as it purchased S-400 surface to air missiles and Russian Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets. However US and China are two biggest economies of the world and have very strong economic relations hence the relations will improve soon. Not only this, relations between China and India are also strengthening, hence for Pakistan, China may not strain its relations with India or US. China has other strategic problems including trouble

with Taiwan, in Korean peninsula as well as in South and East China Seas. Pakistan with its internal problems including financial crisis will become a big liability. China, India and US, all are suffering because of terrorism which is emanating from Pakistan hence all the three countries can work together on counter-terrorism. They can also work on infrastructure development and can increase trade.¹⁷

In the beginning, Pakistan army was completely dependent on America for supply of armaments as well as for training. US support enhanced manifold when Pakistan agreed to work as front state against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. However when Pakistan was trying to develop nuclear warheads, US suspended all military assistance under Pressler Amendment in 1990. Pakistan felt deceived and slanted heavily towards China. Unfortunately Pakistan has failed to learn lessons from past mistakes. If Pakistan will continue supporting terrorism China will also dump it soon.

Recently, Washington based Wilson Centre published a study in which it mentioned that middle level and younger Pakistani Army officers consider that home grown terrorism is a bigger danger than India. Nonetheless the senior Pakistani Army Officers continues to project India as the biggest danger for Pakistan. In fact few senior Pakistani Army officers have close links with terrorist outfits, while others are enjoying several benefits by projecting India as enemy number one. Nevertheless it is encouraging to see that middle level and junior army officers especially of navy and air force are realising that terrorism is the main threat for the country and it must be eliminated. It is a good sign, and if Pakistani army makes sincere efforts terrorism can be eliminated from the country. Not only this if Pakistan army does not consider India as its foremost enemy, it will not play Chinese cards and may stop cross-border terrorism and in that case the hostility between India and Pakistan may come to an end. Pakistan's undue dependence on China will also stop and Islamabad may take decisions without gratuitous pressure from Beijing.¹⁸

Sometimes back China which is suffering from terrorism has passed a law that Chinese forces can conduct counter-terrorism operations out of the country. China is suffering from Uighur terrorism and Pakistan and Afghanistan forces are not able to control these Islamic outfits which are helping Uighur terrorist outfits, through POGB. The analysts claim that after passing of the law, Chinese forces may enter POGB or even

the Badakshan province of Afghanistan from where the secessionists of East Turkestan Islamic Movement are operating.

The CPEC passes through POGB and residents of the area are against Federal government as well as of CPEC. China wants peace in Afghanistan, and as Kabul considers Islamabad as its enemy, Beijing has agreed to start projects with India. Pakistan must control diverse terrorist outfits otherwise it will continue losing friends. It should also strengthen itself economically, because there is change in Chinese perception. Previously China-Pakistan relationship was primarily security-centric but now China is attaching more emphasis on economy.¹⁹

The foundation of China-Pakistan friendship rests on anti-India sentiments however the time is changing and at present China is largest trading partner of India and in financial year 2016-17 India imported goods worth Rs.4, 11,124 Crores. Besides import China's 84 percent of total crude oil and hydrocarbons comes through Indian Ocean where Indian Navy has assertive presence. Hence China will not like to fight with India because of Pakistan and in past when India Pakistan fought, China never intervened. China is using Pakistan as a proxy against India. Hussain Haqqani former Pakistan Ambassador in US has rightly put up that "for China, Pakistan is a low-cost secondary deterrent to India."²⁰

Pakistan may not care about growing India US relationship and may remain happy with its close relationship with China but the latter has international ambition and may feel insecure if India and US becomes close to each other and will not mind discarding Pakistan to become friendly with US and India.²¹

Imran Khan while in opposition raised questions about the utility of CPEC for Pakistan. He also assured to the masses that the contents of CPEC, which are closely guarded secret, would be released. Khan should implement his promise at an early date and the details of the contracts should be made public, so that the economists and strategic analysts can analyse the terms and conditions of these contracts in detail. In view of the recommendations of experts, Pakistan government can retain or reject the contracts. If the work on these projects start then it will be difficult to repudiate the contracts.²²

The government of Pakistan should also learn lessons from other countries where Chinese have signed agreements for massive investments in infrastructure projects but later the governments realised, that the contracts were not in favour of the country and renounced them. Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad Prime Minister of Malaysia has countervailed Chinese funded energy pipelines and a rail project as these projects were not beneficial to the country. Same way former President of Maldives Mohamed Nasheed and president of The Maldivian Democratic Party whose candidate Ibrahim Mohamed Solih won the presidential elections, also promised to review the contracts and mentioned that Chinese want to grab Maldivian land through debts and contracts. Solih also criticised the free trade agreement signed by outgoing president Yameen.²³

Xi Jinping has global aspiration and considers India as its potential rival; hence it will continue encircling and using Pakistan against India. Beijing will also use Islamabad to fulfill its maritime objectives and to advance OBOR projects. China would also carry on assisting and instigating Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and others against India. However China will evade open confrontation with India but it will use Pakistan and other countries to needle India with malafide intention to dwindle its progress. Hence India should also be friendly with China but should be ready for confrontation.

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INDO-PAK DIPLOMACY & MEDIA POWER

By

NILOFAR SUHRAWADY

SYNOPSIS

This paper attempts to highlight several aspects of Indo-Pak diplomacy with specific analysis of the role played by media power. Yes, in the age of today, power of media at various levels, including diplomatic, cannot be denied. Recently, Indo-Pak diplomacy was in news because of Kartarpur corridor. This and several other issues linked with Indo-Pak relations have been taken note of and analysed in keeping with media coverage accorded to them. It has been pointed out that Indo-Pak issues have seldom failed to hit headlines particularly when prominent personalities and key leaders are involved. Another aspect of media power, which has not accorded notable coverage to several Indo-Pak issues, has also been pointed out. Questions such as whether media is subject to any kind of pressure and/or has played primarily an independent role have also been speculated on.

A section has also been devoted to briefly analysing the diplomatic role played by western media, specifically with reference to Arab Spring. The role of Indian media in its coverage of Indo-Pak issues has been compared with this. Overall, Indian media has not been subject to any major pressure nor has it relied on specific/select sources of information for news regarding Indo-Pak diplomacy. The same cannot be said about media in greater part of the world. Diplomacy can no longer be de-linked from role played by media. Importance assumed by media power, even regarding Indo-Pak diplomacy, can no longer be ignored.

INTRODUCTION

Diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan have recently hit headlines because of the Kartarpur corridor. Interestingly, this issue has received mixed reactions on whether it may or may not contribute to improvement of diplomatic ties between the two countries. And this draws attention to speculations voiced about Indo-Pak relations through coverage accorded to the same by media in both the countries and across the world. Undeniably, the role of media, that is media power, cannot be undermined, sidelined and/or ignored with respect to any issue. In this paper, an attempt shall be made to delve on this aspect that is media power with respect to nature of Indo-Pak relations.

Recent history is witness to great heights achieved by media through new and numerous means of communication. And this has also led to greater importance of media power. Now, great significance is accorded by various governments to importance given by media to different issues they seek to promote. At the international level, with respect to their foreign policy, diplomatic strategy, their own image at various levels and other aspects, it is worth taking note of different ways that media power can be put to use to. Certainly, all outlets of media are not always subject to promoting only what their government seeks. Nevertheless, when it comes to international issues, the unwritten media ethics followed in general by most outlets is that they must exercise restraint in questioning the foreign policy and also diplomacy exercised by their governments.

The preceding point also suggests that while analysing foreign policies of different countries, it has become extremely important to study the role played by media. This is for several reasons. First, it is imperative to take note of whether outlets of media play an independent role. In addition, to what degree is an independent approach adopted by media? Or is media's role primarily decided by what various governments seek to promote? Secondly, do the media give importance to only negative and/or positive aspects regarding international issues? It is equally important to reflect on the impact that role of media has and can have on bilateral diplomatic issues involving neighbouring countries.

This paper shall also briefly deliberate, comparatively, on the role of media involving neighbouring countries and the ones which do not

share geographical boundaries, a common history and so forth. This aspect needs to be considered as the main focus of this paper is on Indo-Pak diplomatic ties, two countries which don't just share borders but also have a lot of cultural similarities and were the same country historically. In this case, it may not be wrong to say that significance of communication between the two countries extends beyond the media.

WHAT IS MEDIA POWER?

Elementarily speaking, the various outlets of media include newspapers, televisions, Internet and other means via which "news" is communicated from key sources of information to recipients, that is the people. In the present era, what's App on mobiles and Face book through Internet have also begun being giving importance for communicating "news" from person to person, one group to another and so forth. While outlets of media play their respective roles in serving as means of covering news, their significance lies in the manner in which the same is done. Nature of importance given to news regarding various issues can differ. Some news may be treated as breaking news, dominate headlines and be focussed upon for more than a day, backed by photographs, press conferences, interviews, TV debates, discussions and other means of communication. This is an important nature of media power. Coverage of this nature, along positive lines, may contribute to enhancing image of government and various leaders. The impact may be contrary if negative aspects are focussed upon. To a degree, the negative and positive parameters of media coverage play a crucial role in raising speculations about diplomatic ties between countries focussed upon in their news coverage.

Briefly speaking, role of media power is decided by nature of coverage, the outlets choose to accord to topical diplomatic issues, the advantages and/or disadvantages they spell for respective leaders, governments and also the possible impact they may have and/or are expected to have. Impact may be decided by the degree to which media power may contribute to change in relations between two countries, have a positive/negative impact on opinion of the people and other countries regarding their bilateral ties and also whether it may prove advantageous for politicians in two countries or not.

Media power is thus not limited to coverage the different sections of media choose to accord to diplomatic issues. It is equally important to consider the sources of “news” media rely upon. For instance, with respect to Indo-Pak diplomacy, whenever any issue hits headlines, it is not surprising to find statements from right-winged organisations also being accorded some coverage. In addition, debates, discussions, interviews and opinions are voiced through various means for several days. These may or may not have any impact on Indo-Pak bilateral relations. Yet, to a considerable degree, the role of media at this level too cannot be undermined. This demands speculation on the factors that may prompt various persons/groups to voice their opinions. One could be their own desire to get media coverage, enhance their own publicity and so forth.

Yes, it cannot be ignored that a considerable section of individuals, groups and other sections are dependent on media coverage to promote their respective images. This demands a review of circumstances, places, time and overall situation in which various opinions are voiced on issues linked with Indo-Pak diplomacy. An attempt shall be made in this paper to focus on relevant aspects of media power, especially with reference to Indo-Pak diplomacy.

KARTARPUR CORRIDOR

Kartarpur Corridor, linking Sikh shrines of Dera Baba Nanak Sahib located in Punjab (India) and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Punjab (Pakistan) is expected to be finalised in November 2019. Clearly, this corridor bears great religious significance for the Indian Sikh community. It is likely to allow them to visit Gurdwara in Kartarpur, without any passport or visa. Foundation stones for the inauguration of this corridor were laid from both sides on 26 November 2018 in India and on 28 November 2018 in Pakistan. In India, Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu and Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh laid the foundation stone. Prime Minister Imran Khan laid the foundation stone in Pakistan. The corridor is expected to be finalised before the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak.

Notwithstanding Kartarpur Corridor’s religious significance for Indian Sikhs, it is as yet too early to contemplate on prospects of it contributing to improvement in Indo-Pak relations. Nevertheless, the nature of

media coverage accorded to inauguration of this corridor cannot be undermined. While addressing a section of Sikhs on 23 November 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi compared opening of the corridor with falling of Berlin Wall.¹ His statement received great media coverage. It is debatable as to whether this remark was made for the sake of media coverage or was really directed at taking more steps towards improving Indo-Pak ties. Equally significant is the fact, the comment was made at a Sikh gathering and not at any press conference or while interacting with any Pakistani diplomat, delegate or leader.²

With parliamentary elections around the corner, it is possible that Indian Prime Minister did not wish to lose this opportunity of enhancing his image through the media. Though talks about Kartarpur corridor have been on the table for around two decades, the decision to speed them up in November 2018 cannot be ignored. The Indian cabinet gave the green signal for Kartarpur corridor on 22 November 2018 and within less than a week, the foundation stone was laid from the Indian side. It is possible that the move was escalated with eye on gaining Sikhs' votes in Punjab, where they are in majority. This only implies that perhaps media power was used for intra-national political purposes and not for the sake of bilateral diplomacy.

Among Indians who attended the inauguration ceremony in Pakistan was Navjot Singh Sidhu. Paradoxically, his decision to attend raised a great controversy in India. Right-winged extremists described him as a "traitor."³ Incidentally, Indian External Minister Sushma Swaraj did not attend the ceremony due to other engagements. However, the timing of some of her comments cannot be sidelined. This particularly refers to her criticism of Pakistan-supported terrorism and that because of it India will not participate in SAARC summit, scheduled to be hosted in Pakistan.⁴ Her statements also received fairly good media coverage. In this case, the prime objective of her comments was apparently to convey the message that India retains a strong stand against Pakistan-supported terrorism and other issues the two countries differ on. The objective was apparently two-fold. One, to convince anti-Pak elements in India that Kartarpur corridor should not be viewed as sign of India edging towards friendly ties with Pakistan. Clearly, media coverage of her comments was essential to spread this message.

Secondly, her decision not to attend the inauguration ceremony in Pakistan may also be viewed as directed towards conveying the same message in India. At the same time, she exercised diplomatic wisdom in stating that other engagements held her back from participating in the inauguration ceremony of Kartarpur corridor. Whatever be differences between India and Pakistan, being an external affairs minister, Swaraj exercised diplomatic caution in not presenting a negative image about Delhi's approach towards Kartarpur corridor. Similar was Indian premier's attitude, marked by his talking about falling of Berlin wall. At the diplomatic level, for rest of the world, through media coverage of their comments, both chose to present a positive approach.

While Prime Minister Imran Khan used the occasion to spell need for normalisation of Indo-Pak ties, he asserted that all issues, including Kashmir, can be resolved with "strength and will" of leadership of both the countries.⁵ Clearly, the implication was obvious. For all the hype being raised from Pakistan side about Kartarpur corridor's diplomatic significance, he was keen to make the point that Indo-Pak differences also needed attention. His statements were also directed at two different sets of recipients. While keen to enhance his diplomatic image by letting the world know about his interest in improving ties with India, he laid emphasis on solving their differences over Kashmir and other issues.

What stands out is that while giving importance to Kartarpur corridor, both India and Pakistan did not refrain from expressing their respective stands on crucial issues which needed attention for improving their relations. They did not indulge in any bilateral dialogue for this purpose. But they used the opportunity to make statements directed towards gaining media coverage. Media power was thus shrewdly used on both sides to talk about diplomatic importance of Kartarpur corridor and also draw attention to issues hampering normalisation of their ties.

At this point, it is essential to briefly elaborate on words referring to use of media power in preceding paragraphs. Organisation of media conferences, release of press statements, issuance of official news and other such means are used to gain media coverage. However, there is no guarantee that all such means may receive the coverage desired. Prospects of their being covered and/or sidelined by media also prevail. Prospects of pressure being exercised upon various outlets to ensure

coverage desired by various authorities also exist to a certain limit. Pressure can be exercised by use of power of various kinds, including political and economic.

News related to Indo-Pak relations falls in that category which is usually accorded substantial coverage. Also, when the two are engaged in any event, such as Kartarpur corridor or any other, the opportunity is used by many to the maximum extent possible to gain media coverage. Attempt is also made to issue statements basically to gain media coverage. Now, primary sources of news regarding Kartarpur corridor were the inauguration ceremonies in the two countries and comments made on the occasion by those who laid foundation stones. Undeniably, these were covered fairly well by media in general. The opportunity was also seized by certain elements to issue negative comments. This includes their describing Navjot Singh Sidhu as a traitor because of his having gone to Pakistan to attend the inauguration ceremony. Subsequently, a similar extremist group announced an award of one crore-rupee to anyone who beheads Sidhu.⁶

It may be noted, a mild criticism of Sidhu's decision would not have probably received any coverage. The word "traitor" was apparently deliberately used to attract media attention. It was also used as a means of displaying the anti-Pak approach of this element. The same may be said about bounty offered for beheading Sidhu. Paradoxically, these comments did not originate from primary source of information. Nor were they issued by any official or diplomat linked with Kartarpur corridor. The occasion was deliberately used and comments made for apparently no other purpose but to gain media coverage. In essence, Kartarpur corridor's diplomatic significance may carry little or no relevance for these elements but since it was linked with Pakistan, the opportunity was exploited by them to secure coverage. Simply speaking, negative comments were issued for the sake of using media and securing some publicity.

The preceding paragraph also suggests that "news" linked with Indo-Pak ties is at times created to use media. What else can be said about calling Sidhu a "traitor" and the "reward" for killing him? Incidentally, it would not wrong be to say that diplomatically not much importance is paid to "news" of this kind. Certainly, Sidhu has been criticised by several other groups too but significance of these criticism may be

viewed as primarily an intra-national affair. Also, political reasons, in lieu of forthcoming parliamentary elections, responsible for his being strongly criticised cannot be sidelined.

THE OTHER SIDE OF MEDIA POWER

Though Indo-Pak diplomatic “news” doesn’t take long to hit headlines and remain in circulation for a considerable period, there is yet another side of media power regarding it which cannot be ignored. As mentioned earlier, “news” linked with it does not take long to hit headlines. This, however, does not imply that each and every aspect linked with Indo-Pak ties receives substantial or even needed coverage. It is possible that these are not considered significant “news” subjects. The other angle is that these are deliberately not accorded substantial media coverage to avoid raising a storm over the same.

Cultural similarity between India and Pakistan is probably responsible for popularity of Bollywood movies in Pakistan and Pakistani plays in India. Likewise, Pakistani ghazal singers are as famous and liked in India as they are in Pakistan. Recent history has been witness to Pakistani actors trying their luck in Indian films and also television serials. In addition, there are cases of Pakistani patients coming to India for medical treatment. Oft and on interaction between media persons and other personalities from both the sides also takes place. Though these events have not gone unnoticed, they have not received much media coverage. It is possible by limiting coverage of these issues; media is playing its own distinct role. Giving too much importance to these may create the impression of improvement in Indo-Pak ties which in essence is not really the case. So rather than take the risk of doing so, media has apparently chosen to give minimal possible coverage to them.

The preceding paragraph has drawn attention to events involving engagement at largely people-to-people level. Interestingly, several formal Indo-Pak issues, though suggestive of positive development, have also not received much media coverage. This includes release of civilian prisoners from both the sides. As per a statement of Indian ministry of external affairs, “India attaches high priority to addressing humanitarian issues including early release and repatriation of Indian fishermen and prisoners in Pakistan’s custody.” Fourteen Pakistani

civilian prisoners were repatriated on 7 August 2018 and seven on 13 August 2018.⁷ The same month also witnessed 115th meeting of India-Pakistan Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) in Lahore, Pakistan from 29 to 30 August.⁸ Neither of these events received notable media coverage. Were prominent personalities involved from either or both sides, media may have played a greater role. These events have been deliberately cited to draw attention of the role that media can play by not giving substantial coverage and even ignoring “news” regarding Indo-Pak relations.

Over a period of time, repeated occurrence of events outlined in preceding paragraphs suggests that they have ceased to have any “news” value. It is possible that viewing them as “routine” topics, with nothing “new” about them, media has chosen to sideline and/or ignore them. From another angle, considering the anti-Pak feeling that prevails in several Indian sections and that normalisation of Indo-Pak ties is still a long way off, events such as these have not been viewed as path-breaking to be given notable coverage. It is possible; they may have had greater “news” value if some significant comment was made about them by prominent personalities, high-ranking officials and/or key politicians.

The last point is supported by Indo-Pak events referring to engagements and/or comments of Indian prime minister and external affairs minister receiving immediate and substantial coverage. It may be recalled, foreign ministers of both sides were earlier scheduled to meet in New York on sidelines of United Nations General Assembly meeting in September 2018.⁹ A day after announcing that the meeting would be held, it was cancelled. Official spokesperson of external affairs ministry issued a media briefing, stating: “... there will be no meeting between the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York.” The meeting was cancelled because of “two disturbing developments” which were “brutal killings of Indian security personnel by Pakistan-based entities and the recent release of a series of twenty postage stamps glorifying a terrorist and terrorism confirm that Pakistan will not mend its ways.” The statement also said, “Now, it is obvious that behind Pakistan’s proposal for talks to make a fresh beginning, the evil agenda of Pakistan stands exposed and the true face of the new Prime Minister of Pakistan has been revealed to the world in his first few months in office. Any conversation with Pakistan in such an environment would be meaningless.”¹⁰

If Indo-Pak foreign ministers had met, the issue would have certainly received greater media coverage. But even cancellation of the meeting was given considerable importance by media. If the meeting had taken place, the two ministers would have touched on some issues concerning Indo-Pak ties. Just ahead of its cancellation, foreign ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said, "It is a meeting, not a resumption of dialogue."¹¹ In comparison, "news" linked to release of fishermen and Indus-Water talks received minimal coverage. It may be worth noting, with respect to "news" regarding high-profile diplomatic talks or their cancellation, media coverage may be viewed as essential for the government. As mentioned earlier, media also accords greater importance to "news" involving prominent personalities. Media coverage of "news" not involving prominent personalities does not, apparently, hold much importance either for the government or media even though they may be suggestive of positive aspects of the strained Indo-Pak diplomacy.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Media power's significance is certainly not confined to different roles it plays regarding Indo-Pak diplomacy. In this section, its importance shall be briefly elaborated on at other diplomatic levels. Diplomatically, as mentioned earlier, media plays an important role in creating news, spreading news, influencing recipients about importance of news, enhancing/defaming image of personalities covered and so forth. The hype about Arab Spring contributing to democratic revolution in several Arab countries may not have really spread without an important role played by western, particularly American media. By giving substantial coverage to this issue, the world at large in general was convinced about the "impact" of the so-called Arab Spring. The dependence of most countries on American media for "news" regarding Arab Spring was also responsible for the hype raised about this issue. Little importance was paid by most to primary source of such news, countries where Arab Spring was supposed to be taking place.

Within a few years, crises and chaos in most countries, earlier assumed to be undergoing a democratic revolution, changed the impression created about Arab Spring. Now, it is referred to as Arab Winter. The "news" about Arab Spring was created and prevailed for a considerable period. Media contributed immensely to spreading this "news" about the so-called democratic revolution as desired by certain key powers.

The world at large may not have been initially “convinced” about Arab Spring had media not accorded it substantial coverage. The same importance has not been accorded by media to how people affected by so-called Arab Spring viewed it, sufferings faced by them because of it and so forth.

Diplomatic role of western media was primarily limited to convincing the world at large about the Arab Spring hype. It may not be wrong to assume that media power of this nature was deliberately used by western powers to make world aware about the so-called democratic nature of Arab Spring. A lot more can be written on this issue and several other cases linking the use of media power and diplomacy at various levels. At this point, it would be relevant to compare media-power’s linkage with Indo-Pak diplomacy and with so-called Arab Spring. The key point with respect to Indo-Pak diplomacy is that media exercises an independent role too. The media is not absolutely dependent on what is desired by leaders in power. Secondly, as mentioned earlier, “news” created for the sake of gaining coverage is also not ignored by media.

Spread of “news,” that is created through media power, at the diplomatic level may be said to be deliberately indulged in to gain support of other powers for a certain diplomatic message. Had media not spread “news” about Arab Spring, the world may not have really become aware about it. In this case, dependence of other countries on American media for international “news” of this nature also led to their being caught in a dependency-trap. They were “trapped” into believing what was promoted by western media. Media power may also be said to be responsible for spread of the label called Islamic terrorism.

With respect to spread of labels, such as Arab Spring and Islamic terrorism, substantial use of media power may be observed. The impact at both these levels is a pointer to aggressive use of media diplomacy promoting manufactured “news.” It is being described as manufactured as so-called Arab Spring has not led to spread of any democratic revolution in Arab countries affected by it. Since Islam does not promote terrorism and hardly a percentage of Muslims are actually engaged in pursuing terrorism, the label Islamic terrorism cannot be viewed as credible from any angle. The term aggressive has been used in keeping with the negative impact that diplomacy directed at promoting usage of these terms has had.

In comparison, diplomatically, media power in India has certainly relied on government sources for news regarding Indo-Pak relations. Media diplomacy has definitely been made use of by Indian government. However, in the present era, aggressive use of media diplomacy has not been indulged in. If this was the case, recent history would not have witnessed inauguration of Kartarpur corridor. Nor would this have received substantial media coverage. In addition, blame-game, particularly regarding Pakistan-supported terrorism has certainly been paid considerable attention by Indian leaders and also media. This has, however, not been excessively propagated to the extent of preventing positive turns in Indo-Pak diplomacy. Oft and on, negative aspects have been certainly been taken note of. Nevertheless, it may be noted that media power's linkage with Indo-Pak diplomacy has not led to any dependency-trap with primarily a negative and/or aggressive impact.

CONCLUSION

Undeniably, in the age of today, the use and role of media power has assumed a great importance politically, socially, economically, diplomatically and at other levels. Media's importance is no longer confined to just being a medium of communicating news from sources to recipients. Rather, now, media power's role extends to creating and propagating "news," enhancing positive/negative image of leaders and/or events and so forth. The focus in this paper has been on analysing the importance of media power in the specific case of Indo-Pak diplomacy. On one hand, media has not failed to give substantial coverage to events probably considered as landmarks in their bilateral ties. Media coverage of Kartarpur corridor has been specifically cited as an illustration of this fact. However, media has not sidelined the fact that normalisation of Indo-Pak relations is still a long way off.

It is equally important to note, Indian media's approach towards Indo-Pak diplomacy has not been confined to official statements, media conferences, press releases, interviews and so forth. Notable coverage has also been given to right-winged, extremist elements' negative approach and the manner in which opportunities have been exploited for sake of getting space in media.

Indo-Pak diplomacy is perhaps an extremely complicated issue for rest of the world, which they probably find difficult to comprehend. If at one level, there seems to be an improvement in their relations, at another they don't take long to blame each other and before long news regarding Indo-Pak tension seems to dominate. In these circumstances, Indian media can perhaps be credited for not limiting coverage of Indo-Pak ties to only one and/or select sources. This has apparently helped others a great extent in gaining a fairly correct perception of the swings in bilateral ties of India and Pakistan. This may also be viewed as responsible for limited spread of manufactured "news" regarding their bilateral ties. Yes, as mentioned, there are several issues regarding their bilateral ties which have not been paid substantial coverage by media. Here, it may be noted, competitive race does not elude media. So, it is natural for various outlets of media to pay attention to only that which may interest the recipients.

What perhaps stands out most markedly about role of media is that the nature of coverage does not appear to have contributed to any dependency-trap based primarily on manufactured news. With India and Pakistan still viewed as enemies and not friends, possibility of news manufactured along negative lines leading to a dependency-trap cannot be ignored. This may have been the situation if media was subject to pressure of primarily manufactured news being circulated about Indo-Pak ties. Diplomatically, in the present phase, Indian government may be credited for having wisely not exercised any such pressure on media. In the same vein, media may also be credited, as mentioned earlier, for not being dependent on select and/or specific sources of information regarding Indo-Pak relations. Considering the pace at which means of communication are increasing and developing, perhaps, the Indian government and media have had no choice. International media and external powers would probably have paid great attention to use of such pressure and may be even media-bias. This would have probably led to the rest of the world's dependence on them for "news" regarding Indo-Pak relations. But this has not happened and is not likely to take place. This does not imply that Indo-Pak diplomacy is dependent on media power or is likely to be. Simply speaking, nature of Indo-Pak diplomacy's coverage is responsible for the world to get a fairly correct perception about it. Most may be fairly confused and

puzzled about which way are their ties headed towards. This is the actual picture and media power may be credited for projecting it quite appropriately!

END NOTES

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Nilofar Suhrawardy is a well-known freelance journalist who has, at different periods, written extensively for national papers. Her book *Ayodhya Without the Communal Stamp, In the Name of Indian Secularism*, was listed as the sixth-most popular book on the website.

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